

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH (PHHS)

Graduate Degree Program
College: Public Health

Abstract

The doctoral program in Health Services Research provides interdisciplinary training in research and policy analysis relevant to the planning, administration, management, and evaluation of health and health care programs. The degree will prepare students to advance research, policy, and practice change that improves access, cost, and quality in the health care sector. The program requires 53-56 credits, depending on whether the student enters with an MPH degree. Students take 9 required courses that cover theory and methods relevant to the field, a 1-credit research ethics course, and a 1-credit applied statistical programming course. Students without an MPH take a foundational public health course. Together with their advisor, students select 4 elective courses that allow for specialization. The area of specialization is specific to the student but might include health economics, policy analysis, health equity, or outcomes research. After completing the coursework, students must pass a qualifying exam and then a dissertation proposal defense. After the dissertation proposal defense, students enter candidacy and take dissertation credits, which culminate in a doctoral dissertation and an oral dissertation defense. For further information, go to <https://sph.umd.edu/academics/doctoral-degrees/phd-health-services-research>. For further information, go to sph.umd.edu/academics/doctoral-degrees/phd-health-services-research (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/doctoral-degrees/phd-health-services-research/>).

CONTACT

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Website: sph.umd.edu/phd-health-services-research (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/doctoral-degrees/phd-health-services-research/>)

Relationships: Health Administration (HLSO) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/health-services-phhs/graduate/programs/health-administration-online-hlso/>) Health Equity (HLEQ) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/health-equity-hleq/>) Health Policy Analysis and Evaluation (HPAE) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/health-policy-analysis-evaluation-hpae/>) Public Health Practice and Policy (PHPP) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/public-health-practice-policy-phpp/>) Health Care Management (HLCM) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/health-care-management-hlcm/>)

Courses: SPHL (<https://umd-curr.courseleaf.com/graduate/courses/sphl/>) HLSA (<https://umd-curr.courseleaf.com/graduate/courses/hlsa/>)

ADMISSIONS

The PhD program in Health Services Research has a two-part application process: Applicants must submit the SOPHAS application (sophas.cas.myliasion.com (<http://sophas.cas.myliasion.com>)), the centralized application service for schools and programs of public health, and the UMD Supplemental application (<https://terpengage.umd.edu/community/CustomLoginPage/?GradApp=True>). Both applications must be submitted, complete with all required documents and verified by the scheduled deadline (<https://sph.umd.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/graduate-application-process/>). Applications will be reviewed once both the SOPHAS and UMD Supplemental applications are complete.

GENERAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A Bachelor's degree
- Minimum 3.0 undergraduate GPA
- Transcripts from all previous coursework
- English proficiency test score (TOEFL, IELTS or PTE) (international applicants (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements/>))
- Statement of purpose and objectives
- Response to personal experiences question(s)

PROGRAM SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

- SOPHAS application & UMD Supplemental application
- The statement of purpose should include career and educational goals, professional experience, and research areas of interest
- A master's degree in public health, health administration, health services, economics, business administration or a related field
- Documented potential for research
- A writing sample is required. Examples include a published manuscript, an undergraduate or graduate thesis, or a research paper. If you submit a published manuscript and you are not the first author, you should describe the contributions you made to the publication.
- Resume or curriculum vitae
- Three letters of recommendation
- Alignment between the applicant's professional goals and expectations and the program's degree competencies and faculty expertise.
- Submission of GRE test scores is optional. If submitting, official scores must be sent to SOPHAS via ETS (code: 0485).

Note for applicants with foreign credentials:

- The SOPHAS application requires that applicants submit a WES credential evaluation (https://help.liasionedu.com/SOPHAS_Applicant_Help_Center/Sending_Your_Official_Transcripts_and_Test_Scores_to_SOPHAS/Sending_Official_Transcripts_to_SOPHAS/2_Foreign_and_French-Canadian_Transcripts/)
- The UMD supplemental application requires uploading unofficial transcripts issued in the original language, along with a literal English translation. Visit the Graduate School website for additional information (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/international-admissions/>)
- Evidence of English Language proficiency is required if the applicant does not hold a degree from a U.S. institution or from one of the English-speaking countries listed on the Graduate School website

(<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements/>)

- Language scores must be submitted both to SOPHAS and the UMD supplemental application

For detailed instructions on how to apply, please visit the School of Public Health Website: sph.umd.edu/graduate-application-process
(<https://sph.umd.edu/graduate-application-process/>)

APPLICATION DEADLINES

Type of Applicant	Fall Deadline
Domestic Applicants	
US Citizens and Permanent Residents	December 18, 2026
International Applicants	
F (student) or J (exchange visitor) visas; A,E,G,H,I and L visas and immigrants	December 18, 2026

RESOURCES AND LINKS

Department website: sph.umd.edu/department-health-policy-and-management (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/departments-units/department-health-policy-and-management/>)

Program Website: sph.umd.edu/phd-health-services-research (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/doctoral-degrees/phd-health-services-research/>)

Application Process: sph.umd.edu/graduate-application-process (<https://sph.umd.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/graduate-application-process/>)

Admissions FAQ: sph.umd.edu/graduate-application-faqs (<https://sph.umd.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/graduate-application-faqs/>)

REQUIREMENTS

- Health Services Research, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/health-services-phhs/health-services-phd/>)