

**Handbook
Department of Epidemiology
Doctor of Public Health Program
2020-2021**

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Dear Doctor of Public Health students, prospective students, faculty, and staff,
We are pleased to share with you the 2020-2021 DrPH doctoral student handbook. The handbook incorporates all program developments and changes adopted in recent years up to August of 2020. The handbook is revised annually and policies subject to interim change by the Epidemiology DrPH Committee and the MSPH Doctoral Policy and Program Committee.

This introduction provides a quick overview of the information presented in the handbook: • Section 1 provides a broad overview of the goals, structure, and administration of the PhD program in the Department of Epidemiology. • Section 2 addresses the basics of admission and registration and provides information about covering the costs of a doctoral degree. • Section 3 summarizes administrative and academic structures within the department. • Section 4 covers the program requirements in 9 subsections that address the following: overview of the program, the required schoolwide core curriculum, both the required and selective courses required for the DrPH Degree in Epidemiology, the Applied Practical Experience (APE), teaching experience, the student portfolio, the qualifying exam, the Integrated Learning Experience (ILE) process and administrative details regarding waivers and exemptions. • Section 5 covers student-mentoring; academic integrity and the honor code, MSPH policy for staying in good standing; procedures to monitor satisfactory progress. Section 6 provides resources to support students who encounter challenges while in the program. It is our sincere hope that these guidelines will enable our students to have an optimal educational experience in the Department of Epidemiology. We welcome and encourage any suggestions for their improvement and will update them annually.

My very best wishes, Leslie L. Davidson, MD MSc
Director, Department of Epidemiology Doctor of Public Health Program

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Section 1 DrPH Overview and Program Objectives

1.1 The DrPH programs in the Mailman School of Public Health

There are five departmental Doctor of Public Health degree programs at the Mailman School of Public Health (MSPH). These are advanced professional degrees designed for public health practitioners whose goal is to improve the health of the public. These degree programs are uniquely grounded in several values and structural elements, including a shared cross-departmental core curriculum, one that complements the scientific research and practice skills embedded in the unique strengths and foci of the five departments offering the degree. These DrPH programs meet all of the competencies required by the US Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH). These competencies include data and analysis; leadership, management and governance; policy and programs; education and workforce development as well as a number of department or discipline specific competencies. In addition, we consider that a research-grounded degree is essential for a public health practitioner.

DrPH students are deeply integrated into their home department while at the same time forming a powerful cross-departmental cohort that builds upon their prior professional experience. The initial streamlined, but high-level, core curriculum include courses in Leadership in Public Health, Organizational Behavior, and Strategic Management as well as a course on Essentials in Teaching and Communication in Public Health. Students have highly valued their membership in an active cross-departmental program cohort. In the departmentally specific coursework, students they complete advanced coursework specific to each discipline.

As part of the CEPH requirements, DrPH students complete an Advanced Practical experience (APE) addressing a specific public health problem in an area of their interest working with an external mentor. In some departments this is linked to planning the final culminating project. In others, it provides an opportunity to develop additional expertise in an area of public health practice that may be new to the student.

Following completion of all required coursework, the APE, portfolio and qualifying exam, students define and shape an Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) that is the culminating stage of the DrPH program. Addressing an important public health issue, through the design and/or analysis of programs, policies and/or systems, the student must include a segment on the implications of their work for improving the health of the public. All projects must address at least three of the CEPH competencies. In addition, the ILE should demonstrate synthesis of foundational and concentration-specific competencies. There are differences in protocol by Department, but all departments offer students several options for the ILE. For instance, students may undertake empirical research such as a more traditional dissertation based in empirical epidemiological research, or perhaps the development or evaluation of an intervention, policy, or framework for use by for public health practitioners.

Students in the DrPH programs at MSPH may enrich their experience by engagement with a number of distinguished initiatives such as ICAP (<https://icap.columbia.edu/>) and the Centre for Infection and Immunity (<https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/research/center-infection-and-immunity>) among others listed in Appendix I.

1.2 The DrPH program in the Department of Epidemiology

The DrPH program in Epidemiology at MSPH is intended for future leaders in public health looking for a flexible career combining high-level leadership, management, and research skills with a specialization in Epidemiology. It is aimed at public health professionals who are invested in applied science and seek to utilize a systems approach to research, program management, and policy development in practice-based settings globally, both in the USA and in other countries including emphasis on resource poor settings. Graduates are armed with the advanced skills in evaluation, organizational management, and epidemiologic expertise needed to advance professionally, while allowing them to maintain careers and leadership positions within their current organization during the course of study.

The DrPH in Epidemiology seeks to:

- Provide advanced public health research skills;
- Reflect a practice-based focus by enabling deployment of these skills with regard to program development, measurement and evaluation;
- Emphasize critical and innovative thinking rooted in rigorous research and best practices;
- Equip students for advanced leadership and management roles reflecting a strong understanding of systems approaches in health and social welfare;
- Strengthen cross-national connections and networks amongst faculty and a diverse student body; and
- Prepare students to advocate for sustainable public health goals within governments, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions.

The Department of Epidemiology has strengths in many areas of both applied research and practice including a plethora of cross-disciplinary initiatives. Among these are: Chronic Diseases, Aging, Environmental Epidemiology, Neuro Epidemiology, Psychiatric Epidemiology, Social and Spatial Epidemiology, Substance Abuse, and Violence and Injury.

During the first 4 semesters of study, students undertake the required coursework and complete an Advanced Practice Requirement. In principle, both in person and online resource materials are used throughout the first two years of the program for the Core courses, the other required courses and the DrPH seminar, establish a pattern of pre-class review and distillation of material in advance of group discussion. During the COVID 19 pandemic a mixed approach of online synchronous and asynchronous training will be utilized, and in-person teaching resumed when it is safe according to Columbia and NY State guidelines.

While addressing unique program objectives, the DrPH in Epidemiology ensures that candidates acquire mastery in specified competencies reflecting the standards expected for a DrPH Professional Degree by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). CEPH Core Competencies for this program are listed in Section 4.1. There are also six program-specific competencies in Epidemiology where mastery is required for the DrPH degree in Epidemiology at Columbia.

Completing the DrPH program requires successful completion of: 36 credits of required, selective and elective coursework, teaching experience at the graduate level, an Advanced Practical Experience, the completion of a portfolio documenting the achievement of the competencies, a qualifying examination and the Integrative Learning Experience (empirical research or a substantive public health project with a written report). The portfolio, though begun early in the program, must be completed at the end of the second year of study, reviewed by the DrPH Committee and the student's advisor and then finalized before the student may take the qualifying exam. Students are expected to complete the entire DrPH program including all elements listed above within five years from matriculation if not working fulltime and seven years if working full time.

Section 2 Applying to the Program, Tuition and other Costs

2.1 Applying to the Program

The DrPH program has been designed to provide opportunities for rich field-based learning and research for mid-career professionals much of whose study needs to exist side-by-side with substantial on-going work obligations. Students who only recently completed an MPH may apply if they have had substantial public health experience.

Entrants to the DrPH program typically hold an MPH Degree but applicants are also welcomed with a related degree such as MSW, RN or MD, or similar graduate degree that has introduced them to concepts of the health and wellbeing of the public (such as statistics, healthcare management, social sciences, and population-based sciences). In this case, students who are accepted may have to make up some foundational public health material or in the year after matriculation. Most applicants will have had several years of professional experience related to the health of the public.

2.2.1 Admission Requirements

Applicants must meet the following admissions criteria:

- Two or more years of post-graduate experience in public health, epidemiology, global health, development, or a related area
- A prior master's or doctoral degree preferably in Public Health or Epidemiology
- A Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 3.5 in prior graduate study is preferred, though not required.
- Demonstrated leadership potential
- Demonstrated ability to think critically
- Motivation to obtain senior-level positions within organizations committed to public health;
- Evidence of excellent writing and communication skills
- For international students: TOEFL or IELTS score. Minimum TOEFL score is 100. A minimum score of 25 is required for the writing section, and preferred for all sections
- For international students: Financial Certificate (United States Immigration requirement for entry into the United States)

2.2.2 The Application

The application is available through the online SOPHAS portal. In addition to the requirements and criteria listed above, all students must submit an official transcript showing courses and grades from each prior institution through the SOPHAS portal. Applicants must also submit a statement of purpose, a writing sample as specified in the SOPHAS application, and three letters of evaluation from academic and/or work sources. The writing sample must be individually authored and may not be a multi-authored publication. All international students whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate degree is from an institution in a country whose official language is not English must submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or IELTS scores through the SOPHAS portal.

