BIOSTATISTICS, MHS

Overview

The Johns Hopkins Department of Biostatistics MHS program is intended for outstanding individuals with prior professional experience or a professional degree (ie, PhD or MD) seeking a one-year intensive course of study in biostatistical theory and methods. It is also open to students concurrently enrolled in a doctoral program at the Bloomberg School of Public Health. MHS graduates:

- Design research studies of human health and disease.
- Design and implement data management systems.
- Design and implement tabular and graphical displays of quantitative information.
- Draw inferences from quantitative data.
- Use statistical reasoning and theory to deal effectively with non-standard statistical problems.

Program Requirements

Course location and modality is found on the JHSPH website (https://www.jhsph.edu/courses/).

The MHS program involves one year of coursework (64 units) in biostatistics and other courses. Students are required to take a year-end comprehensive written examination. Students must demonstrate competence in material covered by the courses:

Course location and modality is found on the JHSPH website (https://www.jhsph.edu/courses/).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH.140.651</td>
<td>Methods in Biostatistics I</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH.140.652</td>
<td>Methods in Biostatistics II</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH.140.653</td>
<td>Methods in Biostatistics III</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH.140.654</td>
<td>Methods in Biostatistics IV</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH.140.646</td>
<td>Essentials of Probability and Statistical Inference I: Probability</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH.140.647</td>
<td>Essentials of Probability and Statistical Inference II: Statistical Inference</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.140.648</td>
<td>Essentials of Probability and Statistical Inference III: Theory of Modern Statistical Methods</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH.140.649</td>
<td>Essentials of Probability and Statistical Inference IV</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH.340.721</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Inference in Public Health I</td>
<td>5</td>
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Total Credits 37

A culminating data analysis project, documenting the statistical ideas and skills developed in the coursework, is also required.

Concurrent School-Wide Master of Health Science Program in Biostatistics

The object of this program is to provide doctoral students in other departments with the opportunity to pursue an MHS program in Biostatistics concurrently with their doctoral program. The administrative requirements and certifications by the faculty as set forth in the existing Policy and Procedure Memoranda for the respective doctoral degrees apply to the doctoral degree requirements of the concurrent School-wide Doctoral/Master of Health Science program in Biostatistics.

Students must have been accepted into one of the doctoral programs at Johns Hopkins University. With the primary department’s approval, the student may apply to the Master of Health Science program in Biostatistics. Students already in residence may also apply to the program. Specific details about sequencing of courses, etc., will be arranged in conjunction with the doctoral program involved. Core course requirements consist of successful (graded) completion of the 651 and 646 sequences; these classes should be taken over the course of the student’s first two or three years in residence in the doctoral program. Three additional (graded) statistical electives are required (introductory statistics courses excluded; other quantitative courses may serve as substitutes upon approval of the graduate program). Sixty-four total credits of coursework in Biostatistics or other areas are required.

Additionally, students must attend Biostatistics departmental seminars (https://www.jhsph.edu/departments/biostatistics/about-us/news-and-seminars/seminars/), take a written comprehensive examination, and complete a culminating data analysis project. Upon satisfactory completion of these requirements, the student is then eligible for award of the Master of Health Science in Biostatistics degree.

Before they will be awarded the MHS degree, students whose primary department is NOT in the Bloomberg School of Public Health will also need to:

1. register and pay tuition for two credits of special studies research (PH.140.840 Special Studies and Research Biostatistics) as a School of Public Health student during a summer term;
2. complete a course on the responsible conduct of research (ie, PH.550.860 Academic & Research Ethics at JHSPH or PH.306.665 Research Ethics and integrity: U.S. and International Issues); and
3. complete the course PH.550.865 Public Health Perspectives on Research, held during second term.

There is a brief (one-page) application that interested students will need to fill out and have approved by their advisor and department chair. Prospective students should wait to apply until they have completed one term of either the 651 or 646 sequences, but they must apply before they have completed one-half of the required coursework.

For further information about the concurrent school-wide Master of Health Science Program in Biostatistics, or to request an application, please contact Mary Joy Argo (margo@jhsph.edu), academic administrator for the Department of Biostatistics.

The department may accept a few students who do not seek degrees (special students and postdoctoral fellows) for periods of at least one academic year. This provision is intended for mature students who wish to undertake specialized study or research.

The Department offers a weekly seminar (https://www.jhsph.edu/departments/biostatistics/about-us/news-and-seminars/seminars/) program featuring recent work by outstanding statistical scientists from around the world. Attendance is required for all graduate students. The seminar on the first Wednesday of each month is the "Biostatistics Grand Rounds," which features statistical analyses addressing important public health questions.
Sample Curriculum

The curriculum is essentially the same as that for ScM candidates, with the exception that MHS students do not write a thesis but instead, prepare a culminating data analysis project.

During their time in the program, MHS students may choose from a wide range of elective courses to meet their educational needs.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH.140.642</td>
<td>Design of Clinical Experiments</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.340.645</td>
<td>Introduction to Clinical Trials</td>
<td>3</td>
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Students specifically interested in learning the SAS statistical package may want to consider the course:

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH.140.632</td>
<td>Introduction to the SAS Statistical Package</td>
<td>3</td>
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Click here to search for course schedules and descriptions (https://www.jhsph.edu/courses/).

Master’s Student Academic Standing Guide

This document covers policies regarding academic performance of master’s students that are specific to the Department of Biostatistics. Students also must satisfy the academic standing requirements of the University and Bloomberg School of Public Health. Master’s students are expected to maintain a grade point average of no less than 2.75 throughout their studies, to meet the minimum grade threshold of a C in required courses, and to complete academic requirements within established deadlines.

Departmental Master’s Comprehensive Exam

The Departmental master’s exam is taken at the end of the first year of study (typically in early June). The Departmental master’s exam is administered only once a year.

The grading of the Departmental exam is as follows. Passing scores are determined by exam writers after grading with examiners blinded from student names. Students who pass all sections of the exam pass the exam. Students failing one or more sections will be discussed by the faculty as a whole. This discussion will include exam and course performance in the first year. Possible resolutions include: declaring the student as passing the exam, declaring the student as having failed the exam, take-home remediation of sections of the exam or a full retake (only available if it is the student’s first attempt at the exam).

In the event of a retake of the exam, students are allowed one retake. Student retakes typically occur in the following year, with exceptions occurring when mitigating circumstances are present, such as a leave of absence. In the event of a failure in the retake, the student will be asked to leave their master’s program or switch to another program (for example from ScM to MHS).

Students who fail the exam are not eligible to receive the 75% tuition reduction for their second year of study. Failing the exam typically results in at least one extra academic year without the tuition reduction.

Often students who will not receive the 75% tuition reduction in their second year consider switching to part-time status. Such a switch must be discussed and approved with the graduate committee. Further, it should be noted that part-time status is often not an option for foreign students due to visa issues and residency requirements.

Upon successful completion of the Master of Health Science in Biostatistics, students will have mastered the following competencies:

- Design research studies of human health and disease.
- Design and implement data management systems.
- Design and implement tabular and graphical displays of quantitative information.
- Draw inferences from quantitative data.
- Use statistical reasoning and theory to deal effectively with non-standard statistical problems.

Upon successful completion of the Master of Health Science in Biostatistics, students will have mastered the following competencies: