

# JOINT MASTER OF SCIENCE IN HEALTH SCIENCES IN THE FIELD OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT AND MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Program Director: Howard Straker

As the US healthcare system continues to evolve, market forces and changing personnel requirements create new and expanding roles for healthcare professionals. The joint master of science in health sciences in the field of physician assistant and master of public health (MSHS–physical assistant/MPH) degree program strives to fill the need for a new type of healthcare professional: one who has both the depth of medical knowledge and the range of leadership and policy skills to meet the challenges of future practice.

Managed jointly by the Milken Institute School of Public Health (SPH), Department of Prevention and Community Health, and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), the program presents a curriculum that blends two important traditional paradigms of healthcare: the biomedical and the preventive. Healthcare professionals in the future US health system must be prepared, competent, and caring clinicians, as well as bring a broad view of population health and prevention to their work. Graduates of the dual MSHS–physician assistant and MPH program are leaders in clinical practice in primary care and preventive medicine and have the preparation to assume influential positions in education, research, and policy.

The MSHS–physician assistant/MPH program provides an opportunity for students to obtain the competencies needed to succeed in the rapidly evolving US and global healthcare systems.

The major goals of the MSHS–physician assistant/MPH program are to:

- Recruit diverse and intellectually curious students and develop in them a strong clinical medical and prevention knowledge base necessary to deliver the highest quality patient-centered health care in a variety of clinical settings worldwide.
- Educate future healthcare professionals who are competent clinicians who can bring a population health orientation to their practice setting.
- Develop practitioners for the future who integrate concepts of prevention, community-oriented primary care, and population health.
- Graduate collaborative clinicians who serve the health care needs of a worldwide community with intelligence, compassion, and integrity.
- Foster analytic thinking skills such that graduates can perform a wide range of clinical tasks working with physicians, as well as assessing community health problems and addressing population health needs.
- Nurture a sensitivity and respect for the cultural and personal beliefs of all patients and an understanding of how social,

economic, and other system forces can impact health and health care and how these impact patient morbidity and mortality.

- Encourage graduates to be responsive to the needs of patients and society and advocate for quality patient care regardless of the patient population.
- Graduate practitioners who will have the information technology and research skills necessary to access and interpret the medical literature and support their ongoing professional development.
- Expect graduates to practice collaboratively, professionally, legally, ethically, and with integrity.

The MSHS–physician assistant/MPH program draws from faculty in both the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the Milken Institute to provide instruction in a wide range of subjects in medicine, public health, and professional leadership.

The purpose of the program is to provide future clinicians with a wide range of skills in leadership, policy development, and community and preventive medicine. Students in the dual program prepare as clinicians, fulfilling all requirements for national certification as a physician assistant (PA) in the GW Physician Assistant program. In addition, public health coursework provides an orientation to population and community health. For example, in the Community Oriented Primary Care (COPC) track, students acquire skills in community health assessment, community-based interventions, and the application of COPC principles in community-based practice settings. GW's SPH coursework in healthcare administration, management, and healthcare economics prepare students to be leaders in a wide variety of clinical settings, office practices, outpatient clinics, community-based health centers, and healthcare institutions. Students are also exposed to the formulation of health policy.

Set in the center of the health policy in the nation, the MSHS–physician assistant/MPH program affords students the chance to interact with individuals in both the public and private sectors who are involved in policy research, practice, and legislation.

Visit the MPH program website (<https://publichealth.gwu.edu/joint-degree-pamph/>) or the PA program website (<https://smhs.gwu.edu/physician-assistant/pa-program/>) for additional information.

## COMMUNITY-ORIENTED PRIMARY CARE

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 138 credits, including 100 credits in physician assistant courses, 17 credits in public health core courses, and 21 credits in departmental and program-specific coursework.