The statement of purpose may not be longer than 500 words. Ideally it should convey a clear understanding of the public health field and describe how the student hopes to work within the field. The most effective statement will address many of the following points:

- 1) what interests them within the field of epidemiology;
- 2) what interests them specifically in the DrPH program of the Department of Epidemiology at the Mailman School;
- 3) the student's previous experiences of public health or related fields; and
- 4) how the student hopes to use training from a DrPH degree to help build on this experience and achieve long-term career goals.

Applicants to the DrPH degree program should submit their completed online applications to the SOPHAS by December 1st to ensure full consideration for admission and funding.

2.2.3 Expected Prerequisites

Prior to beginning their DrPH studies students are generally expected to have demonstrated competence in the core public health areas, as specified for MPH graduates by the Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH), the core accreditation body for schools of public health. This is generally met by the MPH degree. Students may fulfill similar coursework at CEPH-accredited outside institutions and submit transcripts and syllabi for review to ensure compatible competencies were met or they may fulfill needed coursework at Columbia. Students who do not have relevant, CEPH-accredited courses from a prior degree, are required to do so prior to admission into the program or within the first year of the program. Fulfilling these foundational competencies may extend the time required to complete the degree. If foundational core competency courses are taken during enrollment in the DrPH program, these credits are not counted towards the required credit load for the doctorate. More information on fulfilling these foundational competencies is in Section 4.2.

2.3 Costs & Funding

Ultimately DrPH students are responsible for all costs associated with the program, including tuition, Mailman School student activity, health service, international student, transcript and document fees, and relevant travel and accommodation costs. The cost of tuition is determined by credits for courses taken. Each course has a set number of credits. Tuition and fees are detailed [here](#)¹.

However, we are offering the incoming cohort of 2020 a package that includes full coverage for tuition, fees, and benefits for 5 years and an annual \$10,000 stipend for years 1-3. The stipend is not contingent on anything other than fulfilling the departmental program requirements and being in good academic standing. If you've been granted a waiver for a program requirement then you are still regarded as fulfilling your requirements.

We have also made the decision to extend the tuition package to our current doctoral students based on their stage in the program as of September 2020. This means that for all rising year 2 through-year 5 doctoral students, the department will cover outstanding tuition/fees/benefit costs not already covered by other sources, through year 5. Doctoral students in years 2-3 as of September 2020 will also receive the annual 10k stipend, through the end of academic year 3.

We regret that we are not able to offer stipends for students in years 4 or 5, or apply them retroactively. However, starting in the fall we will make departmental funds for miscellaneous student travel and research expenses preferentially available to students beyond year 3 in the program.

Furthermore, we will continue to work with all doctoral students to identify opportunities for supplemental support through TA and RA roles and extramural funding such as scholarships and fellowship arising both inside and outside the University; research-based employment including graduate research assistantships (GRAs); or, if their ILE is eligible, the NIH individual pre-doctoral awards (such as the F31 and the R36).

[The Mailman School of Public Health financial aid office](#)² is also available to assist students with financial preparation and maintains a website of [interschool and institutional fellowships](#)³ as well as [outside sources of funding](#)⁴. Appendix II lists a number of possible sources for scholarship funding. Applicants are strongly encouraged to proactively pursue funding alternatives, including federally funded dissertation/ILE grants or diversity grants if eligible.

A student may not be in arrears with any financial responsibilities to the University or there will be a hold on their subsequent registration and before undertaking the qualifying exam. All financial requirements must be discharged before conferral of the degree.

¹ <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/become-student/apply/tuition-fees/ms-doctoral-costs>

² <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/become-student/apply/financial-aid>

³ <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/become-student/apply/financial-aid/funding-options/scholarships-fellowships-and-grants>

⁴ <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/become-student/apply/financial-aid/funding-options/outside-sources-funding>

Section 3 Academic and Administrative Structures

3.1 Administrative Structure of the Department and the DrPH Committee

The Department of Epidemiology Director of Academic Programs serves as the main administrative contact for the program. Currently this is Liliane Zaretsky. The Director of Academic Programs supports the Program Director of the Department's DrPH Program. Dr. Leslie Davidson serves as the current director of the Epidemiology DrPH program and assumes day-to-day leadership over the DrPH program structure and implementation and assists in addressing student needs. Policies of the DrPH program are determined by the Department of Epidemiology DrPH Committee influenced by the Departmental Chair and Vice Chair for Education and the Mailman School of Public Health Doctoral Committee. Members of the DrPH Committee and the departmental leadership are listed on the inside cover of this handbook.

3.2 Academic Advisor and ILE Sponsor

Students are assigned an **Academic Advisor** upon entry into the program. The Academic Advisor serves as a guide to the student with regard to their academic program. Students and their advisors choose the frequency with which they meet but it is expected that they meet at least once a semester. The advisor all meets with the student to review the Annual Progress Report and their Individual Development Program (IDP) (see section 5).

The **Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) Sponsor** provides key subject-area and/or methodological guidance to students with regard to their ILE. The ILE Sponsor is usually identified during the second year of study. The appointment of an ILE Sponsor and the composition of the ILE committee is reviewed by DrPH Program Director to ensure it meets Department ILE protocol (see Section 4.9).

The roles of **Academic Advisor** and **Dissertation/ILE Sponsor** are distinct. However, there is no barrier to an Academic Advisor being chosen by the student as Dissertation/ILE Sponsor if the Advisor is willing and possesses relevant expertise. Additional information on the Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) process, including processes for establishing an ILE Committee, are in Section 4.7.

3.3 Membership in Departmental Units

DrPH students are welcomed at all departmental seminars. It is recommended that each DrPH student choose one of the nine Epidemiology Units to join and regularly attend their seminars and participate in other unit activities. This provides an academic home for the student and enhances potential for in depth engagement with faculty.

3.4 The MSPH Doctoral Committee

The MSPH Doctoral Committee for Policy and Programs contains representatives from each department that offers the DrPH and members from the Office of Student Affairs and the Assistant Dean for Educational Initiatives. The chair of this committee is appointed by the Dean of MSPH. There are two student representatives appointed by the Doctoral students – one who is a DrPH student and one who is a PhD student. This committee reviews and agrees applications put forward by each department for admission. This committee also develops and approves schoolwide policies regarding the DrPH and the PhD.

Section 4 DrPH Program requirements

4.1 DrPH CEPH Competencies and MSPH Epidemiology Competencies

The Council for Education in Public Health in 2016 established a set of competencies that must be met by every accredited program offering the DrPH degree. They allow schools and departments to add competencies specific to their program. The competencies can be met through coursework, applied practical experience, portfolio and exam preparation and the Integrative Learning Experience. What follows below are the 20 CEPH DrPH competencies and the 6 Epidemiology specific competencies. They are divided into five sections: Data and Analysis; Leadership, Management and Governance; Policy and Programs; Education and Workforce Development and the Epidemiology Competencies. The program requirements that follow the list of competencies are designed to deliver training in each of these and to build on the competencies that candidates bring with them into the program.

Data & Analysis

1. Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels
2. Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue
3. Explain the use and limitations of surveillance systems and national surveys in assessing, monitoring and evaluating policies and programs and to address a population's health

Leadership, Management & Governance

4. Propose strategies for health improvement and elimination of health inequities by organizing stakeholders, including researchers, practitioners, community leaders and other partners
5. Communicate public health science to diverse stakeholders, including individuals at all levels of health literacy, for purposes of influencing behavior and policies
6. Integrate knowledge, approaches, methods, values and potential contributions from multiple professions and systems in addressing public health problems
7. Create a strategic plan
8. Facilitate shared decision making through negotiation and consensus-building methods
9. Create organizational change strategies

10. Propose strategies to promote inclusion and equity within public health programs, policies and systems
11. Assess one's own strengths and weaknesses in leadership capacities including cultural proficiency
12. Propose human, fiscal and other resources to achieve a strategic goal
13. Cultivate new resources and revenue streams to achieve a strategic goal

Policy & Programs

14. Design a system-level intervention to address a public health issue
15. Integrate knowledge of cultural values and practices in the design of public health policies and programs
16. Integrate scientific information, legal and regulatory approaches, ethical frameworks and varied stakeholder interests in policy development and analysis
17. Propose inter-professional team approaches to improving public health

Education & Workforce Development

18. Assess an audience's knowledge and learning needs
19. Deliver training or educational experiences that promote learning in academic, organizational or community setting
20. Use best practice modalities in pedagogical practices

MSPH Epidemiological Competencies

21. Develop skills to evaluate epidemiologic research (from study design through field implementation to analysis and interpretation)
22. Understand the use of contemporary analytic methods to address issue such as validity, confounding, effect measure modification and mediation
23. Conduct and interpret the synthesis of evidence-based knowledge including systematic reviews and meta-analyses
24. Demonstrate knowledge of data resources essential to epidemiology - their advantages & limitations: vital statistics, national and international population-based surveys, census data, public use databases
25. Understand the application of screening methods as a component of prevention and intervention in epidemiology and public health
26. **There is a draft of a competency with regard to Epidemics and Pandemics in review by the committee and it will be added when approved:**

4.2 Foundational Prerequisites for students without an MPH:

Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, in line with the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH), requires entering DrPH students to have completed, or to complete, coursework covering the five core areas of public health knowledge. These foundational courses include Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Environmental Health Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Health Policy and Management. For students entering the doctoral program without an MPH or completion of these courses through a CEPH-accredited program, options to meet these requirements are detailed below.

