

**IU Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public  
Health PRAC Annual Report  
2022-23 Academic Year**

## OVERVIEW

In this PRAC report, the Fairbanks School of Public Health presents review and assessment efforts for the 2022 – 2023 academic year. During this period, Fairbanks began a restructuring and review process for both the Bachelor of Public Health and the Master of Public Health degrees that was completed for fall 2023. Additionally, the Master of Public Health degree was also the first IU graduate program that launched a program of scale in President Whitten’s presidential initiative. Due to the significant programmatic restructuring, going forward Fairbanks will be implementing the following cycle that focuses on a subset of programs each year. The 2022 – 2023 report focuses on the assessment measures, and changes made as a result of the assessments for the following programs.

Bachelor of Science in Health Services Management	2022 – 2023 report
Master of Public Health	2022 – 2023 report
Doctor of Philosophy in Health Policy & Management	2022 – 2023 report

The programs represented below will be addressed in subsequent years.

Bachelor of Public Health	2023-2024 report
Doctor of Public Health in Global Health Leadership	2023-2024 report
Master of Health Administration	2023-2024 report
Master of Science in Biostatistics	2023-2024 report
Doctor of Philosophy in Epidemiology	2024-2025 report
Master of Science in Global Health & Sustainable Development	2024-2025 report
Doctor of Philosophy in Biostatistics	2024-2025 report

The IU Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health (FSPH) [mission, vision, and core values](#) are outlined on our website.

- **Mission:** The mission is to cultivate innovative, interdisciplinary, community-engaged education, research, and service while preparing leaders in public health and health care.
- **Vision:** The Fairbanks School of Public Health is a leader in improving the health of the people of Indiana, the nation, and the world.
- **Values:** The following core values guide all aspects of teaching, research, and service: collaboration, commitment to social justice, environmental consciousness, cultural competency, equity, innovation, respect, and sensitivity to diversity.

## ACCREDITATION

The IU Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health is fully accredited or certified by the following agencies:

- Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) – Entire School
- Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation (APHEA) – Entire School
- Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) – MHA Program
- Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA) – BS in Health Services Management

The Fairbanks School of Public Health is a member of the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health ([ASPPH](#)) and the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region ([ASPHER](#)). The ASPPH collects outcome data annually from all accredited schools of public health. The ASPHER strengthens the “education and training of public health professionals for both practice and research.”

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The Fairbanks School of Public Health currently offers 10 academic degree programs. In addition to the 10 degree programs listed below, the school also offers [4+1 accelerated degree programs](#) and multiple [dual/joint degree programs](#).

1. Bachelor of Science in Public Health ([BSPH](#))
2. Bachelor of Science in Health Services Management ([BSHSM](#))
3. Master of Public Health ([MPH](#))
  - Epidemiology Concentration
  - Health Policy and Management Concentration
  - Public Health Informatics Concentration
  - Social and Behavioral Sciences Concentration
  - Interdisciplinary Public Health Studies (launched fall 2023)
4. Master of Health Administration ([MHA](#))
5. Master of Science ([MS](#)) in Biostatistics
6. Master of Science ([MS](#)) in Global Health and Sustainable Development
7. Doctor of Public Health ([DrPH](#)) in Global Health Leadership
8. Doctor of Philosophy ([PhD](#)) in Biostatistics
9. Doctor of Philosophy ([PhD](#)) in Epidemiology
10. Doctor of Philosophy ([PhD](#)) in Health Policy and Management

## ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Student audits are conducted at the conclusion of each term to review each student’s progress toward graduation. The Academic Progress Review Committees meets at least three times per year to monitor and evaluate student progress and success in each program. Each degree is represented by an academic program or concentration coordinator, as well as representatives from academic advising. Additionally, three Curriculum Committees meet monthly to provide oversight of the curricula:

1. Undergraduate Program Committee (BSPH, BSHSM)
2. Master’s Program Committee (MS, MPH, MHA)
3. Doctoral Program Committee (PhD, DrPH)

## PROFILES OF LEARNING FOR UNDERGRADUATE SUCCESS (PLUS)

**PLUS:** The school’s undergraduate programs were linked to the new Profiles of Learning for Undergraduate Success (PLUS) and submitted to the IUPUI Undergraduate Affairs Committee. As a next step, the faculty will map their undergraduate capstone courses to PLUS, similar to the way in which programs were mapped to PLUS. Faculty will also be asked to identify a required 300-level mid-point course in each undergraduate program that will map to PLUS.

