



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Mel & Enid Zuckerman
College of Public Health

2025-2026
Epidemiology PhD and MS
Student Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

The University of Arizona's Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (MEZCOPH) was established in January 2000 and accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health in 2003. Under its administrative roof are academic programs that lead to seven degrees:

- Two Bachelor Degrees ([BS in Public Health](#) and [BA in Wellness & Health Promotion Practice](#))
- [Master of Public Health](#) with several concentration areas
- Four Master of Science Degrees ([MS in Biostatistics](#) and Health Science Data, [MS in Environmental Health Science](#), [MS in Epidemiology](#), and an MSPH in Health Behavior Health Promotion)
- Four PhD programs (in [Biostatistics](#), [Environmental Health Science](#), [Epidemiology](#), and [Health Behavior Health Promotion](#))
- And a DrPH with two concentrations in [Maternal and Child Health](#) and [Public Health Policy and Management](#)

The Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts, and the Master of Public Health degree programs are offered through both the Main and Online Campuses, with several MPH concentrations offered on the Phoenix Campus as well.

Comprehensive information about all of the College's academic programs can be found in the [College of Public Health Curriculum Guide](#)

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. The University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.

MEZCOPH MISSION STATEMENT

The Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health is dedicated to promoting the health and wellness of individuals and communities in the southwest and globally with an emphasis on achieving health equity through excellence in education, research & service.

MEZCOPH VALUES STATEMENT

MEZCOPH acts with respect and integrity to continuously advance health and well-being for all through knowledge, collaboration, empowerment, advocacy, and sustainability. Our core values are: Fairness, Trust, Equity, Social Justice, Excellence, Innovation, Commitment, Collegiality,

Diversity, Open Communication, Participation, Consensus, and Enhancement. We strive to foster an educational community that values innovation and excellence in teaching, creation and dissemination of knowledge, practice-based research, and research-based practice to address the health needs and interests of individuals and communities.

SECTION I GENERAL INFORMATION FOR COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATE STUDENTS

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

The objective of this handbook is to provide straightforward guidance to MEZCOPH students about how to navigate through the academic programs of the College. The handbook is divided into two sections. The first section of the handbook includes general information for all graduate students about MEZCOPH resources and operations, student organizations, events, and financial assistance. The second section of the handbook outlines information specific to each of the graduate programs (i.e., MPH, MS, DrPH or PhD programs). Students should refer to the handbook often.

While students are held to the program requirements of the Academic Curriculum Guide for the academic year in which they were admitted, University and College of Public Health operational processes and policies do change. These changes in policies and procedures are reflected in the Student Handbook. Please refer to the most recent MEZCOPH Student Handbook (revised annually) for the most current policies. The [University of Arizona General Catalog of policies](#) and [Graduate College website](#) provide comprehensive details on current policies and procedures that pertain to all graduate students at the university. **Much effort goes into communicating changes to students, but it is the student's responsibility to be aware of these policies and to adhere to them.** Additionally, it is intended that faculty refer to this handbook when mentoring and advising students. This handbook works to promote expectations that are shared by students, faculty, and staff.

The staff members of the MEZCOPH Office of Student Affairs (OSA) look forward to helping students work toward their degrees. If, at any time, you have questions or concerns about specific MEZCOPH issues, do not hesitate to contact the staff member assigned to that area (see the [Office of Student Affairs staff page](#)). Although the Office of Student Affairs is here to support student progression through our degree programs, **keep in mind that completion of all degree requirements and paperwork is ultimately the responsibility of the student seeking the degree.**

Again, we welcome you and look forward to working with you during your time at MEZCOPH!

PHYSICAL RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

TUCSON CAMPUS

DRACHMAN HALL

Information related to [College of Public Health Facilities](#) is maintained on our website.

MEZCOPH student affairs and administrative offices are found on the 1st floor. Faculty offices are located primarily on the 2nd floor. MEZCOPH students, faculty and staff are asked to report any incidences of vandalism, theft, or questionable activities to the CPH Facilities Email: coph-facilities@arizona.edu or via the Student Suggestion Box on the [Hub](#) if the issue is non-emergent. Building security services are not available in the evening or during weekends; therefore, students should not be in the building after regular business hours (8 a.m.-5 p.m.) or weekends unless they are taking a class or working in an assigned cubicle or office space.

Student Intranet (Hub)

A student intranet, the Student Hub, on the College's website, has been developed to assist students in locating information that is relevant to their role in the college. It is important, therefore, to check this site frequently for information regarding events, college developments, and student news. In addition to creating an electronic student community and presenting diverse information, such as student calendars, forms, deadlines, policies, and processes, the MEZCOPH Student Hub serves as the access point to a number of required electronic surveys. MPH students must submit their internship abstracts, deliverables, and final reports through the Student Hub. A UA NetID and password are required to access this site.

<https://hub.coph.arizona.edu/>

Website

The MEZCOPH website, <http://publichealth.arizona.edu/>, is used as the College's primary point of information dissemination to the public, potential applicants, and students. Research interests of faculty members, a college directory, and news items are posted on this site. Curriculum requirements, academic and student policies, and fellowship announcements are posted on the MEZCOPH Student Hub.

MEZCOPH and UA Information Technology Resources

General Tech Support

- **MEZCOPH IT Resources:** Send a detailed email with your issue to coph-help@arizona.edu, or call 520-626-7417.
- **UA IT Resources:** Call 520-626-TECH (8324) or 877-522-7929, or chat with them at <https://support.arizona.edu>.
UA IT FAQs can be found at: <https://it.arizona.edu/get-support>

MEZCOPH Computer Lab

Location: Drachman Hall Room A319

General availability: Monday through Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m. unless the lab has been scheduled for other College activities.

MEZCOPH's computer lab is equipped with 21 Windows PCs, a printer, and a projector. Information about courses scheduled in the computer lab for the current week can be viewed via the [UA Health Sciences Scheduling System](#) (search by date for Drachman Hall Room A319).

To use the systems, students must log in to the computers with their NetID and request access to the 3rd floor through the Building Manager. **Please make sure to log off the computer when done.** Stata, SPSS, SAS, ArcGIS, R, EpiInfo, Matlab, Teams, Adobe Acrobat DC, and Microsoft Office are installed on each system. Qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA, has recently also been added to the computer lab on every other computer. A maximum of 5 people can use the software at once.

Do not save your work on the lab computer. The systems are wiped after each reboot. Use a flash drive or cloud storage (e.g., Google Drive) to save your work. Printing is free, but students must provide their own paper.

Other Computer Labs Around Campus

There are several other computer labs available at the University of Arizona Tucson. They may not have the same software titles as the MEZCOPH computer lab.

[UAHS Library](#) - All computers have the basics (Office Suite, browsers, media players), plus specialty software for graphics, statistics, engineering, and more.

[OSCR](#) - Most labs feature Apple computers that dual boot into your choice of Mac or Windows operating system.

Software via University Licensing

The University Bookstores manages software titles that are available to students for free or at a discount. For a list of these software, please visit: <https://softwarelicense.arizona.edu/students>.

VCAT (Virtual Computing Access Technology)

Use a wide variety of software from home. [VCAT](#) is a virtual computing system for students and faculty that is accessible from anywhere with a broadband internet connection. You will find much of the same software that is installed in OSCR's physical computer labs, as well as any that may be provided by your academic department.

VPN (Virtual Private Network)

The [UA VPN](#) provides a secure connection from your home computer, laptop, or mobile device to the UA's network. It is also a valuable security tool when you are on an unsecured wireless network (e.g., coffee shops, airports).

Lactation Room

For nursing parents, the College of Public Health established a Lactation Room, located in Drachman Hall, Room A107, around the corner from A112. To use the room, obtain the access code from the administrative assistant in the Office of Student Affairs (Room A110), enter the code on the keypad outside of room A107, lock the door using the manual lock while in use and when finished. There are other lactation spaces available across UA Campuses and can be located using the [Family Resource Map](#).

Lockers

Students may reserve a locker for use while pursuing a degree in the Colleges of Public Health or Nursing. Requests for lockers are processed by the administrative associate in the Office of Student Affairs, Room A110 of Drachman Hall. A one-time, non-refundable user fee of \$5 is assessed (payment by cash only). To reserve a locker, a student should identify the range of locker numbers in the first-floor hallway in which the locker is desired and communicate this information to the administrative assistant, who will assign the locker number and provide the padlock combination to the student. Students may not use their own padlocks on Drachman Hall lockers. Drachman Hall is not accessible in the evening or on the weekend, so needed items stored in lockers should be retrieved prior to the conclusion of classes.

Lost and Found

Items found in the east wing or "A" side of Drachman Hall should be brought to the administrative associate in the Office of Student Affairs, Room A110 where the Lost and Found repository is located. Individuals who are attempting to locate lost property should check with the Office of Student Affairs to determine if the item has been turned in. Individuals must provide an adequate description of the item and in some cases, personal identification before being reunited with lost items.

Policy for Posting Advertisements in Drachman Hall

Any paper advertisement, flyer, or announcement to be hung in either of the Drachman Hall buildings shall first be approved by the MEZCOPH Office of Student Affairs, administrative associate in Drachman Hall, Room A110 (for postings hung in Drachman A-side) or the College of Pharmacy's Office of Student Affairs, administrative associate in Drachman Hall, Room B107 (for postings hung in Drachman B-side). To gain approval, bring an original copy to the appropriate Office of Student Affairs. When approval is given, the announcement will be

initialed and dated by the administrative assistant in the Office of Student Affairs. Copies of the announcement showing the initials and date can be made at this time.

Announcements may be hung indoors on plastic, metal, or bulletin boards ONLY, not on painted walls or glass/wooden doors unless special permission is granted by the Office of Student Affairs. Announcements may not be taped, nailed, screwed, or in any way attached to the outside metal or brick siding of the building. Announcements without approval or on restricted surfaces will be removed. Removal of announcements is the responsibility of the organization or individual who hung them. Announcements must be removed no later than two days following the event. Failure to do so may result in denial of future postings.

Student Cubicle Space

Each department has a limited number of dedicated graduate student cubicles on the second floor of Drachman Hall. These spaces are assigned in priority order. Priority for cubicle assignments is for courses with teaching assistants. The cubicle space is assigned to the course and cubicle space must be shared if there are multiple TAs in the course. Doctoral students are the next space assignment priority. Students who are participating in a training grant follow in priority and finally, any graduate student who is employed as a research assistant by a department that has space available may be assigned space. Only those students who have been assigned cubicles will be granted access to the second floor of Drachman Hall after hours.

Teaching assistants may arrange to meet with students in the breakout rooms (the small classrooms on the west side of the first floor). Using these spaces reduces noise on the second floor and provides private space when needed. Teaching assistants may schedule these rooms by accessing the [UA Health Sciences Scheduling System](#). The course number, name and faculty member should be included in the request.

Student Group Meeting Space

Student groups needing meeting space may request it by submitting a room scheduling request through the [UA Health Sciences Scheduling System](#). The group's name and faculty advisor's name should be included in the request. Advisors are expected to be present when student group meetings occur after hours. While individual students may not reserve a breakout room to study or meet with group members outside of course times, they may use unoccupied, unreserved rooms for these activities.

Wireless Internet Access

Wireless access is available throughout and around Drachman Hall via connection to UAWiFi, a secure and fast wireless network that is available across most of our campus. Partially funded by the Student Technology Fee, it provides wireless access for all students, staff, and faculty on campus. Instructions for setting up UAWiFi wireless access can be found [here](#).

How to get help with UAWiFi

Help can be obtained through the [University Information Technology Service \(UITS\)](#). Call 626-TECH (8324) to schedule an appointment or stop by during drop-in hours.

ARIZONA HEALTH SCIENCES CAMPUS RESOURCES

Health Sciences Bookstore

The University of Arizona Campus Store at UAHS is located inside the University of Arizona Health Sciences on our north campus, easily accessible to UA law, medical, nursing, public health and pharmacy students as well as faculty, staff, and visitors. Products at this location include clothing, gifts, medical supplies and textbooks. More information can be found [here](#).

Health Sciences Innovation Building (HSIB)

One of the main building's for Public Health courses on the Arizona Health Sciences Campus is the [Health Sciences Innovation Building](#). It includes a number of multi-use spaces and several student lounges. Student study space is found on floors 3 through 6. The 7th floor is home to the Simulation Center (ASTEC) and the 8th floor houses Clinical and Professional Skills labs. Arizona Health Sciences administrative offices are found on the 9th floor.

HSIB Student Study Space

HSIB is open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. (The Health Science Library will be open on weekends and after 7:00 p.m. so students can always find a place to study.) The student study areas are located along the east side of the HSIB on floors 3 through 6. There is a librarian's office on each of the student study floors. Bookable study rooms include 1-person, 4-6-person, and 8-person sizes. All HSIB and library study rooms are bookable via the library reservation system [libcal](#).

HSIB Day Use Lockers

There are 500 day-use lockers throughout the HSIB building. The locks reset at midnight each night so articles must be removed prior to the building closing at 7:00 p.m.

Arizona Health Sciences Library

The [Arizona Health Sciences Library](#) is located within the College of Medicine Tucson and is available to all students, faculty and staff associated with the four colleges that comprise Arizona Health Sciences (Public Health, Nursing, Pharmacy and Medicine). The AHS Library is available to students at our Phoenix Campus as well.

Students can use the AHS Library for a myriad of services. The computer lab is comprised of desktop computers that are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. These computers have all the basic applications (Office Suite, browsers, and media players), plus statistical software

such as SPSS, STATA, and SAS. Students can also utilize the library's scanners, print on the wireless WEPA printers using CatCard or debit card, or use the self-serve printer (cash only). The UAHS Library also rents out technology equipment like laptops, iPads, and cameras. To reserve a designated place to study alone or with a group, students should access the [Online Reservation System](#).

Visit the [library's website](#) to find the current hours of operation. After the doors are locked, UA Health Sciences students can enter the library with their CatCards. Learn more about library access on the [website](#). The library is closed on all major holidays. All MEZCOPH enrolled students are provided access to the AHS Library after hours. If you have trouble accessing the library after hours with your CatCard, please email the CPH Facilities Office at coph-facilities@arizona.edu with your first and last name as well as a copy of your CatCard (with the numbers being visible and legible). You may need a CatCard PIN for some card readers on campus, such as the AHSL. If you have not set up a PIN, please go to: https://www.fm.arizona.edu/dacportal/index.html#. You will need your Net ID and password to log in. Once you are at the "DAC Portal" website click on "view personal access". Students also have the capability of accessing UAHS online resources from off-campus by logging in with your UA NetID and password.

Students can view AHS Library safety resources [here](#).

The Arizona Health Sciences Library Liaison to the College of Public Health is Jean McClelland. She is available to assist students, staff, and faculty with their library research needs, and has developed an [Information Resource Guide](#) specifically for students in the College of Public Health to help you be successful throughout your time in the program. Students may also reach out directly to Jean at jmcc@arizona.edu.

The Arizona Health Sciences Library Liaison to the College of Public Health is Jean McClelland. Ms. McClelland is available to assist students, staff, and faculty library needs. She has developed an [Public Health Information Resources](#) specifically for students in the College of Public Health to help you be successful throughout your time in the program. Students may also reach out directly to Jean at jmcc@arizona.edu.

Safety

The safety and security of our students is of utmost importance. Safety issues of the students, faculty and staff of the University of Arizona Health Sciences campus are handled by the [University of Arizona Police Department \(UAPD\)](#) located just two blocks to the south of the College of Public Health. UAPD can be reached by dialing [520-621-UAPD \(8273\)](#). In an emergency, dial 9-1-1 for assistance. The hospital, Banner University Medical Center has around-the-clock security patrol. Drachman Hall is monitored with the use of security cameras as well.

A comprehensive list of safety tips for students can be found through the Office of Public Safety's [Safety Guide](#) and the [UAPD website](#).

PHOENIX BIOSCIENCE CORE

The city-owned Phoenix Bioscience Core (PBC) is a 28-acre urban medical and bioscience campus planned for more than six million square feet of biomedical-related research, academic, and clinical facilities. Students have access to the facilities through their CatCards and that identification must always be displayed when on campus. The MEZCOPH offices are located on the 3rd floor of Building 1 at 550 E. Van Buren Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004. Students are also welcomed and encouraged to utilize the facilities in the Health Sciences Education Building (HSEB), and the [AHSL Library](#) located on the 3rd and 4th floors of the HSEB building. Student access is limited to when Security is on site.

Building 1, 2, and 3 (The Historics): Daily 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

HSEB: Weekdays 5:30 a.m. – Midnight / Weekends 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. / No Holidays

Security is present on campus and the roving security officer can be reached at 602-827-2368.

Computers

Students are encouraged to use the computers available in the AHSL Library located in HSEB. The systems revert to their initial state after a reboot, so a thumb drive is required to save any work. Printing is available in the HSEB Library for 10 cents per black and white page.

Phoenix Student Space

MEZCOPH students at the Phoenix Bioscience Core are encouraged to use the central area on the third floor of Building 1 as a meeting space, along with the student spaces in HSEB. Students may also use the lunchroom located on the 3rd floor of Building 1. This area is equipped with a sink, microwave, and refrigerator. It is expected that students will keep the lunch area orderly and clean, and food that is no longer fresh is disposed of in a timely manner.

Wireless Internet Access in Phoenix

Wireless access is available throughout and around the Phoenix Bioscience Core via connection to the UAWiFi and UAPublic networks. Instructions for setting up UAWiFi wireless access can be found [here](#).

Eats and Treats

There are many local spots near the Phoenix Bioscience Core that our students, faculty, and staff like to frequent. Coffee shops are numerous, as are local and chain restaurants. For a list of places to eat and things to do in the Downtown Phoenix Area, visit the following websites: [Visit Phoenix](#) and [Downtown Phoenix](#).

COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS

The Office of Student Affairs communicates with students primarily through email, student listservs and the College's student intranet, the MEZCOPH Student Hub. The College hosts Facebook groups for prospective and current graduate students, as well as LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook groups for Alumni; however, these groups are not used to communicate official business.