4.2.1 Fulfilling foundational pre-requisites before matriculation

Foundational course requirements may be satisfied prior to matriculation through one of many CEPH-accredited programs at other institutions. This option may be a cost-effective and flexible way to complete individual courses and can potentially be done through intensive sessions or online. Students who consider that prior coursework may potentially satisfy one or more of the five foundational courses required should contact the Epidemiology Director of Academic Programs and provide 1) the name of the course; 2) the institution at which the course was taken; 3) a copy of the syllabus; and 4) documentation of the final grade received. This documentation may also need to be sent to, and evaluated by, faculty in other departments within the Mailman School of Public Health on a per-case basis. This will enable adjudication of potential substitution. Courses in other departments within the Mailman School of Public Health may also be considered for substitution, using the same process.

4.2.2 Fulfilling foundational pre-requisites after matriculation - Components of the MPH Core Curriculum

In order to fulfill prerequisites for students who matriculate without an MPH, students may enroll in one or more studios within the Columbia MPH Core. Studios meet for various lengths of time in the fall semester. Some are thirteen weeks in length and others eight. All Core lectures are recorded and available for review as a supplement to lectures. Contact the Epidemiology Director of Academic Programs and the Office of Educational Programs (msph-oep@cumc.columbia.edu) for more detailed information on the days of classes for various MPH Core studios.

4.3 Mailman School of Public Health Continuous Registration Policy

4.3.1 The Continuous Registration Policy

DrPH students must complete 36 credits of coursework and must be continuously registered until the semester in which they are depositing their ILE. After students complete the required 36 credits of coursework, all students, must continue to register every semester (except summer) for doctoral research registration (zero credit course to maintain status). Further information on the Mailman School's continuous registration policy is described below and can be found in the Mailman School Handbook⁵. During the COVID 19 pandemic a trimester system will temporarily be instituted.

Doctoral education is an investment in time and money for students, for the academic departments, and for the Mailman School. This investment is based on a mutual contract between the student and the department that includes providing students with opportunities to explore research interests, opportunities to develop academic advising and mentoring relationships, and access to other academic resources to carry out their academic goals. Because of this, it is important to ensure that each student's progress toward completion of his/her degree is being made at the appropriate pace expected of doctoral students. In support of this goal, the Mailman School has developed a policy of continuous enrollment for its DrPH students.

⁵ <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/people/current-students/academics/student-handbooks>

The continuous enrollment policy begins with the semester in which the student first enrolls in the DrPH program and continues through the semester the ILE is defended. Students who register for additional classes after the first three years of tuition support must pay the current Mailman School tuition. After completion of required academic coursework, in order to be continuously enrolled, DrPH students must register for one of the following in all spring and fall semesters:

Doctoral Research Registration

- RSRH P0001 - charged one credit of tuition - full time status.
- RSRH P0003 - must have department approval - charged one credit of tuition - part time status.

4.3.2 Waivers to the Continuous Registration Policy and Requests for a Leave of Absence

Waivers to the continuous registration requirement will be rare and considered on a case by case basis. A request for such a waiver should begin through a petition for a leave of absence to the student's academic department with a recommendation from the department made to the Mailman School's Office of Student Affairs. Reasons for requesting a waiver would include maternity/paternity leave, serious personal illness, or other serious life events. Such a petition should include the reason for requesting the waiver and a proposed plan for completing the remaining DrPH degree requirements. For all students, after two years' leave of absence, the student must reapply to the Mailman School. The policy is available at:

<https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/academics/policy-and-procedures>.

4.3.3 Failure to register

If any DrPH candidate fails to register for at least one continuous point of credit during a particular fall or spring semester without having been granted a waiver or leave, then the Office of Student Affairs will notify the student and the student's department at the start of that semester.

4.4 Requirements for the Satisfactory Completion of the Epidemiology DrPH Program

Consistent with CEPH guidelines, for award of the DrPH, students are required to complete all required courses with a combined average GRA of B+, including completion of a minimum of 36 credits. Students must achieve a B or above on each individual required course. Students must also successfully complete a mentored practicum project, complete the competency-based portfolio, pass the oral qualifying examination and successfully complete and defend an integrative learning experience via a substantive project or a dissertation based on empirical research.

4.4.1 The Epidemiology DrPH Program overview

The DrPH program at the Mailman School contains a cross departmental core program undertaken by DrPH students in all departments (7.5 credits) consisting of coursework in Case studies of Public Health Leadership, a course in Teaching and Communication in Public Health, and Courses in Management and Organizational Behavior and one in Strategic Management. There are specific course requirements specific to Epidemiology that include four semesters of a monthly seminar, courses in Public Health surveillance,

advanced regression analysis and critical thinking in Epidemiology, crafting publications and dissemination of knowledge. Several of these courses are shared seminars with the PhD students - The student may choose nine credits from a list of courses (selectives) from a wide menu matching DrPH competencies. A student may, if appropriate, suggest an alternative course if it advances their mastery of competencies and fulfills a gap in their skillset. There are also opportunities for electives (four credits, or more if the student wishes). Students may take more than 36 credits within the program but are required to complete 36 in order to be awarded the degree. The credits for the Teaching and Communication course are under review and as a result Table 4.4.1 currently shows 36.5 credits as the requirement. This will be resolved in the coming months.

As the student completes the coursework, they must plan and complete a mentored Advanced Practical Experience addressing an important Public Health question or development of Public Health skills. The student completes a practicum report and presents it at the DrPH seminar for assessment by their peers (see the protocol for the Advanced Practical Experience in section 4.5.1).

As they go through the program the student compiles a portfolio containing evidence of their mastery of each competency, documenting what was achieved and how it was assessed. The DrPH committee assesses the portfolio and if deemed adequate to fulfill the competencies, the student may move forward to undertake the oral qualifying exam. The portfolio is also used in crafting questions for the oral qualifying exam. This exam is built around both the student's specific expertise and around broad and essential Public Health skills (see section 4.5).

After passing the oral qualifying exam, the student undertakes the Integrated Learning Experience or ILE. This summative project may take many forms but must be relevant to an important public health issue. The student is mentored by an epidemiologist sponsor within the Department of Epidemiology assisted by a committee of four other faculty or public health professionals. The committee provides mentorship and assesses the final product. It must include three epidemiologists, a representative from another relevant public health discipline and a practicing public health professional. The student develops aims, creates and defends a proposal, implements the project, drafts a written report and a reflection on the process and defends it to their committee. This is the final step before conferral of the degree. Section 4.7 provides more detail on the project possibilities and the process.

4.4.1 Summary Table of the Epidemiology DrPH Program Requirements (8-10-2020)

Course listing	DrPH Core Course Requirements	Credits	Selective credits
P9070 Fall Yr1	Leadership in Public Health 1	1.5	
P9071 Fall Yr 2	Leadership in Public Health 2	1.5	
P9060 Spring	Essentials of Teaching and Communication in Public Health	1.5	
P9040 Spring	Seminar in Management and Organizational Behavior	1.5	
P9050 Spring	Seminar in Strategic Management	1.5	
DrPH Epidemiology Course Requirements			
P9490 Fall / Spring P8430 Fall	DrPH Monthly Seminar (4 semesters at 0.5 credit each) Surveillance (Online)	2 3	
P9410 Fall	Pathophysiology	3	
P9400 Spring	Epidemiology IV Critical Thinking	3	
P8110 Spring	Regression Analysis 2	3	
P9494 Spring	Publications	3	
DrPH Epidemiology Selectives - choose 9 credits from courses below *		9	
P8499 Fall	Epidemiology III (required only if student has not taken it)		3
P9485 Fall	Epidemiology V Causal thinking		3
P9487 Spring	Epidemiology VI Advanced Methods in Epi		3
P9405 Fall	History of Epidemiology		3
P8499	Field Methods in Epidemiology		3
P6503	Health Economics		3
P8601/P8772	Program Planning/Designing		3
P8640/P8705	Program Evaluation		3
P8792	Dissemination and Implementation Science		3
P8450	Clinical Epidemiology		3
DrPH Epidemiology Electives (more credits possible if student wishes)		3	
Non Course Requirements			
Completion of Practicum and Practicum Report - Linked to DrPH seminars			
Completion of at least one Teaching Assistant role			
Completion of the Portfolio			
Qualifying Oral Exam in order to continue to ILE			
Integrative Learning Experience			
Total	36 credits required to complete the degree (See text in 4.4.1 for explanation of 36.5)	36.5	

4.4.2 The DrPH Core Curriculum

The DrPH Core curriculum is designed to provide a base of knowledge and skills that students will use as a foundation for their departmental-specific coursework and other degree requirements. The Core curriculum comprises five courses. These courses cover the following competency areas 1) Policy & Programs 2) Leadership, Management & Governance, and 3) Education & Workforce Development. The required core courses are listed in the Table in Section 4.4.1 and course descriptions can be found at <https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/academics/course-directory>. The courses in the Core Curriculum are graded Pass/Fail though the criteria for a passing grade in a doctoral level course is equivalent to a grade of B or above.

