Master of Science in Epidemiology

Student Handbook

Department of Epidemiology

College of Public Health and Health Professions

College of Medicine

2016-2017

http://epidemiology.phhp.ufl.edu/

Last updated: 9/21/16
# Table of Contents

Welcome from the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology ............................................. 3  
Welcome from the Master of Science in Epidemiology Program Director ......................... 4  
Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 5  
Part I: The University of Florida ........................................................................................ 6  
Overview of UF ................................................................................................................... 6  
The UF Health Science Center ............................................................................................ 7  
College of Public Health and Health Professions ............................................................... 8  
College of Medicine ........................................................................................................... 10  
Department of Epidemiology ............................................................................................... 12  
Part II: Master of Science in Epidemiology ....................................................................... 13  
Program Overview ............................................................................................................. 13  
Student Learning Outcomes ............................................................................................... 14  
Administration and Faculty ............................................................................................... 15  
Student Guidance and Mentoring ..................................................................................... 19  
Curriculum .......................................................................................................................... 21  
Registration ....................................................................................................................... 23  
Supervisory Committee ...................................................................................................... 24  
Part III: Other Important Information .............................................................................. 28  
Gatorlink ............................................................................................................................... 28  
Academic Integrity and Professionalism ............................................................................. 29  
Grievance Procedures ......................................................................................................... 31  
Counseling and Student Health ......................................................................................... 32  
Shared Governance ............................................................................................................ 33  
Readmission Requirements ............................................................................................... 34
Welcome from the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology

Welcome!

Welcome to the Department of Epidemiology, housed in both the College of Public Health and Health Professions and the College of Medicine, two of the six Colleges that make up the Health Science Center.

The College of Public Health and Health Professions routinely ranks in the top 20 in research funding for colleges of public health, with more than $25 million in grant awards in 2013. The annual percentage growth of NIH funding for the College of Medicine was among the best in the nation in 2013.

The Department of Epidemiology aspires to be a top tier program in the country, but can only achieve this through excellent faculty and terrific students like you. The Department is home to the PhD Program and the Epidemiology concentration in the MPH Program, an MS in Epidemiology, a Certificate in Psychiatric Epidemiology and a NIDA T32 for pre and post docs. Our students are funded by the Gates Foundation, McKnight Foundation, Fulbright, NIH and other agencies.

I have found UF to be a wonderful place to call home and I know you will too. Welcome to the Gator Nation!

Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH
Dean’s Professor and Chair, Department of Epidemiology
Welcome from the Master of Science in Epidemiology

Program Director

Dear Students:

On behalf of our faculty and staff, and your fellow epidemiology students, welcome to the University of Florida Department of Epidemiology. You are joining a growing and dynamic department; new faculty will come on board and courses will be created and developed while you are here! While your cohort will be unique in some ways, in other ways you are part of an extended student cohort. You join two other groups of students: our PhD students and epidemiology concentration MPH students.

This handbook describes the policies and procedures of our program. We hope that it answers most of your questions. Keep it as a guide as you move through the program. Details of many topics important to graduate students are also addressed in the University of Florida Graduate Catalog. Please take the time to read through the handbook and to discuss any questions with your advising and mentoring team.

Again, a warm welcome to our program! I hope to see each of you frequently. Stop by my office; email me. Let’s take the time to get to know each other. Your success is our success!

Warm wishes,

Cathy

Catherine Woodstock Striley, PhD, MSW, MPE
Director, Master of Science in Epidemiology Program

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Introduction

The Graduate School establishes and administers graduate student policies and procedures campus-wide for the University of Florida. Policies and requirements listed in this handbook are either clarifications of those described in the Graduate Catalog or additional requirements or policies of the Master of Science in Epidemiology Program. This program is administered through the Department of Epidemiology, which is housed in both the Colleges of Public Health and Health Professions and Medicine.

Throughout this handbook, you will find links to programs, institutes, colleges and centers in the University of Florida. These links allow us to keep up with the ever changing complexion of the University.
Part I: The University of Florida

Overview of UF

The University of Florida in Gainesville is a major research university and one of only 17 public, land-grant universities that belong to the Association of American Universities. It is the state's oldest and most comprehensive University and is among the nation's most academically diverse public higher education institutions. UF has a long history of established programs in education, research, health care and service.

UF has a 2,000-acre campus and more than 900 buildings, including 170 with classrooms and laboratories. UF's extensive capital improvement program has resulted in facilities ideal for 21st century academics and research, including the Emerging Pathogens Institute building; the Cancer and Genetics Research Center; the Biomedical Sciences Building; the Proton-beam Therapy Center in Jacksonville, the Institute on Aging and the new Clinical and Translational Research Building (shown below).
The UF Health Science Center

The UF Health Science Center is the country’s only academic health center with six health-related colleges located on a single, contiguous campus. They include the Colleges of 1) Dentistry, 2) Medicine, 3) Nursing, 4) Pharmacy, 5) Public Health and Health Professions, and 6) Veterinary Medicine. The Colleges teach the full continuum of students from undergraduates to professional students to advanced post-doctoral students, enrolling over 6,000 students each year.