Email Accounts

The University of Arizona requires that all students open email accounts through the University of Arizona. Students are required to use these accounts for all University-related correspondence. In turn, official University and College messages are communicated to students via this account. It is imperative, therefore, that all students keep the Office of Student Affairs notified of any address changes, as well as ensuring their UAccess Student Center is up to date. Failure to read messages sent to the UA email account is not an acceptable excuse for not knowing important information. While forwarding one email account to another may be advantageous, there may be some risk of loss of information, and we do not encourage this.

Listservs

Current information about new policies and procedures, program and college events, and course information is announced via the academic program listservs. Each academic program or concentration within the College maintains a student listserv for communicating program or concentration business from its faculty and staff.

General announcements for all students related to academic business, e.g., speakers of interest, conferences, seminars, new courses, etc., should be sent to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for distribution. Graduate Coordinators also make every effort to reduce e-mail redundancy by compiling and sending out digest e-mails over the listservs.

College of Public Health Social Media Guidelines

The College of Public Health strives to support a vibrant, respectful conversation and expects that all users of the College's social media platforms treat each other with respect and abide by the rules and responsibilities of each social media platform.

MEZCOPH reserves the right to block or unsubscribe abusive users, and remove comments that:

- Are hateful, threatening, malicious or discriminatory.
- Are libelous.
- Harass, bully, or intimidate any user.
- Engage in commercial activities not approved by the appropriate authority.
- Contain profanity, nudity, or graphic or gratuitous violence.

- Condone or encourage illegal activity.
- May be considered spam or are irrelevant to the primary contents of the page.
- Are repetitive (multiple identical or substantially similar posts by the same user).
- Cannot be translated into English using free online translation software.
- Could compromise the safety of a member of the public or the individual who created the comment, post, or discussion.
- Reveal information in conflict with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), or any other applicable laws or regulations.

STUDENT SERVICES, RESOURCES & OPPORTUNITIES

Office of Student Affairs

The MEZCOPH Office of Student Affairs (OSA) serves as the central point of coordination for student activities/events and provision of services to undergraduate and graduate students in all academic programs of the College. Each OSA professional has significant experience advising students, participates in numerous university wide taskforces and committees, and meets with MEZCOPH students to help them resolve issues related to their academic careers. These issues include but are not limited to admissions questions; course registration; meeting academic paperwork deadlines; college financial aid, scholarships, and fellowship application processes; internship processes; career advising questions; travel requests; and graduation requirements.

Career Advising

An integrated approach to career advising, utilizing the expertise of the university's [Graduate Center](#), the [Student Engagement & Career Development Office](#), other university resources, and professionals within the Office of Student Affairs, is available to our students. The University of Arizona Student Engagement and Career Development Office offers a broad range of programs designed to assist students and alumni in developing and implementing career plans, gaining career-related experience while enrolled in school, and pursuing post graduate career goals, whether that means permanent employment or alternate plans.

University career resources include large career fairs, employer info sessions, resume workshops and an online job board and interviewing system, called Handshake. The College hosts alumni panels, provides resume/cover letter workshops tailored for public health students, hosts a public health jobs listserv on which alums and college partners advertise positions and through which timely career guidance is provided. Review the Career Services page on the Hub, found under Career Services, to explore a comprehensive list of resources available to you.

The Office of Student Affairs consistently shares information regarding public health internships, fellowships, career opportunities through its listservs and weekly emails. College of Public Health students may request to join the jobs listserv by subscribing via [Trellis](#). Faculty and designated OSA professionals provide individual career guidance and résumé review.

Student Problem Resolution

When students encounter problems, it is imperative that resources and solutions are identified to resolve these issues.

The [Assistant Dean, Student Affairs](#) is the designated administrator whose role it is to listen to student concerns and determine how these issues should be addressed. Student services professionals within OSA often are the first to hear student concerns. These concerns are discussed with the Assistant Dean, who triages the response to responsible administrators or to the full Dean's Council.

Students who are experiencing difficulties of a sensitive or confidential nature are encouraged to make an appointment with the [Assistant Dean, Student Affairs](#) who can provide assistance and guidance or will work with the student to find additional resources to solve the problem. The student and Assistant Dean will work together to find a mutually acceptable "next steps" plan of action.

Students may also speak with the Graduate College. Please review the Graduate College's [Summary of Grievances](#) webpage for more information.

Disability Resource Center

The UA Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus department designated by the university to determine and provide access to university classes, programs, and activities for disabled individuals. Through an interactive process, the DRC will facilitate access either through reasonable accommodation or by redesigning aspects of a university experience. The DRC's processes are designed to be convenient for students.

Accommodations are available to any pre-qualified student (undergraduate or graduate including masters and doctorate). Disabilities appear in many forms (visible or invisible) and each pre-qualified student can discuss accommodations with an assigned Disability Access Coordinator. Accommodations may involve flexibility with test taking times, test locations, note taking, or course substitutions. For more information, contact the [DRC](#) or visit their website.

Campus Health and Student Health Insurance

[University of Arizona Campus Health](#) is committed to promoting health, wellness, and safety at the University of Arizona and in the surrounding community by providing quality medical and mental health care, outstanding health education, while assisting the institution in health-related policy development. Campus Health is fully accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.

The University offers one major [medical health insurance policy](#), which meets the Affordable Care Act requirements and is rated as a gold level plan. Coverage extends nationwide and has an emergency benefit worldwide. All three State of Arizona university health centers serve as primary care providers for the main subscriber, and it is available to: UA Students, Graduate Assistant and Associates, Post-Doctoral Fellows, J1 Visiting Scholars, and J1 Student Interns.

Campus Health Service sends out three “Open Enrollment” notices each major semester (fall & spring) through the student’s official University of Arizona email address. The Student Health Insurance is ordered, canceled, or changed through [UAccess Student Center](#) only during an “Open Enrollment” period, unless one qualifies for a prorated through a qualifying life event. When the insurance is ordered, you are ordering for a specific amount of time.

Helpful Student Resources

The College has developed a list of helpful student resources to assist students in navigating their life and time here at the University. The Helpful Student Resources are found on the [Student Hub](#) on the Graduate Students tab under the heading Additional Resources.

The Graduate College’s [New and Current Students webpage](#) and [Graduate Center pages](#) in addition the [Graduate & Professional Student Council site](#) also have a number of resources for graduate students across campus including specific links to Graduate College policies and procedures, professional development, child care subsidies, staying safe on campus, and more! They also have a comprehensive [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page for all new and continuing graduate students.

Student Input into MEZCOPH Operations

The administration of MEZCOPH is keenly interested in understanding the student perspective of the College and its operations. To that end, numerous avenues for students to provide input and share concerns have been developed. First and foremost, student members are sought for all MEZCOPH committees, except for the Promotion & Tenure Committee and the admissions committees. In addition to the university-administered Student Course Surveys where students are encouraged to fully assess all aspects of a course, the College or individual faculty often administer a mid-semester online course evaluation to determine if there are ongoing course issues. All graduating students are required to complete a comprehensive Exit Survey.

Ongoing student dialogues with faculty and staff provide a venue for proactive resolution of problems. When there are issues within a particular course, students should first speak with the instructor about their concerns. Course concerns involving multiple students that are not resolved through meeting with the instructor may be addressed at the Student Affairs Committee Meeting where a plan of action for resolution of the issues can be developed.

Student Participation on MEZCOPH Committees

Membership on MEZCOPH committees provides students with opportunities to participate in much of the college's decision making and governance processes. Students are encouraged to consider committee membership as a means of familiarizing themselves with college operations, faculty, and staff, and to build their own leadership and collaborative skills.

Student Affairs Committee

The charge of the Student Affairs Committee is to act as a clearinghouse for issues related to students; plan, facilitate, and support student seminars, workshops, etc.; function as lobbying agent/advocate for resolution of student problems; and communicate concerns to college administration. This is an important committee as it supports the role of shared governance in college operations. The Student Affairs Committee meets twice each semester. While student representatives from each program are elected and help lead the committee, all students are welcome to attend and participate in the Student Affairs Committee.

Student Suggestion Box

MEZCOPH students have great ideas, and we want to hear them! A physical Student Suggestion Box and an [Online Student Suggestion Box](#) are available to provide students with an opportunity to share feedback and suggestions. We appreciate the feedback, and we take suggestions seriously. A main objective of the Student Suggestion Boxes is to get the suggestion/feedback in front of the appropriate College colleague, office, or committee for consideration. Please remember, however, that not all suggestions and great ideas are implementable. Sometimes a follow-up dialogue about the suggestion brings greater clarity and understanding of the issue for all concerned parties.

The **Physical Student Suggestion Box** is located on the first floor and second floor of Drachman Hall next to the water fountain. This box is checked by the Office of Student Affairs every week. Students can submit anonymous suggestions to the physical box but must include their contact information if they would like someone to follow-up with them.

STUDENT AMBASSADORS

To aid MEZCOPH with outreach and recruitment of a diverse student body, the Office of Student Affairs coordinates undergraduate and graduate Ambassador Programs. With a competitive application process, ambassadors proudly represent the College's student

perspective to prospective students and their families, the University of Arizona, and other groups as called upon. College Ambassadors assist with undergraduate and graduate recruitment, participating in the following activities:

- Communication with prospective and admitted students.
- Volunteer for UAHS-sponsored events.
- Outreach to campus clubs and organizations.
- Assist with the College's social media and student blog accounts.
- Develop and support the mentor mentee program.
- Staff tabling events on campus, as well as at the American Public Health Association, Arizona Public Health Association, and Graduate School Fairs.
- Student panels for visit days.
- Lots of other fun outreach/recruitment activities.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Below is a list of some of the student organizations available at the University. Many of the ones that are College specific are student led and may have a variance by year in activity, student engagement, and contacts for getting involved.

Public Health Student Alliance (PHSA) – Phoenix

The Phoenix Public Health Student Alliance (PPHSA) is one of the student organizations designed to involve the Phoenix-based University of Arizona students in the surrounding community. The organization was founded in 2011 to keep all students involved in the public health field who otherwise would not be able to participate in Tucson-based activities. All MEZCOPH students are invited to participate. The primary mission of the group is to promote student connection and outreach in Maricopa County. PHSA-Phx has built bonds with the community to promote not only the Phoenix-based University of Arizona programs, but also to establish connections with community members that will ultimately positively impact their health in all aspects. This group relies on active student participation and recruitment for leadership and membership occurs each fall semester.

American Indian and Indigenous Health Alliance (AIIHA)

The American Indian and Indigenous Health Alliance (AIIHA) is an undergraduate and graduate student organization established in 2012 by a group of MPH and DrPH students. The organization's goals are to enrich and foster the educational and professional experience of Indigenous students at the University by offering diverse avenues of support that are responsive, adaptive, and efficient to meet the needs of Indigenous students. The organization also hopes to increase the representation of Indigenous students in public health disciplines.

Environmental and Occupational Health/Industrial Hygiene Club

The EOH/IH club at the University of Arizona is a student run organization that aims to enhance student knowledge and involvement. Members share a common interest in the promotion of environmental and occupational health, safety, and industrial hygiene through the reduction of biological, chemical, and physical hazards. Activities include professional networking, community engagement, and educational events that work in conjunction with current course objectives within the master's program. Educational and networking opportunities for members of the industrial hygiene and environmental and occupational health communities are provided through seminars, training opportunities, local tours, and roundtable discussions developed by the student group. This club also encompasses the student sections of the nationally recognized AIHA and American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) organizations.

LUCHA

Learning, Understanding, and Cultivating Health Advocacy (L.U.C.H.A.) is a group collective in the UA Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health, which promotes health advocacy through policy education, service, and campus engagement amongst Arizona-local community and institutional settings. L.U.C.H.A. is composed of faculty, staff, community members, students, and alumni who are interested in supporting the L.U.C.H.A. mission.

Global Health Alliance (GHA)

As a student driven organization, the Global Health Alliance (GHA) aims to enhance students' knowledge of how public health functions in a global context. GHA engages in the following activities: providing opportunities for students and faculty to connect to international organizations and community service projects; facilitating discussion of global health and promoting internships that increase student experience in global health and multicultural interaction.

Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC)

The Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC) was founded in 1991. In its early years, the GPSC was a branch of the Associated Students of the University of Arizona (ASUA). Now the GPSC is independent from ASUA and has its own officers, directors, representatives, and budget. The GPSC has played major roles in improving graduate student life by pushing for programs such as health insurance, childcare, TA and RA benefits, travel grants, and national advocacy (the latter primarily via the NAGPS). To find out more about the scope of GPSC activities, visit the [GPSC website](#). Each College elects representatives to serve on GPSC. Annually and throughout the academic year GPSC provides various [grants](#) for eligible graduate students.

University of Arizona Student Organizations

The University of Arizona has over 600 student clubs and organizations, which play a key role in student life on campus. There are numerous undergraduate, graduate, and professional organizations fulfilling all aspects of student interests. For more information and contact information, follow our list of student clubs! The Associate Students of the University of Arizona (ASUA) [website](#) provides information about these student clubs.

STUDENT MANAGED EVENTS

MEZCOPH Poster Forum

The graduate programs of MEZCOPH host an annual research poster forum led by students. This event provides an opportunity for students conducting public health research and community-based work to network with other public health professionals from industry and regional and state governments. The goal is to promote future collaborations such as employment and research partnerships. The student planning group invites keynote speakers, develops promotional literature, maintains a website that provides guidance for poster creation and participant registration, and produces a forum program which includes abstracts. Students throughout the university are encouraged to present public health related posters. Posters are judged, and scholarship prizes are awarded to the best student posters.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA OFFICE OF SCHOLARSHIPS & FINANCIAL AID

To be eligible for any federal loans or scholarship awards, domestic students must file a FAFSA. To qualify for scholarship awards, International Students must complete a [Financial Aid Calculation for International Students](#).

Federal Financial Aid

Federal financial aid (i.e., loans and grants for MEZCOPH students) is awarded through the University of Arizona's Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (OFSA). Application requests for financial aid should be made in the semester prior to the anticipated funding needs. Further information can be found on the [OFSA website](#). You can also [contact](#) them directly.

Educational Assistance Program

Benefits eligible employees of the three state universities, their spouses and dependent children may be eligible for drastically reduced tuition rates. The qualifying employee must be employed on the first day of the semester or term for which the benefit is to be used and must apply through the employee's hiring department to access this benefit. Detailed information can be found on the [Human Resources website](#).

STUDENT FUNDING MANAGED BY MEZCOPH

A College Scholarship Committee made up of faculty and staff appointed by the Dean manages the award process for the MEZCOPH scholarships. A full listing of the College's scholarships, complete with criteria, application deadlines and forms can be found on the [MEZCOPH Website](#). The College's Scholarship Committee meets annually and on an ad hoc basis to select scholarship awardees. Students apply in the spring semester for financial assistance for the following academic year via the College of Public Health Named Scholarship Application on [Scholarship Universe](#). The process and timing will be announced by the Assistant Dean in the spring semester. Students may review and if eligible apply for the [MEZCOPH funding opportunities](#) such as the Dean's Student Research Fund or Dean's Annual Fund to seek financial support to travel to conferences.

MEZCOPH SCHOLARSHIPS

Monetary awards have been established to assist MEZCOPH students in in-person programs in funding their required coursework or research/internship experiences in specific areas of interest. Many of the MEZCOPH Named Scholarships can be applied for through [Scholarship Universe](#), which is the University's scholarship management system for students and departments. During the spring semester, applications for scholarships for the following academic year will be available. Each student must create a profile on Scholarship Universe and will be matched to scholarships for which they are eligible.

Graduate College Dissertation/Thesis Tuition Scholarship

A limited number of awards that reduce nonresident tuition to Arizona resident tuition for 1 to 6 units are available. The award excludes the mandatory registration fees and differential tuition charges. This tuition scholarship is designed to reduce the tuition for nonresident students who are within 2 years of completing their degree and are only working on their thesis or dissertation research and writing. Students are eligible to apply if they are nonresident graduate (master or doctoral) degree-seeking students who are enrolled for one to six credits of **900-level units ONLY** (no actual courses). This scholarship is not applicable for summer tuition. Students desiring more information about this scholarship should contact the [Assistant Dean, Student Affairs](#) early in the semester prior to the one in which they will be requesting this scholarship.

Graduate College Fellowship Funding

The University of Arizona Graduate College allots MEZCOPH a limited amount of Graduate College Fellowship funding each academic year. Graduate Fellowships are cash awards that can be applied to tuition, health insurance or any other academic expense, the balance of which is paid directly to the student. MEZCOPH awards Graduate Fellowships to its students based on both financial need and academic merit. Awardees must establish and maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA, be enrolled in six graduate units per semester, and have a current FAFSA on file to be eligible to receive and retain their award.

Additional merit-based scholarships administered through the Graduate College are found on the Graduate College website.

MEZCOPH RESEARCH AWARDS

Graduate students in the MS/PhD Epidemiology and Environmental Health Sciences, PhD Biostatistics, PhD Health Behavior Health Promotion, and DrPH Programs are also eligible for available research funds. No more than one MEZCOPH research award can be awarded to the same student in a given academic year. These awards are designed to assist graduate students in the completion of their thesis or doctoral research and to provide them with funds to purchase supplies, equipment, or laboratory tests that are not funded by other resources. Announcement of these award opportunities will be distributed to graduate students via student listservs.

TRAVEL AWARDS/POSTER PRINTING

Students are encouraged to apply for travel funding through the [Graduate and Professional Student Council \(GPSC\)](#).