### Physician assistant curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
ANAT 6215	Anatomy for Physician Assistant Students	

PA 6101	Clinical Assessment I
PA 6102	Clinical Assessment II
PA 6103	Clinical Assessment III
PA 6104	Integration into Clinical Concepts I
PA 6105	Integration into Clinical Concepts II
PA 6106	Integration into Clinical Concepts III
PA 6109	Foundations of Medicine
PA 6111	Evidence Based Practice for PA/MPH Students
PA 6112	Clinical Medicine I
PA 6113	Clinical Medicine II
PA 6116	Clinical Skills I
PA 6117	Clinical Skills II
PA 6119	Health, Justice, and Society II
PA 6120	Human Behavior
PA 6121	Clinical Specialties
PA 6122	Role of the Physician Assistant in U.S. Healthcare
PA 6259	Introduction to Clinical Education
PA 6261	Inpatient Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6262	Family Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6263	Surgery Clinical Practicum
PA 6264	Women's Health Clinical Practicum
PA 6265	Pediatrics Clinical Practicum
PA 6266	Emergency Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6267	Behavioral Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6268	Elective Clinical Practicum
PA 6300	Introduction to Professional Practice
PHAR 6207	Pharmacology I
PHAR 6208	Pharmacology II
PHYL 6211	Physiology for Health Sciences Students

**Public health, community-oriented primary care curriculum**

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
Public health core		
PUBH 6000	MPH Applied Practice Experience	
PUBH 6002	Biostatistical Applications for Public Health	
PUBH 6003	Principles and Practices of Epidemiology	
PUBH 6007	Social and Behavioral Approaches to Public Health	
PUBH 6011	Environmental and Biological Foundations of Public Health	
PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy	
PUBH 6021	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership I	
PUBH 6022	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership II	
PUBH 6023	Interprofessional Education Experience	
PUBH 6015	Culminating Experience	
Prevention and community health		
PUBH 6500	Planning and Implementing Health Promotion Programs	
PUBH 6501	Program Evaluation	
Community-oriented primary care		
PUBH 6504	Social and Behavioral Science Research Methods	
PUBH 6510	Community-Oriented Primary Care Principles and Practice	
PUBH 6512	Community-Oriented Primary Care Policy and Issues	
PUBH 6513	Community Health Management	
PUBH 6591	PA/MPH Clinical Leadership Seminar	
<b>Electives</b>		

4 credits in PUBH courses.

## EPIDEMIOLOGY

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 138 credits, including 100 credits in physician assistant courses, 17 credits in public health core courses, and 21 credits in department and program specific coursework as outlined.

## Physician assistant curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
ANAT 6215	Anatomy for Physician Assistant Students	
PA 6101	Clinical Assessment I	
PA 6102	Clinical Assessment II	
PA 6103	Clinical Assessment III	
PA 6104	Integration into Clinical Concepts I	
PA 6105	Integration into Clinical Concepts II	
PA 6106	Integration into Clinical Concepts III	
PA 6109	Foundations of Medicine	
PA 6112	Clinical Medicine I	
PA 6113	Clinical Medicine II	
PA 6116	Clinical Skills I	
PA 6117	Clinical Skills II	
PA 6119	Health, Justice, and Society II	
PA 6120	Human Behavior	
PA 6121	Clinical Specialties	
PA 6122	Role of the Physician Assistant in U.S. Healthcare	
PA 6259	Introduction to Clinical Education	
PA 6261	Inpatient Medicine Clinical Practicum	
PA 6262	Family Medicine Clinical Practicum	
PA 6263	Surgery Clinical Practicum	
PA 6264	Women's Health Clinical Practicum	
PA 6265	Pediatrics Clinical Practicum	
PA 6266	Emergency Medicine Clinical Practicum	
PA 6267	Behavioral Medicine Clinical Practicum	
PA 6268	Elective Clinical Practicum	
PA 6300	Introduction to Professional Practice	
PHAR 6207	Pharmacology I	

