

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND BIostatISTICS

Department Admission Requirements

General Admission Requirements for Epidemiology

Admissions decisions are based on an evaluation of the applicants' entire file in relation to the pool of applicants that year. We also evaluate whether the applicant's needs and goals fit well with our department's strengths and resources. We review master's degree applications once/year for fall matriculation, and we review doctoral student applications twice/year for fall and spring matriculation.

Applicants for graduate degree programs in Epidemiology must meet all requirements of The Graduate School (https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/public_health/apply/graduate_applicants/) for admission and the Arnold School of Public Health (https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/public_health/apply/graduate_applicants/). All applications are submitted through SOPHAS (<http://www.sophas.org/>), with the following required documents:

- Resume or CV
- Three letters of recommendation from academic and/or professional sources
- Official transcripts from **all** schools or colleges previously attended
- GPA 3.0 or higher (4.0 scale)
- GRE scores 50% or higher for each: Verbal, Quantitative, Analytical Writing
 - MCAT scores may not be substituted for GRE scores.
 - The percentiles above are general guidelines not cut points.
- Personal statement describing your academic and research interests and professional goals.
 - Master's applicants should discuss how they became interested in epidemiology as a career choice.
 - Doctoral applicants must discuss their research area of interest along with the faculty member who has agreed to mentor them.
- Non-US institution transcripts must be verified by World Education Services (WES) or equivalent service. Submit course-by-course evaluation (WES ICAP).
- For those whose native language is not English, we require either a TOEFL (minimum 80) or IELTS (minimum 7.0) score.

Masters Admission Requirements

The Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) program and the Master of Science (M.S.)* program matriculate one cohort of students every fall. Admission requirements include a four-year baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from an accredited institution, preferably in the arts, sciences, or medicine. Prior professional work experience is considered an asset but is not a requirement

Students admitted to either the M.P.H. or the M.S. program who do not have academic or professional experience that provides a strong understanding of the biological basis of public health are strongly encouraged to select courses that will provide this understanding.

**Note: The Master of Science in Public Health degree in epidemiology will undergo a name change. Effective Fall 2021, the new name for the degree program is Master of Science (M.S.). The curriculum remains the same.*

Doctoral Admission Requirements

For the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program, applicants must have a master's degree in public health from an approved school of public health or related field or an equivalent advanced professional degree.

Before an application is reviewed, students must find an epidemiology faculty member in their research area of interest who agrees to be their mentor. This agreement should be mentioned in the personal statement. A holistic approach to application review process is utilized.

Research experience and publications are not required; however, prior experience is highly encouraged along with publications, including first author.

Admission Requirements for Biostatistics

Applicants for a graduate degree in Biostatistics must have a degree from an approved college or university. Applicants must meet all requirements of The Graduate School for admission and be recommended to the Graduate School for acceptance by the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics.

When we make our admissions decisions, we evaluate the applicant's entire file in relation to the pool of applicants that year. We also evaluate whether the applicant's needs and goals fit well with our department's strengths and resources.

The admission criteria for all degree programs follow those of The Graduate School and the Arnold School of Public Health. Before you can be considered for admission, you must submit an Online Application via <http://www.sophas.org>. Your application must include:

- Completed Application submitted through SOPHAS – <http://www.sophas.org>
- At least two letters of recommendation for the MPH and MSPH programs and at least three letters of recommendation for the PhD program
- An updated Résumé or CV
- Official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate work previously undertaken
- Official copies of Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores
- A personal statement that addresses research or practice interests and long-term objectives

Candidates for all graduate programs in Biostatistics must demonstrate proficiency in communicating in English, working with mathematical concepts, and in thinking analytically. While we do not set absolute cut points for grade point average and GRE scores (in part because of variability in test-taking ability that may not reflect competence to do well in the programs, and the fact that the percentile scores vary by year) we value their ability to provide us with global comparative criteria. Therefore, we provide the following as a general guideline for all our programs:

- Grade point average of 3.0
- GRE Verbal score > 151 (International students whose GRE Verbal score is > 146, and whose TOEFL score is at least the minimum defined below, will also be considered)
- GRE Quantitative score > 157 for the M.S.P.H. program and > 161 for the Ph.D. program

Committee members review the entire files carefully. Clear demonstration of competence in one or more domain(s) can supersede specific GRE score(s)

An electronic application packet should be submitted to **SOPHAS** as early as possible, and will not be processed until all the required credentials have been received and verified. Electronic applications can be submitted online. For information on how to apply electronically see the Arnold School of Public Health's admissions website.

International applicants whose native language is not English and who have not earned a degree in an English-speaking country are also required to submit a satisfactory score on the **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)** or the University of Cambridge's **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)** Academic Course Type 2 exam. The minimum acceptable score on the TOEFL is 230 (computer-based) or 570 (paper-based) or 75 (Internet-based). The minimum acceptable overall band score on the IELTS Academic Course Type 2 exam is 6.5. Proficiency in English sufficient to undertake graduate study is expected upon entry. Students who do not meet proficiency levels established by The Graduate School and the department will be expected to take additional work to raise their level of performance. Also, any transcript from a non-US institution will need to be verified by **World Education Services (WES)**. WES is an organization that provides international credential evaluation and checks documents for validity and accuracy. WES also offers an analysis of an individual's degrees and transcripts and will provide equivalents for each credential. For more information contact WES at <http://www.wes.org> or 212-219-7330.

Masters Admission Requirements

Departmental courses are sequenced so that students should begin their program of study in the fall semester. However, applications for spring admission will be accepted.

Applicants to the Master of Science in Public Health (M.S.P.H.) program must have a baccalaureate degree in arts, science or medicine. Applicants should also have completed with a B or greater Calculus-2 and Matrix or Linear Algebra. Prior professional work experience is considered an asset but is not a requirement.

Students admitted to the M.S.P.H. program who do not have academic or professional experience that provides a strong understanding of the biological basis of public health are strongly encouraged to select courses that will provide this understanding.

‡*Note: *Master of Science in Public Health degrees in biostatistics will undergo a name change. Effective Fall 2021, the new name for the degree program is Master of Science (M.S.). The curriculum remains the same.*

Doctoral Admission Requirements

Departmental courses are sequenced so that students may begin their program of study in the fall or spring semester. Applications for summer admission will also be accepted.

For the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program, preference for admission is given to applicants with breadth and depth of academic preparation in Biostatistics, Statistics, or a closely related field. Applicants must have a master's degree in one of these areas, or a master's degree in some other field and experience in these areas. Applicants should also have completed with a B or greater Vector Calculus and Matrix or Linear Algebra.