The Health Science Center is also a world leader in interdisciplinary research. Major Institutes and Centers include the Clinical and Translational Science Institute, the Emerging Pathogens Institute, the Institute on Aging, the Center for Environmental and Human Toxicology, the UF Shands Cancer Center, the UF Genetics Institute, and the McKnight Brain Institute. Information on other UF centers and institutes can be found at this link.

The Health Science Center is part of UF Health. Together with clinical programs and services across all HSC colleges, UF Health system is helping to create Florida’s future healthcare workforce.

The Health Science Center has recently completed Forward Together, a new strategic plan of core vision, values and goals.
College of Public Health and Health Professions

The mission of the UF College of Public Health and Health Professions (PHHP) is to preserve, promote, and improve the health and wellbeing of populations, communities and individuals. In 2014, the College was re-accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). PHHP is the first college to include both public health and health professions that has received accreditation as a School of Public Health. Quick Facts about PHHP can be found on the college fact sheet.

Teaching
The College is composed of nine departments: 1) Behavioral Science and Community Health; 2) Biostatistics; 3) Clinical and Health Psychology; 4) Environmental and Global Health; 5) Epidemiology; 6) Health Services Research, Management and Policy; 7) Occupational Therapy; 8) Physical Therapy; and 9) Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences.

Research
Among colleges of health professions, the College of Public Health and Health Professions consistently ranks first or second in National Institutes of Health research funding and was granted over $25 million in research support in fiscal year 2013-2014.

The College is home to numerous research centers, including the Center for Pain Research and Behavioral Health, the Center for Pediatric Psychology and Family Studies, the Center for the Study of Emotion and Attention, the Center for Research on Telehealth and Assistive Technology, the Florida Center for Medicaid and the Uninsured, the Florida Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation and the Florida Trauma Rehabilitation Center for Returning Military Personnel, the Hearing Research Center, the Institute for Advanced Study of Communication Processes, the Institute for Mobility, Activity, and Participation and the National Rural Behavioral Health Center. These units draw faculty from many departments, including Epidemiology, for transdisciplinary investigations that serve both scholarly and policy goals. The Florida Center for Medicaid and the Uninsured conducts research and policy analysis on access to health care for people with low income, and the Florida Office on Disability and Health is the state’s first public health program to build epidemiologic capacity and coordinate Florida’s disability programs.

Research Training
The College has received four NIH training grants: a K-12 Rehabilitation Research Career Development award, & three T-32 training grants: one in substance abuse training in the departments of Epidemiology and Psychiatry, one in rehabilitation and neuromuscular plasticity, and the other in physical, cognitive and mental health in older adults. The Department of Epidemiology has a Fogarty International Training Center to train mental health professionals in Bangalore, India, and Sikkim and Assam areas of India. The Department of Environmental and Global Health has also been awarded a Fogarty International Center Training Grant for professionals in Mongolia.
Patient Care
The College of Public Health and Health Professions is home to five patient clinics offering services in Speech and Audiology and in Psychology.

Service
One major service site is provided through the Department of Epidemiology’s HealthStreet, which is a community-based effort that works every day to reduce disparities in healthcare and research participation by linking the medically underserved to medical and social services and opportunities to participate in research.

On an international level, students and faculty in the Departments of Physical Therapy, Behavioral Science and Community Health, and Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences travel annually to countries in Latin America to provide training, health care services and public health needs assessments. The College has also opened a UF Public Health Field Laboratory in Haiti. The Department of Epidemiology is launching a population study to understand non-communicable disorders in rural and urban Haiti. Opportunities also exist through the Fogarty International Training Center Program for students to work in India.
College of Medicine

The UF College of Medicine is acknowledged as having one of the strongest medical education programs in North America. Its mission is to improve health care in Florida, our nation and the world through excellence and leadership in education, clinical care, education, discovery and service.

Teaching
The College offers a variety of educational opportunities in addition to the medical degree, including the Interdisciplinary Program in Biomedical Sciences, which leads to a PhD or MS degree, and joint programs for both MD and PhD degrees. Also part of the College of Medicine is the School of Physician Assistant Studies. The College plays an important role in the continuing education of resident physicians and fellows through its collaboration with UFHealth. The College offers residencies in 56 medical specialties and sub-specialties as well as clinical and research fellowships.

The College of Medicine has ranked among the top 50 medical schools for the past seven years and includes 40 research-oriented basic and clinical academic departments, 1000 students, 700 residents and fellows and 1,170 faculty members. The Jacksonville campus, located 75 miles to the northeast, is home to more than 350 physicians and scientists delivering medical care in an urban setting, performing research and educating medical students and residents.

Patient care is provided by the UF Health Physicians Group Practice, the Malcolm Randall Veterans Affairs Medical Center and several community health-care sites and other affiliated hospitals in Florida.

Research
College of Medicine faculty have attained national leadership in patient care, research and education related to addiction, the brain and spine, cancer, diabetes, pharmaceutical design and development, genetics and organ transplantation. The College was responsible for 45.7 percent of UF’s total extramural research awards for FY 2010, earning $310 million in research grants and contracts. The College of Medicine houses 6 affiliated research institutes and 32 research facilities/centers.