MEZCOPH GRADUATE, RESEARCH, & TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Graduate Research Assistantships

Research assistantships are often available through the research grants of MEZCOPH faculty members or from other departments on the University campus. When the Office of Student Affairs is notified of research assistantship opportunities, information will be shared with students via student listservs. However, these opportunities are best sought by speaking with individual faculty members who are conducting research as not all opportunities are shared with OSA. In general, these positions are awarded based on a competitive application that exhibits excellence in academic and/or professional endeavors and a strong indication that the candidate has the talents or abilities that the assistantship requires. In addition to a salary, these assistantships typically provide the recipient with a waiver of out-of-state tuition, partial remission of in-state tuition, student health insurance, and a 10% discount at the UA bookstores. Students are responsible for university fees and College of Public Health program fees.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

Based on class size and format, a limited number of MEZCOPH courses utilize teaching assistants (TAs). TAs serve in mentoring, instruction, and administrative roles working with course instructors in the classroom. TA job duties may include taking attendance, grading homework, quizzes, and papers, preparing course materials, developing, and holding study sessions, scheduling guest speakers, monitoring academic integrity, holding office hours and lecturing.

In addition to a salary, these assistantships provide the recipient with a waiver of out-of-state tuition, partial remission of in-state tuition, student health insurance, and a 10% discount at the UA bookstores. Students are responsible for university fees and College of Public Health program fees.

The MEZCOPH Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs works with department heads and program directors to manage the TA assignment process. All TAs are required to complete [two mandatory pieces of online training](#), as well as participate in the Brightspace-based Graduate Assistant Teaching Orientation before they are eligible for employment. International students who serve as TAs must satisfy an English-speaking proficiency evaluation per the Graduate College. For detailed information, please see the Graduate College's [English Speaking Proficiency Evaluation](#) webpage.

The course instructor serves as the TA's supervisor, and it is the instructor's responsibility to communicate job expectations to the TA. It is also the instructor's responsibility to hold the TA accountable for meeting these expectations. At the end of the semester, the instructor is expected to evaluate the TA through a university established process, the [GA Career Conversation](#).

To be considered for a teaching assistantship, students must have completed MEZCOPH's Teaching Assistant Application. Successful completion of duties as a TA does not guarantee future assignments. Students are encouraged to seek graduate research and teaching assistantships in other departments and units at the university. The salary and benefits available to graduate assistants are comparable throughout the university campus.

In addition to the requirements of assistantships throughout MEZCOPH, all students should familiarize themselves with the Graduate College's [Graduate Assistant \(GA\) Manual](#). It is the student's responsibility to read the GA Manual and abide by all policies outlined by the Graduate College.

The Graduate College also offers resources designed to help students balance family, work and school including [GA Parental Leave](#) and [Temporary Alternative Duty Assignments \(TADA\)](#).

DEGREE COMPLETION INFORMATION

MEZCOPH Exit Survey

The MEZCOPH Graduating Student Exit Survey is a mechanism for students to:

- Provide feedback on services and student experiences,
- assess skills and competencies gained while enrolled in the college,
- have a means to contact and network post-graduation.

Exit Survey feedback is used to refine curriculum, operations, and provide inspiration for new initiatives. All students are required to complete the Exit Survey as part of their graduation requirements. Final degree paperwork will be processed after the student has responded to the survey. The link to complete the Exit Survey will be sent directly to the student via e-mail in the weeks leading up to their graduation. Responses are aggregated when reported and do not influence your current or future standing with the college.

Please note that the MEZCOPH Graduating Student Exit Survey is in addition to and separate from the Graduate College Exit Survey that is requested of graduating students across the University.

As part of the Exit Survey, students are required to complete a Graduate Information Sheet, which provides the College with the students' forwarding address and future plans, if known. This information is needed by the college to maintain its accreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health and is collected using the same link as the Exit Survey.

MEZCOPH Convocation

Traditional Semester (Fall and Spring) Completion

Students who finish all degree requirements in Spring are permitted to participate in the May convocation ceremony. Students who finish all degree requirements in the Fall semester are permitted to participate in the December convocation.

All students must notify the Office of Student Affairs of their intent to participate in the MEZCOPH ceremony by April 1 for the May convocation or November 1 for the December convocation.

Prior to these dates via the college listservs, the Office of Student Affairs communicates with students to outline specific convocation information and the procedure for submitting their RSVP. It is the responsibility of the student to read these emails and follow any directions provided.

Non-Traditional Semester (Summer or Winter) Completion

Master's students and doctoral level candidates who complete their degrees in Winter may participate in the college's May ceremony and Summer completers may participate in the December ceremony.

Graduate students who desire to participate in a ceremony preceding the completion of their degree may do so if they have no more than 6 outstanding credits at the time of convocation.

These students must be enrolled in these outstanding units for Summer at the time of May convocation or for the Winter session for the December convocation.

Additionally, MS and doctoral candidates with outstanding graduation requirements must secure their Chair's approval to participate in Convocation and present documentation of approval to OSA by April 1 for the May ceremony or November 1 for December.

University of Arizona Commencement

The UA university-wide commencement ceremony happens only once each year in May. December graduates are welcome to attend the Commencement ceremony either before or after their graduation date. You cannot participate twice. Names in the printed program are by the semester of degree completion and when the application for degree candidacy was filled out in UAccess Student Center. Spring and Summer graduates have a deadline of February 1st of the intended semester and Fall and Winter graduates have a deadline of September 1st of the intended semester.

Per university rules (<https://commencement.arizona.edu>), August graduates, on the other hand, are welcome to participate only in the preceding May commencement and will have their names listed in that commencement program.

To view the university-wide commencement ceremony schedule, please see the University of Arizona academic calendar page: <http://catalog.arizona.edu/acadcal.html>

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA POLICIES

Academic Policies

MEZCOPH students are expected to adhere to all registration, enrollment, grading and academic policies outlined in the [University of Arizona General Catalog](#) and [Graduate College Website](#).

Residency Classification

Residency classification standards and procedures at The University of Arizona are based on the Arizona Board of Regents Policy on Tuition Classification. Each student must be classified as a resident student or a non-resident student for tuition purposes. It is the responsibility of each student to provide the information necessary to obtain a correct residency classification and raise the issue of a disputed classification in a timely manner. For more information, please see the [UA Residency Classification Office website](#).

UA Smoking and Tobacco Policy:

The University's "Smoking and Tobacco Policy" is designed to promote the health and wellness of all members of the University community, including visitors to campus, and it prohibits the use of tobacco and nicotine-containing products on property owned or controlled by the UA. This includes the main campus, the Arizona Health Sciences Center, the Phoenix Bioscience Core, UA South, all satellite campuses, University vehicles, and any property leased by the UA. Smoking cessation aids, such as nicotine gum, patches, and nasal sprays, will be permitted, but all other forms of tobacco or nicotine - including pipes, cigars, cigarettes and e-cigarettes, all types of smokeless tobacco, and water pipes - will be prohibited. The latest version of the policy is available [here](#).

Weapons Policy

Arizona Board of Regents policies 5-303 and 5-308 prohibit the use, possession, display or storage of any Weapons, Dangerous Instruments, Explosive Devices, or Fireworks, among other things, on The University of Arizona campus and on all land and in all buildings owned or under the control of The University of Arizona on behalf of the Arizona Board of Regents, except as provided in Section 12-781 of the Arizona Revised Statutes. No concealed carry permit exempts a person from these policies. These policies apply to all University of Arizona students, employees, visitors, and guests.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES GOVERNING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, CONDUCT & NON-DISCRIMINATION

Academic Integrity Code

Integrity and ethical behavior are expected of every University of Arizona student in all academic work. This academic integrity principle stands for honesty in all class work, and ethical conduct in all labs and clinical assignments. This principle is furthered by the student Code of Conduct and disciplinary procedures established by ABOR Policies 5-308 through 5-404, all provisions of which apply to all University of Arizona students.

The procedures for reviewing a suspected violation are found in the complete [Code of Academic Integrity](#), administered through the UA Dean of Students Office. Students are encouraged to review and be familiar with UA's Dean of Studies policies [here](#).

MEZCOPH students are provided with a number of online resources to assist them in understanding the concept of plagiarism and tools to build citation skills and strategies for avoiding plagiarism. University sanctions may be imposed on a student following an academic integrity infraction. In addition, MEZCOPH financial support (scholarships and assistantships) will be withdrawn, and future awards prohibited.

Student Code of Conduct

The University of Arizona Student Code of Conduct sets forth the standards of conduct expected of students who choose to join the university community. Students who violate these

standards will be subject to disciplinary sanctions to promote their own personal development, to protect the university community, and to maintain order and stability on campus. [The UA Student Code of Conduct](#) outlines these standards and sanctions.

Disruptive Behavior in an Instructional Setting Policy

The University seeks to promote a teaching and learning environment free from material and substantial classroom disruptions. Faculty members and teaching staff have the authority and responsibility to effectively manage their classroom environment. Instructors may determine the time and manner for student questions and expression of points of view in the instructional setting. Accordingly, instructors should establish, communicate, and enforce reasonable rules of classroom behavior and decorum via the syllabus and classroom discussion. This policy is not intended to discourage appropriate classroom expression, discussion, or disagreement, but to promote respectful interactions. Please review the full description of the [Disruptive Behavior in an Instructional Setting Policy](#).

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

The University of Arizona is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free of discrimination. In support of this commitment, the University prohibits discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, based on a protected classification, including race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information. The University encourages all who believe themselves to have been the subject of discrimination to report the matter immediately as described in the link below on Reporting Complaints to University Offices. All members of the University community are responsible for participating in creating a campus environment free from all forms of prohibited discrimination and for cooperating with university officials who investigate allegations of policy violations. Please review the full description of the [UA Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#).

Threatening Behavior by Students Policy

The University seeks to promote a safe environment where students and employees may participate in the educational process without compromising their health, safety, or welfare. The Arizona Board of Regents' Student Code of Conduct, ABOR Policy 5-308, prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community, including to oneself. Threatening behavior can harm and disrupt the University, its community, and its families. Please review the full description of the [UA Policy on Threatening Behavior](#).

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH MATRICULATION STANDARDS

The College has developed matriculation standards to identify the skills and behaviors that are expected of students admitted to the MEZCOPH academic or certificate programs. During the period of enrollment, should the student's performance in any of the areas outlined drop below the acceptable standards, the student may be dismissed from the program to which the

student has been admitted. A student's performance compared to these standards will be assessed during annual academic progress reporting or at any time during the student's enrollment in the College should unsatisfactory performance be reported. Please review the full description of the College of Public Health Matriculation and Progress Standards, found on the MEZCOPH Student Hub under Student Forms.

GRADUATE COLLEGE & MEZCOPH POLICIES

Academic Deficiencies Noted at Admission

A deficiency is a lack of course work or knowledge in a basic area that may be critical to graduate and professional work. Deficiencies in a student's past academic work may be identified by program faculty during the admissions process. The program faculty has the authority to require completion of additional coursework prior to entry into the program or at the onset of the student's graduate study. The coursework required must be taken at the undergraduate level, can be transferred from another accredited institution, and must be graded "A", "B", or "C". Students should take steps immediately to address any deficiencies noted in communications from the College of Public Health.

Academic Probation at the Graduate Level

Students who have a cumulative grade point average of less than 3.00 will be placed on academic probation. Graduate College policy requires students who are on probation to meet with their Faculty Mentor/Advisor, discuss the steps to be taken to remedy the circumstances that caused the probationary status, and devise a written plan of action. Per College of Public Health policy, students on Academic Probation must complete a [Retention Plan](#). Graduate students who are on probation for two consecutive semesters will be disqualified by the Graduate College. Students can apply for readmission to a degree program as early as the semester after their disqualification if they achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 through additional graduate coursework. A re-admission request must be supported by the head of the major department and approved by the Graduate College. There is no guarantee of re-admission. The program can request termination of graduate studies for a student on academic probation. No student on academic probation may hold a Graduate College scholarship, fellowship, or graduate teaching or research assistantship.

GradPath

GradPath is the Graduate College's electronic degree audit process that makes tracking and monitoring student progress transparent to all involved. Students fill in and submit forms online through their UAccess Student Center. Forms have some automatic checking built in that will prevent common errors (e.g., typos in course numbers, illegible faculty names, etc.). There is also some built-in logic to notify students when there is a problem with their form, such as courses outside our time limit. Such messages include links to policy. The automated workflow engine then routes the electronic forms to the faculty and Graduate College for their approval.

It is the student's responsibility to monitor the faculty members' and Graduate College's approval of all forms submitted through [GradPath](#). Students can monitor the approvals by tracking the approval path at the bottom of any form in GradPath.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of I (for Incomplete) may be awarded with the instructor's agreement only near the end of a term when coursework to date has been satisfactorily completed. These are not to take the place of a failing grade and are only appropriate when a student has all but a minor portion of coursework done. More information about the [Incomplete Grade policy](#) can be found online. Instructor conditions for the Incomplete should be outlined on a [Report of Incomplete Grade form](#), which serves as a contract between the student and the instructor, and the completed version is to be sent to your Coordinator for your file.

Leaves of Absence

Students who have an interruption in their enrollment of one semester or more in the program and have not been approved for a Leave of Absence will be required to apply for readmission upon resumption of coursework. Students seeking readmission should contact their MEZCOPH Graduate Coordinator and the MEZCOPH Director of Admissions to determine a plan for readmission. At a minimum, a Graduate College Application must be completed online, and additional application materials may be required. When a student leaves their graduate program and does not take a leave of absence, readmission is not guaranteed.

Graduate students may be granted a Leave of Absence for a maximum of one year throughout the course of their degree program by the Dean of the Graduate College. Under extraordinary circumstances, LOAs may be granted retroactively for up to one year. LOAs are granted on a case-by-case basis for compelling reasons. Only when the LOA is approved prior to the beginning of the semester for which the LOA is being sought will students be exempted from fees for that semester. Only services or facilities available to the general public can be used during the LOA.

Leaves of Absence (LOAs) may affect the status of a graduate student's financial aid. Students are responsible for determining the requirements of their funding agency and/or academic unit prior to applying for a Leave of Absence. A Leave of Absence does not pause or stop the clock on the allowed time to completion. Master's students have 6 years to complete their degree program starting with the first course that is applied to their degree. Doctoral students have five years from the time they passed the comprehensive exam to complete their degree. Some doctoral programs may have additional maximum time to completion requirements found in the program-specific information of the handbook.

Failure to obtain a Leave of Absence or remain in continuous enrollment will result in penalties, as described in the [Continuous Enrollment](#) policy requirements. The Leave of Absence form is

found within [UAccess Student Center](#) under the Advising header > GradPath > >GradPath forms and lastly Petition Forms.

Academic Leave of Absence

Academic Leave of Absence (i.e., leaves to take coursework at another university, for research, field work, internships, professional development, etc.) are handled on a case-by-case basis by the student's department and the Graduate College.

Medical Leave of Absence

Graduate students in degree programs may be granted a Medical Leave of Absence by the Dean of the Graduate College. Students are able to upload medical documentation if they so choose but are not required.

Personal Leave of Absence

LOAs can be submitted for compelling reasons including birth or adoption of a child, personal or family reasons, military duty, or financial hardship if they do not fit into the above categories.

Responsible Conduct of Research Statement

Every graduate student must complete the Graduate College's Responsible Conduct of Research Statement. This statement verifies that the student agrees to follow responsible conduct of research compliance regulations and academic integrity requirements and will adhere to them in their research. This statement is electronically signed within [UAccess Student Center](#) GradPath. Students must sign the statement before they are able to access their Plan of Study and other [Graduate College forms](#). For guidance on GradPath forms, visit the [User Guides](#) resources developed by the Graduate College.

Exceptions to Policy (Petitions) and Grievance Processes

There are many different types of policies that govern your time with us. When a student experiences an unusual situation, typically outside of their own control, that the student believes merits an exception to a policy, it is important that the appropriate appeals process is followed. We highly encourage students to discuss and identify the appropriate process in consultation with their Graduate Coordinator. Some examples include:

- Program Specific policies should be addressed initially with the Faculty Mentor/Advisor. If necessary, the Program Director and/or the full Program Faculty may need to be consulted.
- Exceptions to MEZCOPH-specific policies include structured process and form designed for that process that must be completed. The document allows the student to explain the reason for requesting an exception to a MEZCOPH-specific policy and requires the

student's request to be reviewed by multiple College administrative channels. Graduate students, please see your Graduate Coordinator. Undergraduates, please see your Academic Advisor.

- [Grade Appeals](#) have specific timelines and processes.
- Graduate College policies have their own [petition process](#).
- Issues related to the Registrar's Office or the Bursar's Office should be directed to those offices.
- For a listing of different grievance categories, please see the Graduate College's [Summary of Grievance Types and Responsible Parties](#).

All appeals require a clear explanation of relevant facts and are strengthened by supporting documentation. In some cases, a letter of support from key faculty or staff may also be requested. Again, your Graduate Coordinator is available to help you identify the most appropriate process for your particular situation.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

To be considered as maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress, a student must:

- Maintain continuous enrollment.
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 or greater.
- Meet Program Milestones in a timely manner.
- Complete and receive a satisfactory faculty review of Student Annual Progress Report.
- Complete required courses satisfactorily – no grades of D, E, or F.

Continuous Enrollment

According to [Graduate College Policy](#), graduate students must be continuously enrolled each fall and spring semesters in a minimum number of graduate units from original matriculation until all degree requirements are met. (See table below.)

Unless excused by an official Leave of Absence (which may not exceed one year throughout the student's degree program), all graduate students are subject to the Continuous Enrollment Policy and must pay tuition and fees to remain in the program. If the student fails to maintain continuous enrollment or obtain a Leave of Absence, the student will be required to apply for re-admission (including submitting application materials as determined by the program), to pay the Graduate College application fee, and pay all overdue tuition and fees. Tuition or registration waivers cannot be applied retroactively.

See the table below for the minimum number of units required.