- **First Fall Semester**
 - PUBH P9070: Case Studies in Public Health Practice and Leadership – Part I
- **First Spring Semester:**
 - PUBH P9040: Seminar in Managerial and Organizational Behavior
 - PUBH P9050: Seminar in Strategic Management
 - PUBH P9060: Essentials for Teaching and Communication (option to take Second Spring Semester)
- **Second Fall Semester:**
 - PUBH P9071: Case Studies in Public Health Practice and Leadership Part II

Case Studies in Public Health Practice and Leadership Part I sets the stage for your role as a public health practitioner at an advanced level. The course presents foundational theoretical lenses that can help students (and future public health professionals) to understand, accommodate, and shift these risks, interests, and values. Students will apply these lenses to case studies of actual events that exemplify the complex facets of public health practice. Moving from the practice of public health through a program and stakeholder lens to the organizational level, the seminars in *Managerial and Organizational Behavior* and *Strategic Management* focus attention on both micro and macro levels of leading innovative health systems. Students will apply their own personal work experience and challenges to course assignments and discussions. *Case Studies in Public Health Practice Part II* then asks students to build on this content by thinking broadly about public health systems, interventions, and how to build consensus around policies and interventions. Lastly, throughout a public health career, the ability to educate and communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences and stakeholders is essential for public health professionals. *The Essentials of Teaching & Communication* course is designed to build capacity to communicate with distinct constituencies, taking into account individual needs, goals, and priorities.

4.4.3 Courses Required by the Department of Epidemiology

The courses required for the DrPH Program in Epidemiology are listed in Table 4.4.1 in Section 4.4.1 and descriptions can be found at <https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/academics/course-directory>

4.4.4 Menu of Selective Courses Required by the Department of Epidemiology

Students should choose 9 credits of courses in the list of selective courses in the Table in Section 4.4.1 and descriptions can be found at

<https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/academics/course-directory>.

They should consider which courses will enable them to achieve the competencies and to further their own career interests. This list is not exhaustive, and students may propose an alternative course provided they make an effective case that it addresses a competency not otherwise met. If a student has not taken the equivalent of Epi III, they must include Epi three in their first year before taking Epi IV, Critical Thinking. To opt to take Epi V or Epi VI, the student must have achieved a B or above in Epi IV.

4.4.5 Tutorials

After discussion with their academic advisor, students may register for a tutorial with a member of the faculty to fulfill up to three credits of their required coursework. Based on agreement between the student, their Academic Advisor and the faculty member, a plan will be agreed for the specified tutorial. Such tutorials may be in residence or abroad, and will normally involve a structured program of communication, supervised reading and/or practical fieldwork and a writing assignment. Unless it is an elective, it should address at least one of the CEPH or Epidemiology Competencies.

4.4.6 Cross Registration Policies

Candidates interested in cross-registration at another Columbia University school need two types of permission. The advisor should first confirm approval to apply a course from another school to their degree program. Then, they must obtain permission from the school that offers the course in order to secure a space in the course. The process of obtaining permission to enroll in a course as a cross-registrant is overseen by the other school (not the Mailman School). The other school may provide a physical form that tracks permission granted either by the instructor or the student affairs office at that school, or both. The candidate must contact the Director of Academic Programs as well as the other school about the cross-registration process and how to obtain permission to enroll in a course.

Additional information on registration policies and procedures may be found in the [Mailman School of Public Health Doctoral Student Handbook](#)⁶. In instances where content from the Mailman School of Public Health Doctoral Student Handbook differs from the content of this departmental handbook, information found in the most recent Epidemiology DrPH Handbook takes precedence.

4.4.7 Obtaining waivers for required courses

Currently, doctoral students who believe they have already passed an equivalent doctoral level courses (with a grade of B+ or higher) at other institution may apply for a waiver for required courses. Applications should be addressed to the Director of the DrPH Program. These should include a clear rationale, a course syllabus, and transcript from the institution where the course was taken.

⁶ <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/people/current-students/academics/student-handbooks>

To apply for a waiver from the requirement for the Publications course, P9494, a student needs to demonstrate all of the following:

1. At least two epidemiology-focused articles first-authored by the student and published (or accepted) in a quality scientific journal
2. At least one first or presenting author conference poster or slides from an oral presentation at a scientific meeting
3. Oral presentation experience, which may include scientific and/or work-related presentations
4. Formal review of at least one manuscript submitted to an epidemiology-focused journals or planned mentored experience (see #5)
5. The student needs agreement from a departmental faculty member that s/he will be working on manuscript writing at least over the course of the semester, and, if the student has not completed a formal review of a submitted manuscript that the advisor will ensure the student completes this requirement.

4.4.8 Requesting exemptions for other Program Requirements

Though such exemptions are unlikely to be awarded, students seeking an exemption from any other program requirement should send an email to the Director of Doctoral Programs explaining the request and the logic behind the request for exemption. These will be reviewed by the full DrPH Committee and possibly by the MSPH Doctoral Committee.

4.4.9 Grandfathering students when requirements change

In general, the applicability of program changes depends on the stage within the program that the student has reached. The procedures and requirements before taking the qualifying exam described in these guidelines apply to all doctoral students entering in 2019 and later. Students who have undertaken the qualifying examination are not affected by subsequent changes in course requirements or the examination protocol. Those who have successfully defended their ILE proposal similarly are not affected by changes in requirements pertaining to coursework, qualifying exam or the ILE proposal defense. Changes in ILE format or content will be in effect for students who have not yet defended their proposal. Where a change in program requirements has an impact on students currently undertaking program elements other than as noted here, affected students will be notified by email. Students who have questions about whether requirements apply should talk with the Director of the DrPH Program and those wishing to seek an exemption should send a letter by e-mail to the Director of Doctoral Programs outlining the request and offering a cogent justification.

4.5. Advanced Practical Experience MSPH Overview

Regardless of the amount or level of prior experience, all DrPH students are required to complete an advanced applied practice experience. Students are responsible for completing at least one project deliverable that advances their expertise and contributes to the activities of a host organization.

The work product may be a single project or a set of related projects that demonstrate a depth of competence. The deliverable must contain a reflective component that includes the student's expression of personal and/or professional reactions to the applied practice experience. This may take the form of a journal or other written product, a professional portfolio, or another deliverable that serves to assess students' fulfillment of departmental and school competencies.

The Applied Practice Experience must meet a minimum of five CEPH and/or departmental competencies. Competencies for the applied practical experience must be agreed upon by the advisor and site supervisor. Students must submit an approved Scope of Work (SOW) to the MSPH Office of Field Practice.