The BS in Health Services Management (BSHSM) program successfully mapped the Profiles of Learning for Undergraduate Success (PLUS) to the Capstone in Health Services Management (PBHL-H475) in 2021.

Course Learning Outcome	Program Competency	IUPUI+	Assessment
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Apply classroom learning to a hands-on experience in a professional setting.	Develop inclusive leadership skills to ensure all team members are valued, inspired, and respected.  Demonstrate behaviors that align with ethical, legal, and professional standards.	Problem Solver  Community Contributor [Primary]	Student reflection demonstrated in ePortfolio  Supervisor mid-point and final evaluation of intern
Describe the knowledge gained over your time in the BSHSM program and your internship experience.	Demonstrate effective written communication and oral communication skills.	Communicator	Student reflection demonstrated in ePortfolio  Student competency self-evaluation
Identify full-time positions, evaluate job offers, and negotiate offer terms.	Demonstrate behaviors that align with ethical, legal, and professional standards.	Community Contributor [Primary]	Discussion assignments and in-class activities
Develop social capital through internship connections and broader professional connections.	Build and manage a network of healthcare professionals, including peers, faculty, and program alumni.	Community Contributor [Primary]	Social capital builder assignments
Transition smoothly into a professional position.	Demonstrate behaviors that align with ethical, legal, and professional standards.	Community Contributor [Primary]	Supervisor final evaluation of the intern  Student competency self-evaluation

**How do students experience the Profile(s) of Learning for Undergraduate Success with the assignments, activities, and assessments in the capstone experience?**

Students engage with the Profiles of Learning for Undergraduate Success through a variety of assignments, activities, and assessments in their capstone experience. First and foremost, as a capstone internship, students are engaging with the profiles (community contributor, problem solver, and communicator) on a regular basis through the objectives they have identified for themselves in their internship experiences. Their progress in this area is self-evaluated and the midpoint of the semester and evaluated by their internship supervisor.

In-class activities also allow students to engage with the Profiles. For example, one of the lessons focuses on job offer evaluation and negotiation. During class, students complete a group activity that calls all three Profiles into play. Students are given a job offer scenario and are tasked with evaluating the offer, developing a negotiation strategy, drafting their negotiation strategy.

**EXAMPLE: Job Offer and Negotiation Activity**

<b>IUPUI+</b>	<b>Activity Engagement</b>
Problem Solver	Students must research various aspects of the job offer utilizing a variety of resources and evaluate whether the offer is sound. If they feel elements of the offer are sub-standard, they must collaboratively determine how they would proceed with a negotiation.
Communicator	As a group, they are given more details to take into consideration about the prospective employer and their own situation. They must evaluate this information and develop their negotiation strategy, adapting their questions and messages as new information is provided.
Community Contributor	Throughout the activity, students are engaging with each other in a group setting. They must build a connection as a team, respectfully engage with one another to see the negotiation through.

Additionally, the course places a substantial emphasis on the importance of reflection. Throughout the semester, students develop an electronic portfolio. The ePortfolio is another way the PLUS is assessed in the capstone course.

**EXAMPLE: ePortfolio Assignment**

<b>IUPUI+</b>	<b>Activity Engagement</b>
Problem Solver	Students discuss how they were able to work through problems and challenges in their internship experience. For some, this includes addressing how they were able to grow from constructive criticism and how they worked through a conflict in their internship organization.
Communicator	Students demonstrate their ability as communicators in how they present their portfolio. While they are given some guiding expectations, students decide how they will convey their ideas effectively through the ePortfolio medium.
Community Contributor	Students demonstrate how they were able to build community within their internship settings. They engage in meaningful self-examination and reflection of their progress toward personal, professional, and internship goals.

