

Epidemiology, MS

Program Competencies

Graduates will be able to:

- define the concepts and content of epidemiology;
- formulate a research hypothesis;
- determine a study aim, objectives, and appropriate design to address a hypothesis;
- apply concepts of ethics to research practice;
- develop study procedures and data collection instruments for conducting a study;
- collect data and manage data quality;
- use existing databases to provide supportive data to address a research question;
- analyze epidemiologic data with descriptive analysis and regression models, including linear and logistic regression; and
- compose an understandable and presentable report of research results.

Requirements

The Master of Science in epidemiology requires at least 39 s.h. of graduate credit and is offered with or without thesis. Students who choose to complete the degree without thesis must satisfy a final examination requirement; see the following section titled "Master's Final Examination for the MS Without Thesis." All students must maintain a Graduate College program grade-point average of at least 3.00. Those who receive a grade of C in 7 s.h. of coursework may be dismissed from the program.

The Master of Science in epidemiology requires the following coursework.

Core Courses

All core courses except CPH:6100, CPH:7270, EPID:5950, and EPID:7000 must be taken on an A-F graded basis.

Students must retake CPH:7270 Principles of Scholarly Integrity: Public Health if they completed the course more than four years ago or if they changed degree programs.

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
EPID:4400	Epidemiology I: Principles	3
EPID:5600	Introduction to Epidemiology Data Management and Analysis	3
EPID:5610	Intermediate Epidemiology Data Analysis With SAS and R	3
EPID:6400	Epidemiology II: Advanced Methods	4
BIOS:4120	Introduction to Biostatistics	3
BIOS:5120	Regression Modeling and ANOVA in the Health Sciences	3
CPH:6100	Essentials of Public Health	2

CPH:7270	Principles of Scholarly Integrity: Public Health (taken first year in the fall semester for 0 s.h. and in the spring semester for 1 s.h.)	0-1
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One of these:

EPID:6510	Injury Epidemiology	3
EPID:6550	Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases	3
EPID:6600	Epidemiology of Chronic Diseases	3

One of these:

EPID:5950	Preceptorship in Epidemiology (for nonthesis students)	3
EPID:7000	Thesis/Dissertation (for thesis students)	3

Epidemiology Journal Club

In addition to the above core courses, students are required to enroll in EPID:5925 Epidemiology Journal Club: Evaluating the Literature three times (typically the fall and spring semesters of their first year and the fall semester of their second year). Through the course, students gain experience reading, interpreting, and critically evaluating recently published journal articles.

Full-time students enroll in EPID:5925 for 0 s.h. Students enrolled part-time (less than 9 s.h.) who have a graduate research assistantship appointment may choose to register for 1 s.h., however, the credit earned for this course will not be applied toward the minimum semester hours required for the MS in epidemiology.

Every other week during the academic year, the journal club meets to discuss articles of interest in the field. Contact information for the journal club coordinators can be found on the Department of Epidemiology website under Preceptorship, Journal Club, and Seminar Contacts. Information about the schedule is distributed to students each semester. Students are required to achieve at least 80% attendance at journal club for three semesters during their time in the program.

Human Pathology Requirement

Students must take a human pathology course on an A-F graded basis. Most students choose to enroll in HHP:4390 Understanding Human Disease. Alternatively, students with a strong biosciences background may choose to enroll in PATH:5270 Pathogenesis of Major Human Diseases if it better complements their training plan; this is an advanced course that requires a strong foundation in molecular biology and related disciplines but may be suitable for some students.

Electives

Students must earn a minimum of 8 s.h. in elective coursework numbered 4000 and above, 6 s.h. of which must be from Department of Epidemiology courses (prefix EPID). The remaining 2 s.h., selected in consultation with the student's advisor, may be taken in an epidemiology course or other graduate coursework pertinent to the student's educational goals and background.

Students completing a thesis are required to take EPID:7000 Thesis/Dissertation once for 3 s.h.; see the preceding "Core Courses" section. They are permitted, but not required, to

repeat the course once for a maximum of 3 s.h. and apply it toward elective requirements.

The following courses are examples of recommended courses that can be taken outside of epidemiology toward the elective requirement.

