

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions About MPH@GW

How is MPH@GW different from other MPH programs offered by the Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University? How is it similar?

MPH@GW is an online program, meaning students can attend the program from anywhere in the world. It has the same admissions criteria as that of the on-campus program, leverages the same faculty, and the content of the online program is based on the curriculum delivered on campus. Additionally, MPH@GW graduates earn the same degree as graduates of our traditional MPH program and have access to the same resources.

Are there any required campus visits?

There are no required campus visits; however, MPH@GW graduates are welcome to participate in the on-campus commencement ceremony on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

When will classes begin?

We offer cohort start dates each January, April, July and September. Please visit our [Admissions Overview page](#) for scheduled program start dates.

How long will it take to complete the MPH@GW?

Full-time students can complete the program in as little as one year. Part-time students have up to four years to complete the degree. Please speak with an Admissions Counselor to discuss which track may be best for you.

Is MPH@GW delivered completely online?

All class sessions and course work are completed online. Real-world practicum experience is a critical component of the MPH@GW curriculum and can be completed at a site in your community or another location around the globe.

Will my course schedule be flexible?

You will be required to attend live online classes occurring on a weekly basis. Outside of the classroom, you will have some flexibility completing assignments and course work.

What is the program's curriculum?

You can tailor your course work to focus on community-level, national or global interests in the United States and countries around the world. You can choose to focus your elective courses on health communication, health policy, epidemiology, environmental and occupational health, global health or program planning and evaluation. You may also choose from a broader selection of electives to build expertise across all areas of public health.

What can I expect from my courses?

Each course is designed and delivered by full-time GW faculty and requires:

- Preparation outside of class through group work and assignments that may include readings, projects and papers.
- Attendance in weekly live classes, which may include discussions and breakout groups.

How much time should I expect to be in class?

The MPH@GW academic year is broken into four 10-week modules. All classes meet for 10 full weeks, and you should expect to spend about 80 minutes in each live class session per week. Students also dedicate time to studying, preparation and completing course work outside live sessions.

What is the field practicum?

The 120-hour field practicum is selected in conjunction with a GW faculty adviser and a sponsoring organization. You can complete your practicum in your own community or in any city around the world. Through your practicum experience, you'll help communities by solving public health problems and will develop practical skills as a public health professional.

What type of career support can I expect as an MPH@GW student?

You will have access to the Milken Institute Career Center, which offers a range of services and resources to aid students. Services include guidance on job-search strategies, resume review, mock interviews and access to the GW alumni network.

Will my diploma denote that I took classes online?

Your diploma will not state that you took classes in an online format.

Is the MPH@GW program accredited?

Yes, MPH@GW is accredited by the [Council on Education for Public Health \(CEPH\)](#).

Questions About MPH@GW Admissions

Is work experience required?

Work experience is not required but is helpful in the program.

Is an undergraduate degree required?

Yes, you must hold a bachelor's degree. International candidates must have a college-level education equivalent to a U.S. undergraduate or baccalaureate degree (the same as a first university degree). Generally, this is a four-year degree. If you received a bachelor's degree upon completion of a three-year undergraduate program, you are eligible to apply to our program.

Do I have to take a graduate exam to apply to MPH@GW?

GRE scores are not required, but are accepted to strengthen your application.

Do you accept transfer credits?

Yes. The maximum number of credits that may be transferred is 12 credits taken at a graduate level. Requirements include:

- Grade must be a B or better.
- The course must have been completed in the last three years.
- The course may not have counted toward any other degree program.

What are the language requirements for non-native English speakers?

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) requirement for non-native English candidates is 100. We also accept the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with an overall score of 7, with no individual band score under 6. Read more about the [Language Proficiency and International Testing Requirement](#). If you have additional questions, contact the [admissions team](#).

Can I request that my transcripts be sent electronically?

Many schools issue transcripts electronically, either through their own web services or through vendors. If this option is available through the institutions you attended, please specify that your transcript(s) be sent via e-mail or select "MPH@GW - Online Program" if listed as an option through a vendor. This will expedite the delivery of your transcript(s) and the completion of your application.

Questions About Financial Aid

TUITION AND BILLING

What are the tuition and fees for MPH@GW?