4.5.1 Department of Epidemiology Protocol: Advanced Practical Experience (as of 8.31.2020)

a. Requirement: The DrPH in Epidemiology requires the completion of a mentored applied practical experience (APE), also called the practicum. The project must be "meaningful for an organization and to advanced public health practice" (CEPH criteria D6). The practicum may be undertaken at any point during or after completing the program coursework but must be successfully submitted and assessed before completion and review of the portfolio and before the candidate may request scheduling of the qualifying exam.

b. Mentors: Mentors will include a public health professional appropriate to the practicum project goals and approaches. In general, there should be a mentor external to MSPH. If appropriate to the specific project and to the practicum goals, there may be an internal mentor since at times it would be useful to include as a mentor, a member of the Columbia full time or adjunct faculty. with experience as a public health practitioner or as a clinical epidemiologist. Additional potential mentors are those who can bring specialist expertise to the area addressed by the practicum project or colleagues who will utilize the practicum product. The mentor should not be the supervisor of a candidate at his/her job. A *primary* mentor should be identified if there is more than one mentor on the APE project.

d. Topics: There is a wide range of possible practicum projects. A DrPH practicum might include, but is not limited to, the following activities:

- interpreting epidemiology surveillance data for a non-profit or government entity;
- analyzing data from a national or local health survey;
- creating a report (paper/web-based) for the public evidence addressing an important PH issue;
- developing evidence-based practice guidelines for a professional organization;
- preparing a public health policy statement utilizing epidemiologic evidence;
- designing a community program;
- creating an action plan to achieve a public health goal;
- drafting a plan for PH training component such as designing a syllabus or developing a teaching case; crafting a public health blog on an aspect of public health practice.

e. *Process*: Each candidate will identify one or more mentors and an idea for a project. The Program Director may assist the candidate to identify a partner organization and appropriate mentor(s). The student will develop a one to two page outline for the practicum project that will serve as a basis for discussion with the Director of the DrPH Program and the mentor(s), eventually leading to development of a detailed proposal (Statement of Work or SOW) which is filed with the MSPH Office of Field Practice (OFP). This office maintains MSPH practicum records. The Director and the primary mentor must approve the SOW. After completion of the practicum, the candidate submits to the Director and mentor(s) a final report which describes the processes undertaken and challenges encountered. It should include any tangible products, such as a survey questionnaire, planning documents, interviews, policy guidelines, etc. It should identify the five specific competencies the practicum aims to fulfill. The final report will be included in the candidate's portfolio, where its contribution to competencies will be described. The candidate will also submit a separate reflective report. The candidate presents their project at a DrPH seminar where the students will assess it (see below). Questions on the approach should be addressed to the Director of the DrPH Program. Questions on submitting the SOW should be addressed to the OFP (Office of Field Practice).

f. Group practica are possible, but each candidate must be able to discuss both their joint plan and their own distinct contribution to the project. Each individual must submit a final report on their actual role in producing the completed practicum project and each must present their practicum at a DrPH seminar. A previous example was the creation of a public health blog in Spanish – Salud Publica Global undertaken by three DrPH candidates.

g. *The Practicum Report*: Any practicum project outputs should be submitted accompanied by a brief written report on the process undertaken, the outcome of the project and the challenges addressed. This report should include a description of growth towards mastery of the specific DrPH competencies identified in the proposal/SOW (up to 10 pages double spaced, font 12, margins 1 inch).

The practicum report should name the mentor(s), review the development of the project, the manner in which it contributes to the development of the student's planned or possible career trajectory, make clear that it is distinct from any of the student's employment duties and outline how the project contributed to deepening exposure to, or mastery of, specific competencies and skills required by the Epidemiology Department (which incorporates those of CEPH for the Doctor of Public Health Degree). The DrPH candidate must also include an estimate of the public health impact of the practicum. The student should append to the report any products of the project (survey, project planning, interviews, policy guidelines etc.). The project will be presented at a DrPH seminar in the semester following completion.

Assessment: The project will be graded pass/fail and will be formally assessed by the practicum mentor(s) using a rubric developed for this purpose, and then by the students in the DrPH seminar.

h. *Deliverables*:

- Initial practicum proposal, 1-2 pages
- SOW, approved by Director and primary practicum mentor

- The practicum project product(s) – submission of a summary linked as far as possible to any practicum outputs
- The practicum reflective report, up to 10 pages, including a summary of the process, any challenges encountered, solutions and noting growth in mastery of the competencies
- Presentation of the project at a DrPH seminar the semester following completion

4.6. Teaching Experience

Besides participating in the class on P9060, Essentials of Teaching and Communication in Public Health, DrPH students must serve at least once as a TA in at least one Epidemiology course prior to taking the qualifying exam. This may be taken concurrently with or after completion of P9060.

4.7. DrPH Portfolio – Department of Epidemiology

The first year DrPH student will begin to develop a portfolio to document progress and achievements throughout the degree program.

The Portfolio is a structured, personalized electronic record that the student maintains and updates throughout the program. It serves both as an administrative tool to manage and organize work, and an assessment tool to track progress towards achieving program requirements and, more specifically, meeting the degree competencies. Its catalog of key skills and accomplishments during the program will facilitate faculty guidance and serve as a medium for the student's reflection on personal growth and progress.

The portfolio serves as both a showcase for the student's work and skills, and an illustration of critical thinking. As the student nears the end of the DrPH program, it can also become a resource for career development and job placement. More immediately, it is a benchmark that provides evidence of adequate preparation for the qualifying exam and the Integrative Learning Experience. The portfolio is used as the foundation for several questions in the qualifying exam focused on applying competencies to the student's areas of expertise.

The format of the Portfolio is flexible and tailored to the individual student's needs but is organized according to the twenty CEPH competencies and five Epidemiological competencies. Each competency will be illustrated by one or more "demonstrations" of how it has been met, or what additional steps or skills are needed to arrive at this goal. Each competency will include a description of how the "demonstration" was assessed (a course grade, a research project whose completion required evidence of the competency, an employment product adopted). An entry may consist of listings of courses taken, projects completed or skills developed augmented by inclusion of specific assessment materials such as papers, presentations, and projects, often included as hyperlinks to electronic documents such as graphic, audio, and video files, or published journal articles. It may also document courses that the student has taught or assisted teaching which contribute to specific competency objectives. The student is encouraged to annotate entries with reflections on how the listed items specifically contributed to his/her academic and professional growth.

4.8. The Epidemiology DrPH Oral Qualifying Exam

4.8.1 Purpose and Rationale. The revised Epidemiology DrPH degree curriculum at Mailman differs from the PhD degree program in that it is grounded in a set of Competencies established by the Council on Public Health Education and expanded with five competencies specific to Epidemiology. We have instituted a Qualifying Oral Exam in place of the Epidemiology Methods Exam and Foundation Essay given to students matriculating before the new DrPH program and the 2016 CEPH competencies. The goal of this exam is to assess whether the student has met the DrPH competencies. A successful outcome in the Oral Exam qualifies the DrPH student to advance to the Integrated Learning Experience, which is the final phase of the degree process. *Students who who undertake the exam before February of 2021 will be examined using this exam protocol. The protocol will be evaluated by the beginning of 2021 and any changes will be incorporated into the handbook.*

- a. **Objective.** The specific purpose of the Oral Exam is to satisfy the DrPH program leadership in the Department and the School that the candidate has met all of the academic requirements and competencies that apply to the DrPH degree, and that the accomplishments and progress documented in the candidate's portfolio and other records are consistent with the candidate's career development and post-graduation goals, which are themselves founded on widely accepted public health vision, values and approaches.
- b. **Eligibility.** A DrPH candidate may apply to schedule an Oral Exam upon successful completion of all course and credit requirements (available before their completed their coursework, submitted Practicum presented in the DrPH seminar, and the Portfolio containing description of how they met the competencies including the extent which these were assessment. The application should be made in writing by email to the Chair of the DrPH Committee with a copy to the Director of Academic Programs. They will review the student's record to confirm whether the student has met criteria to take the Exam.
- c. **Examiners.** The Oral Exam will be conducted by a committee of four examiners, consisting of a member of the DrPHC, the candidate's faculty advisor, and two additional knowledgeable public health professionals, at least one of whom is in the Department of Epidemiology at Mailman). The DrPHC chair will approve the committee. At least one member must be active in or knowledgeable about one or more areas related to the student's field or expertise in public health practice. In order to plan an appropriate exam, the committee members will be given access to the student's Portfolio at least four weeks in advance of the Exam so that they may become familiar with the student's career objectives, academic record, and accomplishments in the DrPH program and their work experiences.
- d. **Review of Requirements:** Prior to the Exam the committee members will review the academic requirements for the DrPH degree including the practicum, the student's portfolio

and the exam protocol. They should also familiarize themselves with the twenty CEPH competencies associated with the DrPH degree, including the five competencies focused on Epidemiology.

- e. *Exam Structure:* Committee members will focus questions elements consistent with the four content headings of the CEPH competencies and any of the five Epidemiology competencies. Emphasis will be given to leadership and management skills, application of epidemiological principles and methods, public health values including inclusion and equity, communication, and education. There will be eight questions, two proposed by each examiner. Four questions will be grounded in areas of the student's expertise, including their practicum experience and may also derive from elements described in the portfolio. Two questions will address a current important public health issue (hot topics) and two questions will be derived from articles published in two previous issues of the AJPH. The issues will be chosen well in advance of the date of the exam. The student will be informed of the hot topic(s) one week before the exam and provided with a brief reading lists relating to the topic(s).

Each question may be preceded by a paragraph setting the context for the question, followed by the question. To facilitate the assessment of criteria for passing, the examiners will have created an assessment rubric containing aspects of a good answer. The examiners will fill this out during the exam and add relevant notes. Examiners will also have identified for faculty use in assessment several DrPH competencies called for in answering the question appropriately.