Course #	Title	Hours
BIOS:6210	Applied Survival Analysis	3
BIOS:6310	Introductory Longitudinal Data Analysis	3
CBH:5220	Health Behavior and Health Education	3
HMP:4000	Introduction to the U.S. Health Care System	3
OEH:4240	Global Environmental Health	3

Other Requirements

Department of Epidemiology Seminar

Every week during the academic year, the Department of Epidemiology seminar provides a forum for speakers to present information or research pertaining to diverse topics in epidemiology. Contact information for the seminar coordinators is located on the Department of Epidemiology website under Preceptorship, Journal Club, and Seminar Contacts. Information about the schedule is distributed each semester and is also available on the University of Iowa Events Calendar. Students are expected to achieve at least 80% attendance at the seminar during each semester of enrollment.

Scientific Poster Requirement

Every student is required to present at least one scientific poster at the department level and is encouraged to present at the international, national, regional, state, or university level at some point prior to graduation. A student's advisor or thesis/preceptorship mentor can help determine the suitability and timeline for the poster presentation.

For nonthesis students, this poster requirement takes the place of an oral seminar presentation as part of the preceptorship requirement. Nonthesis students would typically formulate preceptorship research into a poster presentation, though the requirement may be met by a poster presentation of other research, such as from an independent study or research related to employment.

For thesis students, the poster requirement is in addition to the oral seminar presentation requirement for the thesis. Thesis students would typically formulate thesis research into a poster presentation, though the requirement may be met by a poster presentation of other research, such as from an independent study or research related to employment. The poster must be submitted for review to the student's advisor or thesis/preceptorship mentor a minimum of 10 days before the poster session. A Department of Epidemiology poster session is held at the end of the fall and spring semesters.

Master's Final Examination for the MS Without Thesis

The master's examination is a written in-class exam covering the competencies expected for master of science graduates. It specifically covers material from the following core courses: EPID:4400 Epidemiology I: Principles, EPID:6400 Epidemiology II: Advanced Methods, and BIOS:5120 Regression Modeling

and ANOVA in the Health Sciences. This exam is offered twice per year.

Students who earn a grade of B or higher in each of the three courses addressed on the exam are not required to take the exam.

Master's Thesis Defense for the MS With Thesis

The master's thesis defense is an oral presentation of the purpose, methods, and results of the thesis research. A specially formed committee thoroughly examines a student's area of knowledge associated with the context of the work. The goal of the thesis is a document that is publishable in a peer-reviewed journal.

Seminar Presentation for the MS With Thesis

In addition to the thesis defense, students are strongly encouraged and may be required by the thesis committee chair to make a presentation at a Department of Epidemiology seminar. It is recommended that students complete the seminar presentation and dissertation defense in the same semester, with the seminar presentation scheduled before the master's thesis defense so the seminar can serve as preparation for the defense.

Combined Programs

Undergraduate Degree/MS

The Undergraduate to Graduate (U2G) program provides an opportunity for University of Iowa students interested in health science to earn their undergraduate and graduate degrees in five years. Undergraduate students should apply to the program by Feb. 1 of their junior year.

For additional information, visit MS in Epidemiology—Undergraduate to Graduate on the Department of Epidemiology website.

Admission

Applicants must apply through the Schools of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS); they must also pay the required application fee to the Graduate College through University of Iowa Admissions when prompted. For detailed application information, visit How to Apply to the Department of Epidemiology on the department's website.

The epidemiology faculty considers several factors when evaluating applications for admission, including Graduate Record Exam (GRE) General Test scores, grade-point average, letters of recommendation, intent and motivation for graduate study, and research interests. Students with deficiencies in one area may be admitted if all other components of their application are very strong.

All applicants must hold a baccalaureate degree and have a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00. Undergraduate preparation must include two semesters of biological sciences and mathematics through algebra. Coursework in statistics is highly recommended.

All applicants and students are required to have strong written and oral communication skills.

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

Application deadlines for fall admission are June 1 for U.S. citizens and April 15 for international applicants.

Career Advancement

The program prepares graduate students for professional careers in which specialized knowledge of epidemiological methods and analytic techniques is essential. Graduates find employment in local, state, and federal health agencies; academic institutions; and private enterprises, such as hospitals, pharmaceutical and device companies, insurance companies, and foundations.