

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What different tracks are offered?

WKU's MPH program offers two different Public Health concentrations: Health Education and Environmental Health. All students, regardless of their chosen concentration, must complete the public health core courses. These courses include: Introduction to Public Health, Health Behavior, Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Environmental Health, Public Health Administration, Program Evaluation, and a concentration-specific Capstone Course*. During the student's third semester, they will begin to take specific courses for their concentration area. All students are required to complete a practice experience/internship related to their respective concentration.

* Students who prefer to complete a thesis will not be required to take this course

2. How do I apply?

Students seeking a graduate degree must complete an on-line Application for Admission found on the Office of Graduate Studies website – www.wku.edu/graduate/

There is also a \$40 non-refundable application fee that is required. You may also contact the Office of Graduate Studies if you have questions about the application process:

Office of Graduate Studies and Research
1906 College Heights Blvd #11010
Bowling Green, KY 42101-11010
(270) 745 2446

3. Is there a deadline for applications?

Yes, there are deadlines.

	Fall Semester Enrollment	Spring Semester Enrollment
International Students	April 1	October 1
Domestic Students	June 15	November 15

4. What are the admission criteria?

- a. Graduates of accredited institutions other than Western Kentucky University must submit one official transcript showing their completed degree to the Office of Graduate Studies. Applicants who have not yet completed their undergraduate degree are required to submit one official transcript at the time of application and one official transcript after their degree is completed.
- b. All degree-seeking students from U.S. institutions must submit the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test Score unless their undergraduate grade point average is at least 3.2 out of a possible 4.

- c. All applicants must also submit 3 letters of recommendation (at least 2 of them must be academic recommendations), a resume, and a written personal Statement of Purpose.

5. When will I be notified of my acceptance?

After all materials have been submitted, the student should allow a processing period of up to three months. Acceptance letters are mailed usually within the months of March and April (for fall applicants), and October and November (for spring applicants).

6. What exams are required for entrance into the program?

The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is required for both domestic and international students. International students are additionally required to submit scores from either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Due to recent changes in the GRE as of August 2011, adjustment to interpretations of test scores is necessary. For specific information about test score eligibility please go to the Graduate Studies web-site for specific requirements: www.wku.edu/graduate/

7. What should I include in my personal statement?

In not more than 1200 words, please address the following:

- Explain how your academic and personal background experiences have prepared you for graduate study in public health, and in particular, public health education or environmental health
- Explain or describe your interest in public health and your reasons for seeking education in this field
- What are your long-term career plans? How do you expect the Master of Public Health degree will help you achieve your goals?
- Describe the type(s) or position(s) you expect to fill in the field of public health upon completion of the MPH.

8. How long does it take students to get through the program?

The length of the program is unique for each student; however a full-time student typically moves through the program in 2 to 2.5 years (three to four semesters of courses and an additional semester for practice experience/ internship). Full time students generally take 3 to 4 courses or 9 to 12 credit hours each semester. Part time students may take longer but should know that all requirements for WKU graduate degrees must be completed within 6 years from the date the first course is taken.

9. Are certificates offered?

There is one certificate program offered at the graduate level—Environmental Health and Safety.

10. Where do students complete their internships?

Although advisors can aid in the process, students have the primary responsibility for arranging their own internship, also referred to as a practice experience. Students typically complete their internships within health departments and other community-based health service agencies under the guidance of an MPH mentor.

11. What are the demographics of students within the program?

The MPH program is highly diverse. There are more than 100 students currently enrolled. Approximately 55 - 60% are non-domestic students who represent 8 countries from across the globe.

12. How many faculty are in the MPH program?

There are 8 full-time faculty and several part-time faculty within the MPH program. To receive information about the different faculty visit the 'Faculty' page.

13. Are graduate assistantships available to students?

Yes, all students are eligible to apply for Graduate Assistantships. The award for GAs is approximately \$4,500 per semester. These Assistantships are highly competitive - about 1 assistantship is awarded for every 7-8 applicants. [link to online application]

14. What courses will I take?

All students, regardless of concentration area, will take the same five core courses plus Introduction to Public Health and Program Evaluation.

In addition, Public Health Education students are required to take:

- PH 548 Community Health Organization
- PH 575 Health Education/Promotion Program Planning
- PH 576 Education and Communication Techniques in Health Education
- 2 elective courses

Public Health Environmental Health students are required to take:

- PH 510 Watershed Management and Science
- PH 571 Air Quality Management
- PH 577 Environmental Toxicology
- EH 580 Solid and Hazardous Waste
- 1 elective course

15. Can I specialize in any of the core areas of public health?

Students are encouraged to take specific courses within their area of interest as electives. At the present time and given the limited number of required credit hours, our program does not provide opportunities for students to formally specialize in any other area than Environmental

Health and Public Health Education. Having said that, students may strategically plan to focus their elective course choices on advanced biostatistics or epidemiology or take additional courses beyond the 42 credit hour requirement. It is not uncommon for many students who graduate with their MPH degree to continue their education by entering PhD programs in Public Health. Many doctoral programs allow students to specialize in a specific area of public health.

16. Can I obtain a joint degree?

At this time, joint degrees are not offered at WKU, although students are welcome to explore elective courses outside the College of Health and Human Services.

17. How much is tuition?

Tuition for graduate students entering the Fall of 2011 was increased and is now based on credit hour rather than semester. Qualifying international students may be eligible for reduced tuition rates. Specific tuition rates may be found on the WKU Bursar's Office website - http://www.wku.edu/bursar/tuition_fees_current.php

18. Am I required to complete a thesis?

Students within the MPH program have the option of completing a thesis or taking a capstone course. Students are not required to complete a thesis, even if they plan to go on to a doctoral program. However, the thesis option is supported for students who prefer this experience.

19. Can I get my degree online?

While many MPH courses are offered online, students cannot complete the entire MPH degree through the Internet at the present time.

20. Can I transfer into the program?

Students attending other MPH programs may transfer to WKU. Students may transfer up to 9 credit hours. However, to transfer credits, the student must provide a detailed syllabus from those courses for which they wish to receive credit. These syllabi will be carefully reviewed by the faculty who teach related courses and a determination made for how much credit will be granted. Courses that are more than 6 years old will not be accepted by WKU's Graduate Studies.

21. When will I be assigned an advisor and how can I communicate with them?

When students receive a formal acceptance letter from WKU, it will contain the name of their assigned advisor. When the student is sure that he/she will enroll in the program they may contact their assigned advisor to introduce himself/herself. Upon arrival at WKU all students are required to attend a new student orientation where they will be introduced to their advisor and can make an appointment to formally meet with them.

22. What is the cost of living in Bowling Green, Kentucky?

Apartments and housing in Bowling Green is easy to find, but the prices vary. Whether you plan to live alone or with roommates, you can find apartments from \$200 to \$1000 or more. Some links to available apartments are below:

<http://www.campussuites.com/properties/wku/>

<http://www.myownapartment.com/westernplace/>

<http://www.campus-pointe.com/default2.htm>

<http://www.theregistryatbowlinggreen.com/index.php?In=en&pg=floorplans>

<http://www.apartmenthomeliving.com/apartment-finder/Adams-Station-Apartments-Bowling-Green-KY-42101-163241>

<http://www.apartmentfinder.com/results.aspx?CCity=Bowling%20Green&CCountry=US&CRadius=-1&CState=KY&CSearchType=1>

<http://www.chandlerparkapartments.com/>