UF was ranked the No. 1 public institution at transferring its research to the marketplace and is among the top 10 U.S. universities in licensing income. The University averages more than 50 issued patents each year. Two of the most widely recognized products to come out of research at the College of Medicine are Gatorade®, a popular sports beverage, and Trusopt®, an eye drop developed to treat certain forms of glaucoma.

Patient care
Patient care occurs at two principal locations — Gainesville and Jacksonville — and at more than 40 clinical practices. Clinical strengths are in cancer, neurosciences, aging, gene therapy, psychiatry and addiction medicine, transplantation and children’s services. UF faculty members account for
approximately 550,000 physician visits and 44,000 discharges annually. The UF Health Cancer Center, a 192-bed hospital designed to meet the area’s growing need for cancer services, opened its doors to patients in November 2009. The hospital serves a variety of inpatients, including those receiving diagnostic and therapeutic oncology care. It also houses the Shands Critical Care Center for Emergency and Trauma services. In 2012, the UF Health Florida Recovery Center opened its doors for those who seek recovery from addiction and eating disorders.
Department of Epidemiology

The Department of Epidemiology is uniquely housed in both the Colleges of Public Health and Health Professions and Medicine at the University of Florida. Faculty members are appointed in both Colleges. This forward governance structure was designed to create synergies resulting in a strong, competitive research profile and in highly trained students.

The mission of the new Department of Epidemiology is to improve health globally through education, training, research and service.

As a leader in the field, the Department aims to:

• Advance the field’s theoretical and empirical base through rigorous multidisciplinary epidemiological research that monitors health globally.
• Prepare the next generation of scientific leaders to design and conduct ethical, relevant and innovative epidemiological studies.
• Train a public health workforce committed to working with diverse communities to bring about outcomes that matter.
• Develop and refine epidemiological measures and methods that address the dynamic and complex factors impacting public health globally.
• Provide leadership and service in epidemiology and public health through international, national, state, and local collaboration and community engagement.

The department offers the PhD in Epidemiology, an Epidemiology concentration in the MPH program, MS in Epidemiology and an online Graduate Certificate in Psychiatric Epidemiology. Currently, there are over 70 students across these academic programs in the Department.
Part II: Master of Science in Epidemiology

Program Overview

The Master of Science in Epidemiology degree is a 36 credit program that prepares students for careers in the public health arena that are focused on the surveillance and prevention of illnesses among diverse populations around the world. Students will be trained in the foundational aspects of epidemiology including person, place and time, risk and protective factors, and the social determinants of health. Areas of focus will include: chronic disease, infectious disease, geriatric, environmental, psychiatric, social, cancer and maternal and child health epidemiology.

The thesis is required to demonstrate skill in independent inquiry and investigation, under the tutelage of a mentor.

Graduates of the MS in Epidemiology program will be able to:

- Apply surveillance, assessment, evaluation, and other foundational epidemiological research designs to all areas of interest,
- Choose appropriate measurement and analytic methods to study health and disease in a population,
- Utilize biological, behavioral and social theory to understand how to prevent and intervene to promote the public health.

The program consists of required coursework and the successful completion of a thesis. Students may complete the course in three semesters, with 36 credits.
# Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLO</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Degree Delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Apply surveillance, assessment, evaluation, and other foundational epidemiological research designs to all areas of interest.</td>
<td>1) Evaluation of the student’s performance in their program of study as judged by the Supervisory Committee (Research Mentor, Academic Advisor, director of the program, and in case of any disagreement, the chair of the department); 2) Evaluation of the student's thesis defense by the Supervisory Committee</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Choose appropriate measurement and analytic methods to study health and disease in a population.</td>
<td>1) Successful defense of a thesis as judged by a Supervisory Committee; 2) Submission of thesis manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Utilize biological, behavioral and social theory to understand how to prevent and intervene to promote the public health.</td>
<td>1) Successful defense of a thesis as judged by a Supervisory Committee 2) Submission of thesis manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Behavior</td>
<td>Display ethical behavior, cultural sensitivity, integrity in research conduct, honesty, and teamwork.</td>
<td>1) Consistent adherence during the degree program to the UF Honor Code as judged by the Supervisory Committee; 2) Observation by faculty of professional behavior during class activities, seminars, research and thesis activities</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Administration and Faculty

A current listing of core faculty is shown below and on the Department of Epidemiology website. The Director of the Program, appointed by the Chair of the Department, works with the Chair to oversee the program, assuring student progress and monitoring program accomplishments. The Director works closely with core faculty members in the Department of Epidemiology and collaborates with the Department Curriculum Committee and the Admission Committee.

The Academic Program Coordinator is responsible for maintaining student records and assisting the Program Director.

The graduate faculty members of the Master of Science Program in Epidemiology are:

a) Core faculty in the Department of Epidemiology, and
b) Affiliated graduate faculty from other Colleges in the Health Science Center

Graduate faculty members, invited by the Chair, are voted on by a majority of all other graduate faculty in Epidemiology. Once voted in, their names are sent to the UF Graduate School for approval.