PHAR 6208 Pharmacology II

PHYL 6211 Physiology for Health Sciences Students

## Public health, epidemiology curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
MPH core		
PUBH 6000	MPH Applied Practice Experience	
PUBH 6002	Biostatistical Applications for Public Health	
PUBH 6003	Principles and Practices of Epidemiology	
PUBH 6007	Social and Behavioral Approaches to Public Health	
PUBH 6009	Fundamentals of Public Health Program Evaluation	
PUBH 6011	Environmental and Biological Foundations of Public Health	
PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy	
PUBH 6021	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership I	
PUBH 6022	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership II	
PUBH 6023	Interprofessional Education Experience	
Epidemiology track		
PUBH 6015	Culminating Experience	
PUBH 6247	Epidemiologic Methods I: Design of Health Studies	
PUBH 6252	Epidemiologic Methods II: Advanced Epidemiologic Methods	
PUBH 6260	Applied Epidemiologic Data Analysis	
PUBH 6591	PA/MPH Clinical Leadership Seminar	
PUBH 6853	Use of SAS for Data Management and Analysis	
Selective		
4 credits from the following:		
PUBH 6237	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	
PUBH 6241	Nutritional Epidemiology	

PUBH 6242	Clinical Epidemiology and Public Health: Reading the Research
PUBH 6244	Cancer Epidemiology
PUBH 6245	Infectious Disease Epidemiology
PUBH 6248	Epidemiology of Dementia and Adult Cognitive Health
PUBH 6250	Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS
PUBH 6259	Epidemiology Surveillance in Public Health

### Electives

2 credits in graduate-level Public Health courses.

## GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 138 credits, including 100 credits in physician assistant courses, 17 credits in public health core courses, and 21 credits in department and program specific coursework as outlined.

Physician assistant curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
ANAT 6215	Anatomy for Physician Assistant Students	
PA 6101	Clinical Assessment I	
PA 6102	Clinical Assessment II	
PA 6103	Clinical Assessment III	
PA 6104	Integration into Clinical Concepts I *	
PA 6105	Integration into Clinical Concepts II	
PA 6106	Integration into Clinical Concepts III	
PA 6109	Foundations of Medicine	
PA 6111	Evidence Based Practice for PA/MPH Students	
PA 6112	Clinical Medicine I	
PA 6113	Clinical Medicine II	
PA 6116	Clinical Skills I	
PA 6117	Clinical Skills II	
PA 6119	Health, Justice, and Society II	
PA 6120	Human Behavior	
PA 6121	Clinical Specialties	

PA 6122	Role of the Physician Assistant in U.S. Healthcare
PA 6259	Introduction to Clinical Education
PA 6261	Inpatient Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6262	Family Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6263	Surgery Clinical Practicum
PA 6264	Women's Health Clinical Practicum
PA 6265	Pediatrics Clinical Practicum
PA 6266	Emergency Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6267	Behavioral Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6268	Elective Clinical Practicum *
PA 6300	Introduction to Professional Practice
PHYL 6211	Physiology for Health Sciences Students
PHAR 6207	Pharmacology I
PHAR 6208	Pharmacology II

### Public health (global environmental health) curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
PUBH 6000	MPH Applied Practice Experience	
PUBH 6002	Biostatistical Applications for Public Health	
PUBH 6003	Principles and Practices of Epidemiology	
PUBH 6007	Social and Behavioral Approaches to Public Health	
PUBH 6009	Fundamentals of Public Health Program Evaluation	
PUBH 6011	Environmental and Biological Foundations of Public Health	
PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy	
PUBH 6021	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership I	
PUBH 6022	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership II	
PUBH 6023	Interprofessional Education Experience	
PUBH 6121	Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology	

PUBH 6126	Assessment and Control of Environmental Hazards
PUBH 6128	Global Environmental and Occupational Health
PUBH 6137	Environmental and Occupational Health Culminating Experience I
PUBH 6138	Environmental and Occupational Health Culminating Experience II
PUBH 6400	Global Health Frameworks
PUBH 6411	Global Health Qualitative Research Methods
PUBH 6435	Global Health Program Development and Implementation
PUBH 6591	PA/MPH Clinical Leadership Seminar
PUBH 6853	Use of SAS for Data Management and Analysis

### Electives

1 credit in PUBH courses selected with the advisor's approval.

NOTE: PUBH 6000 may be met with PA clinical rotation in Occupational Health with advanced approval.

## HEALTH POLICY

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 138 credits, including 100 credits in physician assistant courses, 17 credits in MPH core, and 21 credits in health policy and program-specific courses.

