

# UCLA Concurrent Degree Program

## Community Health Sciences and Social Welfare

This concurrent degree program leads to an MSW in Social Welfare and an MPH in the School of Public Health with a specialization in the Department of Community Health Sciences. Public Health and Social Welfare are very complementary disciplines. Public Health teaches a population based approach to the assessment, assurance, and policy development of measures that promote and protect health. Professional MPH training equips students with the skills to plan, implement, and evaluate programs and policies that affect the health of population groups.

Similarly, professional training in Social Welfare prepares students to assess and resolve a range of social, economic, and psychological problems of individuals, groups and communities. Social work emphasizes an understanding of the ecological context in which human and social problems exist. This perspective enables social workers to respond to issues broadly by taking into account the environment in which they occur and the psychosocial factors affecting them. There are particular synergies between Social Welfare and Public Health where both disciplines work to protect and promote the well-being of specific populations, including children, families, elders, and underserved communities.

The Public Health skills in improving health care systems and health promotion programs, together with Social Welfare skills in addressing a wider set of social and psychological determinants of wellbeing, provide a particularly useful skill set for students who seek careers that bridge health and welfare. These two skill sets enhances students' ability to solve social problems by enabling them to make social policy that is congruent with needs of individuals, groups, and communities. Becoming familiar with a broad context and all the externalities that affect social policy provides direct service providers a valuable perspective that enables them to be more adept in influencing these policies that affect their work and the populations they serve.

In addition to offering students a structured interdisciplinary intellectual experience, a major purpose of the concurrent degrees is to shorten the time spent in residence by one year. Thus, the concurrent MPH/MSW degree takes three years instead of the four years that are required if each degree were completed separately.

### Admissions

To enroll in the concurrent degree program, students are required to satisfy the regular independent admissions requirements of both degree programs. Acceptance into the Social Welfare program does not guarantee admittance into the School of Public Health and vice versa. First year graduate students enrolled either in the MPH or MSW program may also apply for admission to the concurrent degree program in their first year of residence.

### Concurrent Degree Program

The basic structure -- which this document describes -- is that each student takes the required first year in either Public Health or Social Welfare, followed by the

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## Alumni Testimonial

*If you had to do it all over again knowing what you would be doing now, would you just get the MSW, or would you still spend the extra year for the MPH?*

"I would definitely still get my MPH. One, this clinical therapy job is more out of short-term necessity because of job availability here, and it isn't my long-term goal, but it's what got me employed, so I'm glad I got my MSW too. I would prefer to move into public health when the opportunity is available. Two, even though my job role right now is as a clinician, I know my boss does more public health things, like collecting data and presenting that information to advocate for our program. I know I can do that role too, and I see more upward movement with my public health background. Additionally, with the MPH I know I wouldn't just be guessing and learning on the job on how to do program planning; I actually have an education that informs that work. Moreover, I think the MPH better informs my work clinically because I have a better conceptualization about how programs (can/should/might/do) work, so I see the world with a larger perspective, rather than just as one-on-one strictly therapeutic techniques. Because CHS focuses on behavior change and change models, I can still use what I learned there and apply it at an individual level, and I have other evidence to support how I approach client's presenting problems. The MPH is also valuable because I have more tools to use within the clinic among coworkers to discuss social issues that impact individual/family situations so we might improve the work that we do as a program.

In sum, while the MSW has prepared me well to be a clinician, it doesn't prepare me well to do the macro social work (aka public health work). While completing the MSW program, I frequently felt that the Public Health program taught "macro social work" concepts much better, so I'm glad for the dual degree. This gradual focus on larger systems is where I ultimately want to be, but the work I'm doing now due to my MSW is a great place to start. I'm happy that I have both the MSW and MPH, and they are great complements of each other.

I cannot say enough how grateful I am for UCLA offering the combined program."

-Khiet Ho Jenkins, MPH, MSW

required first year in the other program (Social Welfare or Public Health), and complete both degrees during the third year. The fixed times of the required prerequisite core courses in both programs repeatedly conflict, necessitating that the suggested course of studies focus on one set of core courses at a time. Students are required to pass the MPH comprehensive exam, normally in their third year of the concurrent program, to receive the MPH degree. Similarly, before receiving the MSW, students are required to pass the MSW comprehensive exam, typically in the third year of the concurrent program.