A current list of all graduate faculty members in Epidemiology is included in the Department of Epidemiology web site.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role in Program (Year Joined UF)</th>
<th>Faculty/Degree(s)</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Dean’s Professor of Epidemiology and Chair (2011) | Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH  
PhD – 1987: Washington University in St. Louis (Sociology/Psychiatric Epidemiology)  
MPH – 1980: Boston University School of Public Health (Epidemiology)  
BA – 1977: Emmanuel College (Biology)  
RN – 1972: Jewish Hospital School of Nursing | -Lee N. Robins, PhD  
-John E. Helzer, MD |
| Professor of Epidemiology (2014) | Xinguang (Jim) Chen, MD, PhD  
PHD – 1993: University of Hawaii (Biostatistics and Epidemiology)  
MPH – 1992: East West University, University of Hawaii (Population Studies)  
MPH – 1987: Tongji Medical University (Biostatistics)  
MD – 1982: Wuhan Medical College | -Bonita Stanton, MD |
| Professor of Epidemiology and Medicine (2007) | Robert Cook, MD, MPH  
MD – 1991: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
MPH – 1991: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Epidemiology)  
BSPH – 1986: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Biostatistics) | -Roberta Ness, MD, MPH  
-Wishwa Kapoor, MD, MPH  
-Duncan Clark, PhD, MD |
| Research Assistant Scientist (2016) | Hui Hu, PhD  
PhD – 2016 – University of Florida | -Xiaohui Xu, PhD, MD, 2012-15  
-Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH, 2015-2016 |
| Associate Professor of Epidemiology (2012) | Volker Mai, PhD, MPH  
MPH – 2000: Harvard School of Public Health (Quantitative Methods)  
PhD – 1999: University of Georgia (Microbiology) | -Arthur Schatzkin, MD  
-Steve Hursting, PhD, MPH, RD |
| PhD Program Director and Clinical Assistant Professor of Epidemiology (2010) | Cindy Prins, PhD, MPH  
MPH – 2006: University of Florida (Epidemiology)  
PhD – 2000: The Pennsylvania State University (Biochemistry, Microbiology, and Molecular Biology)  
BS – 1993: University of Central Florida (Biology) | -Richard J. Frisque, PhD  
-Robert Cook, MD, MPH |
| Associate Professor of Epidemiology (2015) | Mattia Prosperi, M.Eng., PhD  
M.Eng. – 2003: Roma Tre University (Computer Science Engineering)  
PhD – 2008: Roma Tre University (Computer Science & Automation) | -William Hogan, MD, MS  
-Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH  
-Giovanni Ulivi, M.Eng., PhD |
| Assistant Professor of Epidemiology, Epidemiology PhD Program Ombudsperson | Catherine W. Striley, PhD, MSW, MPE  
MPE – 2004: Washington University in St. Louis (Psychiatric Epidemiology)  
PhD – 2002: Washington University in St. Louis (Social Work)  
BA – 1980: University of Missouri at Kansas City (Political Science) | -Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH  
-Arlene Rubin Stiffman, PhD |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role in Program (Year Joined UF)</th>
<th>Faculty/Degree(s)</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Research Assistant Professor and Epidemiology MPH Concentration Coordinator (2013) | Krishna Vaddiparti, PhD, MPE  
MPE – 2005: Washington University in St. Louis (Psychiatric Epidemiology)  
PhD – 2002: National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences Deemed University (Psychiatric Social Work)  
Mphil – 1996: National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences Deemed University (Psychiatric Social Work)  
MSW – 1994: Osmania University (Social Work)  
BA – 1992: Osmania University (Sociology) | - Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH  
- Prabha S. Chandra, MD, MRCPsych |
| Assistant Research Scientist (2014) | Deepthi Satheesa Varma, MSW, MPhil, PhD  
PhD – 2005: NIMHANS Deemed University, Bangalore, India (Psychiatric Social Work)  
MPhil – 1998: NIMHANS Deemed University, Bangalore, India (Psychiatric Social Work)  
MSW – 1994: Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala, India (Social Work)  
BSc – 1992: Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala, India | -Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH  
-Ambika Krishnakumar, PhD |
| Research Assistant Scientist (2016) | Yan Wang, PhD  
MS – 2008 - Syracuse University  
PhD – 2016 – Syracuse University | -Ambika Krishnakumar, PhD  
-Rulla M. Tamimi, ScD |
| Assistant Professor of Epidemiology (2013) | Lusine Yaghyjan, MD, MPH, PhD  
PhD – 2009: University of Cincinnati College of Medicine (Epidemiology)  
MPH – 2003: College of Health Sciences, American University of Armenia  
MD – 1997: Yerevan State Medical University, Armenia | -Momiao Xiang, PhD |
| Professor and Director – Division of Genetic Epidemiology | Jinying Zhao, MD, PhD  
MD – 1989 – Zhengzhou University School of Medicine  
PhD - 1996 –Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences/Peking Union Medical College (Molecular Genetics)  
PhD – 2005 - University of Texas Health Science Center (Statistical Genetics & Genetic Epidemiology) | -Momiao Xiang, PhD |