**300-Level Course Mapped to PLUS**

In 2021, Health Information Technology, Management and Policy (PBHL-H325), a course taken about mid-way through the program, was also mapped to the PLUS. This was done in conjunction with the Capstone course.

<b>Course Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Program Competency</b>	<b>IUPUI+</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Students will learn how health information systems can be used to enhance and improve organizational and clinical performance.	Utilize data and health information technology to inform organizational performance and decision making.	Problem Solver [Primary]	Check-In Assignments  Exams
Students will be able to differentiate between various types of health information technologies and be able to	Utilize data and health information technology to inform organizational	Problem Solver [Primary]	Check-In Assignments  Exams

assess their strengths and weaknesses in accomplishing organizational, clinical, and societal goals for health care improvement.	performance and decision making.		
Students will be able to articulate barriers and facilitators to the adoption of health information technology applications.	Describe the structure and functioning of health delivery, public health, and health services organizations and the importance of a population health perspective.	Problem Solver [Primary]	Check-In Assignments  Exams
Students will be familiarized with issues related to privacy, confidentiality, and security as they pertain to electronic health records and health information exchange.	Describe the structure and functioning of health delivery, public health, and health services organizations and the importance of a population health perspective.	Problem Solver [Primary]	Check-In Assignments  Exams
Students will utilize Microsoft Excel for basic data manipulation, analysis, and visualization, demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of fundamental Excel functions, data analytics techniques, pivot tables, and chart creation.	Utilize data and health information technology to inform organizational performance and decision making.	Problem Solver [Primary]	Excel Check-In Assignments  Final Excel Project

### PLAN FOR IDENTIFYING, DEVELOPING, OR ASSESSING ITEMS FOR THE RECORD:

The BS in Health Services Management program is committed to ensuring engaged and applied learning opportunities for students. A program committee, comprised of faculty members who teach in the program, meets bi-annually to quarterly to discuss programmatic needs. This group is comprised of lecturers, clinical faculty, and tenure-track faculty. There is always representation by the program director and the school's representative to the Undergraduate Affairs Committee and the Division of Undergraduate Education Committee to ensure the program is taking into account campus needs and trends.

This group discusses and recommends potential Record submissions. From there, course instructors work with the program director to compile applications to The Record. In Summer 2022, the BS in Health Services Management program had three courses approved for The Record:

1. **PBHL-H475: Capstone in Health Services Management** [Capstone Internship]

In this course students will gain professional experience through an internship, reflect on, and evaluate their personal and professional growth, and build on their internship experiences to prepare themselves for the transition to professional life in a healthcare setting.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Apply classroom learning to a hands-on experience in a professional setting. (#1)

- Describe the knowledge gained over their time in the BSHSM program and their internship experience. (#2)
- Identify full-time positions, evaluate job offers, and negotiate offer terms. (#3)
- Develop social capital through internship connections and broader professional connections. (#4)
- Transition smoothly into the professional world. (#5)

During the Capstone, students are completing internship hours and meeting regularly as a group to reflect on and discuss their internship experience. The course meetings also focus on professional preparation/career preparation topics relevant to the group of seniors about to graduate and enter the workforce (or graduate programs).

## 2. **PBHL-H380: Internship in Health Services Management** [Elective Internship]

The internship in health administration provides students with an opportunity to gain meaningful and appropriate experience in any of the disciplines within health administration. Students may seek internships in local, state, national, or international organizations in healthcare delivery, payer organizations, policy and management environments, and certain non-profits providing the work of the internship reflects health administration. Internships may be paid or unpaid.

The internship is a valuable part of the academic experience because it gives students an opportunity to:

1. apply classroom knowledge and skills,
2. gain valuable work experience that complements the student's academic program,
3. identify alternative career opportunities,
4. understand expectations for professionals in the field
5. make connections with professionals who might provide letters of recommendation or help with job searches

The H380 course provides students with a structure through which to reflect on the experience and gain academic credit. During the course of the semester, students will complete a midterm and final evaluation with their internship supervisor, complete a log of hours and assigned activities, and complete a final reflection video that summarizes learning.

