



**GRADUATE CERTIFICATE  
IN  
EPIDEMIOLOGY**

**PROGRAM POLICY STATEMENT**

PROGRAM IN EPIDEMIOLOGY  
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES  
Fall 2023

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## **I. PROGRAM HISTORY AND PURPOSE**

### *A. Program Purpose*

Epidemiology is the study of the distribution of disease and determinants of disease in a population. It is frequently considered the basic science of public health, and its methods are used by epidemiologists, laboratory scientists, statisticians, physicians and other health care providers, and public health professionals to better understand the determinants of health and the distribution of those determinants in communities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC n.d.).

Shortages in graduate-level trained epidemiologists have been documented across research and practice. Since 2001, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) has conducted Epidemiology Capacity Assessments (ECAs) to monitor epidemiology capacity in the U.S. (CSTE 2017). According to the most recent assessment, an additional 1,200 epidemiologists are currently needed in the national public health workforce, an increase of 36% over current employment.

The Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology is a 12-credit program intended to support individuals who seek additional training in epidemiologic methods and the applied skills needed to address a broad range of health problems. This certificate serves a need for education and preparation in epidemiology research methods and skills within Delaware, across our region, and beyond. A student who earns the Epidemiology Certificate will be able to:

1. Collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data;
2. Develop advanced knowledge of epidemiologic research methods; and
3. Conduct an independent research study including the conceptualizing and development of a research question(s), data analysis, and interpretation and dissemination of findings.

### *B. Current Status*

The certificate is in the proposal stage.

### *C. Degrees Offered*

The certificate awarded to those who complete the program of study will be Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology from the University of Delaware College of Health Sciences.

## **II. ADMISSION**

### *A. Admission Requirements*

Applicants from diverse educational and professional backgrounds who have a strong interest in public health and epidemiological methods are encouraged to apply. Each application will be evaluated individually on the basis of prior academic achievement, professional experience, and interest in public health. Acceptance to the program is based on a composite of the applicant's scholastic record, letters of reference, and a personal statement. Relevant work experience may also be taken into consideration.

Admission decisions are made by the Epidemiology Program's Admissions Committee. Students will be admitted to the program based on enrollment availability, program capacity, and applicants' ability to meet the following recommended entrance requirements:

- Applicants should have an undergraduate degree where an overall undergraduate Grade

Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher (on a scale of 4.0 = A) was earned.

- If English is not an applicant's first language, then the applicant must demonstrate a satisfactory command of English. The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or TOEFL Essentials is required of all foreign applicants. If TOEFL scores are submitted, a minimum score of 550 (paper-based test) or 79 (TOEFL iBT) is required for consideration for admission.
- Two letters of recommendation are required.
- Applications must also include a resume outlining work and academic experience, as well as an application essay consisting of the answers to the following questions: *1. What educational background and scientific research or employment experience prepares you for this Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology? 2. How will acquiring this graduate level training in epidemiology help you achieve your long-term professional objectives? 3. What disease/condition are your content areas of interest and/or expertise?*

Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission to the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths as determined by the Epidemiology Program Admissions Committee.

### III. ACADEMICS

#### A. Degree Requirements

This program is a Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology. Admitted students will be required to complete 12 credit hours (4 courses) to complete the program.

#### B. Course Curriculum

The table below lists the course curriculum of the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology. Admitted students will be assigned to a faculty advisor/mentor with complementary content expertise who will guide the student through the curriculum from the outset and then supervise their culminating EPID 690 Research Experience in Epidemiology course.

EPID-CERT: Course Curriculum	
EPID 605: Epidemiology Methods I	3 credits
EPID 603: Biostatistics for Health Sciences I	3 credits
EPID 627: Social Epidemiology	3 credits
EPID 690: Research Experience in Epidemiology	3 credits

#### C. Timetable and Satisfactory Progress

##### C1. Time Limit for Completing Degree

The Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology is designed for most students to complete courses part-time or in addition to another degree program; time to completion will vary by student. The program can be completed in 1 year of part-time study (3-credit hours/semester for 2 semesters and 2 special sessions). Students have a maximum of 3 years for certificate completion. There are no full-time residency requirements. Students who complete the Certificate in Epidemiology and then apply and are admitted to the MPH with a major in Epidemiology may apply the credits from

the certificate toward the MPH degree requirements.