MPH@GW students are charged tuition on a per-credit-hour basis, and the current rate of tuition for the 2020-21 academic year is \$1,750 per credit. You are required to complete 45 credits to earn your Master of Public Health through the MPH@GW program, totaling \$78,750 under current tuition rates. Please keep in mind that this is only an estimate, as GW tuition rates are reevaluated each year.

How does employer reimbursement work?

Employer reimbursement is typically contingent upon academic performance. If you are receiving reimbursement from your employer, you are responsible for paying the balance in full by the established billing date for each semester. GW will not defer tuition payments for students with pending employer reimbursement. If payment is not received by the due date, late payment fees, finance charges and administrative holds will be applied. Employers often request an itemized statement displaying the student's cost

per course. The Student Account eBill does not include the itemized costs per course. Should you require an itemized statement, please fill out the Itemized Statement Request Form. Allow three to five business days for processing.

I am not using financial aid. How can I pay my bill?

The accepted forms of payments are electronic checks, credit cards or paper checks. The GW Student Accounts Office provides an option to pay tuition in monthly payments, with fixed due dates for each term. [Read more about monthly payment plans.](#)

Can I use financial aid to pay my deposit?

Students will not be able to use financial aid to pay their deposit.

Are there any payment plans available for my deposit?

There are no payment plans available for the enrollment deposit.

THE FAFSA

What is the FAFSA?

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the Department of Education's application for determining a student's eligibility for federal student aid.

Where can I find the FAFSA?

You can complete the [FAFSA](#) online at fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA is a free application. If you are asked to pay a fee to complete the application, you are on the wrong website.

Do I need my parents' tax information to complete the FAFSA if I live on my own?

If you are applying to graduate school, you do not need your parents' financial information to complete the FAFSA.

When is the earliest I can complete the FAFSA?

Each year the updated FAFSA is available Oct. 1. Your term of entry will determine which FAFSA should be completed to request federal student aid for your first semester. Students are responsible for completing the required FAFSA for each semester they will request federal student aid.

What types of federal student aid are available to graduate students?

The most common forms of federal student aid available to graduate students in GW Public Health Online programs are the Direct Unsubsidized Loan and the Direct PLUS Loan.

Will I need to fill out the FAFSA each year?

Yes, the required FAFSA needs to be completed for each term federal student aid is requested. See the chart above for more information.

Why am I not eligible for the Pell Grant or Direct Subsidized Loans?

Current Department of Education regulations restrict use of the Federal Pell Grant and Direct Subsidized Loan to students pursuing degrees at the undergraduate level.

DIRECT UNSUBSIDIZED LOANS

What is the difference between a subsidized loan and an unsubsidized loan?

Direct Subsidized Loans are only available to undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need. The federal government pays the interest on the loan while the student is enrolled at least half time and during the six-month grace period. Direct Unsubsidized Loans are available to undergraduate and graduate students; there is no requirement to demonstrate financial need. [Learn more about loans.](#)

What is the aggregate loan limit?

The aggregate loan limit determines the total amount of outstanding debt from select federal student loan programs a student can maintain and remain eligible for new loans under those programs. The current aggregate loan limit applicable to students in most MPH programs at GW is \$224,000, which includes certain federal loans received for undergraduate study. [Learn more about aggregate loan amounts.](#) There is currently no lifetime borrowing limit on Direct PLUS Loan funding.

How do I find out if I am near my aggregate loan limit?

You can go to the [National Student Loan Data System website](#) to view your federal student loan borrowing history.

What is the current interest rate?

The current interest rate for Direct Unsubsidized Loans is 6.60 percent. Visit the [Federal Student Aid website](#) for more information.

Do I have to make payments on the balance of my federal student loans while I'm in school?

You are not required to pay your federal student loans while you are enrolled on a part-time basis. You can contact your loan service provider if you wish to make monthly payments toward the balance of outstanding federal student loans or interest-only payments. You should contact your loan service provider to confirm repayment obligations any time you drop below part-time enrollment, including graduation and any periods of leave of absence.

What criteria are used to determine eligibility?