## 3. **PBHL-H379: Career Preparation in Health Services Management** [Required Course]

This course emphasizes career planning and professional development strategies in the health services management industry. Through this class, students will go through hands-on workshops and meetings to develop a professional resume, actively practice interviewing skills, and conduct an internship search. The course culminates in Internship Interview Day, an interactive event through which students are able to participate in multiple back-to-back internship interviews with employer partners.

In the years ahead, the program is considering more Record applications and is in discussions with course instructors to determine if there is alignment. Courses currently under consideration include:

- PBHL-H401: Strategic Planning for Health Care Organization
- PBHL-H101: Your Start in Public Health (Fairbanks' First Year Seminar Course)
- PBHL-H245: Professionalism in the Healthcare Workplace

## OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

**Student Assessment via Competency-based Curricula:** For each degree program and area of specialization, there are clearly defined student competencies (learning outcomes) that guide the development and

implementation of the curriculum. To meet the requirements stipulated by our school’s North American accrediting agency, Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), we identify competencies for all programs at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels.

Appropriate assessment methods are identified for these competencies. Curriculum committees at the undergraduate, masters and doctoral levels determine assessment findings and use them to make continuous improvements in instructional design, curricular content and sequence, and student services such as advising and career development. Faculty members monitor and evaluate student progress in each of the academic programs to determine if competencies have been achieved.

The competencies for each program are used as part of a deliberate and ongoing assessment of student learning and preparedness for the workforce. They are also used to continually drive and update/improve the curriculum. The competencies are available to students on the website and in IU Bulletin. They are also linked to learning objectives and assignments in the course syllabi, on the internship proposal form, and in the capstone course.

### DIRECT MEASURES OF LEARNING

The FSPH uses both indirect measures and direct measures of learning to evaluate student outcomes. Assessment of the competencies is conducted through course requirements (assignments, exams, presentations, papers), internship experiences, and culminating experiences. At all levels, student learning is assessed in the capstone experience, culminating project, thesis, or dissertation, all of which are conducted toward the end of the educational experience. These assessment measures demonstrate student knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and values acquired as a result of their participation in the program.

**The table below illustrates the Applied Practice Experiences and Integrative Learning Experiences used to assess student learning across all FSPH programs.**

<i>Program Applied Practice Experiences (APEs) and Integrative Learning Experiences (ILEs)</i>	
Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH)	Capstone Experience
BS in Health Services Management	Internship and Capstone Experience
Master of Public Health (MPH)	Internship and Capstone Course
Master of Health Administration (MHA)	Internship and Capstone Course
MS in Biostatistics	Comprehensive Exam or Thesis
DrPH in Global Health Leadership	Dissertation and Oral Defense
PhD in Biostatistics	Dissertation and Oral Defense
PhD in Epidemiology	Dissertation and Oral Defense
PhD in Health Policy and Management	Dissertation and Oral Defense

### INDIRECT MEASURES OF LEARNING

In addition to direct measures such as internships and capstone courses, the school tracks graduation rates within the expected timeframe and job placement rates within 12 months of graduation. The FSPH continuously reviews data regarding feedback from students, employers, and alumni to assess the extent to which the curriculum adequately prepares graduates for employment in their field. Additionally, graduates’ ability to perform competencies are tracked in periodic alumni and employer surveys. These surveys include questions regarding attainment of programmatic competencies, strengths and weaknesses of academic preparation, and emerging training/educational needs in the field. These surveys have been conducted at minimum once every three years to meet accreditation standards.

### Student placement outcomes

	2023	2022	2021
BSPH	100%	97%	96%
BSHSM	83%	98%	100%
MPH	100%	98%	100%
MHA	100%	100%	100%
MS	100%	88%	100%
DrPH	100%	100%	N/A
PhD	100%	100%	100

Data Source: CEPH Annual Accreditation Reporting

### Alumni Perceptions of Curricular Effectiveness

To what extent do you feel satisfied that the curriculum prepared you to achieve your program competencies?	92% Very Satisfied to Satisfied
How satisfied are you with your ability to effectively apply your program competencies in your current professional role?	90% Very Satisfied to Satisfied
In which skills do you feel most well-prepared and applicable post-graduation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social determinants and community capacity, understanding differing needs</li> <li>• Strategic thinking, program implementation</li> <li>• Public health surveillance, health equity, infectious diseases, survey development and distribution, data visualization, study designs</li> <li>• Program evaluation, implementation science, qualitative research (these are the 'how to'/direct application of coursework to my current job)</li> </ul>

Data Source: FSPH Qualtrics Alumni Survey 2022-2023

## PROGRAM REVIEWS AND ASSESSMENTS

### **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN HEALTH SERVICES MANAGEMENT:**

The Bachelor of Science in Health Services Management degree is the only such degree in the state of Indiana to be [certified by the Association of University Programs in Health Administration](#) (AUPHA). The AUPHA review team felt the program met the highest standards for an educational program in health services management. A central curricular component of the BSHSM curriculum is an emphasis on applied practice experiences. All students complete a three-course professional development sequence culminating in a capstone internship experience where students are able to demonstrate their competencies. Program competencies focus on communication and relationship management, professionalism, inclusive leadership, knowledge of the health care system, and business skills and knowledge. The BS in Health Services Management program regularly monitors student learning progress and reports on these metrics to our certifying body, the Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA).



### **Direct Measures of Student Learning**

A key direct measure of student learning the program emphasizes is internship supervisor ratings of student performance in required capstone internships. In academic year 2022-2023, 100% of capstone internship supervisors rated BS in Health Services Management students as being either “adequately prepared” (45%) or “very prepared” (55%) for a professional position in the field after graduation. This was a strong indicator of student learning as the capstone internship is the culminating, applied experience that tests students learning from across the curriculum.

We also ask capstone supervisors to share areas of strength and areas for growth. The areas for growth are carefully reviewed by the program’s faculty committee which focuses on curriculum and program quality improvement. This past year the following trends emerged as areas for growth:

- Professional time management and an ability to meet deadlines
- Excel skills
- Communication skills (email etiquette, timely response, etc.)
- Need for more exposure to various healthcare sectors

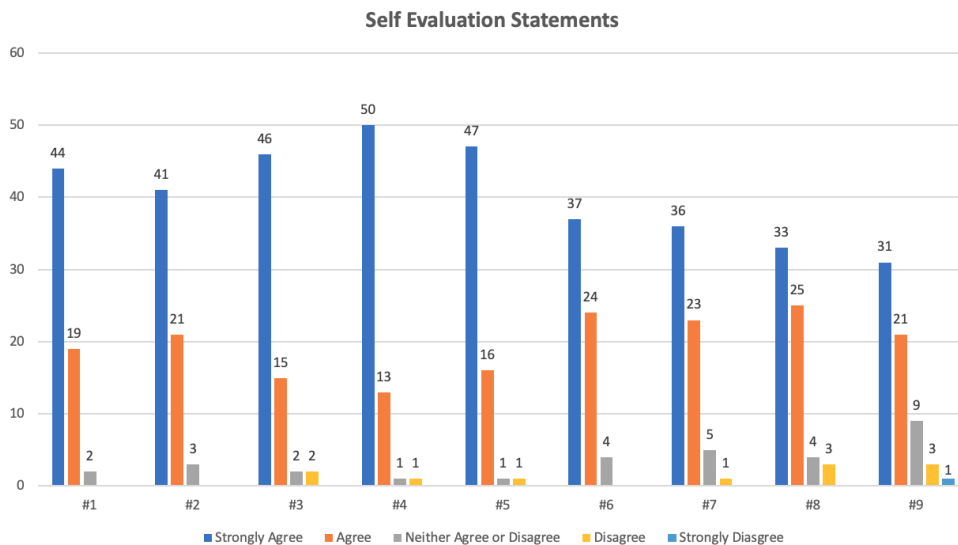
### **Improvement Action Plan**

This feedback aligns with overall trends identified by faculty in classrooms this past year. It has led to a number of faculty program committee conversations around the addition of a data analytics (with an Excel focus) course to the curriculum. This is a suggested change that will be discussed with our certifying body during our review year (2024-2025) as we are currently under self-study and discouraged from making curriculum changes until the self-study is complete.