	<i>Full-time Status without assistantship</i>	<i>Full-time Status with assistantship</i>	<i>Part-time Status (has implications for financial aid and visa status)</i>
Graduate student	9	6	1*
Graduate student with all course work, unit requirements, steps and milestones completed <u>except</u> applied practice experience (MPH), thesis (MS) or dissertation (doctoral) units.	3*	6	1*
Graduate student with all course work, unit requirements, steps and milestones completed <u>including</u> applied practice experience (MPH), thesis (MS) or dissertation (doctoral) units.	1**	6	1**

**International students need to work with the International Student Office to get special endorsement for this minimum number of units.*

***Doctoral or master's students who are making good progress toward their degrees and who are not hired as Graduate Assistants/Associates or on student wages may qualify to enroll for only one credit to maintain full-time status to defer/receive educational loans (federal/private), some institutional support (contact unit to verify), or to maintain F or J visa status. For the Office of the Registrar to determine qualification, the graduate student must complete the Application for Advanced Status each semester (for up to four semesters), be registered for the term requested and submit the form three weeks before the term to have full time status reported (the UA only reports enrollment status to the Clearinghouse beginning one week before a term begins).*

Additionally, MPH students planning to complete degree requirements in the summer must be registered in a minimum of 1 unit of graduate credit during the summer term. If not graduating in the summer term, master's students do not have to register for graduate units during summer sessions *unless* they plan to make use of faculty time. If they do plan to use faculty time, they must enroll for a minimum of 1 unit of graduate credit in the summer term(s) in which they are using faculty time. If the student is working at the internship site during the summer, the student must be registered in a minimum of 1 unit of 909 in Summer 10-wk or Summer II.

If an MPH student has completed all course requirements and is only finishing the internship or final, the student must be enrolled in at least 1 unit of 909, Master's Report, during their final semester(s) in the program. Similarly, MS students who have completed all course

requirements and are only completing the thesis requirement, must enroll in at least 1 unit of 910, Master's Thesis, during their final semester(s).

For doctoral students, if the program degree requirements such as the comprehensive exams or final oral dissertation defense are to be completed in the summer, they do not have to register for graduate units during the summer session. However, they must contact the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs so that the Graduate College can be notified that the milestones will be occurring.

Part-time students need to be aware that there are implications for financial assistance, loan repayment, and/or visa status. It is the responsibility of the student to verify this with the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships before requesting/finalizing enrollment with their Graduate Coordinator.

Deferment/Forbearance of Student Loans

Please visit the [Federal Student Aid website](#) to educate yourself on the federal requirements to defer or forebear your student loan payments. The "Continuous Enrollment" section of this handbook defines part-time and full-time status.

Minimum GPA

In accordance with Graduate College standards, all degree program students must take at least 1 credit or more per semester and maintain a B (3.00) cumulative grade point average (GPA). Failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA for two consecutive semesters will result in dismissal from the program, as outlined by the [Graduate College's Academic Probation policy](#). If a student is in danger of falling below a 3.0 GPA, the student should contact the MPH Coordinator or Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs to create a plan of action.

Students can earn a C in a course and still complete the graduate program. However, to maintain a 3.0 GPA, the student would need to earn an A in another course to balance out the C. Additionally, all courses required for your program (i.e., those on your plan of study), must be passed with a grade of C or better.

Grades of D, E, or F

Only courses in which the student has earned a grade of A, B, C, S or P may be included in the Graduate Plan of Study. A course may be repeated for inclusion in the Plan of Study or to improve the GPA; however, the original grade will be included in the GPA calculation and remain on the student's transcript. Please be aware that students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 to graduate. Students who fail required coursework are at risk of dismissal from the program.

Program Steps and Milestones to Completion

A student's progress toward meeting the Program Steps and Milestones to Degree is assessed at the time of the students' Annual Progress Report in conjunction with their Faculty Mentor/Advisor and Program Faculty. When it is determined that a student is not making timely progress, the student and Faculty Mentor/Advisor will meet to create a Retention Plan using the MEZCOPH form, *Graduate Student Retention Plan for Failing to Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress*. Please see the Steps and Milestones for your degree in the second portion of this handbook below.

Continued Program Progress and Annual Progress Report

Of major importance to the program faculty and to the College is the student's successful progression toward fulfilling all degree requirements. The process of monitoring student progress is outlined below.

Students are required to complete an Annual Progress Report that describes their progress and accomplishments for the previous academic year. This report is completed early in the spring semester of each year; the Office of Student Affairs notifies students of the process and deadlines related to the Annual Progress Report. In a timely manner, students are responsible for completing the report electronically and making an appointment to review the report with their Faculty Mentor/Advisor. After this meeting, the faculty will add notes and electronically sign the report for it to route to the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Coordinator sends these reports to the appropriate Program Director. The student is also asked to attach a résumé and a copy of the current Plan of Study (either draft or final version). Students who do not comply with the requirement for filing the Annual Progress Reports will be notified in writing of their failure to document satisfactory progress with a copy also sent to their Faculty Mentor/Advisor. These students are at risk for potential dismissal from the program.

The program faculty will review the reports, completion of required coursework, course grades, and timeliness of progress. When academic progress issues are identified, the program faculty, in consultation with Student Services, will provide the student with a retention plan.

A copy of the Annual Progress Report with faculty recommendations will be kept in the student's file in the Office of Student Affairs. If issues were identified, the original Annual Progress Report, with official recommendations, will be returned to the student for review with the recommendation that the student consults with the Faculty Mentor/Advisor.

Failure to Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress – Retention Planning

When a student has been identified as not making progress due to the following bulleted conditions, the student will be notified in writing via the student's official UA email account using the College's Graduate Student Retention Plan Form.

- Failing to complete and receive a satisfactory review of the student's Annual Progress Report.
- Received a grade of D, E or F in a required course.
- Placement on University Academic Probation for failing to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or greater.
- Failure to maintain continuous enrollment.
- Failure to meet program milestones in timely fashion.
- Failure to meet other Academic Guidelines.

The student's Faculty Mentor/Advisor and the appropriate Graduate Coordinator should be copied on that communication, as well. According to [Graduate College policies](#) students must be given an opportunity to appeal or rebut items of unsatisfactory progress. The Graduate Student Retention Plan Form will outline how the student is not meeting satisfactory academic progress, provide the student with the opportunity to explain the situation, and allow the student and the Faculty Mentor/Advisor to determine an agreed upon retention plan and timeline of completion. Signatures of agreement from the student, Faculty Mentor/Advisor and Program Director are required.

Students who do not fulfill their retention plan requirements by the agreed upon timeline may be dismissed from the program. In this eventuality, the program may send a formal request to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College requesting the student's dismissal from the program and the Graduate career. The Graduate College then decides whether to dismiss the student.

REGISTRATION, ENROLLMENT, & CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Only 500 level courses or higher will receive graduate credit, and only 500 level (or higher) courses count toward the minimum enrollment. Graduate students may not apply undergraduate units toward their graduate degree requirements.

Registration and Payment Deadlines

Registration for UA courses can be accomplished using the [UAccess Student Center](#). Please be aware that it is the student's responsibility to be informed of the payment deadlines, see UA [Bursar](#) for payment deadlines. The student must pay in advance of these deadlines to avoid late penalties. The Office of Student Affairs cannot negotiate the removal of late fees. It is advisable that initially, a student be prepared to pay for the number of units that the student anticipates taking, even though the [schedule](#) may change later.

Enrollment in Fieldwork

Many students undertake field work in support of independent study, applied practice experience/internship, thesis, or dissertation efforts. While in the field working on any class or research projects for course credit, the student must be registered for appropriate credit hours. When working in the field, students may encounter risk. University of Arizona course enrollment ensures liability coverage by the University. Students may not travel to countries for which the U.S. State Department has issued a Travel Warning to complete academic requirements.

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL PROCEDURES

All students planning an internship or research project or completing a course outside of the United States must register their travel with the university via UA Study Abroad Independent Global Experience (IGE) application. Students traveling abroad must also register for GeoBlue Insurance coverage at \$3 per day. Per UA Study Abroad policy, students are also required to provide proof of a medical appointment with a Health Travel Clinic as part of the IGE application. Campus Health Travel Clinic (<https://health.arizona.edu/immunizations-travel-clinic>) or Find a Clinic Near You (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/find-clinic/>).

The IGE application can be found here:

https://arizona.terraotta.com/index.cfm?FuseAction=Students.Apply&Program_ID=10376

Before planning any international travel for internships or research, always communicate with your Graduate Coordinator to ensure the correct process is being followed. The student's consultation with [UA International Student Services](#) is important in advance of planning the travel.

ATTENTION INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The University of Arizona requires that all international students on non-immigrant visas, regardless of classification or number of units, carry the Student Health Insurance unless one qualifies for an [exemption](#). Exemptions must be requested each semester. Enrollment for Post-Doctoral Fellows, J1 Visiting Scholars and J1 Student Interns are handled directly through the Campus Health Service Insurance Office.

READMISSION POLICY

Occasionally, students encounter life events that lead them to discontinue their graduate studies for a number of reasons. In the event that you discontinue your graduate program while in good academic standing and wish to return to complete your degree, you will need to comply with the College of Public Health readmission policy.

Any student who requests readmission to their graduate program must submit an internal application. The readmissions policy and application process are outlined at <https://publichealth.arizona.edu/admissions/graduate/how-to-apply>.

SECTION II – PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND POLICIES

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPIDEMIOLOGY PhD & MS PROGRAMS

The Discipline of Epidemiology

Epidemiology is the scientific discipline concerned with the causes and prevention of human disease. Epidemiology focuses on the health among human populations, considering changes within populations over time, and differences among and between populations in disease risk. Considering and understanding potential biases and their effect when collecting data or studying sick individuals is a large component to epidemiological investigations. Epidemiology spans multiple disciplines and sub-fields. Some epidemiologists focus is an exposure lens – for example research that examines how social determinants influence multiple disease outcomes. While others are focused more narrowly on the outcome, for example how the risk or progression of communicable or non-communicable diseases are impacted by biological, social, and environmental factors. Examples of research questions an epidemiologist might pursue include: How does structural racism influence the health inequities seen in the COVID-19 pandemic? Does vitamin D deficiency lead to higher risk of colon cancer? What are the risk factors for endometriosis? How well do behavioral interventions work to increase physical activity or vaccination uptake? The field of epidemiology has been critical in identifying causal links between smoking and cancer and air pollution and chronic lung disease.

Our program incorporates the development of skills for designing epidemiological studies, assessing bias and applying statistical methods to epidemiological data, in order to ultimately interpret results within the strengths and weaknesses of a particular study. These skills are developed through methods coursework along with a culminating experience (MPH internship, MS thesis, or PhD dissertation).

Students in MEZCOPH Epidemiology graduate programs come from diverse backgrounds and include those who have recently finished their undergraduate education, those who have experience working in the field of epidemiology, as well as individuals from other fields of study.

The program's graduates have gone on to assume leadership roles in the field of epidemiology, filling career positions such as Chief of the Office of Border Health; Director of Health Services Research Center; faculty members within schools of public health; and senior epidemiology positions in state health departments.

Degree Programs

Currently, MEZCOPH offers the following degrees with a focus in epidemiology: Doctorate (PhD) in Epidemiology, PhD Minor in Epidemiology, Master of Science (MS) in Epidemiology, and the

Master of Public Health (MPH) with a concentration in Epidemiology. Descriptions are in the [MEZCOPH Academic Curriculum Guide](#).

How to Use the Epidemiology PhD and MS Student Handbook

This handbook was written to help students and faculty navigate through the Epidemiology PhD and MS degree programs. Students create a degree plan with incremental goals (e.g., coursework, qualifying and comprehensive exams, and thesis or dissertation). All Graduate College and MEZCOPH policies and procedures discussed in the first part of the handbook apply as well. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to the policies to ensure successful program completion. Operational processes and policies change, and students are subject to the most recent handbook requirements. Additionally, it is intended that faculty refer to the handbook when mentoring and advising students. The handbook defines shared expectations for students and faculty.

Handbook questions or suggestions for improvement should be directed to MEZCOPH's Office of Student Affairs at 520-626-2112.

Welcome to the Epidemiology Program at MEZCOPH! We are glad you're here.

GENERAL ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH POLICIES

New Student Activities

All new students participate in the Doctoral and MS Student Orientation, scheduled in August prior to the start of Fall semester coursework. Topics include research and academic ethics, College and University policies and procedures, and an introduction to college faculty and their research. Orientation is an opportunity to meet other new and continuing students.

Advising

Upon admission, a Faculty Advisor is appointed for each student. An early task is to *draft* the student's Plan of Study. Students are encouraged to meet and communicate regularly with their Faculty Advisor, and it is the student's responsibility to schedule meetings with the Advisor. Please contact your assigned Faculty Advisor or the Epidemiology Program Director if you have problems matching your interests and career goals with your assigned Faculty Advisor; they can work with you to identify another eligible advisor among the Epidemiology Program faculty.

If the student wishes to change their Faculty Advisor, they must:

- Complete a MEZCOPH Notification of Advisor/Mentor Change form (found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#)),
- Notify the Epidemiology Program Director,
- Submit the form to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs in the Office of Student Affairs.

During the first semester in the Epidemiology Program, students should meet with various Epidemiology faculty members and learn about their research interests. This may help the student to identify research interests, research projects/jobs, and to select faculty for their various graduate committees(s). As the student advances through the Program, and more precisely defines their direction, it is appropriate that the student request a faculty member who is most aligned with their research interests, to serve as Thesis or Dissertation Director even if this faculty member is different from their original, assigned Faculty Advisor. The chair will then serve as faculty advisor. Follow the directions above for changing Faculty Advisor.

Epidemiology Faculty and Roles

The list of Epidemiology faculty and their research profiles can be found on the MEZCOPH website. Students should visit this faculty directory at the beginning of each academic year.

The responsibilities and roles of faculty in the Epidemiology program are listed below:

Faculty Advisor: Serves as the student's initial academic advisor. The student and Faculty Advisor draft the course work for the degree program (with final approval from the Graduate Committee). A Faculty Advisor must be a primary faculty member within the Epidemiology program. This person may also become the Chair or Director of the Thesis

or Dissertation Committee if an appropriate relationship exists between the student's research topic and the Faculty Advisor's area of interest.

Chair of the Graduate Committee for the MS: This person must be a current primary Epidemiology faculty member who has Graduate Faculty status. This person's responsibility is to ensure that the student meets the requirements of the Epidemiology Program and the University. When formally declared via the MEZCOPH Committee Declaration form, the Chair also assumes the responsibilities of the Faculty Advisor.

Chair of the Graduate Committee for the PhD: This person must be a current primary Epidemiology faculty member who has Graduate Faculty status. This person's responsibility is to ensure that the student meets the requirements of the Epidemiology Program and the University. For PhD students, the Chair also oversees the comprehensive examination and dissertation defense. When formally declared via the MEZCOPH Committee Declaration form, the Chair also assumes the responsibilities of the Faculty Advisor.

Thesis or Dissertation Director: This person must be a faculty member of the University of Arizona who has agreed to direct the student in the completion of the thesis/dissertation requirements and who has been approved by the Epidemiology Program. Typically, this faculty member represents the student's content focus area. This person will work closely with the student during the research and writing of the thesis/dissertation. This person is most often the Chair of the Graduate Committee as they are typically primary Epidemiology faculty members; however, they may also be non-tenure eligible Epidemiology faculty or other faculty approved by the Epidemiology Program.

Mentor(s): Can be any faculty member who mentors the student regarding scientific or professional development. The student is responsible for seeking out mentors and developing those relationships. One of your mentors may also be your Faculty Advisor or become a Thesis or Dissertation Director if an appropriate relationship exists between the student's research topic and the faculty member's areas of interest.

The Manager for the MS and Doctoral Programs is the student's point of contact in the Office of Student Affairs. The Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs conveys MEZCOPH and Graduate College policies and procedures to students, receives student paperwork for processing with the College and Graduate College, and coordinates MS and doctoral program activities with the Program Directors and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

While the faculty and staff are available to assist, completion of degree requirements and paperwork is ultimately the student's responsibility.

Graduate Faculty Status

Per the [Graduate College's policy](#), "Members of the graduate faculty have special privileges and obligations within graduate education, especially related to thesis, dissertation and other culminating capstone project committee roles and membership, as well as graduate student advising and mentorship. Graduate faculty membership is automatically granted to tenured and tenure-track faculty and continuing-status and eligible academic professionals with faculty titles and may be granted selectively to career track faculty or others. The Graduate College, in coordination with the academic colleges and programs, oversees the criteria, processes, and procedures related to the granting, review, and in rare cases of unacceptable performance, the remediation or removal of graduate faculty membership to ensure the quality of graduate programs and delivery of graduate education."

Faculty members who have been granted Graduate Faculty status will be listed as such in the [university's public phonebook](#).

Composition of Graduate Committees for Epidemiology Students

There are several types of Graduate Committees that serve different advisory and educational functions for the students. Students select these graduate committees to maximize mentoring and practical project-related advice. In certain cases, committee membership can be changed by the student until the committee function is underway. For instance, the Comprehensive Examination Committee can be changed right up until the written exam is started. Once the written exam begins, however, the same committee must be used by that student through both the written and oral portions of the comprehensive exam.

MS Committee:

After selecting a research topic for the thesis, the student selects faculty members for a Master's Thesis Director and Committee in consultation with the Faculty Advisor. Master's thesis committees must consist of a minimum of three members. Two of the members must be current University of Arizona Graduate Faculty and at least two of the members must be primary Epidemiology Program faculty or approved by the primary Epidemiology Program faculty. The Graduate Committee Chair must be Epidemiology Program faculty with Graduate Faculty status. The student and Thesis Director discuss and choose the second two committee members. Each Thesis Committee must also be approved by the Epidemiology Program Director and the Graduate College. Information about the Graduate College policy can be found [here](#).

The student documents the approval by filing a MEZCOPH Declaration of Graduate Committee Membership form (found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#)) and the MS Committee Appointment Form (found on the [UAccess Student Center](#) under the GradPath option). Once these forms are received, the student can register for thesis credits. Briefly:

EPI MS Thesis Committee

- Minimum 3 members, two must be Graduate Faculty* (Grad College requirement)
- Chair is primary Epi Program faculty with Graduate Faculty status*
- At least 2 members must be primary Epi Program faculty or approved by primary Epi Program Faculty
- Thesis Director must be primary Epi Program faculty. If not Graduate Faculty, then this person cannot serve as Chair

*Please see the [Graduate Faculty Status](#) section above for a definition.

