

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCE, PHD

The PhD degree in the Environmental Health Sciences Department is an advanced research degree that prepares students to employ laboratory and community approaches to address adverse environmental health impacts. Students use basic and applied research methodologies to examine consequences of chemical and non-chemical stressors and disasters. Graduates of the PhD programs advance to careers at academic institutions, governmental agencies, industry and nonprofit organizations.

Program Competencies:

- Design original environmental health research.
- Collect data to address environmental health problems.
- Analyze environmental health data.
- Make recommendations based on environmental health data.
- Communicate environmental health research findings.

Requirements

The PhD program requires a minimum of 72 post-baccalaureate degree credits, with at least 30 credits of doctoral study at Tulane SPHTM. Up to 42 credits may be applied from the MPH or equivalent master's degree. Upon admission to the PhD program, faculty review the master's degree coursework to determine credits that may be applied toward the PhD degree. If a prerequisite course or equivalent has not been fulfilled, the student must take the course in addition to the 30 credits of advanced doctoral study, but may count toward the total 72 credits. All students in SPHTM without prior public health degrees are also required to take the SPHL 6020 Foundations in Public Health that provides an overview of public health. [link to PhD Handbook]

The PhD must be completed within seven years of matriculation into the doctoral program.

Prerequisite Coursework (from prior master's degree)

Students who do not have these prerequisites are required to take these or equivalent courses.

Course ID	Title	Credits
SPHL 6020	Foundations in Public Health (or equivalent) ¹	3
ENHS 6030	Survey of Environ Health	3
ENHS 6600	Principles of Toxicology	3
SPHL 6050	Biostatistics for Public Health (or equivalent)	3
SPHL 6060	Epidemiology for Public Health (or equivalent)	3

Required Courses

Course ID	Title	Credits
BIOS 6040	Intermediate Biostatistics	3
EPID 7120	Epidemiologic Methods II (or other advanced epidemiology course relevant to research)	3
Advanced Study Courses		
Select a minimum of 24 credits ²		24
Total Credit Hours		30

¹ SPHL 6020 Foundations in Public Health may be waived with a prior degree from a CEPH accredited school of public health.

² Students consult with advisors to select environmental health advanced study courses in the department, school or university in consultation with an academic advisor. Additional credits may be needed to obtain a total of 72 credits. No more than 12 credits of special (independent) studies may be applied toward the doctoral degree.

Research Ethics

Students are required to take online research ethics training via CITI or another equivalent training program in research ethics. This certification must remain current throughout the program duration.

Comprehensive Exam

The departmental faculty administer the comprehensive examination (<https://tulane.box.com/v/gehs-comprehensive-july2018/>). The exam should be taken no later than a year after completing all required coursework. The comprehensive exam is offered in January, August, or by special arrangement.

The exam consists of written questions from the faculty that gauge the student's ability to identify, assess, and propose approaches to study environmental health problems.

Students have two attempts to pass the examination; the second attempt must take place within a year of the first. (Link to GEHS PhD guidance)

Doctoral Committee

After successful completion of the comprehensive examination, the student forms a dissertation committee and develops a prospectus. The committee must include a minimum of three members with at least two faculty from the Department of Global Environmental Health Sciences and one external to the school.

Prospectus

Students work with their advisor and doctoral committee to determine a research hypothesis and prepare a prospectus of proposed dissertation research. The research prospectus is presented and defended at least one semester before the dissertation defense. Following the successful defense of the prospectus, students are admitted to PhD candidacy and proceed with dissertation research.

Dissertation

Students must conduct original research and defend a dissertation based on that research. The dissertation research demonstrates scholarly work and is the basis for the dissertation. The student defends the dissertation to their committee; the dissertation committee and SPHTM Executive Faculty approve the dissertation.

Please see the doctoral students resources page (https://inside.sph.tulane.edu/student/doctoral_students/) for handbooks, FAQs, and other tools.