**Part Time Faculty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role in Program (Year Joined UF)</th>
<th>Faculty/Degree(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Courtesy Appointment (2012)     | Richard Hopkins, MD, MPH  
MSPH – 1987: University of Colorado  
MD – 1974: University of Pennsylvania  
AB – 1968: Harvard College (Biochemical Sciences) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Clinical Assistant Professor of Epidemiology (2013) | **Sarah Lindley McKune** | PhD – 2012: University of Florida (Interdisciplinary Ecology)  
MPH – 2002: Emory University (International Health)  
BA – 1999: Wofford College (Sociology and French, Latin American Studies Certificate) | Sandra Russo, MS, PhD  
- Alyson Young, MA, PhD  
- Brian Mayer, MA, PhD |
| Adjunct Instructor (2006)        | **Jerne Shapiro, MPH**      | BS – 1998: University of Florida (Microbiology and Cell Science; Plant Pathology)  
MPH – 2001: University of South Florida (Tropical Public Health and Communicable Diseases) | Steven Weismer, MD  
- Thomas Belcuore, MS |
| Professor (2012)                 | **David Sheps, MD, MSPH**   | MSPH – 1988: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (Epidemiology)  
MD – 1969: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
BA – 1965: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill | Herman (Al) Tyroler, MD, PhD |
| Professor of Epidemiology (2012) | **Ronald I. Shorr, MD, MS** | MS – 1990: Case Western Reserve University (Epidemiology)  
MD – 1982: Ohio State University (Medicine)  
BA – 1978: Duke University (Chemistry) | Wayne A. Ray, PhD |
| Joint Faculty                    | **Fern Jureidini Webb, PhD** | PhD – 2001: University of South Florida (Public Health/Epidemiology and Biostatistics)  
MS – 1995: Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University Science and Technology  
BA – 1992: University of South Florida (Chemistry) | Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH |
Student Guidance and Mentoring

Students accepted into the Master of Science in Epidemiology program will have two active supervisors: 1) a Research Mentor and 2) an Academic Advisor.

Research Mentor
Students will choose a Research Mentor in the first semester of enrollment. Guidelines for who can serve as Research Mentor are shown below. The Mentor will also serve as chair of the student’s Thesis Supervisory Committee. Soon after selecting the Mentor, the student will obtain a Mentoring Compact, which outlines expectations for mentoring for both the student and the Research Mentor. Students will meet with the Mentor, review the Compact, both will sign it, and the student will bring a copy to the Epidemiology Program Office. Compacts must be signed annually with copies being given to the Academic Program Coordinator for the student’s file.

Academic Advisor
Students are assigned an Academic Advisor by the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology or Program Director. Advisors will ensure that the student is completing the specific requirements needed to obtain the MS in Epidemiology. The Academic Advisor will be a core faculty member within the Department of Epidemiology and will meet with the student in advance of the course registration period each semester to discuss academic progress. Advisors are available throughout the year to consult with students about academic issues. The Academic Advisor may also provide other general advice, serve as a member of the Supervisory Committee or facilitate communication between the student and faculty.

Guidance
Every semester, the Mentor and Advisor will also sign off on the Course Registration Form. At each registration, the Mentor and student will help plan courses to be taken; however, it is the responsibility of the Academic Advisor to know the curriculum requirements in order to review the form and sign it. To keep track, the Academic Program Coordinator will document the completion of specific curricular requirements. This form will be provided to the student for meetings with the Advisor and Mentor.

Every May, students and Mentors will meet and review the Student Annual Mentoring Plan and Review of Progress toward Goals. The Annual Mentoring Review Form, completed by the student before the meeting, outlines specific goals for the upcoming year. The Research Mentor adds comments in the presence of the student; the completed copy is then delivered to the Academic Program Coordinator by the student. The Program Director will review all Mentoring Review Plans.

Students should keep a copy of their form and bring it with them when meeting with their Academic Advisor or in subsequent annual meetings with their Mentor. In later terms of the program, students should also review the previous year’s goals and identify areas of progress.
Change in Mentor
Due to extenuating circumstances, students may need to change the Research Mentor. Such a change should be discussed with the Program Director (or Chair, if Program Director is involved). A formal written request to the Program Director will be required to finalize the change. If the student is not in good academic standing or the Program Director does not agree to the change, the student will seek the advice of the Ombudsperson, who will resolve the issue.

Ombudsperson
An ad hoc MSE Ombudsperson, appointed by the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology, will settle disputes between students and faculty. Students or faculty can refer a grievance to the Ombudsperson. When this happens, the Ombudsperson will discuss the issues with the student or faculty in confidence—working as an independent, objective broker for the student. Once an issue has been brought to the Ombudsperson, all other faculty involvement should cease, to allow the Ombudsperson the chance to settle the dispute. If a dispute cannot be resolved, the case will be brought to the Chair, who will seek the help of the University Ombudsperson.
Curriculum

All students are required to complete, or to have completed, the following courses before they begin their coursework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Epidemiology Prerequisites</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>HIPAA On-line Courses (for Researchers)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Human Subjects On-line Course (CITI for UF IRB-01)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The HIPAA and Human Subjects courses are available on-line through a sign in process using your Gator1 sign in. The HIPAA Class is PRV801 HIPAA and Privacy – Research; the CITI Course in The Protection of Human Research Subjects is available through the CITI site; you should create a sign in choosing University of Florida, our department and Biomedical Research for key personnel. You do not have to complete any extra or optional training listed.