- f. *Exam Procedure:* For these students who entered prior to the completion of the new DrPH program who did not participate in the fully developed new DrPH program, the candidate will be told the hot topic(s) a week before the exam. On the day of the exam, one hour before the exam, the candidate will be given:
- a copy of the exam,
 - a copy of each of the two AJPH articles chosen for the exam questions and
 - a copy of the DrPH competencies.

The candidate may bring any printed or electronic materials thought to be potentially relevant or useful. The only persons present at the exam besides the candidate will be the four-person exam committee. The exam itself will take no longer than 2 hours.

Before the Exam begins the candidate will be advised of the procedure. The student may have 1-2 minutes at the start for any comments. Then each examiner in turn will ask their questions. Students may request clarification and examiners may add probes. After the questions have been answered, the candidate will have five minutes at the end for any follow-up points they wish to add.

At the close of the Exam the candidate will be asked to leave the room. The committee will discuss the candidate's performance and conclude by voting on whether the student merits a

grade of pass, conditional pass or fail. The student will return to the room and the committee will communicate the exam result. The committee will send written notification of the results of the vote to the appropriate Director of Academic Programs and the appropriate MSPH administrators.

Pass: Three votes for pass from those of the four committee will be required to award a passing grade.

Conditional pass: Should the Committee deem that a student was a near pass but several questions are not appropriately addressed, the student will be given feedback and be given a written exercise to complete within a month to address these. This will be graded by the exam committee or a subset thereof and the student will either pass (with three out of four votes for pass) or fail.

Fail: In the case of a failing grade, the student will be given summary feedback and a plan made for a member of the committee to support the student as he/she addresses the deficiencies identified through the exam process. Between two and six months later, the Chair of the DrPHC will schedule a re-take of the Exam. A second failure will result in termination of the candidate's degree eligibility. In the event of a second failure, the candidate may appeal to the Vice Chair for Education and Chair of the Department, and, failing a positive response, to the Dean of the Mailman School of Public Health, who may at their discretion grant another opportunity. Any re-take of the Oral Exam must include an additional Mailman faculty member, to be appointed by the Chair of the Epidemiology DrPH Committee.

g. Preparation:

- Students will have access to copies of prior exams.
- Candidates should review their portfolio carefully with particular emphasis on the competencies.
- As with all interviews and exams, prior practice with mentors and colleagues is helpful.
- They should carefully read the papers on the reading list of the "hot topic"
- They should give themselves time to read through the two named AJPH issues assigned for the exam. It is helpful to consider potential competency-based questions arising from the papers in the AJPH issues.
- A practice exam can be scheduled with a member of the DrPH subcommittee who is not an examiner.

h. Sample questions: Sample questions typical of what may be expected in all elements of the Qualifying Exam are made available to students both while they are undertaking the DrPH seminar and while they are preparing for the exam.

4.9. The Integrated Learning Experience

Following completion of all required coursework, students begin to define and shape an Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) that is the culminating stage of the DrPH program. Addressing an important public health issue, through the design and/or analysis of programs, policies and/or systems or a more traditional dissertation, the student must include a segment on the implications of their work for improving the health of the public. All projects must address at least three of the CEPH competencies. In addition, the ILE should demonstrate synthesis of foundational and concentration-specific competencies. There are differences by

Department in the ILE protocols, but all departments offer students several options for the ILE. For instance, students may undertake empirical research such as a more traditional doctoral dissertation, or the development or evaluation of an intervention, policy, or framework for use by public health practitioners. All ILE must be assessed by departmental faculty though assessors external to the department may be used as per the departmental protocols. To ensure CEIPH and Departmental competencies are met, assessment will be undertaken and documented using a clearly defined rubric.

4.9.1 The Integrated Learning Experience in Epidemiology

All DrPH students matriculating from 2018 onwards must fulfill the requirements for the new DrPH Professional Degree at Columbia. These include an Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) as the culminating requirement for the DrPH degree. A description of the ILE based on the CEPH 2016 criteria for the DrPH in Epidemiology is outlined below. DrPH students matriculating before 2018 may undertake the ILE in place of the Doctoral Dissertation described in the 2017 Guidelines if this is supported by their sponsor and the Director of the DrPH Program.

Elements of the DrPH Integrative Learning Experience in Epidemiology

- a. ***Composition of ILE committee:*** the student will select a primary mentor within the Department of Epidemiology who will, in consultation with the student, establish an interdisciplinary committee of five members. The composition of the committee should reflect the needed expertise to support the student in accomplishing the ILE goals. In addition to the mentor, there must be three epidemiologist members regardless of whether or not they are faculty in the MSPH Epidemiology department. A fourth member must be drawn from a discipline outside of epidemiology. At least one member, who could be one of the required three epidemiologists, must be a public health specialist whose primary work is outside of a university setting. For example, the committee could be three university-based epidemiologists, a sociologist or statistician and a non-public health professional from another discipline. Alternatively, the committee could be two academic epidemiologists, a public health professional who is an epidemiologist, a statistician and a demographer. The list of committee members should be submitted to the Departmental DrPH subcommittee for approval.
- b. ***Role of mentor and committee:*** The mentor will work closely with the student as he or she develops the goals and proposal for the ILE. The ILE committee will provide advice and support as the student develops and implements the plan for the ILE. The committee will also assess the ILE report and any products arising from the ILE. It will conduct both the defense of the ILE proposal and the final ILE defense leading to the conferral of the DrPH. The steps involved are outlined below in paragraphs C through E.
- c. ***Establishing goals for the ILE:*** the student will identify an important domestic or global public health challenge which will be the focus of the ILE, and at least two of the CEPH competencies as well as at least one of the Epidemiology competencies that will be addressed through undertaking the ILE. The student will review epidemiological and other evidence, consult with stakeholders, and decide on a specific question or

questions of public health significance related to this challenge to address through the specific aims of the ILE. The aims should be relevant to the student's planned career trajectory. Following approval by the student's mentor, the aims and a paragraph on the public health significance should be submitted to the ILE Committee and the Departmental DrPH subcommittee for approval.

- d. *Developing and defending an ILE proposal:* the student will develop a proposal of between 1500 and 3000 words (exclusive of tables, figures and references) that describes a substantive project which may be fulfilled through a range of options using epidemiological methods. Examples include using evidence to design an intervention, evaluating an intervention, and preparing an empirical observational paper that could for example be combined with a systematic review expanding understanding of the chosen public health challenge or putative intervention. The committee must review and provide feedback on the proposal and agree that it is ready to be defended. The defense will be a closed session during which the student will present the proposal to the committee and respond to questions from the committee. The committee must approve the proposal before the student proceeds with the ILE project.
- e. *Implementing and reporting on the ILE project:* the student will undertake and complete the project, interpret the findings and prepare a written summary report.
 - a. The report should be between 6,000 and 12,000 words (exclusive of tables, figures and references). It should summarize relevant background information, the aims, the design of the project, any data or measures used, the analytic approach, statistical results and description of any products arising from the project (such as a new instrument, public health program, intervention), and an interpretation of the results followed by conclusions drawn from the findings. Extensive descriptive or analytic materials and other ILE products may be included as appendices.
 - b. The report should include a section on a strategy to move forward to act on or implement the findings of the project, for instance a dissemination plan or strategy for change.
 - c. The student will submit the draft report for review by the committee and make any requested changes.
 - d. Defending the ILE: The student will present a public seminar on the findings of the ILE and then undertake a private defense before the members of the committee.
- f. *Reflection on the ILE:* In addition to the report on the ILE project, the student will submit to the committee a 1000-1500 word reflection on the process of planning and completing the ILE in Epidemiology. This should incorporate 1) a review of how skills reflecting the identified competencies were advanced through the process, 2) an evaluation of the strengths and limitations of the ILE project, 3) the role of stakeholders in developing and implementing the project, and 4) contributions to the success of the project of an interdisciplinary approach.

- g. *Timeline:* The initial proposal should be submitted within six months of passing the qualifying exam. For students passing the qualifying exam before December of 2019, the proposal should be submitted within six months of receiving the updated ILE Protocol. The final project and the related report, including any manuscripts or other products generated during the project, should be submitted for defense within 24 months of approval to start the ILE. The time from matriculation to degree will thus typically be four to five years for full-time students and may be longer for part-time students.

Section 5 The Honor Code, Mentoring, Moving Forward, Satisfactory Progress

5.1 Academic honesty the honor code and expectations for conduct

All students enrolled at Columbia are expected to adhere to the required standards for academic and scientific integrity expectations and policies for conduct. The Mailman School Honor Code of Academic Integrity can be found at file:///C:/Users/lld1/Downloads/form_academic_integrity_at_the_mailman_school_of_public_health.pdf. Suspected breaches of the honor code must be reported to the Office of Student Services who will follow up and investigate as per the MSPH protocol.