EPI PhD Committees:

While students may have an initial advisory committee during the course of their studies, most PhD students work with one group of faculty members for their dissertation.

However, the Graduate College has two official committees with set rules.

(1) The [Comprehensive Examination Committee](#), and

(2) The [Dissertation Committee](#)

(Note: see the hyperlinks for Graduate College policy regarding committee composition.)

The faculty Chair of both committees is the same and is designated as the Chair of the Graduate Committee. This person must be Graduate Faculty in the Epidemiology Program. While the Comprehensive Exam Committee and the Dissertation Committee most often consist of the same members, this is not required. Members may be changed between the time of the Comprehensive Exam and finalization of the Dissertation Committee.

The Dissertation Director is chosen by the student based on their own area of interest and that of the faculty member. The Dissertation Director (disease, exposure, or other content area expert) and the Chair of the Graduate Committee will typically be the same person, but sometimes this is not possible. For example, if the Dissertation Director is not Graduate Faculty, or is not a primary epidemiology faculty member, then another Epidemiology faculty member must be identified to serve as the Chair of the Graduate Committee. The Graduate Committee(s) is selected by the student in conjunction with their Chair of the Committee/Dissertation Director after the student has passed the Qualifying Exam and during the first two years in the program. After consulting with the Dissertation Director, the student is responsible for inviting faculty members to serve on their Graduate Committee.

The Comprehensive Examination and Dissertation Committees must be approved by the Epidemiology Program Director, after consultation with the faculty if needed, and by the Graduate College. The student must complete the MEZCOPH Declaration of Committee Membership form (found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#)) with all Committee members' signatures and file the form with the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs. In addition,

the student must notify the Graduate College of the Committee membership by filing a Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment Form (found on the [UAccess Student Center](#) under the GradPath option). Committee membership must meet both the Graduate College and Epidemiology Program requirements.

Comprehensive Examination Committee: The examining committee must consist of a minimum of four members. According to Graduate College rules:

- The Graduate Committee Chair and two additional members must be Graduate Faculty. The fourth member may be Graduate Faculty or a special approved member. Special members must be pre-approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.
- The Graduate Committee consists of at least three faculty members from the major field of study and at least one faculty member representing each of the minor fields.
 - The Committee Chair and one other member representing the major must be from the primary Epidemiology Program faculty.
 - The third member can be from the Epidemiology Program faculty, or an outside member approved by the Epidemiology Program faculty.
 - The number of minor faculty members is determined by the requirements of the selected minor(s). A Committee member may not serve in a dual role (i.e., as a minor faculty member and as the third approved member).

EPI PhD Comprehensive Exam Committee

- Minimum 3 members representing the major, 1 representing the minor (Grad College requirement)
- 3 of 4 members must be Graduate Faculty (Grad College requirement)
- Chair is primary Epidemiology Program faculty with Graduate Faculty status
- 1 more major member must be primary Epidemiology Program faculty
- Third member representing the major may be Epidemiology Program faculty or an outside member approved by Epidemiology Program faculty

*Please see the [Graduate Faculty Status](#) section above for a definition.

This Graduate Committee evaluates past coursework and projects, recommends additional coursework that will provide the student with field expertise and specialized knowledge to achieve the dissertation, and will ultimately examine the student's comprehensive knowledge of the field in both written and oral formats as part of the Comprehensive Examination Committee.

- The oral and written part of the exam must be taken within the same or consecutive semesters and must be passed at least 6 months prior to graduation. Students are

required to have an approved Plan of Study with the Graduate College prior to scheduling their oral Comprehensive Examination.

- At least three months before sitting for the written portion of the Comprehensive Examination, the student must complete the MEZCOPH Declaration of Committee Membership form (found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#)) with all committee members' signatures and file the form with the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs. In addition, the student must notify the Graduate College of the committee membership by filing a Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment Form (found on the [UAccess Student Center](#) under the GradPath option). (Please note that these forms are separate from the Dissertation Committee Appointment Form, which the Graduate College requires after the student has passed the comprehensive exam. See the "[Dissertation Committee Appointment](#)" section below for more details.) All comprehensive Committee members are required to attend the entire duration of the oral comprehensive exam, which can be no more than three hours.

Dissertation Committee: After the Comprehensive Examination, the student must officially form the Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation Committee is typically the same as the examining committee, but requires a minimum of three members, all three of whom must be University of Arizona Graduate Faculty. Additional members may be Graduate Faculty or a "Special" approved member. Special members must be pre-approved by the Dean of the Graduate College. The Chair of the Dissertation Committee must be Graduate Faculty in the Epidemiology Program. The student should check with their Minor Advisor's program to determine whether or not the Minor Advisor is required to be included on this committee. All Dissertation Committee members are required to attend the entire duration of final defense, which may be up to three hours. Briefly:

EPI PhD Dissertation Committees

- Minimum 3 members representing the major (Grad College requirement), two of which must be primary Epidemiology Program faculty
- Minor Advisor may or may not serve depending upon policy of minor program
- 3 members must be Graduate Faculty (Grad College requirement)
- Chair is primary or joint Epidemiology Program faculty with Graduate Faculty status
- 2 others are UA Graduate Faculty

*Please see the [Graduate Faculty Status](#) section above for a definition.

Epidemiology PhD Minor Committee Membership: Students seeking a PhD minor in Epidemiology must have at least one primary Epidemiology Program faculty member to serve as a Faculty Minor Advisor and to serve on their Comprehensive Examination and Dissertation Committees. Completion of a MEZCOPH form is required to declare the minor (found on the

[MEZCOPH Student Hub](#) or send a request for the form to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs in the Office of Student Affairs). The Minor Faculty Advisor selection requires approval by the Epidemiology Program faculty.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The policies within specific course syllabi govern the use of AI in your classes. Students are expected to review and understand the policies contained in all their syllabi. Any questions regarding the use of AI for course work should therefore be directed to the course instructor.

Students should not use AI to generate responses for comprehensive exams. Students who would like to use AI in the preparation of a thesis prospectus, dissertation proposal, capstone project, thesis or dissertation should discuss the matter with the faculty member responsible for oversight of the milestone (usually Committee Chair). If the use of AI is approved in any fashion, [proper citation](#) needs to be used and the AI generated text included in the document's appendix. The use of AI without proper citation is plagiarism and a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Human Subjects Protection Program Information

The Human Subjects Protection Program (**HSPP**), as the administrative and regulatory support program to the University of Arizona's Institutional Review Board (**IRB**), works in collaboration with the research community to maintain an ethical and compliant research program. The IRB committees are the independent review committees charged with the protection of human research subjects. An IRB must review all research and related activities involving human subjects conducted at the University of Arizona (UA) or in which the University is a responsible participant.

The purpose of IRB review is to assure that appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the rights and welfare of humans participating in the research are protected, that risks to the participants are minimized and are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, and that the Principal Investigator (PI) is qualified to conduct the study. IRBs review research protocols and related materials (e.g., informed consent documents). In accordance with federal regulations, an IRB has the authority to approve, require modifications in, or disapprove research.

All studies involving human subjects or creation, or use of Protected Health Information (PHI) must be reviewed and approved in advance by the UA HSPP/IRB Office, in the Office of Research, Innovation & Impact (RII), under the Senior Vice President for Research (VPR), to determine if the research adheres to federal regulations. It is against Federal regulations to conduct research involving human subjects without or prior to IRB approval.

The HSPP has launched a portal submission system, [eIRB](#), which is designed to make submitting human research protocols easier and faster. IRB Protocol Application forms should always be

downloaded directly from the IRB-[HSPP Forms page](https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/eirb-information), as they are in constant revision. The eIRB portal can be accessed through UAccess at the following link: <https://uaccess.arizona.edu/>. The student/PI will need their UA NetID and password to gain access to eIRB. There is more information regarding eIRB and the link to access the site at the following IRB link, (which requires a UA NetID and PW) : <https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/eirb-information>.

COPH IRB Training on D2L

The MEZCOPH Research Office has created the “**COPH IRB Training**” on D2L, which is a self-paced training and is recommended for all MEZCOPH students and faculty. The purpose of the training is to assist students and their mentors in determining whether a project would be considered human research or not. The training also provides supplemental guidance, documentation on HIPAA and data use agreements, as well as the CPH internal and IRB submission and approval processes. Please log in to: [D2L](#) then select “Discover” in the top bar and then search for “COPH IRB Training.” Then select the “Enroll in Course” button.

MEZCOPH Human Subjects Approval Process (Doctoral Dissertation/Master’s Thesis Projects)

Human Subjects Training and Certification (CITI)

All doctoral students must obtain Human Subjects training and certification, (via the CITI Program), before beginning their dissertation project, regardless of whether they are completing human research.

CITI training and information can be found on the HSPP-IRB website at the following link: <https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/training-requirements>. There are several courses to choose from, but the two “main” courses are: Social & Behavioral Research or Biomedical Research. Each student should choose the most appropriate course for their dissertation project, in consultation with their Committee Chair/Dissertation Director. Choose the course based on the type of activities you plan to conduct. (Note that other supplemental courses may be required depending on the project activities.)

MEZCOPH Human Subjects Research – Submission and Approval Process

MEZCOPH students must initially submit their IRB Protocol application, and required supplemental documentation, to their Dissertation Director/Chair (“**Advisor**” for IRB purposes), to allow them to review and approve of the application and supplemental materials (as needed). It’s imperative to work with the Dissertation Director and site preceptor, (if applicable), upon answering the questions on the IRB application, to ensure that enough

information has been provided regarding the project protocol. Once approved, the Dissertation Director (Advisor), must then sign and complete the “**Advisor/Co-PI Attestation Form.**” Please note that the Committee Chair/Dissertation Director (Advisor), should also provide the review and approval for the required, “**Scientific/Scholarly Review Attestation for Human Subjects Research.**” The completed *Advisor* and *Scientific Review Attestation* Forms are a part of the IRB required supplemental documentation. (The Attestation forms must be uploaded into eIRB as part of the “Local Site Documents.”)

MEZCOPH **Departmental review** and approval is handled through the **Office of the Associate Dean for Research (ADR)**. In order to obtain the IRB “**Department/Center/Section Review Attestation Form,**” all IRB application forms, supplemental documentation, (as applicable), the *Advisor Attestation*, and *Scientific Review Attestation*, must be submitted to the CPH Research (ADR) Office/(Cc Suzanna Trejo-Robinson), (via email: COPH-Research@arizona.edu and please Cc: suzanna@arizona.edu), for internal pre-review, prior to submitting the IRB application in eIRB. Suzanna will review the submission for completeness. Once the application is complete, she will provide the **Department/Center/Section Review Attestation Form**, on behalf of the Associate Dean for Research (ADR) and will send it back to the PI/student. The **Advisor/Co-PI Attestation Form**, **Scientific Review Attestation** and the **Department Attestation Form** are all required for the eIRB submission. If the required approvals are not uploaded in eIRB, along with the application and other required documents, the submission will not be reviewed.

If clarification is needed on whether the project constitutes human research, (or for internal MEZCOPH procedure questions), Dissertation Directors and/or students should contact the MEZCOPH Research Office (ADR)/Suzanna Trejo-Robinson via: (COPH-Research@arizona.edu and please Cc: suzanna@arizona.edu), early in their planning process. Students and Advisors can also contact the UA HSPP-IRB Office directly with their questions (not related to the CPH internal process), should they choose to do so. In this case, they should email the VPR-IRB Departmental account at: vpr-irb@arizona.edu. Students will also find that the IRB web pages titled, “**Getting Started, FAQs and Top 10 Tips,**” are extremely helpful and informative: <https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/getting-started>.

Human Subjects Forms for Doctoral Dissertation/Master’s Thesis Projects

Completion of the Appropriate HSPP-IRB Forms

Each dissertation project must be reviewed by the Dissertation Director to establish whether the project will require HSPP/IRB review or not, and if so, determine which IRB form to submit for approval. If the project requires a full review by one of the IRB Review Committees, additional time must be built into the dissertation project timeline. There are a couple of protocol form options, for seeking IRB approval of the doctoral research project, and these forms are described below and can be found at the following IRB link:

<https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/HSPP-form/forms-index>

****NOTE:** It is important to begin this process as soon as you have confirmed the project activities with the dissertation committee. This process can take some time, and it is the responsibility of the student to complete/submit the document(s) early to meet deadlines. ******

When You KNOW the Project is Human Subjects Research:

Complete the appropriate IRB Protocol/Application Document

IRB Protocol for Human Subjects Research – utilized for a study involving prospective collection of data from or interaction with human subjects.

IRB Protocol for Human Subjects Research Retrospective Data Review – utilized for a retrospective data review study involving existing records review, data abstraction, and analysis.

IRB Protocol for Projects Using External IRBs – utilized for requests that IRB oversight be ceded to a non-University of Arizona IRB, (i.e., an agency or university outside of a UA department – in other words Ceding IRB review to another institution). *Please note that the student/PI must be added to the external institution/agency’s IRB protocol. *

eIRB Modification (for a **UA-IRB Approved Protocol** for Human Research) – If a student will be added to a current UA-IRB approved project, the PI of the approved study will need to create and submit a Modification, (in eIRB: via the eIRB portal Smart Form), to inform the IRB of changes to study team members. A copy of the acknowledgement and Modification approval, from the IRB, that the student has been added, and email confirmation from the study PI, (that the student has been added to the project), **MUST** be included in the final dissertation paperwork submitted to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs and to Suzanna Trejo-Robinson in the MEZCOPH Research Office. (COPH-Research@arizona.edu and please Cc: suzanna@arizona.edu).

Other Approvals Required

Depending on the research activities, there may be other required approvals that will need to be obtained, prior to submission in eIRB, please see “Step 3: Obtain Additional Approvals” at the following IRB link: <https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/getting-started>

Students must work closely with their Dissertation Director and Suzanna Trejo-Robinson in the MEZCOPH Research (ADR) Office to ensure the correct IRB forms and approvals are completed and submitted in eIRB, to begin the project by the intended start date.

As previously stated, submission of the IRB Protocol Application, including supplemental documentation and required approvals, need to be sent to the ADR Office/Suzanna Trejo-

Robinson at: (COPH-Research@arizona.edu and please Cc: suzanna@arizona.edu). The student should also copy their Dissertation Director and the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs, on the ADR submission email.

Review/approval time, first by Suzanna and then the UA IRB, will vary but ***can sometimes take up to 4 weeks or more to complete***. Use the desired research start date/deadline and plan backwards to submit the IRB application, with enough time to meet the deadline.

UA HSPP-IRB application documents can be found under “IRB Protocol Forms” at:

<https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/HSPP-form/forms-index>

Submit a Copy of the IRB Approval with Project Paperwork

A copy of the final approval letter, from the UA-IRB, *must* be submitted to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs as part of the final paperwork packet. If the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs does not have proof of UA IRB approval, the student may not start their project.

When You are UNSURE if the Project is Human Subjects Research:

Complete the *IRB Protocol for Determination of Human Research* (DOHR) Form

Students should complete the IRB Protocol for Determination of Human Research (DOHR) form, with the assistance of their Dissertation Director, and site preceptor/PI (if applicable), based on the specifics of the (student’s) project activities and projected outcomes. Completing the DOHR form should help assess and clarify whether the (student’s) project activities will be considered “human research” or not and if the project will require additional review through the UA IRB. (If a student is assisting/observing/interning as part of a larger agency project, it is imperative that the student only include details of their specific role(s) and intended projected outcomes, when completing the DOHR form.)

Please review the [IRB Guidance](#) titled, “What is Human Research,” which provides information on activities that are (usually) deemed to not be human research:

<https://research.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/What%20is%20Human%20Research%20v2023-05.pdf>. Please also review the “Getting Started” IRB page at the following link:

<https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/getting-started>.

The DOHR and all IRB Protocol Forms can be found at: [HSPP Forms for Submission](#).

Approvals Required and the Submission Process (Internal and eIRB)

Email the completed IRB form to your Dissertation Director for review and approval.

Once approved, the Committee Chair/Dissertation Director (Advisor), must sign the “**Advisor/Co-PI Attestation Form**” as well as the “**Scientific/Scholarly Review Attestation for Human Subjects Research**” form, (for all Human Research Protocols, not for the DOHR form).

(Note: the DOHR form only requires the Advisor Attestation form. *The Dissertation Director can approve for both the “Advisor” and the “Scientific Reviewer,” for student human research protocols. * These forms are required to be uploaded into the eIRB portal, along with the “**Department Attestation” Approval**, prior to eIRB submission. *Department approval comes from the CPH ADR Office. (*The DOHR form only requires the Advisor Attestation approval and if applicable, the DOHR form can be submitted directly to eIRB, once all documents are complete.)

COPH Department Attestation Approval

Once you have received the **Advisor and Scientific Review Attestations**, from the Dissertation Director, **submit the following: (1) the completed protocol/application forms, (2) supplemental documents (as required), (3) signed (Advisor & Scientific Review) Attestation forms and (4) a PDF of the eIRB submission, (as applicable and only IF the student has already started the eIRB process)**, to the MEZCOPH ADR/Research Office and Suzanna Trejo-Robinson: (COPH-Research@arizona.edu and please Cc: suzanna@arizona.edu).

Students MUST copy their Dissertation Director and the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs on this e-mail. Suzanna will inform the student of any revisions needed.

If the project activities are clearly not human research activities, (and will not require IRB review), Suzanna can (sometimes) approve the DOHR form internally, (but only when IRB review is not required). If this is the case, Suzanna will send an approval email, confirming the form/project has been internally approved. (This only applies to the Determination of Human Research (DOHR) applications.) If it’s not clear, or if the student PI requires an official IRB approval letter, (if requested by journals, sites, sponsors, etc.), the DOHR form should be submitted directly, through eIRB, for UA-IRB review. (*Please review the CPH-IRB Training on D2L for more guidance.)

*(Students should NOT submit the IRB Protocol in eIRB until all required Attestation form approvals and final revisions are completed.)

Please review the IRB’s “Top 10 Tips” page for common pitfalls to avoid when completing study documents: <https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/getting-started/top-10-tips>.