The curriculum is shown below. All students must complete a minimum of 36 credits of coursework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Epidemiology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Epidemiology Curriculum (36 credits minimum)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epidemiology Core Courses (15 Credits)</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6001 Principles of Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6000 Epidemiology Research Methods I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6011 Epidemiology Research Methods II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6003 Epidemiology of Chronic Diseases and Disability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6016 Social Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6194 Spatial Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6517 Public Health Concepts in Infectious Disease Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6711 Measurement in Epidemiology &amp; Outcomes Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6937 Hospital Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6937 Computational Epidemiology in Population Health</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6937 Genetic Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 7007 Cancer Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 7038 Psychiatric Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 7595 Molecular Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biostatistics Courses (8 Credits)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6052 Introduction to Biostatistical Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6053 Regression Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 7065 Critical Skills in Epidemiology Data Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electives (5 Credits)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other course(s) approved by Advisor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Electives (2–3 Credits as appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Electives (2–3 Credits as appropriate)</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other course approved by Advisor</td>
<td>Choose up to one other class from another area as appropriate</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Requirements (4 Credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Journal Club Series (2 Credits)</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHC 7901</td>
<td>Epidemiology Journal Club (Fall)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 7902</td>
<td>Epidemiology Writing Circle (Spring)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 7427</td>
<td>Ethics (2 Credits)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Required Epidemiology Thesis (4 Credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Masters of Science Thesis (Can be taken over two semesters)</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6971</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transfer Credit** Transfer credits may be requested.

Transfer credit may be allowed on an individual basis. All course transfers must meet guidelines outlined in the UF Graduate Catalog guidelines for graduate degrees, as well as guidelines of the Department of Epidemiology. To request a transfer students must:

- Be sure to have previous academic transcripts, course syllabi, have identified potential courses that may qualify for transfer and have identified which required courses or general categories each transferred course may fulfill or replace prior to meeting with their Academic Advisor.
- Meet with the Academic Advisor to complete the Course Transfer Request Form and obtain signatures of approval.
- Submit the Course Transfer Request Form and any accompanying course syllabi to the Academic Program Coordinator. The Academic Program Coordinator will track that this was submitted, and give transfer request materials to the Epidemiology Curriculum Committee for review. The Curriculum Committee will approve, disapprove or request more information for each course transfer request. The Academic Program Coordinator will then submit the approved courses to the UF Graduate School for final approval.

The Department of Epidemiology Curriculum Committee meets regularly to review and adjust the curriculum. Substitution or exemption for any specific curriculum requirements will seldom be approved, but may be considered after the student files a letter of explanation that is signed by the student’s Research Mentor and Academic Advisor and given to the Program Director. Such requests will then be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, and the decision of the Curriculum Committee will be placed in the student’s academic file.
Registration

Registration requirements are consistent with the UF Graduate School Requirements, unless otherwise specifically stated in this handbook. Full-time students in the Epidemiology program are required to register for a minimum of 9 (Fall and Spring Semesters) credits while they are actively working toward their degrees. Students failing to register for two or more consecutive terms are removed from the program and must submit an Application for Readmission if they wish to resume their graduate studies at the University of Florida. Taking a leave of absence requires written approval.

Prior to each upcoming semester, the Academic Program Coordinator will compile a list of courses to be offered that are approved by the Curriculum Committee as program requirements or approved electives. Once students have identified their proposed schedule, they will complete a Course Registration Form and have the form signed by the appropriate people. It is then submitted to the Academic Program Coordinator.

Registration for Independent Research

If registering for an independent study or Thesis work (PHC 6971) the student should initiate the process several weeks prior to registration. The steps needed to register for these courses include: Completing a PHC 6971 Thesis contract or an Independent Research Contract Form that outlines contact time with the instructor, time allocation by students, and specific plan (goals and objectives) and deliverables to be completed during the semester. The student will then obtain signatures from the Instructor, the Research Mentor, and the Academic Advisor. Submitting signed contracts to the Academic Program Coordinator, who will obtain review from the Chair of the Curriculum Committee. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee will then either approve the Contract, or communicate with the student about changes or clarifications that must be completed before approval for registration.
Graduation and Thesis Defense Guidelines

Upon successful completion of 32 hours of required and elective courses, the student will be admitted to Candidacy Status (i.e., “MSE degree candidate”). For Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Science in Epidemiology degree all degree-seeking Candidates must successfully defend their manuscript, which serves as a thesis reflective of knowledge gained and skills acquired in the MSE program.

The manuscript must be submitted for the thesis with the MSE Candidate as sole author. In addition, the paper must be original; if the candidate has submitted the paper for credit as an independent study, it cannot be used again for the thesis. It must not be submitted to a journal until the thesis defense process is complete.