### Physician assistant curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
ANAT 6215	Anatomy for Physician Assistant Students	
PA 6101	Clinical Assessment I	
PA 6102	Clinical Assessment II	
PA 6103	Clinical Assessment III	
PA 6104	Integration into Clinical Concepts I	
PA 6105	Integration into Clinical Concepts II	
PA 6106	Integration into Clinical Concepts III	
PA 6109	Foundations of Medicine	
PA 6111	Evidence Based Practice for PA/MPH Students	
PA 6112	Clinical Medicine I	

PA 6113	Clinical Medicine II
PA 6116	Clinical Skills I
PA 6117	Clinical Skills II
PA 6119	Health, Justice, and Society II
PA 6120	Human Behavior
PA 6121	Clinical Specialties
PA 6122	Role of the Physician Assistant in U.S. Healthcare
PA 6259	Introduction to Clinical Education
PA 6261	Inpatient Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6262	Family Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6263	Surgery Clinical Practicum
PA 6264	Women's Health Clinical Practicum
PA 6265	Pediatrics Clinical Practicum
PA 6266	Emergency Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6267	Behavioral Medicine Clinical Practicum
PA 6268	Elective Clinical Practicum
PA 6300	Introduction to Professional Practice
PHAR 6207	Pharmacology I
PHAR 6208	Pharmacology II
PHYL 6211	Physiology for Health Sciences Students

### Public health (health policy) curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
Public health core courses		
PUBH 6000	MPH Applied Practice Experience	
PUBH 6002	Biostatistical Applications for Public Health	
PUBH 6003	Principles and Practices of Epidemiology	
PUBH 6007	Social and Behavioral Approaches to Public Health	
PUBH 6009	Fundamentals of Public Health Program Evaluation	
PUBH 6011	Environmental and Biological Foundations of Public Health	

PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy
PUBH 6021	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership I
PUBH 6022	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership II
PUBH 6023	Interprofessional Education Experience
Health policy courses	
PUBH 6310	Statistical Analysis in Health Policy
PUBH 6315	Introduction to Health Policy Analysis
PUBH 6320	Advanced Health Policy Analysis
PUBH 6325	Federal Policymaking and Policy Advocacy
PUBH 6335	Public Health and Law
or PUBH 6330	Health Services and Law
PUBH 6340	Health Economics and Finance
PUBH 6350	Health Policy Capstone
PUBH 6591	PA/MPH Clinical Leadership Seminar

### Selectives

2 credits in graduate-level health policy department courses selected from the following:

PUBH 6356	State Health Policy
PUBH 6361	Health Workforce Policy
PUBH 6367	Population Health, Public Health, and Health Reform
PUBH 6370	Medicare/Medicaid Law and Policy
PUBH 6384	Health Care Quality and Health Policy
PUBH 6399	Topics in Health Policy (Valued Based Payment Reform)
PUBH 6561	Maternal and Child Health Policy Analysis
or PUBH 6399	Topics in Health Policy

## MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 138 credits, including 100 credits in physician assistant courses, 15 credits in public health core courses, and 23 credits in department and program-specific coursework.

### Physician assistant curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
ANAT 6215	Anatomy for Physician Assistant Students	
PA 6101	Clinical Assessment I	
PA 6102	Clinical Assessment II	
PA 6103	Clinical Assessment III	
PA 6104	Integration into Clinical Concepts I	
PA 6105	Integration into Clinical Concepts II	
PA 6106	Integration into Clinical Concepts III	
PA 6109	Foundations of Medicine	
PA 6111	Evidence Based Practice for PA/MPH Students	
PA 6112	Clinical Medicine I	
PA 6113	Clinical Medicine II	
PA 6116	Clinical Skills I	
PA 6117	Clinical Skills II	
PA 6119	Health, Justice, and Society II	
PA 6120	Human Behavior	
PA 6121	Clinical Specialties	
PA 6122	Role of the Physician Assistant in U.S. Healthcare	
PA 6259	Introduction to Clinical Education	
PA 6261	Inpatient Medicine Clinical Practicum	
PA 6262	Family Medicine Clinical Practicum	
PA 6263	Surgery Clinical Practicum	
PA 6264	Women's Health Clinical Practicum	
PA 6265	Pediatrics Clinical Practicum	
PA 6266	Emergency Medicine Clinical Practicum	
PA 6267	Behavioral Medicine Clinical Practicum	
PA 6268	Elective Clinical Practicum	
PA 6300	Introduction to Professional Practice	
PHAR 6207	Pharmacology I	