HSPP-IRB Submission through the eIRB Portal

Once all required applicable HSPP forms and study documents are completed, and all applicable attestation approvals have been obtained, the student PI will log into the eIRB portal, to begin the submission, by completing the eIRB smart form and uploading all required documentation. Once the form and uploads are complete, the student will submit the study protocol in the eIRB portal.

Notification of Approval

If IRB determines that the protocol/project is NOT human research, and/or they give a final approval, that the human subject's application has been approved, the student must download the letter from the eIRB portal and then send the official approval letter, from the UA IRB, to (1) the Dissertation Director, (2) the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs, and (3) Suzanna Trejo-Robinson (COPH-Research@arizona.edu). Include a copy of this confirmation with your final project paperwork.

Notes About Common Types of Projects

Program evaluations and/or **quality improvement** projects generally are not considered to be Human Subjects' Research and usually do NOT require a full IRB application, so long as the results are not intended to be generalizable. Please review the IRB Guidance, "[What is Human Research](#)." If they are still unsure, the student/PI, along with their Committee Chair/Dissertation Director (Advisor), can complete the ***IRB Protocol for Determination of Human Research (DOHR)*** form and if necessary, submit to the Research Office, (include the signed Advisor Attestation approval), to assess and evaluate the student's activities. (*Please include in the DOHR form Summary, as part of the project/protocol descriptions: the organization, the program or process being evaluated within the organization, and how the project activities will bring about prompt improvements.) (COPH-Research@arizona.edu and please Cc: suzanna@arizona.edu).

De-identified data, for a secondary data analysis research project, where the PI/advisor/study team does not nor will not have access to the original identifiers, usually will NOT be considered human subjects' research and an additional IRB application generally will NOT be required. Please review the IRB Guidance, "[Record Reviews](#)." If they are still unsure, the student/PI, along with their Committee Chair/Dissertation Director (Advisor), can complete the **DOHR** form and if necessary, submit to the Research Office, (include the signed Advisor Attestation approval), in order to assess the student's activities.

*NOTE: It needs to be clearly stated, (in the DOHR form), from where the data is coming from and who might have access to the identifiers. Please state, in the DOHR **Summary** section descriptions, that the data will be de-identified (if applicable). **Please include (1)** a confirmation email, from the preceptor and/or PI, that you will only receive de-identified data and **(2)** a list of the data elements will be required to accompany the application.

In general, activities involving **quality improvement/ program evaluations**, case reports and oral histories, to name a few, usually do NOT constitute Human Research (so long as the intent is not to generalize the results). The student will have to complete the DOHR form, in consultation with the Committee Chair/Dissertation Director, to make that assessment.

More information and **IRB Guidance** on these types of activities and procedures can be found at: [Guidance for Researchers](#).

For clarification or questions, contact the MEZCOPH Research Office/Suzanna Trejo-Robinson via email at: (COPH-Research@arizona.edu and please Cc: suzanna@arizona.edu) early in the planning process. You can also contact the HSPP-IRB office directly using their VPR listserv email address at: vpr-irb@arizona.edu. (*MEZCOPH submission protocol questions should be directed to the MEZCOPH Research Office, not the IRB Office.)

Committee Chair/Dissertation Director (Advisor) Review & Approval Process:

For all IRB Protocol Forms, the student should work with their Committee Chair/Dissertation Director (Advisor), (and research PI and/or preceptor as indicated), to complete the IRB documents, (regarding the student's activities in the project), and then get the advisor's approval via the "*Advisor Attestation Form*." As a reminder, the Dissertation Director can and should approve as both the *Advisor* and as the *Scientific Reviewer* of the project.

MEZCOPH Review & Approval Process (for human research projects only):

The IRB protocol/application, (and supplemental documentation as required), is forwarded via email to the MEZCOPH Research Office: (COPH-Research@arizona.edu and please CC suzanna@arizona.edu) for a **preliminary review**. (**Do not submit in eIRB without MEZCOPH ADR Department review and approval.)

Suzanna Trejo-Robinson will conduct a pre-review of the application and if complete and if necessary, the application will be routed to the MEZCOPH Scientific Review Committee (as needed) for review and approval (unless approved by the Committee Chair/Dissertation Director (Advisor)). **Please note that these two steps can take 2-4 weeks, depending on projects already in the queue.

Once the Scientific Review Attestation form is signed, it is then sent back to the Research Office for Review and approval by the Associate Dean for Research (ADR) for Departmental Review and approval. Finally, the ADR/Research Office, (Suzanna Trejo-Robinson), will provide the student/PI with the signed "Department Attestation" form, to complete the required eIRB submission documents.

HSPP-IRB Office Review & Approval Process

The **HSPP-IRB Office** will provide the final review and approval. Once the application is submitted in the eIRB portal, the IRB Office will communicate directly with the PI of the project. The IRB Office will send official approval notification directly to the PI, (through the eIRB portal), to activate the research. Please review the "[Submission & Approval Process Overview](#)."

Planning Ahead for Proper Approval

It is the student's responsibility to plan ahead, seek the necessary IRB paperwork approvals, and complete the associated documents. The student must plan far enough in advance to complete the IRB approval process, prior to the desired research start date. Although there is no set timeframe for IRB approval, the student should plan approximately 2-3 weeks at the

MEZCOPH level, (depending on queue), and an additional 2-4 weeks, (depending on queue), once received by the UA HSPP-IRB Office. Questions about the internal MEZCOPH process should be discussed with Suzanna Trejo-Robinson in the MEZCOPH Research Office at: (COPH-Research@arizona.edu) and please Cc: suzanna@arizona.edu or via phone: 626-8315. You can also send HSPP-IRB inquiries, (about project activities and questions), directly to the IRB listserv at: VPR-IRB@email.arizona.edu.

Research Project Closure Forms

Investigators/students are responsible for concluding all Human Research activities as soon as possible, after the research project is completed or no longer involves human research activities. Please see the IRB Guidance, "[Concluding Human Research](#)." If the project was approved using one of the ***IRB Protocol for Human Subjects Research forms***, the research protocol **MUST** be officially concluded OR transferred to another eligible PI, (if the study will continue with a different PI). This process is the responsibility of the individual graduate student.

IRB Continuing Review (in eIRB) for Renewal/Closure for Human Research:

The Continuing Review eIRB Smart Form is completed in the eIRB portal, in order to inform the IRB Office that the study is completed, a decision has been made to not conduct the study, or if the study will be renewed for another year. Projects not concluded, after the expiration date of the project, will enter a "**Lapsed**" state and can be re-opened with a Continuing Review submission in eIRB; however, no human research activities can take place, unless approved by the IRB Office. Please review the IRB Guidance, "[Continuing Review of Human Research](#)."

All IRB Guidance regarding **Continuing Review** of Human Research, **Concluding** Human Research, **Modifying** Approved Research and **PI Eligibility**, etc. can be found at: [Guidance for Researchers](#).

Student Services Requirements

Students should turn in the following documents to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs in the Office of Student Services and Alumni Affairs:

All students:

- CITI Training Completion report
- Forwarded electronic copy of the approved **Determination** form (if applicable)

Select Students Engaged in Human Subjects Research

Forwarded electronic copy of the approved ***IRB Protocol for Human Subjects Research*** form, (OR one of the three human subjects research protocol forms), supplemental documents and the IRB Approval letter **OR**

Forwarded electronic copy of the approved eIRB **Modification Approval**, which should list the newly added project member (student), and/or an email from the PI or project coordinator, confirming the student was added to the UA IRB-approved project.

All doctoral students are required to obtain an RCR certificate. This can be done in conjunction with an ethics course or independently. <https://research.arizona.edu/research-compliance/rcr/workshops>

THE PHD IN EPIDEMIOLOGY PROGRAM

The PhD program in Epidemiology is intended to train individuals for careers in research and teaching in positions at academic settings, research institutes, government agencies, and industry. It is designed for students who are interested in conducting investigator-initiated epidemiological research and in training future public health professionals. On average, the doctoral program requires 4-5 years for completion after completion of a master's degree. The first two years of this time are usually devoted to coursework, taking the qualifying exam and comprehensive doctoral examinations, and development of doctoral research. The program is research-oriented and focuses on the student's development and completion of a major research project (the dissertation).

For complete information about University of Arizona Graduate College policy for PhD students, please see the [Graduate College website](#).

Student Commitment

Upon entering the doctoral program in Epidemiology, students are committing themselves to the completion of a doctoral dissertation that contributes important, original research to the field. This commitment will require the student to become an expert in the subject matter, which takes time. During doctoral studies, students learn to work both independently and with faculty members as colleagues. A good student tends to:

1. Demonstrate enthusiasm and a passion for learning.
2. Be self-motivated and have a written plan and timeline for degree completion.
3. Initiate contact and regularly schedule appointments with faculty advisors.
4. Clarify their needs to their advisor/mentor prior to meeting with them and comes prepared to meet with their advisor/mentor.
5. Listen to advice and feedback and incorporate suggestions into action plans.
6. Show respect to faculty, mentors, other students, and community members.
7. Think independently and take responsibility for their learning experience.
8. Be goal oriented.

Independent research requires problem-solving skills, initiative, and intellectual curiosity. Students learn to ask and answer research questions independently, while effectively collaborating with others and using available resources.

Faculty Commitment

Faculty members are dedicated to ensuring that individuals develop from a "student" to a PhD level "investigator" during the course of doctoral studies. Faculty members have many responsibilities including teaching classes, conducting research, serving on local and national review committees, and providing service to MEZCOPH, the University of Arizona and other organizations. Faculty members treat students with respect and expect the same in return. A good mentor tends to:

1. Dedicate time for student mentoring.
2. Facilitate problem solving without solving the student's problem for them.
3. Provide opportunities for and assist with student career advancement.
4. Encourage students to identify their professional path.
5. Have excellent communication skills.
6. Help students plan and manage workload.
7. Serve as a role model to advance public health.

New Student Activities

All new PhD students are required to participate in the Doctoral and MS Student Orientation, scheduled in August prior to the start of Fall coursework.

New doctoral students are required to enroll in the Fall semester, one-unit course HPS 609, Evaluating Public Health Literature. The course is team-taught and designed to enhance student critical thinking skills related to public health research.

Competencies

A set of [competencies](#) specific to the PhD Epidemiology degree has been developed which will allow students and the faculty to determine progress. It is recommended that this list be used by students to help assess training needs and progress.

Program Steps and Milestones to Degree

Typical time to completion: 3-5 years (2-3 years for coursework, 1-2 years for dissertation work) for full-time students. 5-8 years for part-time students.

Average time to completion: 6.0 years

Note: Epidemiology PhD students have 8 years from the time of admission to fully complete their degree and 5 years after passing their Comprehensive Exams, per the Graduate College ([see Time Limitations](#)).

Program Steps to Completion (Full-time student timeline):

- Attend mandatory new student orientation
- Serve as a Teaching Assistant at least once during their time in the program or to work with the program director and chair of their committee to identify an equivalent opportunity to develop teaching skills in higher education
- First year is devoted to course work
- Work with Faculty Advisor to develop a tentative Plan of Study
- Each Spring, complete an Annual Progress Report with Faculty Advisor
- End of first Spring, take and pass the Qualifying Exam

- Second year is devoted to course work and forming Comprehensive Exam Committee
- Meet with committee members regularly throughout the program – email updates or meetings at least once per semester
- Formalize Plan of Study by end of second year
- During the second/third year, formalize Committee Chair and Comprehensive Exam Committee
- Develop a Dissertation Research Proposal and gain Committee approval
- PHCL 595B or NIH RCR Certification must be completed prior to registering for dissertation work
- If necessary, begin process for Human Subjects approval for dissertation
- Take and pass Comprehensive Exams (written and oral)
- Form and formalize Dissertation Committee
- Meet with committee members regularly – email updates or meetings with all committee members are strongly encouraged at least once per semester
- Third/fourth year, research, develop, and write dissertation
- Fourth/fifth year, successfully defend dissertation and finalize revisions

Progress of the Program Steps and Milestones to Degree

Student progress is assessed at the time of students' Annual Progress Report in conjunction with their Faculty Advisor and Program faculty. When it is determined that a student is not making timely progress, the student and Faculty Advisor will meet to create a Retention Plan using the MEZCOPH form, "Graduate Student Retention Plan for Failing to Make Satisfactory Academic Progress."

Degree Requirements

Please see the Academic Curriculum Guide for the year you were admitted to your current program found on [the MEZCOPH Student Hub](#). Please note the substitution allowed for PHCL 595b mentioned in the following section.

National Institutes for Health Responsible Conduct of Research Program and PHCL 595b

Students have the option to take PHCL 595b Scientific Writing, Presentation and Bioethics as listed in the Curriculum Guide or to complete the [National Institutes for Health Responsible Conduct of Research Certificate](#). The certificate option will require students to enroll in a RCR NIH/NSF/NIFA certificate program, these certification programs include an online course and participation in at least 5 workshops over a one-year period. Students will report their completion of the RCR certificate in their Annual Performance Review. Evidence of certificate completion needs to be submitted to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs prior to requesting registration into dissertation units. Registration into dissertation units is not allowed

until this requirement has been met. Students who choose to complete the certificate option will need to take two additional units of elective.

Diversity and Inclusion training

Diversity and inclusion are core values in public health. Students are required to take 8 hours of training in diversity and inclusion to provide students with the skills that they need to conduct research with cultural humility, an acknowledgement of diverse experiences, and to increase awareness and skills in health equity. These trainings could include but are not limited to those provided by the Arizona University, the University of Arizona [College of Medicine](#), online trainings. A list of opportunities will be provided at the beginning of each semester. Students may also opt to take one of the following courses to fulfill the requirement: HPS 535 Multicultural Health Beliefs, PHP 597C Border Health Service Learning, PHP 597F Phoenix Urban Service Learning, EHS 526 Topics in Environmental Justice. Training should be completed by the time of progression to candidacy. Students will report on the opportunities undertaken during the Annual Performance Review.

Doctoral Plan of Study

In collaboration with the Faculty Advisor, each student is responsible for drafting a Doctoral Plan of Study during their first year in residence. The drafted Plan of Study should be held in the student's file as an advising tool, until a dissertation topic and Comprehensive Exam Committee have been identified, at which point it should be approved by the Dissertation Director and Comprehensive Exam Committee and formalized with required electronic approvals. The Plan of Study form is completed on [UAccess Student Center](#), under the GradPath option.

The Plan of Study identifies (1) completed courses from other institutions the student wants to transfer and count toward the graduate degree; (2) completed University of Arizona courses the student intends to apply toward the graduate degree; and (3) course work to be completed to fulfill degree requirements, including a minimum of 18 units of dissertation (EPID 920).

The Faculty Advisor, the Chair of the Epidemiology Program, and the Minor Faculty Advisor, and Chair of the minor program or department must all approve the Plan of Study through GradPath.

The Plan of Study is usually the basis for the initial Graduate Committee (Comprehensive Exam Committee) meeting. A copy of the Plan of Study, either in draft or final form depending on progress, should also be attached to each Annual Progress Report.

Once a student has completed about 80% of the major coursework and all, or almost all, of the minor coursework as specified in the Plan of Study, as well as a provisional draft of the dissertation research proposal, the Comprehensive Exam can be completed.

Students are responsible for making sure all GradPath forms have the required faculty and Graduate College approvals. Students can track the form approval progress to completion in GradPath (see the “GradPath” section above), summarized at the bottom of the online forms.

Minors for the PhD Degree

Graduate College policy requires PhD students to choose at least one supporting minor subject, in addition to the major subject. The selection of a minor subject area is the responsibility of the student, in consultation with their Faculty Advisor and/or Graduate Committee Chair. Typically, at least one faculty member from the minor serves on the student’s Graduate Committee, although this number may be modified by the graduate faculty responsible for the oversight of the minor and by the student’s Graduate Committee. In addition, it should be noted that some graduate programs require at least 2 members from the minor to participate in the committee. Declaration of the minor(s) will be made on the Doctoral Plan of Study. For those pursuing a minor within the college, a MEZCOPH Minor Declaration Form must also be completed and submitted to the Manager for MS and Doctoral Programs and is available on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#).

Potential minors

With committee approval, a minor may be selected from any program of study at the University of Arizona that offers a doctoral degree, and the academic requirements for the minor are determined by the selected academic department. The student is responsible for knowing and meeting the requirements of the chosen minor area of study.

Minors that might interest students in this program include Biostatistics, Health Behavior Health Promotion, Public Health, Cancer Biology, Geography, Entomology, Global Change, Higher Education, Pharmacoeconomics, among others.

In addition, it is possible to develop a Multidisciplinary Minor. Students, with their advisors, can customize a minor area when no formal minor exists. These ‘focus area’ or ‘thematic’ minors will be listed on the Plan of Study as a ‘Multidisciplinary Minor’ and not with the specific focus area name. Students interested in the Multidisciplinary Minor should discuss it with their Faculty Advisor and Graduate Committee Chair before taking the courses that they hope to include. A Multidisciplinary minor must meet the following criteria and be approved by the Epidemiology Program faculty:

- the minor is not available at the University of Arizona through an official major program,
- the minor must contain at least 9 credits that would not be taken by the student as part of the major,
- courses must come from at least two disciplines and
- all coursework must be outside the Epidemiology Program.

In addition, the student needs to identify a Minor Faculty Advisor who has expertise in the focus area. The student may also need to pass or complete a culminating experience as identified by the Minor Faculty Advisor (i.e., examination, research project, or internship).

Graduate Certificates Offered Through MEZCOPH

Graduate students are welcome to enhance their educational experience by adding a graduate certificate to their plan of study. The College of Public Health offers eight distinct certificates in areas such as Global Health, Indigenous Health, and One Health among others. Certificate curriculums range from 12 to 15 units.

Doctoral students may share six units between the major section of their doctoral plan of study and their certificate plan of study, as appropriate, with Faculty Advisor approval. However, there are no restrictions on the number of certificate courses that may apply to the minor section, if applicable and consistent with any relevant policy of the minor program. Minor Advisor approval is also required. When the certificate curriculum does not align with an existing minor, students may consider declaring a Multidisciplinary Minor (see “Minors for the PhD Degree,” above).