Supervisory Committee

Composition
The Supervisory Committee oversees and mentors the MSE student through completion of the thesis. Supervisory Committee membership is dictated by the UF Graduate School (see Graduate Catalog). As shown in the table below, the Supervisory Committee consists of three faculty members: a core faculty member with primary appointment in the Department of Epidemiology; and two Graduate Faculty members in the Department of Epidemiology. At least two members must be on the tenure track.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Required to be Core Faculty in Dept. of Epidemiology?</th>
<th>Graduate Faculty (GF) Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Committee Chair</td>
<td>At least two members of the committee must be core faculty</td>
<td>Must be core faculty in Epidemiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Committee Member</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preferably GF in Epidemiology; if not, must be GF in another UF department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Committee Member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chair of the Supervisory Committee
The Chair of the Supervisory Committee is the Research Mentor.

Supervisory Committee
In consultation with the Research Mentor, the student will identify the proposed Supervisory Committee during the semester before thesis defense. Each student will obtain the Supervisory Committee Selection Form from the Academic Program Coordinator and will fill it out, getting signatures as needed.
This will then be submitted to the Program Director for approval. The Director will return the form to the Academic Program Coordinator, who will enter the committee into the UF Graduate School system for final approval at the Graduate School, and into the Epidemiology student database.

Supervisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities Regarding Dissertation:

**Chair of the Supervisory Committee (Research Mentor)**
- Mentor the student according to the Compact, which is signed annually
- Evaluate the student officially with a yearly letter of evaluation (Annual Mentoring Review Form)
- Communicate with other members of the committee and the student
- Provide optimum support and guidance to help the student meet academic goals
- Provide guidance on the student’s thesis topic
- Sponsor written approval of the topic and proposal by all Committee members.
- Monitor and evaluate the student’s progress and give clear direction as to the final work plan leading to graduation
- Conduct the thesis defense to satisfy that the thesis is a piece of original research and a contribution to knowledge and a publishable paper
- Inform the Chair and Program Director of all progress as the steps are completed, via email within one day of the completion

**Supervisory Committee Members**
- Provide guidance to the student on the acceptability of the thesis in a timely way before the thesis defense
- Critically evaluate the quality of the thesis and thesis defense to ensure that the original research will contribute to knowledge and will be publishable
- Attend the thesis defense in person

Changes in Committee Membership
Changes made to the Supervisory Committee follow the UF Graduate School procedures and must be approved by the Program Director, and the Chair of the Department. Changes need to be approved at least 60 days prior to the date of the Defense so that the request can be reviewed and so any new member will have ample time to become familiar with the student’s work.

Thesis Defense
For a spring term graduation: The Candidate is expected to submit the pre-defense draft to his or her Research Mentor by **February 1st**; the RM will send the thesis draft to the Supervisory Committee Chair by **February 15th** for review and for distribution to the other Committee members. Committee members are asked to submit critical comments to the Chair prior to the Defense. Although the deadline for review comments from the Committee is **March 15th**, the Committee is allowed 4 weeks to review the paper (just like a publication for a journal), which leaves very little time for revisions and final approval before graduation. Committee members are strongly encouraged to submit major comments
to the Supervisory Committee Chair as soon as possible within the 4-week time frame in order for the Candidate to have ample time to make revisions as necessary. The Chair will meet as soon as possible with the Candidate to offer the Committee’s responses so the Candidate will have the feedback necessary to make improvements before the Defense meeting.

Defenses will be scheduled after the Committee has reviewed the thesis. April 5th is the last day possible to schedule the defense. Defenses can be scheduled any time before this. The Candidate’s final draft to be defended must be submitted to Committee members for their opportunity to review no later than two days before the scheduled Defense. Following the Defense, the Candidate has until April 12th to make changes and submit his or her finalized defended thesis to the Mentor. The Mentor will then obtain the necessary signatures for approval, with submission of the paper to a journal as the final phase to complete the process prior to awarding the MSE degree. [For other graduating terms, please consult with the academic program coordinator for corresponding deadlines]

ORAL DEFENSE GUIDELINES
The Candidate is expected to prepare a 20-minute oral presentation of his or her thesis. This portion of the Defense is open to the University community. This presentation will then be followed by a closed session with the Candidate and Supervisory Committee. The closed session provides the opportunity for the Committee to give feedback about the thesis to the Candidate. The oral presentation should be a PowerPoint presentation that follows the format of a scientific conference presentation with an introduction, summary of methods, highlighting of major findings, and a conclusion.

For spring term graduation there is a firm deadline of April 12th for the Candidate to make final changes to the defended draft and the Research Mentor to obtain the necessary signatures. The paper then will be submitted to a journal as the final step before graduation.

Please note:
While the Candidate and the Mentor may believe the thesis is ready to be submitted to a scholarly journal, and ultimately published, there remains the possibility that the Committee may find that major changes are necessary to make the thesis satisfactory, hence postponing the date of graduation.