The three year program for the concurrent degree requires 119 units: 67 under the MSW and 52 under the MPH. Tables 1 and 2 (attached) describe sample plans of study for students completing a concurrent MSW/MPH degree. Table 1 describes the plan of study for a student choosing to start in Community Health Sciences; Table 2 provides a plan for a student starting in Social Welfare. The particular courses would vary depending on the student's concentration in Social Welfare, but the total required units for each degree would remain constant. Students must qualify for graduation in both Community Health Sciences and Social Welfare to get either degree. Students may remain enrolled in the concurrent degree program following the first year so long as they are in good academic standing and are not on probationary status in either program.

### **Accommodating Current Students**

Not every candidate for this concurrent degree will apply prior to entering graduate school. Some students already enrolled in one or the other program may become interested in this option during their first year of graduate school. If they are in Social Welfare, the required Public Health course requirements will be taken in the second year. If they start in Public Health and later apply for the concurrent program, the second year of the program will focus on the required coursework in Social Welfare. The exact sequence of courses will have to be designed around what the student completed in their first year.

### **Internships/Field Placement**

Social Welfare students complete two years of field practicum. The advanced practicum (SW402) follows the pattern of SW401 in the first year of Social Welfare coursework. In the concurrent degree, students starting in Social Welfare would complete the SW401 ABC during the first academic year of the program and SW402 ABC advanced field practicum during their third academic year. Students will fulfill the 400-hour internship requirement for the MPH by taking the SW402 ABC internship in the third year, but only after it is approved by the CHS fieldwork coordinator. Students who choose the SWIFG (clinical) social work concentration may be able to negotiate an advanced field practicum that meets the expectations of both Social Welfare (for clinical experience) and Public Health (for more "macro" experience). Otherwise, students will have to do an additional field practicum of 400 hours to fulfill their Public Health internship. Students starting in Public Health would complete their SW401 ABC internship during their second year, and their SW402 ABC internship as approved by both the Public Health fieldwork coordinator and the Social Welfare Field Director in their third year.

### **Fees**

Both the School of Public Health and Social Welfare have a differential professional fee but students do not pay the same fees for both degree programs. Students in the concurrent degree program will therefore be expected to pay the higher Public Health fee for four of the nine quarters of study, which is consistent with a normal course load of 12 units per quarter plus a summer internship to complete the MPH component of this degree.

**TABLE 1**

**MSW/MPH in Community Health Sciences**  
Starting with MPH Year  
*Sample Timeline*

**Total units for concurrent degree students:**    **52 MPH (8 units from social welfare counting as electives to meet 60 units total)**  
**67 MSW**

	<b>FALL</b>	<b>WINTER</b>	<b>SPRING</b>
<b>1st YEAR</b>	CHS 210 (4 units)	CHS 211A (4 units)	CHS 211B (4 units)
	HLT POL 100 (4 units)	EPI 100 (4 units)	CHS Dept. Required Course (4 units)
	BIOSTAT 100A (4 units)	CHS Dept. Required Course (4 units)	CHS Dept. Required Course (4 units)
			CHS Elective (4 units)
<b>SUMMER</b>	400 hours of MPH Fieldwork Requirement		
<b>2nd YEAR</b>	CHS 400 (4 units, credit for summer fieldwork)	SW 230B (2 units)	SW 230C (2 units)
		SW 240B (3 units)	SW 221A (4 units)
	SW 230A (2 units)	SW 201B (3 units)	SW 202A, for micro (2 units)
	SW 240A (3 units)	SW 201C (3 units)	SW Elective, for macro (2 units)
	SW 201A (3 units)	SW 401B, Practicum (3 units)	SW 401C, Practicum (3 units)
	SW 401A, Practicum (3 units)		EHS 100 (4 units)
<b>3rd YEAR</b>	SW 231A (4 units) OR SW 241A (4 units)	SW 231B (4 units) OR SW 241B (4 units)	SW 231C (4 units) OR SW 241C (4 units)
	SW Electives (7 units total)	SW 402B, Practicum (4 units)	SW 402C, Practicum (4 units)
	SW 402A, Practicum (4 units)	CHS Dept. Required Course (4 units)	

*This is a sample timeline to be used as a guide for course planning. Students are allowed to take up to 18 units each quarter as long as their schedule permits.*

The M.P.H. program requires a minimum of 60 units for the degree. The M.S.W./M.P.H. program allows students to apply a maximum of 8 quarter units of Social Welfare coursework towards both the M.S.W. degree and the M.P.H. degree **OR** 8 quarter units of Public Health coursework may be applied towards both the M.P.H. degree and the M.S.W. degree through a pro forma petition to the Graduate Division upon application for advancement to candidacy. In this sample, 8 units of Social Welfare coursework are applied to the M.P.H. program to meet the total 60 units for the M.P.H. program.