For more information on graduate certificates offered through the College of Public Health, please [visit our website](#) or email coph-certificate@arizona.edu.

Transfer of Credits from a Master’s Program to the Doctoral Plan of Study

Up to 30 units of graduate credit earned at accredited institutions may be counted toward the requirements of the PhD degree, if approved by the student’s Graduate Committee and/or approved by the Epidemiology Program Director. Grades of transfer work will not be used in computing the student’s University of Arizona grade-point average. Per the EPI Program policy, the coursework being considered should be less than 10 years old at the time the student begins the program.

Per Graduate College [policy](#), transfer credit may be considered if the grade earned was an A or B. Grades of transfer work will not be used in computing the student’s grade-point average.

Process:

- During the first semester of the PhD program, the student will make an appointment with their Faculty Advisor to review and approve the transfer proposal request. The student should bring a transcript highlighting the classes to be transferred. Syllabi for each class are recommended for all substitution requests and required if a course substitution for a required course is being sought (see below).
- After approval by the Faculty Advisor, two forms must be completed in addition to the ultimate incorporation of coursework in the Plan of Study:
 1. MEZCOPH Course Substitution form (see below for information about this form) is used to evaluate the course for content and appropriateness within the Plan of Study.

2. Graduate College Transfer Credit Form - For approved transfer coursework taken at an accredited institution outside of the University of Arizona, the student must also complete the Graduate College's Transfer Credit form (found on the [UAccess Student Center](#) under the GradPath option). The purpose of the Graduate College evaluation is to verify that the requested transfer credit is graduate level and is from an approved and accredited institution. The Graduate College defers to the Epidemiology program to determine whether or not the courses are suitable for substitution or elective credit.

In year two or three, the student's proposed Transfer of Credit will be reviewed by the student's Graduate Committee (Comprehensive Exam Committee) for incorporation (or not) in the Plan of Study. The final decision for transfer of credits for non-University of Arizona courses, whether used as a substitution for a required course or as an elective, is made when the Plan of Study is submitted to the Graduate College.

Course Substitutions

If a student has completed a course similar to a required course, the student can apply to substitute it for the required course. A course substitution can only be approved by the UARIZONA professor/instructor of the required course.

- The course professor/instructor will review documentation from the student (i.e., course syllabus) for comparability to the required course and the student's grade. If approved, the course professor/instructor signs the Course Substitution Form that the student provides (found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#)). The Faculty Advisor must concur, and sign on the appropriate line. The student then submits the form to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs.
- The substituted course fulfills the content requirement, but the student must take another course of equivalent credit hours toward the degree requirement, unless the course also is approved for transfer credits.

Students who believe they have completed the prerequisite courses for the [Qualifying Exam](#) with previous course work are required to complete the course substitution process for EPID 573a/b and/or BIOS 576a/b prior to their first Fall semester.

Independent Study Registration Policy

A student who wishes to enroll in independent study (EPID 599/699) must complete the Independent Study Registration form found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#) before being registered for the units. The form serves to establish the scope and focus of the independent study, provide a permanent record for the student's academic file, and facilitate the assignment of final grades at the end of each semester. After the student has completed the form and received approval from the faculty member serving as Instructor (person responsible for overseeing the student's work and assigning credit) and Faculty Advisor, the student submits

the signed document to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs who registers the student for the units.

Research and Dissertation Registration Policy

A student who wishes to enroll in research units (EPID 900) or dissertation units (EPID 920) must complete the 900-Level Course Registration form found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#) before being registered for the units. Additionally, the student must meet specific program requirements to do so (see the “Dissertation Unit Enrollment” section below). The 900-Level Course Registration form serves to establish the scope and focus of the work to be completed that term, provide a permanent record for the student’s academic file, and facilitate the assignment of final grades at the end of each semester. After the student has completed the form and received approval from the faculty member serving as Research Director or Dissertation Chair (person responsible for overseeing the student’s work and assigning credit), the student submits the signed document to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs who registers the student for the units.

Qualifying Exam (QE)

All PhD Epidemiology students are required to take and pass the Qualifying Exam (commonly referred to as the “QE”) before they can proceed to work on the PhD Comprehensive Exam. This exam will be administered on the Wednesday and Thursday during the third week after the last day of the Spring semester.

This exam is a two-day, written examination, typically taken at the end of the first year in residence or upon completion of the basic epidemiology/biostatistics courses (EPID 573A, EPID 573B, BIOS 576A, BIOS 576B). Newly admitted students who believe they have met the objectives of EPID 573a/b and/or BIOS 576a /b with previously earned coursework are required to complete the [course substitution process](#) prior to the start of their first Fall term. See above for the approval process.

The Qualifying Exam may not be taken before the student has completed an academic year as an Epidemiology doctoral student. The Exam is pass/fail with a score of 80% required for a pass. Students who are working part time on their graduate degree in Epidemiology may have the Qualifying Exam delayed.

The Qualifying Exam can be repeated once if it is not passed the first time. If the reexamination is not successfully passed, the student is recommended for dismissal from the program before the beginning of the next semester. The Graduate College makes the determination, and the student is notified of the decision in writing by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

The Epidemiology Exam Committee is responsible for developing, monitoring, and grading the exam. This committee is composed of faculty in the Epidemiology Program. See below for some more specific information on the exam and its format.

The “Who, What, When, & Where” for the Qualifying Exam

Who needs to take the qualifying exam?

- EPI major PhD students

What is the Qualifying Exam?

- The Qualifying Exam is an 8-hour, written, in-person exam (two 4-hour periods on consecutive days) consisting of questions intended to assess how well the student comprehends and can synthesize the Epidemiology and Biostatistics core course competencies.
- The Exam is taken on computers without internet access. Answers are typed by the student, who is issued a code number/ID.
- Each student is allowed to bring one page of notes (front and back) which include what each student thinks they will need to answer questions. This may include specific formulas, concepts, definitions and whatever the student would like to include on this page. No books are allowed.
- Each student is required to score at least 80% on the exam in order to pass.

When do students need to take the Exam?

- Students may take the Exam after successful completion of at least one academic year in the Epidemiology PhD program and the four core courses: EPID 573A and 573B and BIOS 576A and 576B.
- A meeting to discuss the Exam will be held in January of the Spring Semester. Students are required to attend the meeting.
- Students must declare that they will take the Exam by February 1st. To declare that they will take the QE, the student must send an email to the chair of the QE Committee, the Program Director, and their Faculty Advisor.
- The Exam will only be offered once per year and is set for Wednesday and Thursday three weeks after the last day of classes in the Spring Semester.

Grading of the Exam

- The Exam will use codes for identification provided by the Office of Student Affairs. Graders will only have students typed answers with the identification code.
- There will be at least two graders for each question. Grading is conducted blindly. If necessary, a third grader may also evaluate answers.
- The results will be reviewed by the QE Committee, and each student will either pass or fail the entire exam. There will be no passing on a per question basis.
- The Program Director will notify the students of the results of the QE as well as notify the Faculty Advisors.

Strategies for Studying for Exam

- Students are encouraged to form study groups to prepare for the exam.
- Taking or sitting in on the Epidemiology Seminar may be helpful to reinforce concepts.

- Serving as a teaching assistant/preceptor in either the EPID573A course or the EPID309 course can provide insight into basic concepts and build skills.

Residence Requirement

To meet the minimum Graduate College residence requirement, the student must complete a minimum of 12 units of regular grades (i.e., A, B or C and not pass/fail) taken in residence at the University of Arizona. "In residence" is defined as taking credits offered by the University of Arizona, whether or not they are offered on campus.

Required Teaching Experience

All PhD students are expected to serve as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for at least one epidemiology course or develop an equivalent alternative with their Committee Chair and the Epidemiology Program Director. The student arranges this experience with the Epidemiology Program Director and the Committee Chair.

Students serving as Graduate Teaching Assistants are required to 1) complete the UA's Graduate Teaching Assistant Orientation (TATO), and 2) participate in the MEZCOPH Teaching Assistant Orientation facilitated on D2L.

The student is encouraged to seek other opportunities to gain experience with teaching as providing university/college teaching is a required attribute of PhD epidemiologists and a necessary component of faculty status. One option for PhD students is that the University of Arizona Office of Instruction and Assessment offers a [Certificate in College Teaching](#). Graduate students can take advantage of this program prior to or while completing the teaching assistantship assignment.

Dissertation Research Proposal

The dissertation research proposal is a two-step process. The first step is the development of a "prospectus." The second step is the development of a full proposal.

Near the end of a student's coursework (~80% complete), and prior to the Comprehensive Exams, the student writes a "prospectus" (< 5 pages) outlining the proposed research/ dissertation topic and submits it to potential Graduate Committee members. The student then convenes a Graduate Committee meeting to discuss and seek approval of the research plan and the writing of a dissertation research proposal. The student forms the official Committee at this point. The Graduate Committee reviews this information and helps the student formulate an approach or to consider alternate plans as appropriate. The student then writes a full, original proposal addressing the topic.

The prospectus format should be a research proposal in the form of a Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, or other funding agency grant application and is selected in discussion with the student's Graduate Committee. Grant

application formats and guidelines for various agencies are available in the [Office of the Vice President for Research](#).

The faculty strongly emphasizes that the responsibility rests completely with the student for the quality of the proposal, its originality, approach, and significance. The student selects the area, secures approval of the topic and methods during the Graduate Committee meetings, prepares the written proposal, submits it to the Graduate Committee for review and provisional approval. The Graduate Committee members must approve the written proposal before the student can proceed to the Comprehensive Exam. Students should expect to give faculty at least 2 weeks to read each draft. It is expected that developing the proposal will be an iterative process that may require several meetings and multiple drafts (each with 2-week review windows) to complete. An electronic copy of the final approved dissertation research proposal is to be submitted to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs post-comprehensive exam.

Per Graduate College policy, after the proposal is approved by the Graduate Committee in its final form after the comprehensive exam, the student sends an email (copying the Graduate Committee) to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs with an electronic copy of the proposal attached. The Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs notifies the Graduate College that this requirement was met. The student should note that the Graduate College needs to be notified of this milestone concurrently with the student's successful passing of the Comprehensive Exam.

Comprehensive Examination

Per Graduate College policy, the Comprehensive Exam consists of a written and oral portion. Students must pass the written examination before the oral examination. Both written and oral comprehensive examinations must occur within the same or two consecutive semesters and within that time, the student must be in good academic standing.

The student can take the Comprehensive Exam when approximately 80% of the major course requirements and all, or almost all, of the minor course requirements are met. The student is advised to take the Comprehensive Exam within 3 years from the date of admission to the Epidemiology doctoral program. This milestone will be reviewed by the Student Progress Committee for evidence of academic progress. The student's Graduate Committee can petition the Epidemiology Program faculty for extension.

At least three months prior to beginning the written portion of the Comprehensive Exam, the student must have an approved Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment Form on file with the Graduate College along with completing the MEZCOPH Declaration of Committee Membership form (found on the MEZCOPH Student Hub) with all committee members' signatures and filing the form with the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs.

Written Portion of Comprehensive Examination:

The written portion of the Comprehensive Exam must occur prior to the oral option. The dissertation research proposal must be written and provisionally approved prior to sitting for the written comprehensive exam portion.

Comprehensive Exam questions will be written specifically for the student and will come from Comprehensive Exam Committee members representing the Epidemiology major and the student's minor (as appropriate), coordinated by the student's Graduate Committee Chair. The written portion is a take-home examination that generally includes a detailed question from each committee member. The written exam will be graded (pass/fail) as a whole, with responses to all questions reviewed by all members of the Comprehensive Exam Committee. The student will be notified within two weeks of receipt of the examination responses, whether the examination is 'pass' or 'fail'. The written examination can be repeated once if it is failed the first time within one year of the date of the first written examination. If the re-examination is not successfully passed, the student is recommended for dismissal from the program before the beginning of the next semester. The Graduate College makes the determination, and the student is notified of the decision in writing by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Oral Portion of the Comprehensive Examination:

The oral portion of the exam must be taken within the same or subsequent semester as the written exam. The oral portion of the Comprehensive Exam (also known as "oral comps") consists of a presentation and discussion of the dissertation research proposal, questioning of responses to the written exam and proposal and examination of the student's breadth of knowledge of the literature and methodology of the field of Epidemiology.

The [Graduate College](#) summarizes the goal of the examination:

"Before admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree, the student must pass a written and an oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination. This examination is intended to test the student's comprehensive knowledge of the major and minor subjects of study, both in breadth across the general field of study and in depth within the area of specialization... This is the occasion when faculty committee members have both the opportunity and obligation to require the student to display a broad knowledge of the chosen field of study and sufficient depth of understanding in areas of specialization. Discussion of proposed dissertation research may be included. The examining committee must attest that the student has demonstrated the professional level of knowledge expected of a junior academic colleague."

In addition, MEZCOPH has the following 'Recommended Best Practices for Oral Examinations':

- In Epidemiology, we ask students not to present more than 10-15 minutes on their dissertation proposal, and the remainder of the first hour is spent asking questions

regarding the proposal, before moving into the final 2 hours of general questions regarding epidemiology and the minor to test whether the student has “a broad knowledge of the chosen field of study.” The committee may request additional revisions of the proposal to be completed after the oral examination.

- The student is encouraged to meet with each committee member individually before the exam to determine potential topics for which they should be prepared to discuss.
- The student is encouraged to “practice” both the presentation and answering general questions with other students.
- At the discretion of the Program Director, another faculty member may be selected to observe the examination as a neutral third party. The Epidemiology Program Director will make this assignment and ensure that a person is present at the examination. This faculty member is not to ask the student questions or to participate in discussion with the Committee Members during the exam.
- The student is responsible for scheduling the Oral Comprehensive Examination with the Comprehensive Examination Committee members. Comprehensive Examination Committee members’ schedules must accommodate the entire scheduled exam period. The student also needs to notify the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs. If needed, the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs will assist the student in scheduling a room for the examination.
- The student is responsible for completing the Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam form found on the [UAccess Student Center](#) under the GradPath option. This form completion notifies the Graduate College of the date and time of the exam and should be submitted a minimum of two weeks prior to the exam date.
- The Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair (aka the Graduate Committee Chair) is responsible for submitting the results of the Exam to the Graduate College, via the GradPath form, Results of Comprehensive Exam.

The student may retake the oral portion of the Comprehensive Exam once and within one year of the first unsuccessful oral examination. If the re-examination is not successfully passed, the student is recommended for dismissal from the program. The Graduate College makes the determination, and the student is notified of the decision in writing by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Once the student has successfully passed the Comprehensive Exam and completed all course work listed on the approved plan of study, they transition from a doctoral ‘student’ to a doctoral ‘candidate’ designation. In light of this status change, a degree candidacy charge will

be added to the student's Bursar's account. A copyright fee is optional. Check the [Graduate College website](#) prior to your anticipated completion to determine the charge amount.

Time Limitations

Per Graduate College [policy](#), all requirements for the PhD must be completed within five years of passing the Comprehensive Exam. Should a student have concerns that they will not finish the doctoral degree within that time period, the student needs to contact their Faculty Advisor and the Epidemiology Program Director to make a plan of action and may have to re-take the Comprehensive Exam and some coursework before proceeding to complete the dissertation and degree. In the Epidemiology PhD Program, students must also complete the degree within 8 years of the first day of class of their first semester after admission to the PhD program.

Dissertation Committee Appointment

After successful completion of all coursework, teaching requirements, and passing the written and oral portions of the Comprehensive Examination, the student must complete the Graduate College Dissertation Committee Appointment Form. The completion of this form indicates the candidate has identified committee members for the next stage of their graduate career. The final Dissertation Committee must be composed of at least three faculty members representing the major. See the "[Composition of the Graduate Committees for Epidemiology Students](#)" section above for more information.

The Dissertation Committee Appointment form is found on the [UAccess Student Center](#) under the GradPath option. The Dissertation Director reviews and approves the electronic form on behalf of the Committee. In addition, the Program Director reviews and approves the form on behalf of the Epidemiology faculty. This form must be submitted and approved by the Graduate College prior to the Final Oral Dissertation Defense.

Dissertation Unit Enrollment

PhD students in Epidemiology must meet several criteria before they are able to enroll in EPID 920 dissertation units. Students must have an approved Doctoral Plan of Study, have passed both the written and oral portions of the Comprehensive Exam, successfully completed either PHCL 595b or the National Institutes of Health Responsible Conduct of Research Program, as well as officially designated their Dissertation Committee.

All students who wish to enroll in dissertation units must complete a 900- Level Course Registration Form (found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#)) before they can be registered for the units. The form serves to establish the scope and focus of the work to be completed, provides a permanent record for the student's academic file, and facilitates the assignment of final grades at the end of each semester. After the student has completed the form and received approval from the Dissertation Director who serves as the "Instructor", the student turns it in to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs who registers the student for the units.

Dissertation

The PhD dissertation should involve innovative research and demonstrate a sophisticated command of epidemiologic skills. If the research involves human subjects, even if it involves secondary data analysis, the student must have IRB approval before starting this work. It is the responsibility of the student, in consultation with the Committee Chair/Dissertation Director, to obtain the approvals and conform to ethical research standards. See the [“Human Subjects Approval for Dissertation/Thesis Projects”](#) section above for more information about the Human Subjects approval process.

The Epidemiology Program faculty currently approves two dissertation formats: a standard dissertation or a three-paper format. The Graduate Committee must approve the format of the dissertation prior to the student beginning the work. Actual preparation of the written dissertation document follows the Graduate College [guidelines](#).