The faculty program committee is also beginning to discuss ways to strengthen communication skills. More time will be spent on professional communication practices in the existing professional/career courses in the curriculum. Finally, the growth area of timeliness and meeting deadlines is one of great concern to our program faculty. There is a concern that relaxed expectations during the pandemic and immediately following the worst of the pandemic created a sense among this cohort of students that deadlines are highly flexible. This approach did not serve them well in their professional internships. The program plans to work to counteract this with more structured program-wide expectations to better prepare students for the professional world.

### **Indirect Measures of Student Learning**

A key indirect measure of student learning the program pays close attention to comes from our senior self-evaluations. In these self-evaluations, seniors rate their self-perceived level of growth across the program competencies. For each of the program competencies, seniors are asked to think about their abilities when they entered the major and where they are now, at graduation, as they respond. For example: “My ability to build and manage a network of healthcare professionals, including peers, faculty and program alumni has improved as a result of the courses and experiences I’ve had while in the Health Services Management program.” Response options to each question include strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The chart below shows the student responses to the nine program competencies for the academic year 2022-2023.



Data Source: 2022-2023 BSHSM Student Self-Evaluation Survey

### BS in Health Services Management Program Competencies

1. Build and manage a network of healthcare professionals, including peers, faculty, and program alumni.
2. Demonstrate effective written communication and oral communication skills.
3. Collaborate in diverse teams utilizing interpersonal skills, recognizing, and demonstrating sensitivity to diverse points of view.
4. Demonstrate behaviors that align with ethical, legal, and professional standards.
5. Develop inclusive leadership skills to ensure all team members are valued, inspired, and respected.
6. Describe the structure and functioning of health delivery, public health, and health services organizations and the importance of a population health perspective.
7. Apply quality, strategic planning, organizational behavior, marketing, and human resource theories and tools to manage organizational resources, confront industry challenges and improve outcomes in health organizations.
8. Utilize data and health information technology to inform organizational performance and decision making.
9. Utilize financial tools, principles, concepts, and practices to determine and understand the financial performance of health services organizations.

The overwhelming majority of students either agreed or strongly agreed with each competency statement. A competency area the program faculty are paying close attention to is #9: Utilize financial tools, principles, concepts, and practices to determine and understand the financial performance of health services organizations. This is always one of the more challenging competencies in the program as students often come into their accounting and finance courses with a noticeable amount of anxiety.

### Improvement Action Plan

The program's full-time accounting faculty member will be working closely with finance associate faculty to strengthen those courses to ensure students feel confident in this area by the time they complete the program.

### Next Steps and Future Plans

In addition to these direct and indirect measures of learning, the program is in the midst of its required self-study to maintain AUPHA certification (2023-2024). The self-study report will be reviewed by a highly qualified team of reviewers from AUPHA to ensure the Health Services Management program is meeting certification requirements. An important part of this review process will include consultative suggestions by the review team. The program will discuss its plans to add a data analysis course and will request feedback from the review team on how to better manage student concerns around finance/accounting courses. Furthermore, the program plans to discuss

the feedback received from capstone supervisors with the review team for their consultative input. Once consultative input has been provided, the faculty program committee will convene (2024-2025) with the intent to act on appropriate curricular changes recommended by the certifying body.

Outside of curricular updates, the program faculty are particularly interested in assessing student belonging and inclusion. There are plans to add a question to the senior self-evaluation to evaluate each student’s sense of belonging and inclusion in the program. The program is also heavily encouraging engagement with the campus Equity Champions program. In the next round of assessment, the program will plan to explore this area in greater depth.

**MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM:**

In 2022 the Fairbanks School of Public Health began a process to evaluate the Master of Public Health (MPH) program, with a focus on measuring and tracking competency attainment through the public health core courses and the Certified in Public Health Exam. The public health core courses play a critical role in the MPH curriculum, as the required 22 foundational competencies set forth by our accreditor the Council on Education for Public Health are mapped to these courses for individual student assessment. The public health core courses are meant to provide a strong base of essential knowledge required for degree progression as well as preparation for the Certified in Public Health (CPH) exam. The CPH exam is a national certification exam that assesses knowledge across the 10 domains of public health and is required of all MPH students for graduation. Prior to the program review, all MPH students completed an integrated public health core which consisted of four courses. The MPH program had largely been relying on successful completion of the four core courses to demonstrate student foundational competency attainment. As the program reviewed overall student degree progression, key findings included deficiencies in knowledge rates within the domain of health policy and environmental public health. Grade distribution in core classes was assessed as well as performance and pass rates of the CPH Exam.