Also, co-authors may be added to the manuscript upon successful defense and in consultation with the mentor.
Thesis Defense Rubric

Scoring Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Present, but does not meet expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Some improvement possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Exemplary demonstration of criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction and Background</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear problem statement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant literature cited and choice of theory</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear statement of significance to field of epidemiology and public</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health relevance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear description of sample and appropriate choice of sample</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear description of data</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate choice of analytic methods</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of understanding of methodology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables and figures clear and without error</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive description of sample and findings</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate presentation of findings</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations discussed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance of findings discussed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Product</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications to practice and future research detailed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality publishable or presentable at national level</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of innovation or significance to field</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Possible (15 criteria)</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target for Passing</strong></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>(86%)</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part III: Other Important Information

Gatorlink

UF requires all students to maintain access to their Gatorlink e-mail. GatorLink is a computer ID and suite of services that allow access to a variety of UF campus computing resources. Every student is required to get a GatorLink ID. Students will be held accountable for information contained in official university mailings to the GatorLink address (which resembles this format: username@ufl.edu). Free services, including a free mailbox and web space, are available. Other campus services require a GatorLink sign on to authenticate your identity. To use GatorLink, you must agree to abide by the policies stated in the Policies for Use of GatorLink and in the UF Acceptable Use Policy. To create your GatorLink, you must go to the GatorLink home page.
**Academic Integrity and Professionalism**

The Department of Epidemiology has opportunities for students to learn about current activity in the field of epidemiology and to meet practicing epidemiologists. Students are strongly encouraged to attend major seminars or talks that are directly supported by the Department of Epidemiology, and to meet with visiting epidemiologists during times that are allotted to students.

**Research Integrity**

All students are responsible for receiving training in the Responsible Conduct of Research. This training should be received as early in the program as possible; ignorance of federal regulations covering research is not an excuse for misconduct. Graduate students can be and are held accountable for their conduct, and such accountability can lead to serious consequences. To meet this training need, students are required to take the Department Ethics Course. Students should also expect regular discussion of expected conduct with their mentors.

The University has an [Office of Research](#) and Research Compliance Officer. Become familiar with the information on their web site.

You are responsible for reading and understanding this policy before you engage in any research activities:

**UF Research Misconduct Policy.**

“It is the policy of the University that each individual faculty, staff member and student is expected to maintain high ethical standards in the conduct and reporting of his/her scientific and scholarly research. Faculty, staff, and students have responsibilities for ethical conduct in research not only to the University, but also to the community at large, to the academic community, and to private and public institutions sponsoring the research activities. Research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research or reporting the results. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data. It also does not include authorship or credit disputes. Should alleged incidents of misconduct in research occur, reporting of such possible violations is a shared responsibility, and it is the duty of the faculty, staff members and students to respond in a fitting manner to resolve issues arising from such alleged misconduct. Such an allegation should be brought to the administrative officer to whom the accused reports (e.g., supervisor, department chair, dean or director). The procedures for reporting misconduct may vary depending on the type, seriousness, and technical nature of the alleged misconduct.”

In addition to the administrative officer to whom the accused reports, academic and research misconduct will be reported to any persons who have a legitimate educational need to know about the issue. This may include the Department Chair, the MSE Program Director, and members of the supervisory committee.

The full University Policy of Research Misconduct section can be accessed [here](#).
If you have any concerns about conduct, please see the Program Director to clarify the UF policy and to consider possible action.

**Student Honor Code**

All students are required to abide by the [Student Honor Code](#). In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. Student and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.
Grievance Procedures

Grievance Procedures for graduate students at the University of Florida are outlined in the University of Florida Graduate Student Handbook. Students are encouraged to speak to their Research Mentor, Academic Advisor, Program Director, or Epidemiology Department Chair to help resolve any issues. The department uses the Ombudsperson process to assist with student concerns or issues. Once an Ombudsperson, appointed by the Department Chair, is engaged, other discussions should cease in order to allow this process to work.
Counseling and Student Health

Students may occasionally have personal issues that arise in the course of pursuing higher education or that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing problems affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and to seek confidential assistance at: University of Florida Counseling & Wellness Center, 352-294-1575. Visit their web site for more information.

Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from: Alachua County Crisis Center: (352) 264-6789

BUT – Do not wait until you reach a crisis to talk with a counselor. The University of Florida Counseling Center has helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance; you are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services, including primary care, women’s health care, immunizations, mental health care and pharmacy services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 352-294-6789 or check out the web site.
Shared Governance

Shared governance is important at the University of Florida and in the Department of Epidemiology. The Department of Epidemiology invites student participation on several committees including the:

- Epidemiology Curriculum Committee
- Faculty Meetings
- Social Networking Committee
- Seminar/Symposium Committee.
- Other Committees as determined.

Annual Appointments to committees are made by the Chair of the Department, who is notified of a students’ interest by the PhD Program Director. To be involved, contact the Program Director.

At the University level, Graduate Student Council serves as a liaison between UF graduate students, UF administration, and the UF Student Government. General body meetings are held on the third Thursday of each full month of the Fall and Spring term. More information can be found on the Graduate Student Council website.
Readmission Requirements

Students, who have left the program for any reason and who wish to be readmitted require the following:

• A minimum GPA of 3.00.
  GRE scores that satisfy the admission requirements of the program in effect at the time of readmission.
• Two letters of recommendation from faculty members on the Epidemiology Graduate faculty.

Readmission is not guaranteed, irrespective of the circumstances that necessitate it.