While the Committee Chair/ Dissertation Director will work closely with the student, the other members of the Dissertation Committee should also be asked to review drafts of the dissertation as it moves forward to avoid problems at the Oral Defense. It is recommended that the student work with the Dissertation Committee to determine a communication plan and timetable for reviewing dissertation work. Students should expect to give each dissertation committee member at least 2 weeks to read *each draft*. It is expected that there will be several drafts prior to the final draft. This should be acknowledged when trying to schedule the final defense. Some committee members may want individual chapters while others may not want to see drafts until the full dissertation is completed. Students are expected to maintain regular contact with their entire committee, including meetings or updates provided at least once each semester following the Comprehensive Exam. When the student and Dissertation Director consider the dissertation complete, the student submits a copy of the penultimate draft to each Dissertation Committee member and negotiates a date for the Oral Defense with the Dissertation Committee members. This document should be submitted to the committee members at least one month prior to the agreed upon date of the final examination.

Final Oral Dissertation Defense Examination

No later than 15 working days before the proposed dissertation defense date, the student (with approval from the Dissertation Director) must work with the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs to 1) reserve a MEZCOPH classroom for the tentatively scheduled examination and 2) publicize the public forum presentation portion of the examination. The time, date, and place of this examination must also be scheduled with the Graduate College. The Graduate College notification occurs when the student submits the Doctoral Announcement of Final Oral Defense form. This form is found on the [UAccess Student Center](#) under the GradPath option. Each semester has official Graduate College deadlines related to the dissertation defense and eligibility for that same semester graduation. Visit the Graduate College website for [specific semester deadlines](#).

Formal oral defense of the dissertation research constitutes the Final Examination. This consists of a public seminar by the candidate of no more than one hour, immediately followed by an oral examination by the candidate's Dissertation Committee. The entire exam must be completed within three hours. It is expected that the student will meet with the Dissertation Director to discuss the content of the public seminar prior to the scheduled presentation. The student may take a printed Approval Page downloaded from the Graduate College website to the final defense or may request the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs initiate an electronic version via Adobe Sign prior to the defense.

The student needs to be sure that all Dissertation Committee members can attend the entire duration of the final examination. The Graduate Committee Chair presides over the examination. The initial seminar portion is open to the public; the remaining examination portion is closed to the public.

Possible Outcomes:

The Dissertation Committee determines the Final Oral Dissertation Defense outcome as:

- Pass, no revisions of the dissertation required. This option is rarely awarded in the experience of the Epidemiology faculty.
- Pass, with revisions that must be approved by the Graduate Committee Chair and/or Dissertation Director. This option is used most often in the experience of the faculty.
- Pass, with revisions that must be approved by all Dissertation Committee members.
- Fail. The Dissertation Committee then decides if a request for re-examination will be submitted to the Graduate College. The Graduate College Dean approves/disapproves the request.

The Graduate Committee Chair submits the defense results to the Graduate College.

When revisions are required, the student is responsible for meeting with the Dissertation Committee Chair and/or Dissertation Director to work out a timeline for completion and review of the revisions.

Completion of Doctoral Requirements

Following successful completion of the Final Oral Dissertation Defense Examination and completion of revisions required by the Dissertation Committee, the final dissertation must be submitted via the [electronic submission site](#) at the Graduate College website and meet all Graduate College requirements. The Graduate College publishes [deadlines for the completion of all degree requirements](#) on their website.

Because of instances of accused self-plagiarizing when students go to publish their work, the Epidemiology faculty highly encourage students to permanently embargo their dissertation when submitting it to the repository. The embargo can be lifted at a later date as deemed appropriate by the student and their committee chair. Please discuss this with your committee.

The student may provide a bound copy of the dissertation to the Dissertation Director. Copies may also be provided to the other Dissertation Committee members. Additionally, if the candidate chooses to embargo the dissertation, the Office of Student Affairs would appreciate a bound copy.

The University of Arizona Dean of the Graduate College then certifies that the candidate has fulfilled all requirements for the Doctoral Degree and recommends conferral of the doctoral degree by the Arizona Board of Regents. The Graduate College posts the degree completion date on the transcript and mails the diploma.

THE PhD MINOR IN EPIDEMIOLOGY

Minor Requirements

The PhD minor in Epidemiology is designed for individuals from other University of Arizona doctoral degree programs who wish to obtain graduate training in Epidemiology. A member of the primary Epidemiology faculty will serve as the Minor Advisor and sit on the student's Graduate Committee.

The PhD minor in Epidemiology (for majors outside of Epidemiology) is administered by the Epidemiology Program in MEZCOPH. A total of 15 course units are required, as well as the successful completion of the written and oral questions during the Comprehensive Exam. See the MEZCOPH website for course listing and scheduling.

Required PhD Minor in Epidemiology Courses (at least 15 units)

EPID 573B	Epidemiologic Methods (3)
EPID 573C	Advanced Epidemiology (3)
BIOS 576A	Biostatistics for Public Health (3)
BIOS 576B	Biostatistics for Research (3)
EPID Elective	The elective must be 600-level or above (to be approved by Epidemiology Minor Advisor)

Note on minor coursework:

- It is the responsibility of the student to have met prerequisites (EPID 573A Basic Principles of Epidemiology) if not already required for the student's Major. Minor GPA requirement: 3.5/4.0 scale

Declaration of Minor

The student should meet with the Epidemiology Program Director to discuss the minor. After identifying an Epidemiology Minor Faculty Advisor and receiving guidance regarding minor coursework, the student needs to complete the MEZCOPH Declaration of Epidemiology Minor Form (found on the [MEZCOPH website](#) or by contacting the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs to request the form). The form is reviewed and approved by the Epidemiology faculty through the Program Director. The form must be filed with the MEZCOPH Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs in the Office of Student Affairs (Drachman Hall Room A302). The Minor Faculty Advisor will then also serve as the Chair of the Minor for the student's Graduate Committees (i.e., Comprehensive Exam and Dissertation Committee).

Composition of Committee

The composition of the Epidemiology Minor Committee shall consist of at least one primary Epidemiology faculty member. Final selection will be approved by the Epidemiology Program faculty. All Epidemiology minors will be required to complete a written examination of Epidemiology Principles as part of their written Comprehensive Examination. The structure of

this exam is typically in the format of one written question that assesses key epidemiological concept(s) in the context of their area of research.

Transfer of Credits

Graduate credit earned at other approved institutions may be counted towards fulfilling the requirements of the PhD minor in Epidemiology, if approved by the Minor Faculty Advisor, the Epidemiology Program Director, and the student's Graduate Committee. Two forms must be completed in addition to the ultimate incorporation on the Plan of Study: The MEZCOPH Course Substitution form is used to evaluate the course for content and appropriateness within the Plan of Study. For approved transfer coursework taken at an accredited institution outside of the University of Arizona, the student must also complete the Graduate College's Transfer Credit form.

THE MS IN EPIDEMIOLOGY PROGRAM

The Master of Science degree in Epidemiology is designed for individuals who wish to pursue training in epidemiological research. It is anticipated that graduates will occupy positions as research administrators, program managers, analysts, and evaluators in universities, health departments, governmental agencies, and similar organizations, or will continue on to a PhD program.

On average, the MS program requires two years for completion. The first year is usually devoted to core coursework. The second year is focused on the remaining coursework and development and completion of the master's thesis research.

The Epidemiology Program offers both a general MS in Epidemiology degree and a specialization in clinical epidemiology. The requirements for these two MS degrees vary slightly. Students who are interested in clinical epidemiology should contact the Epidemiology Program Director for additional information.

For complete information about the University of Arizona Graduate College policy for MS students please see the [Graduate College website](#).

Competencies

A [set of competencies](#) specific to the MS Epidemiology degree have been developed which will allow students and the faculty to determine progress. It is recommended that this list be used by students to help assess training needs and progress.

Program Steps and Milestones to Degree

Typical time to completion: 2 years full-time students, 3-4 years part-time students.

Average time to completion: 3.2 years

Program Steps to Completion (Full-time student timeline):

- Attend mandatory new student orientation
- First year is devoted to course work
- Each Spring, complete an Annual Progress Report with Faculty Advisor
- Second semester, identify Thesis Chair
- Second year is devoted to course work and thesis research/development
- If necessary, begin process for Human Subjects approval for thesis
- Third semester, form thesis committee
- Submit Master's Plan of Study
- Begin research/thesis development

- Fourth semester, successfully defend thesis and finalize revisions

Progress of the Program Steps and Milestones to Degree is assessed at the time of students' Annual Progress Report in conjunction with their Faculty Advisor and Program Faculty. When it is determined that a student is not making timely progress, the student and Faculty Advisor will meet to create a Retention Plan using the MEZCOPH form, "Graduate Student Retention Plan for Failing to Make Satisfactory Academic Progress."

Master's Plan of Study

In collaboration with the Faculty Advisor, each student is responsible for developing a Master's Plan of Study as early as possible during the first few months in residence, to be submitted to the Graduate College in the second to last semester of the program. The Plan of Study form is completed on [UAccess Student Center](#), under the GradPath option.

The Plan of Study identifies (1) completed courses from other institutions the student wants to transfer and count toward the graduate degree; (2) completed UARIZONA courses the student intends to apply toward the graduate degree; and (3) course work to be completed to fulfill degree requirements. The Faculty Advisor and the Chair of the Epidemiology Program must approve the Plan of Study. A copy of the Plan of Study, either in draft or final form depending on progress, should also be attached to each Annual Progress Report.

Students are responsible for making sure all GradPath forms have the required faculty and Graduate College approvals. Students can track the form approval progress to completion in GradPath, summarized at the bottom of the online forms.

Graduate Certificates Offered Through MEZCOPH

Graduate students are welcome to enhance their educational experience by adding a graduate certificate to their plan of study. The College of Public Health offers eight distinct certificates in areas such Global Health, Indigenous Health, and One Health among others. Certificate curriculums range from 12 to 15 units.

If applicable, masters level students who add a certificate may share up to six units between their masters and certificate plans of study, pending Faculty Advisor approval.

For more information on graduate certificates offered through the College of Public Health, please [visit our website](#) or email coph-certificate@arizona.edu.

Transfer of Credits

Graduate credit earned at accredited institutions may be counted toward the requirements of a graduate degree, if approved by the student's Graduate Committee and/or approved by the Epidemiology Program Director. Grades of transfer work will not be used in computing the

student's grade-point average. Per Graduate College [policy](#), transfer credit may be considered if the grade earned was an A or B.

In the MS program, no more than 20% of the total coursework (9 credits) required for the master's degree can be transferred from another, properly accredited institution. A total of 12 credits earned as an undergraduate senior (if not used toward the undergraduate degree) or while in non-degree status at the University of Arizona, may also be applied to the MS degree.

During the first semester of the MS program, the student will make an appointment with their Faculty Advisor to review and approve the transfer proposal request. The student should bring a transcript highlighting the classes to be transferred and, if possible, a syllabus for each class. After approval by the Faculty Advisor, two forms must be completed in addition to the ultimate incorporation on the Plan of Study:

1. The MEZCOPH Course Substitution form (see below for information about this form) is used to evaluate the course for content and appropriateness within the Plan of Study.
2. For approved transfer coursework taken at an accredited institution outside of the University of Arizona, the student must also complete the Graduate College's Transfer Credit form (found on the [UAccess Student Center](#) under the GradPath option). The purpose of the Graduate College evaluation is to verify that the requested transfer credit is graduate level and is from an approved and accredited institution. The Graduate College defers to the Epidemiology Program as to whether the courses are suitable for substitution or elective credit.

The final decision for transfer of credits for non-University of Arizona courses, whether used as a substitution for a required course, as an elective or not at all, is made when the Plan of Study is submitted to the Graduate College.

Course Substitutions

If a student has completed a course similar to a required course, the student can apply to substitute it for the required course. In this case a course substitution can only be approved by the UARIZONA professor/instructor of the required course. The course professor/instructor will review documentation from the student (i.e., course syllabus) for comparability to the required course and the student's grade. If approved, the course professor/instructor signs the Course Substitution Form that the student provides (found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#)). The Faculty Advisor must concur, and sign on the appropriate line. The student then submits the form to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs. The substituted course fulfills the content requirement, but the student must take another course of equivalent credit hours toward the degree requirement, unless the course is approved for transfer credits.

Independent Study Registration Policy

A student who wishes to enroll in independent study (EPID 599/699) must complete the Independent Study Registration form found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#) before being

registered for the units. The form serves to establish the scope and focus of the independent study work, provide a permanent record for the student's academic file, and facilitate the assignment of final grades at the end of each semester. After the student has completed the form and received approval from the faculty member serving as Instructor (person responsible for overseeing the student's work and assigning credit) and their Faculty Advisor, the student submits the signed document to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs who registers the student for the units.

Research and Thesis Registration Policy

A student who wishes to enroll in research units (EPID 900) or thesis units (EPID 910) must complete the 900-Level Course Registration form found on the [MEZCOPH Student Hub](#) before being registered for the units. The form serves to establish the scope and focus of the work to be completed that term, provide a permanent record for the student's academic file, and facilitate the assignment of final grades at the end of each semester. After the student has completed the form and received approval from the faculty member serving as Research Instructor or Thesis Director (person responsible for overseeing the student's work and assigning credit), the student submits the signed document to the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs who registers the student for the units.

MS Thesis Committee

After selecting a research topic for the thesis, the student selects faculty members for a Master's Thesis Committee, in consultation with the Faculty Advisor. The Chair of the Master's Thesis committee must be a primary Epidemiology faculty member and have Graduate Faculty status. At least one other member of the Thesis Committee must come from the primary Epidemiology faculty and one other member must be Graduate Faculty. The Thesis Committee must be approved by the faculty of the Epidemiology Program Director and Graduate College. See the "[Composition of the Graduate Committees for Epidemiology Students](#)" section above for more information on the composition of the Thesis Committee. This committee is typically formed prior to the second year of the program to allow students to enroll in thesis credits and complete the program in two years.

Thesis

A thesis is required for the MS degree. Prior to initiating the research for the thesis, the student must submit a "prospectus" (< 5 pages) outlining the proposed research/thesis topic to their Thesis Committee. They should also outline her or his academic progress to date, and courses to be completed prior to writing the thesis. The student then meets with the Thesis Committee to discuss the prospectus and to formulate any new plans deemed appropriate.

If the research involves human subjects, even if it involves secondary data analysis, the student must have IRB approval before starting this work. It is the responsibility of the student in consultation with the Thesis Director to obtain the approvals. See the "[Human Subjects](#)

[Approval for Dissertation/Thesis Projects](#)” section above for more information on the Human Subjects Approval process.

Preparation of the written thesis follows the Graduate College [guidelines](#).

The student should be working closely with the Thesis Director throughout the research and writing of the thesis. When the Thesis Director considers the thesis sufficiently completed, the student submits a draft copy to Thesis Committee at least one month prior to the end of the academic term or their proposed formal defense date. This should not be the first draft that the committee sees, unless they specifically request that this be the case.

Oral Defense of Thesis Research

The MS student is required to complete a formal defense of the thesis research in a public seminar, immediately followed by an oral examination by the candidate's committee of no more than one hour. The exam must be held prior to “reading day” in any given semester. At least fifteen business days before the defense, the student should be in touch with the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs to schedule a MEZCOPH classroom and to publicize the open portion of the defense. The student may take a printed Approval Page downloaded from the Graduate College website to the final defense or may request the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs initiate an electronic version via Adobe Sign prior to the defense.

Time Limitation

Per Graduate College [policy](#), all requirements for the master’s degree must be completed within six years. Time-to-degree begins with the earliest course to be applied toward the degree, including credits transferred from other institutions or credits taken under non-degree seeking/certificate status.

Completion of Master’s Requirements

After addressing comments on the thesis from the Thesis Committee and obtaining final approval for the written thesis, the student prepares the final copies of the thesis. The student makes any corrections required by the program and submits an electronic copy to the Graduate College via the [electronic submission site](#) and must meet all Graduate College requirements. The Graduate College publishes [deadlines for the completion of all degree requirements](#) on their website.

Because of instances of accused self-plagiarizing when students go to publish their work, the Epidemiology faculty highly encourage students to permanently embargo their thesis when submitting to the repository. The embargo can be lifted at a later date as deemed appropriate by the student and their committee chair. Please discuss this with your committee.

Students may choose to present bound copies to the Thesis Director. Copies may also be provided to the other Thesis Committee members. Additionally, if the candidate chooses to embargo the thesis, the Office of Student Affairs would appreciate a bound copy.

Per Graduate College policy, after all requirements are met by the student, the student notifies the Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs via email (copying the Thesis Director and Faculty Advisor). The Manager of MS and Doctoral Programs notifies the Graduate College that final requirements have been met. The student should note that the Graduate College needs to be notified of this milestone before the student is considered for degree conferral.

Each semester has official Graduate College deadlines related to completing the MS degree requirements and eligibility for that same semester graduation. Visit the Graduate College website for specific semester deadlines.

The University of Arizona Dean of the Graduate College then certifies that the student has fulfilled all requirements for the degree and recommends the conferral of the Master of Science degree by the Arizona Board of Regents. The Graduate College posts the degree completion date on the transcript and then mails the diploma to the student.

Admission to the PhD Program

Students who were admitted to the MS or MS/PhD Epidemiology Program may apply to the doctoral program by way of an abbreviated process. Successful completion of the MS program, including defending the thesis and submission of the Master's thesis report to the Graduate College, is required for admission to the doctoral program. Applications will be accepted during the student's final semester of the master's degree program.

MS and MS/PhD students from within our program will not need to re-submit the SOPHAS application. Instead, they will provide a research statement, an updated statement of purpose and objectives, and three new letters of recommendation. In addition, MS students who have not already submitted GRE scores must do so. On a case-by-case basis, the program may request additional documents. Likewise, the student is welcome to submit other materials to strengthen their application.

The above materials will be emailed to the Admissions Professional in the Office of Student Affairs. The student's documents will then be forwarded along with the original SOPHAS application, and an unofficial transcript of MS course work completed to date to the Program Director. The Program Director will consult with the Epidemiology Faculty to review application materials and reach a decision. The decision will be communicated back to the Admissions Professional who notifies the student of the outcome.

Successful doctoral applicants will work with the Admissions Professional to complete a GradApp for the doctoral program. Per program policy, up to 30 units listed on the student's

MS plan of study may be applied to the PhD plan of study, contingent upon applicability, faculty approval, and Graduate College policy.