PHAR 6208	Pharmacology II
PHYL 6211	Physiology for Health Sciences Students

### Public health, maternal and child health curriculum

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
Public health core courses		
PUBH 6000	MPH Applied Practice Experience	
PUBH 6002	Biostatistical Applications for Public Health	
PUBH 6003	Principles and Practices of Epidemiology	
PUBH 6007	Social and Behavioral Approaches to Public Health	
PUBH 6011	Environmental and Biological Foundations of Public Health	
PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy	
PUBH 6021	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership I	
PUBH 6022	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership II	
PUBH 6023	Interprofessional Education Experience	
Onboarding for PA/MPH Students		
PUBH 6591	PA/MPH Clinical Leadership Seminar	
Maternal and child health courses		
PUBH 6500	Planning and Implementing Health Promotion Programs	
PUBH 6501	Program Evaluation	
PUBH 6015	Culminating Experience	
PUBH 6550	Maternal and Child Health I	
PUBH 6551	Maternal and Child Health II	
<b>Program-specific selective courses</b>		
6 credits in courses selected from the following:		
PUBH 6235	Epidemiology of Obesity	
PUBH 6240	Pediatric HIV/AIDS	
PUBH 6262	Introduction to Geographic Information Systems	
PUBH 6269	Reproductive Epidemiology	

PUBH 6299	Topics in Epidemiology
PUBH 6335	Public Health and Law
PUBH 6359	Reproductive Health Policy
PUBH 6400	Global Health Frameworks
PUBH 6451	Monitoring/Evaluation of Sexual/ Reproductive Health Programs in Low- and Middle- Income Countries
PUBH 6452	Social and Behavior Change Communication in Middle- to Low-Income Countries
PUBH 6455	Global Vaccinology
PUBH 6481	Global Mental Health
PUBH 6499	Topics in Global Health (Structural Racism and Public Health)
PUBH 6503	Introduction to Public Health Communication and Marketing
PUBH 6514	Preventing Health Disparities
PUBH 6552	Women's Health
PUBH 6553	Adolescent Health
PUBH 6555	Reproductive Health: U.S. and Global Perspectives
PUBH 6560	School Health and Safety
PUBH 6561	Maternal and Child Health Policy Analysis
PUBH 6562	Physical Activity and Dietary Interventions for Promoting Healthy Weight
PUBH 6563	Global Child Health
PUBH 6620	Designing Healthy Communities
PUBH 6853	Use of SAS for Data Management and Analysis
EXNS 6242	Nutrition Throughout the Life Cycle
HDEV 6109	Child Development

### General electives

At least 2 credits taken in any graduate-level SPH courses.

## ADMISSIONS

### Admissions Requirements

Prospective students interested in the joint MSHS–physician assistant/MPH program receive correspondence from both the

School of Medicine and Health Sciences—for the MSHS–physician assistant program and Milken Institute School of Public Health for the MPH—regarding the completion of their application and admissions decisions. Should the applicant be accepted to one degree program and not the other, they may accept the admissions offer from the program to which they were accepted, as the decisions are made separately.

1. Submit the PA application (CASPA and PA secondary application) according to instructions (<http://smhs.gwu.edu/pas/program/prospective-students/admissions/>).
2. Submit the PA secondary application within two weeks of submitting the CASPA.
3. October 1 is the deadline for complete applications. The GRE is not required.

To save the applicant time and application fees, the School of Medicine and Health Services provides a copy of application materials to the Milken Institute SPH admissions office. Applicants should not complete SOPHAS application or the SPH secondary application, as this delays the processing of the application and results in increased application fees.