The University policy on Gender based misconduct updated in August 2020 can be found at <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/studentconduct/documents/GBMITIXPoliciesAndProceduresforStudents.pdf>

5.2 Program Schedule and Timeline

The DrPH in Epidemiology is structured to be possible to complete over a period of three to four years, with four consecutive semesters of coursework, a practicum, qualifying exam, and portfolio submission followed by 12-18 months to complete the ILE. Students must complete the degree within seven years.

5.3 Criteria to remain in good standing in the program

In order to remain in good standing in the program, students must:

- Meet the MSPH continuous registration policy
- Pass all *required and selective* courses with a B or above.
- For *required* courses only, students must in addition maintain an overall grade point average of B+ or above. Therefore, if a student receives a B in one course, they will need an A- in another to maintain a B+ average in required courses.
- Establish that they have made progress in the annual report or provide an explanation of extenuating circumstances

5.4 Annual Review of Progress

The University, MSPH and the Epidemiology Department require that the student create a written annual progress report including a summary of progress towards meeting the competencies. The purpose of this report is to monitor student progress, trouble-shoot potential problems, provide support and allow for student input. All DrPH students and their academic advisors are asked to review their progress against the DrPH program requirements and competencies. The student should complete an Annual Progress Report and submit an updated CV. Alongside a summary of their progress towards mastery of the competencies. The report should include a thoughtful evaluation of the progress made in the previous year, including a discussion of any barriers faced. A plan for the coming year should be included with measurable and specific milestones. The completed forms will be reviewed and included in students' records maintained by the department.

Students are required to complete the review, discuss it with the advisor or sponsor and submit it to the Director of Doctoral Programs. A student who fails to submit this within the specified timeframe is not in good standing in the university and will not be allowed to register for the following semester. The advisor provides verbal and written feedback after the discussion and the student submits signed copies of the report, an updated CV to the Director of the DrPH and the Director of Academic programs. Initial progress towards meeting the competencies may form the initial structure for the Portfolio.

The Director of the DrPH Program reviews these reports and students' progress throughout their training, including annual reviews of transcripts, performance on qualifying examinations, and progress on completing the APE and the ILE. In the event of questions or problems, students are asked to meet with a member of the Doctoral Committee and/or other appropriate faculty (e.g., their academic advisor, ILE sponsor) to discuss progress and formulate a plan for moving forward.

5.5 Satisfactory progress

The satisfactory progress of doctoral students is assessed annually on the basis of academic performance, including the timely completion of the Advance Practical Experience, the qualifying exam and Integrated Learning Experience and satisfactory performance in any required teaching or other requirement.

5.6 Failure to make satisfactory progress

A student who fails to maintain satisfactory progress will be alerted to their deficiencies, advised of the means to remedy them, and told the consequences of his or her failure to do so. This may include academic probation. Academic probation is set by the Office of Student Affairs in collaboration with the Epidemiology DrPH Committee. The student is informed that they are on probation and notified of any conditions set. A student who fails to maintain satisfactory progress after such a probationary period will have his or her candidacy terminated.

In cases of egregious failure to achieve progress, a breach of the honor code or other serious misconduct, a student may be dismissed from the degree program without a probationary period.

5.7 Allowable Time for Completion of All Degree Requirements

Students who enter the DrPH program after 2020 are allowed up to 14 semesters of continuous registration to satisfy all requirements for the doctoral degree. Students who do not complete all requirements for the doctoral degree by the end of that time will no longer be considered doctoral degree candidates and will be notified accordingly in writing. To request an extension of one or two semesters to the time limit, a student must submit their most recent progress report and indicate all the steps they will take, with a timetable and specific milestones, in order to complete the ILE and defend it by the end of the extension. A sponsor's letter of support is required and should indicate support of the student's written plans and timetable and demonstrate that ongoing progress is being made. The request will be reviewed by the Director of the DrPH Programs on behalf of the DrPH committee and if appropriate, the Vice Chair for Education. If approved, the student must have successfully defended the ILE by the end of the second semester extension or no longer be a degree candidate at Columbia.

Only those semesters in which a student has been registered are counted toward the time-to-degree limit—i.e., official leaves of absence granted by MSPH are not counted in the number of semesters in the program. Students who have not registered continuously and who have not received an approved leave of absence must apply for and be accepted for reinstatement by both the department and the Mailman School.

5.8 Awarding the degree

Degrees are awarded in October, February, and May of each year. The candidate is eligible to receive the degree on the next conferral date following successful defense of the ILE and deposit of the ILE report and reflection. Commencement Ceremonies for the three conferral dates of the academic year is held once each year in May. There are no conferral ceremonies held in October or February.

5.9 Participating in Commencement Ceremonies

According to MSPH policy, DrPH students may choose to participate in the May Commencement Ceremonies if they have distributed their dissertation to their committee before the date named as the deadline to be included in the Commencement or Convocation Program. This policy represents a reasonable expectation of defending and depositing a dissertation before the University deadline for conferral of October degrees. This date is published on the University GSAS website.

Section 6 Getting Help for Students Facing Challenges While Enrolled in the Degree Program

Students remain in a doctoral program for a number of years and issues may arise which require assistance beyond the scope of the advisor or sponsor. Below is a list of resources that may prove useful for a range of issues.

6.1 Within the department

Doctoral Student Representatives

The doctoral student representatives to the Department DrPH Committee or the MSPH Doctoral Committee are a good resource for students for peer advice. It is often true that other students have had similar experiences and have found ways to solve similar problems.

Director of Academic Programs

Liliane Zaretsky (lz3@cumc.columbia.edu) can assist with solving many administrative and other problems that students face over the course of their doctoral training.

Director of the DrPH Program

Leslie Davidson (lld1@cumc.columbia.edu), Professor of Epidemiology at CUIMC is Chair of the DrPH Committee and Director of the DrPH Program. If a student or member of the faculty has questions about policies, requirements, status, standards, or difficulties, they should contact her. Students having difficulty with a sponsor or advisor or another faculty member should contact her. She can help resolve problems and/or get involved when initial attempts to resolve issues have been unsuccessful.

Vice Chair for Education:

Lisa Bates is the Vice Chair for Education, if after working with the Associate Director of Academic Programs and the Director of the Doctoral Programs, attempts to resolve a conflict remain unsuccessful, a student may approach the vice chair, Assistant Professor Lisa Bates at lb2290@cumc.columbia.edu.

Chair of the Department of Epidemiology

If after working with the Vice Chair for Education and the Director of the DrPH Program, attempts to resolve a conflict remain unsuccessful, a student may approach the department chair, Professor Charles Branas, at c.branas@cumc.columbia.edu

6.2 Outside the department

Office of Student Affairs (OSA)

The OSA assists students as they navigate their academic programs. From orientation to graduation, the office monitors academic progress, assists with registration-related questions, develops co-curricular programming to enhance student life, and assists students who encounter any academic or personal obstacles along the way. Their website is mailman.columbia.edu/people/current_students/academics. For Academic issues, contact Eric Ratner, Director of Student Academic Affairs, at emr2211@cumc.columbia.edu and for student support, Sarah Tooley, Associate Director of Student Support, at st3146@cumc.columbia.edu

Office of Disability Services

The Department of Epidemiology works closely with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to facilitate equal access for students, including coordination of reasonable accommodations and support services for students with disabilities. ODS works with students with all types of disabilities, including physical, learning, sensory, psychological,

AD/HD, and chronic medical conditions. ODS also provides assistance to students with temporary injuries and illnesses. The Department of Epidemiology is committed to a campus culture that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of students. The department will support students with disabilities to fully realize their potential, recognizing their abilities and independence while supporting reasonable accommodation, maintaining equal access and preserving their confidentiality, in line with the spirit and provisions of the amended Americans with Disabilities Act.

To register with the Office of Disability Services, students must complete a Graduate Application for Accommodations and Services and submit documentation of their disability. The application and guidelines for disability documentation are available online at health.columbia.edu/disability-services and at the ODS office.

Students are encouraged to register with the Office of Disability Services at the time of their matriculation at Columbia University although they may do so later if appropriate. Review of requests for accommodation and disability documentation may take two to three weeks to complete. Students are eligible to receive reasonable accommodations only when the entire registration process is complete. For more information, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 212.854.2388 or disability@columbia.edu. The liaison with Disability Services for the Mailman School is Meredith K. Ryer – Assistant Director, Student Support, OSA-Ryer, Meredith K. mr4075@cumc.columbia.edu

Center for Student Wellness

The purpose of the Center for Student Wellness (CSW) works to promote health and enhance learning by addressing health-related barriers to academic success. The Center offers a wide range of services for students in the Health Sciences including counseling and mental health consultation and treatment. The CSW assures confidentiality and does not report the names of visitors to the office and will not act without permission, except in cases of imminent serious risk to individual safety, or if required by law.