### *C2. Satisfactory Progress*

The Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology requires students to achieve an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in the four courses. Failure to satisfactorily progress in the program will be based on the University Graduate Policy. The Graduate College monitors the academic progress of all graduate students and notifies students in writing of all academic deficiencies. The cumulative GPA after each semester determines academic standing. The Graduate College notifies students when they are dismissed from graduate programs without completing a degree. Dismissals usually take place at the end of a term. Students may be dismissed for the following reasons:

- Upon the failure to meet the grade point average requirements as stated in the policy on Academic Deficiency and Probation.
- Upon written notice to the Graduate College of voluntary withdrawal from the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology.
- Upon the determination by the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology program faculty that the student has failed to make satisfactory progress towards meeting required academic standards
- Upon violation of University of Delaware regulations regarding academic honesty. All students are subject to University of Delaware regulations regarding [academic honesty](#). Violations of these regulations or other forms of gross misconduct may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

In the case of dismissal, the Epidemiology Director is required to send a report to the Graduate College that states the faculty vote on the decision causing dismissal and the justification for the action. The Graduate College will notify the student in writing when they are being dismissed.

### *C3. Procedures for Student Appeals*

Students who receive what they perceive as an unfair evaluation by a faculty member or faculty committee may file grievances in accordance with University of Delaware policies. Students are encouraged to contact the Epidemiology Director prior to filing a formal grievance in an effort to resolve the situation informally.

In the case of academic dismissal, the student may appeal the termination by writing to the Graduate College. This appeal must be made within ten class days from the date on which the student has been notified of academic dismissal. If the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate College grants reinstatement, the student must meet the conditions of the reinstatement. Failure to meet these conditions will result in dismissal from the program. A graduate student may be reinstated only once. The student's academic transcript will reflect the reinstatement with academic probation status.

Students wishing to review their program file must submit a written request to the Epidemiology Director at least 24 hours in advance. Students must review the file in the presence of program staff or faculty and are not permitted to remove a file but may photocopy documents from their folder. All access to student records is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

#### **IV. ASSESSMENT PLAN**

A variety of internal and external mechanisms will be used to evaluate the curriculum and overall effectiveness of the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology.

The Epidemiology Program Director and the Academic Program Manager will review student progress, grades, and pass/fail rate on coursework, enrollments, and advising contracts on an annual basis. This information will be used to evaluate the extent to which students are satisfactorily progressing, and to assess and adjust student flow through the program. In addition, the program will monitor how effectively the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology advances students by tracking the following:

1. Completion rates and program attrition (dropouts, dismissals)
2. Time to complete the certificate
3. Post-graduation outcomes (80% or greater employment or enrollment in further education within a specified time frame)
4. Student and alumni perceptions of curricular effectiveness

The Program in Epidemiology will also use a variety of mechanisms to assess perceptions of the program, including:

1. Teaching evaluations
2. Anonymous student surveys to assess different aspects of the program
3. Unsolicited student feedback
4. Alumni and partner perceptions of curricular effectiveness

#### **V. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

##### *A. Program Administration*

The development, administration and progress assessment of the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology will be guided by the Director of the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology and the Epidemiology Program Committee. The Epidemiology Program Committee will be responsible for admission, advising, and progress assessment of the students in the certificate program. The Director will be responsible for the overall implementation, quality and progress of the degree program. The Academic Program Manager will provide day-to-day program management and assist with student recruitment, admission, advising, progress assessment, and career planning

##### *B. Program Timetable*

We expect to enroll the first cohort in Fall 2024. The goal is to incrementally increase enrollment with a planned growth to approximately 20 students. Market research conducted by the University of Delaware's Office Corporate Program and Partnerships shows that the labor market in the Mid-Atlantic States for students with epidemiology preparation is strong and would support a program of this size.