

Rationale for Using Aggregate Data across MPH Programs for Goal 1, Learning Outcome 1

The Arnold School of Public Health is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). As such, the school is the unit of accreditation and all degree programs within the school are expected to comply with appropriate CEPH criteria. Thus, the academic assessment activities must address both university and external accreditation requirements, which are not always compatible.

In particular, Master of Public Health degree programs are a key focus of the CEPH accreditation. These professional degrees must integrate concepts and competencies from the five public health core areas (biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health science, health services administration, and social and behavioral sciences). To do this, the Arnold School requires all MPH students to complete certain core courses, which is reflected in the academic assessment plans for all of the MPH programs. The MPH plans, therefore, share a common goal and learning outcome with its associated measures and methods (Goal 1, Learning Outcome 1, shown below).

Goal 1. Graduates of this program will demonstrate an understanding of the history and fundamental concepts constituting the breadth of public health, with the goal of developing an interdisciplinary approach to public health practice.
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Curriculum (core courses for MPH Program)
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BIOS 700 Introduction to Biostatistics (or BIOS 701 Concepts and Methods of Biostatistics) ENHS 660 Concepts of Environmental Health Science EPID 700 Introduction to Epidemiology (or EPID 701 Concepts and Methods of Epidemiology) HPEB 700 Concepts and Methods in Health Promotion HSPM 700 Approaches and Concepts of Health Administration

Learning Outcome 1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of a) fundamental principles and practices in health promotion, education, and behavior; b) organization, principles, and practices in health administration; c) principles and practices in epidemiology, and tools for translating epidemiological findings into public health action; d) public health statistical applications; and e) environmental health from the perspective of the earth as a complex, dynamic system.

This learning outcome is deliberately written as a single complex learning outcome covering the five core curricular areas. Each part of the outcome has its own measures and criteria; and the results are collected and reported at the school level and shared with the programs. These data are not generally disaggregated by program, as the course requirements and learning outcomes are assessed at a macro level by a committee comprised of the program directors of all MPH programs. Curriculum changes affecting any of the core courses affect all of the MPH programs. Although this is contrary to the university's guidance for the assessment plans, it is essential for meeting our CEPH accreditation requirements and for our ability to assess the MPH programs overall. Anecdotally, most changes in the public health core courses listed above have often resulted from concerns or requests by the other programs, not by the department offering the course.

In addition to this common learning outcome, each MPH program's assessment plan has specific goals and learning outcomes that are used to measure success of the individual programs.