Some initial requirements for federal student aid eligibility are listed below. Other criteria may be applicable and the GW Office of Student Financial Assistance will request additional information as

needed to certify your eligibility based on the results of your FAFSA. To apply for federal student aid, you must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen
- Have a valid Social Security number
- Be registered with Selective Service if you're male (age 18 through 25)
- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a regular student in an eligible degree program
- Be enrolled at least half time in an eligible program
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- Not currently be in default on previous student loans borrowed through federal student aid
- Not have exceeded the maximum aggregate loan limit

Title IV graduate student loans are not income dependent. [Learn more about student eligibility criteria.](#)

Are there any additional fees for borrowing unsubsidized loan funds?

Yes, there is a loan origination fee on unsubsidized loans currently set at 1.062 percent. This loan origination fee is a percentage of the total loan amount. This fee is deducted proportionately from each loan disbursement you receive.

What if I am in default or have defaulted on a prior federal student loan?

Review your loan history on the National Student Loan Data System website and contact your loan service provider for details on how to clear the default.

DIRECT PLUS LOANS

What is a Direct PLUS Loan?

Direct PLUS Loans are federal student loans that graduate or professional degree students can use to help pay for education expenses. [Learn about Direct PLUS Loans.](#)

How do I apply for a Direct PLUS Loan?

To apply for a Direct PLUS Loan, you must first complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Once you have completed the FAFSA, you can apply for the Direct PLUS Loan by completing the [credit application](#).

What are the credit criteria for the Direct PLUS Loan?

To qualify for a Direct PLUS Loan, applicants may not have an adverse credit history. A credit check is performed to determine whether applicants meet this requirement. [Learn more about what is considered adverse credit history.](#)

How much can I borrow with the Direct PLUS Loan?

If approved for a Direct PLUS Loan, you can borrow up to the difference between the cost of attendance for your program (as determined by the GW Office of Student Financial Assistance) and any other aid resources you are receiving.

What is the current loan fee?

The current loan fee for Direct PLUS Loans is 4.248 percent.

Do Direct PLUS Loans affect aggregate loan limit?

No. Only Direct Subsidized and Direct Unsubsidized Loans are used to calculate your aggregate loan amount.

When do I have to repay my Direct PLUS Loan?

Your Direct PLUS Loan will go into repayment immediately after you

graduate, withdraw from the program or fall below half-time status. You are not required to pay your student loans while you are enrolled at a minimum of half-time status as certified by GW. Students should consult with their loan service providers for definitive information on when payments are required.

MILITARY BENEFITS

How do I apply for military benefits?

If you are eligible to apply for military education benefits, visit the [Veterans Affairs website](#) and complete the Educational Benefits Application Process.

Do I need to do anything in addition to completing the Educational Benefits Application Process?

You need to present GW with an updated Certificate of Eligibility, which will be mailed to you within six to eight weeks of successfully completing your Educational Benefits Application Process.

What is the national maximum for the 2020-2021 academic year for private schools?

Visit the [U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs website](#) for 2020-2021 payment rates.

What is the Yellow Ribbon Program?

The Yellow Ribbon Program (YRP) is a matching program between the university/college and Veterans Affairs. Members must not be on active duty or the transfer spouse of someone on active duty and must be 100 percent eligible to receive the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit. [Learn more about YRP.](#)

Am I eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits?

You may be eligible if you have at least 90 days of aggregate active duty service after Sept. 10, 2001, and are still on active duty, or if you are an honorably discharged veteran or were discharged

with a service-connected disability after 30 days. [Learn more about the Post-9/11 GI Bill.](#)

Who do I contact with questions about my benefits at GW?

[Military and Veteran Services](#)

Phone: 202-994-9570

E-mail: vetserve@gwu.edu

GW FINANCIAL AID

Can I use loans to cover expenses beyond tuition (housing, books, living expenses, etc.)?

Yes. [View a sample estimated cost of attendance for a nine-month period of study at GW Milken Institute School of Public Health.](#)

Are there any scholarships available for this program?

MPH@GW awards both merit-based scholarships and partner organization benefits to outstanding students whose professional and academic achievements set them apart as leaders in the field.

What is the minimum number of credits required to receive federal student aid?

You need to be taking at least 4.5 credits per semester (fall and spring) and at least 3 credits for the summer semester.