**Certified in Public Health Examination First Attempt Pass Rates**

*Students take the CPH Exam after completing their public health core, usually at the end of their second semester.*

Year	Notes	Pass	Fail	Grand Total	Pass Rate
2021	Optional student participation	10	6	16	63%
2022	1 <sup>st</sup> year of required student testing	18	2	20	90%
2023	2 <sup>nd</sup> year of student requirement-ongoing	24	9	33	73%

*Data source: National Board of Public Health Examiners 2021 – 2023*

Additionally, the MPH program conducted several student focus groups to gain insight into their CPH Exam experience. Although student performance and the averaged pass rates were reasonably good over the past few years, 75% for first attempt, the domain areas of Environmental Health and Health Policy were identified by students as challenging content areas. This was then confirmed by exam data that reflected low score reports in these targeted domain areas.

**Certified in Public Health Examination Domain Areas**

Average Exam Results	Collaboration and Partnership	Communication	Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health	Health Equity and Social Justice	Law and Ethics	Leadership	Policy in Public Health	Program Management	Program Planning and Evaluation	Public Health Biology and Human Disease Risk
Total	13.1	13.3	12.2	11.3	11	12.3	10.4	13.8	13	11.2

*Data source: National Board of Public Health Examiners 2022 – 2023*

### **Improvement Action Plan**

The faculty determined that expanding the public health core courses from four to six would provide an opportunity for an in-depth and focused approach to covering foundational content. The expansion includes the addition of P504 US Healthcare Systems and Health Policy and P519 Environmental Science in Public Health which will address the knowledge gaps demonstrated in test score data. Additionally, as a part of this review process, Fairbanks became the first IU school to launch a graduate degree within the programs of scale initiative with IU Online. As such, faculty in coordination with OCAP have developed foundational competency rubrics that are linked to assignments, projects, or skills mastery within each of the expanded public health core courses. These rubrics will be used to track effectiveness of course learning and measure individual competency attainment. Finally, a CPH Exam prep course was developed as an MPH student requirement to provide a structured opportunity for expanded learning, preparation and review of content in the 10 domains of public health. This course launched in fall 2023-, and first-time pass rates have increased to 84% from 73% (January 2022 – August 2022).

### **MPH Applied Practice Experience Assessment**

Before students earn their diploma, they must demonstrate the knowledge, skills and applications expected of someone who has progressed through their academic programs. In the MPH Program, faculty assess whether students can apply what they have learned in the program during their Applied Practice Experience (internship). Students must identify five competencies to be addressed in their experience before they are approved to begin, but no direct competency assessment other than faculty review of the two final work products had been integrated. Additionally, preceptors evaluate the student midway and at the end of the internship. Preceptor evaluation feedback showed that student performance was Outstanding (72%) or Very Good (24%). When asked to identify areas of student improvement, the following emerged:

- Self-assessment and professional development
- Professional communication, written and verbal
- Time Management and Organization

Although the internship experience was designed to meet accreditation requirements, there was no direct evidence that students were actively connecting their work with the designated program competencies. Additionally, there was a lack of connection and assessment as to how their experiences affected their career goals or future practice plans.

### **Improvement Action Plan**

As a result of assessment efforts, the Applied Practice experience (internship) began a process to restructure course delivery and bring a greater emphasis on student competency assessment. A more formalized course delivery has been developed which includes touchpoints for interactions between the student and the supervising faculty throughout. The experience includes an asynchronous course format that incorporates milestone assignments that require students to submit written self-assessments that connect the internship with professional goals, and map and self-assess their identified competencies to two required work products.

### **Future MPH Plans and Next Steps**

Faculty will continue to monitor and update courses to meet the needs of our students and remain current with industry trends in public health. The implementation of foundational competency rubrics in all six of the public health core courses is an exciting addition, and we look forward to what promises to be meaningful data for course enhancements and bolstered academic student support. Faculty will continue to offer annual student focus groups to assess student's self-evaluation in their preparations and experience with the CPH Exam. The next

step is to develop rubrics to assess the competencies assigned to individual MPH concentrations, to ensure that students can apply foundational knowledge while synthesizing the additional depth provided by the concentration level coursework.

### **PHD IN HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT**

During AY2022-2023, the PhD HPM program had 15 students, a full breakdown is presented in the table below. Student assessment of progress toward learning objective takes several forms and includes course grades, progress toward degree completion (i.e. credits earned per semester), a qualifying exam, a dissertation proposal, and a dissertation defense. The PhD HPM Curriculum and Admissions Committee reviews students who receive poor performance (e.g. B- or lower in a course, taking low number of credits, a failing qualifying exam grade). The Committee, comprised of 4 tenured HPM faculty including the PhD Program Director, provide input on strategies to remediate students failing to meet competencies.

In prior years, the qualifying exam consisted of eight hours of in-class assessment over two days followed by a take-home exam with a 10-day deadline. The exam is written by HPM faculty members who teach the core courses. Five students took the qualifying exam in AY22-23, three did not pass on the first attempt. Two retook the exam and passed, the remaining student opted not to retake the exam and withdrew from the program.

### **Improvement and Action Plans**

The HPM PhD Committee is continuing to review and monitor the qualifying exam passing rate. Discussions within that committee are in part whether the exam as a tool for measuring competencies needs to be recalibrated and/or whether students ongoing feedback should be recalibrated – including whether coursework should be altered to better reflect learning objectives and competencies. Another related concern the Committee has discussed is how to improve academic progress from passing of the qualifying exam to dissertation defense. Upon review, the Committee observed several key findings: 1.) students who did not pass the exam had generally positive feedback on assessments to that point, 2.) students who made academic progress at slower rates tended to have more difficulty with the exam, 3.) the take-home portion of the exam was not a strong predictor of the ability to successfully defend a dissertation.

In response, the take-home portion of the qualifying exam has been revised with the goal of accomplishing three objectives: 1.) create an assessment opportunity that is a better predictor of success at the dissertation stage, 2.) ensure students are better prepared to initiate dissertation research when they reach candidacy, 3.) align research credits taken for the required course H799 with dissertation proposal writing. Implementation of these changes took place in the summer before AY22-23. Qualitatively, students have expressed a preference for this change to past take-home exams. Additionally, students have been able to more quickly apply for dissertation grants, request data from state and federal sources, and form research committees quickly after completion of H799. We will continue to monitor whether this change results in less time in candidacy.

### **Future Plans and Next Steps**

In response to FSPH-wide curriculum changes, the PhD HPM curriculum underwent a revision for AY22-23 to better reflect courses that were consistently offered and allow for more flexibility in electives. These changes were implemented to reduce the number of substitutions that students would need to fulfill the course requirements and provide a longer list of elective choices to reflect the interests of our students. Going forward, the Committee may update the curriculum more comprehensively with an intention of enabling/requiring students to take the qualifying exam earlier in the program rather than at the completion of coursework. This would enable a comprehensive assessment of a student's progress toward learning objectives earlier in the program and is consistent with other doctoral programs in FSPH.

A challenge the Committee will monitor is online education. How this will affect PhD students' attitudes about the program, their progress toward competency mastery, and particularly international students' ability to maintain enrollment, will be imperative to understand for future cycles.

**PhD HPM students enrolled AY2022-2023**

	No. of Students
Enrolled	15
Full time	5
Part time	10
Admission Year	
2012	1
2013	1
2014	1
2015	1
2016	1
2017	0
2018	3
2019	2
2020	1
2021	3
2022	1
Status at beginning of AY	
Coursework	8
Candidate – dissertation proposal pending	3
Candidate – dissertation defense pending	4
Took Qualifying Exam	5
Passed	2
Passed after retake	2
Did not pass	1
Status at end of AY	
Continued	13
Withdrew	1
Graduated	1