Located at 107 Bard Hall, the CSW is open Monday through Friday by appointment and also maintains walk-in hours. Services provided by the CSW are free to CUMC students. For more information, call them at 212.304.5564 (email studentwellness@columbia.edu) or see their website at cumc.columbia.edu/student-health/center-student-wellness.

Ombuds Office

The Ombuds Office is another excellent source for thoughtful and confidential advice regarding challenges or conflicts involving academic issues. More information can be found at ombuds.columbia.edu. The office has drop-in hours Wednesdays from 10:30am–2:30pm or an appointment can be made by calling 212.304.7026 or emailing ombuds@columbia.edu

The Student Services for Gender-based and Sexual Misconduct

The Student Services for Gender-based and Sexual Misconduct is designed to support students facing inappropriate behavior based on sex and/or gender discrimination that may

or may not be sexual in nature. Their website contains information on resources, on policy and on how to get advice. It can be accessed at [sexual respect.columbia.edu](http://sexualrespect.columbia.edu) and they can be contacted at 212.854.1717.

For More Information

All questions regarding the content of this handbook and procedures for the DrPH program in Epidemiology may be directed to Liliane Zaretsky, Director of Academic Programs, or Dr. Leslie Davidson, Professor of Epidemiology and of Pediatrics, DrPH Director.

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Appendix I: Centers at or affiliated with the Mailman School

The Mailman School contains or is affiliated with many active and innovative centers providing training and programs to bring new knowledge and to promote equity globally.

- [CAPRISA Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa](#)
- [CII Center for Infection and Immunity](#)
- [Columbia Center for Injury Science and Prevention](#)
- [Columbia Population Research Center](#)
- [Global Mental Health Program and WHO Collaborating Centre](#)
- [Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)
- [ICAP Global. Health. Action.](#)
- [Imprints Center for Genetic and Environmental Lifecourse Studies](#)
- [Injury Free Coalition for Kids](#)
- [PHIOS Policy and Health Initiatives for Opioids and other Substances](#)
- [Robert N. Butler Columbia Aging Center](#)
- [Sergievsky Center for Research of the Brain and Nervous System](#)

Appendix II: Funding Sources for DrPH Students (courtesy of the Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health, updated in 2020)

American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC) Fellowship Program

Who is eligible: Enrolled member of a US federally recognized American Indian tribe or Alaska Native group or possess one fourth degree US federally recognized American Indian blood pursuing a doctoral degree as a fulltime student at an accredited graduate school in the United States and demonstrates financial need. Fellowship Amount: \$1,000-5,000

Enrollment Status: Applicants do not have to be admitted into a graduate degree program at time of application.

Web Site: <http://www.aigcs.org/scholarships/graduate-fellowships/>

Grace Legendre Endowment Fund Fellowship

Who is eligible: New York state women

Fellowship Amount: \$1,000

Enrollment Status: Applicants must be enrolled in graduate study

Web Site: <http://gracelegendre.org/>

The Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship

Who is eligible: U.S. citizen graduate students

Fellowship Amount: full tuition and \$18,000 stipend renewable up to 3 years

Deadline: Students notified by Financial Aid Office

Enrollment Status: Applicants must be enrolled in graduate study

Application: <http://publichealth.columbia.edu/apply/financial-aid/outside-funding>

Doris Duke Fellowships for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

Who is eligible: U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. interested in a career in the field of child abuse and neglect prevention

Fellowship Amount: \$25,000 for up to two years

Enrollment Status: Applicants must be enrolled in a doctoral program

Web Site: <http://www.chapinhall.org/fellowships/doris-duke-fellowships>

Alpha Kappa Alpha Educational Advancement Foundation Merit Scholarship

Who is eligible: Students with a minimum GPA of 3.0 (B average), with demonstrated community service and involvement.

Enrollment Status: Must be enrolled in the sophomore year or beyond, fulltime

Financial Need Scholarship

Who is eligible: Students with a minimum GPA of 2.5 (C+ average), demonstrate community service and involvement.

Enrollment Status: Must be enrolled in the sophomore year or beyond, fulltime

Web Site: http://www.akaef.org/graduate_scholarships.htm

Hebrew Free Loan Society Scholarships

Who is eligible: native born Jewish American students (criteria vary for four different scholarships offered)

Web Site: <http://hfls.org/scholarships>

American Association of University Women

Who is eligible: Students who display academic excellence, a commitment to improving the human condition, and the promise of continued impact; both U.S. and international students are eligible to apply.

Enrollment Status: Varies for each of the 5 scholarships

Deadline: Varies for each of the 5 scholarships

Web Site: <http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/educational-funding-and-awards/>

Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans

Who is eligible: Students who are 30 or under and permanent residents or naturalized citizens if born abroad or children of naturalized citizen parents

Enrollment Status: Students must be enrolled in either the first or second year of an academic program.

Amount: up to \$90,000 over 2 academic years

Web Site: <http://www.pdsoros.org/forms/index.cfm>

Ethel Louise Armstrong Foundation Scholarship

Who is eligible: A student who is a woman with a physical disability, active in a local, state, or national disability organization (in-person or electronically), which is providing services or advocacy for people with disabilities. Enrollment Status: Students must currently be accepted to a graduate program working toward a Master's degree or above.

Amount: \$500-\$2,000

Web Site: <http://www.homeschoolbuyersco-op.org/ethel-louise-armstrong-ela-foundation-scholarship-for-women-graduate-students-.html>

National Science Foundation

Catalyzing New International Collaborations

Who is eligible: Student researchers who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents interested in activities intended to catalyze new international collaborations.

Enrollment Status: Must be enrolled full time in a graduate program.

Deadline: Applicants should submit proposals at least 9 months prior to the expected date of the proposed activity.

Web Site: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=12815&org=NSF

Graduate Research Fellowships

Who is eligible: Students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents interested in research-based doctoral degrees.

Fellowship Amount: 3 years of support for a graduate program.

Enrollment Status: Must be enrolled full time in a graduate program.

Web Site: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=6201

International Dissertation Research Fellowship

Who is eligible: Graduate students in PhD program in the United States (regardless of citizenship) conducting research on non-U.S. topics.

Enrollment status: Must be enrolled full time in a PhD program.

Amount: Average of \$20,000

Web Site: <http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/idrf-fellowship/>

Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa Fellowship

Who is eligible: Early-career faculty in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Enrollment Status: Must be enrolled in a doctoral program and researching for a doctoral dissertation. Amount: \$3,000-\$15,000

Web Site: <http://www.ssrc.org/programs/nextgenafrika/>

Margaret McNamara Memorial Fund

Who is eligible: Women from developing countries residing in the U.S. or Canada at the time of application, national of a lower or middle income developing member country (designated on the web site), is not a citizen or permanent resident of the U.S., demonstrates financial need and satisfactory academic performance, and is at least 25 years old.

Enrollment Status: Must be enrolled in a doctoral program full time

Amount: \$12,000 (not renewable)

Web Site: <http://www.mmmf-grants.org/home/grants-home>

Inter-American Foundation Grassroots Development Fellowship Program

Who is eligible: U.S. citizens and citizens of independent Latin American and Caribbean countries (except Cuba) with a demonstrated and planned substantive collaboration during the field research period with affiliation with a research institution in Latin America or the Caribbean country. Enrollment Status: Must be currently enrolled in a U.S. university doctoral program.

Web Site: <http://www.iie.org/programs/IAF-Grassroots-Development-fellowship-program>

Hispanic Serving Health Professions Schools--- Graduate Fellowship Training Program

Who is eligible: U.S. citizens or permanent resident with English fluency (Spanish fluency requirement varies by program) with 5+ years of professional experience in health.

Enrollment Status: Current doctoral student

Web Site: <http://www.hshps.org/programs/gftp>

Sheikh Saud Bin Saqr Al Qasimi Doctoral Research Grant

Who is eligible: Applicants whose dissertation proposal must be approved by applicant's graduate program, must have IRB approval for research, must focus on the UAE particularly Ras Al Khaimah, must address social science issue or question.

Enrollment Status: Must be a current DrPH student in good academic standing with coursework complete and ready to conduct field research for dissertation

Web Site:

<http://www.alqasimifoundation.com/en/WhatWeDo/Research/DoctoralResearchGrants.aspx>

A database with many funding opportunities for DrPH students:

<http://scholarships.fatomei.com/public---health---scholarships.html>

Another database with comprehensive funding opportunities:

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/osfs/scholarship-information/external-funding-opportunities/>