Welcome

to the Department of Global and Community Health
at George Mason University.

The Student Handbook has been developed to introduce you to the program requirements and student policies of the Department. Please read through this handbook and become familiar with the requirements, policies, and procedures of your program. The information in this handbook will help you be successful in your program and help you make critical decisions along the way. As questions and issues arise during your studies, this handbook, along with the Graduate Catalog, and the Graduate Programs Coordinator should be where you turn to first for answers and guidance.

We welcome you to the Department and hope you find this experience to be both enjoyable and rewarding.

Robert M. Weiler, PhD, MPH
Department Chair

Ali A. Weinstein, PhD
Graduate Programs Coordinator
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Department Overview

Guiding Principles

Mission
The Department of Global and Community Health brings together faculty and students from the disciplines of biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health and health promotion within public health with three primary missions:

- Provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate educational programs preparing our students to enter the domestic and global public health workforce;
- Conduct innovative research that address pressing and emerging domestic and global health problems;
- Establish partnerships that promote population health and well-being especially among underserved and disadvantaged communities.

Goals
Based on our mission, our disciplines, and our values, the following are our primary departmental goals for 2015-2018:

- Maintain and support high quality educational programs that prepare students to be critical thinkers and successful public health practitioners.
- Expand faculty and student opportunities and involvement in research of consequence.
- Strengthen partnerships with agencies engaged in public health through research, education and training, and service.
- Foster learning opportunities for students to work on global efforts that contribute to healthier populations and communities around the world.
Educational Offerings

The Department of Global and Community Health (DGCH) offers a variety of graduate and undergraduate programs. At the graduate level, programs include two Masters Degree programs and one Graduate Certificate program. Brief descriptions of each program are provided, with more details available on the department website. For all degrees and certificates, the most up-to-date information is provided in the University Catalog. To confirm terms that courses will be offered, please consult this handbook and confirm with your advisor.

Master of Public Health

The Council on Education for Public Health-accredited Master of Public Health (MPH) degree is a professional degree for those wishing to enter or advance in the field of public health. Mason’s MPH program provides coursework in the five core disciplines of public health – epidemiology, biostatistics, health administration, social and behavioral sciences, and environmental health – along with advanced training in one of two concentration areas:

The Epidemiology Concentration prepares students to investigate and analyze factors that influence the occurrence, distribution, prevention, and control of disease. Emphasis is placed on the development of such skills as study design, data collection and management, data analysis and interpretation, and communication of research findings.

The Global and Community Health Concentration prepares students to address social and behavioral factors affecting the health of communities in both domestic and international settings. Through course work and practical application, students learn to analyze social determinants, develop culturally competent prevention efforts, manage program implementation, and evaluate the quality of preventive services. Students become familiar with a range of issues, including infectious disease, nutrition, environmental health, health service delivery systems, and social and cultural factors that influence health status.

The mission of the George Mason University MPH program is to prepare professional public health practitioners to address contemporary public health challenges of local, national and global communities. Through its multidisciplinary approach to instruction, research, and community engagement, the program fosters development of integrated, comprehensive knowledge and skills in public health and ensures an understanding of community, leadership, and ethics as these apply to diverse public health areas.

The MPH Program reflects the following set of Core Values:

- **Community** - We believe that enabling participation and fostering collaboration among stakeholders helps create healthy communities.
- **Diversity** - We promote a learning environment that allows students, faculty, and staff to realize their full potential by integrating individual strengths, developing talents and creativity, and maintaining mutual respect.
- **Innovation** - We reward excellence and welcome creative achievement for advancing public health.
- **Justice** - We believe individuals should have equitable access to resources and knowledge that support their right to achieve and freely participate in the improvement of individual and population health.
• Professionalism - We foster the development of public health professionals who will hold the highest ethical standards with competence, enthusiasm, respect, integrity, responsibility, accountability, and a commitment to life-long learning.

• Science - We are committed to scientific rigor, critical analysis, and sound reasoning in public health research and practice.

• Sustainability - We are dedicated to environmental, social, and economic stewardship in public health research, practice, and workforce development.

Master of Science in Global Health

This degree incorporates epidemiology and biostatistics, region-based nutrition, cross-cultural perspectives on health issues, community health assessment, program evaluation, international health systems and organizations, and international health research. Coursework and the Research Capstone allow students to explore current dilemmas, demands, and health services with a global focus and perspective.

Graduate Certificate in Public Health

The public health certificate provides public health professionals with the fundamental skills and knowledge central to each of the five core areas of public health – social and behavioral health, epidemiology, biostatistics, environmental health, and health systems.
Degree Requirements

Master of Public Health Program

Degree requirements are designated by the academic year during which they were published in the Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for meeting the degree requirements that were stipulated in the Graduate Catalog at the time of enrollment into the program. Degree requirements for the 2015-2016 Academic Year are listed below. Links for degree requirements from previous academic years can be found in archived graduate catalogs.

Program of Study

Students must complete 42 credits of graduate course work. Each course can be used to fulfill only one requirement. A graduate course in which a grade of C or below is earned may be repeated only once. Graduate students may repeat no more than two courses in their stated program of study. Students must maintain a 3.00 GPA to graduate. Students may take classes on a part-time or full-time basis, but must complete all program requirements within six years of first enrollment.

Public Health Core (21 credits)
- GCH 543 - Global Health (3 credits)
- GCH 560 - Environmental Health (3 credits)
- GCH 600 - Health Promotion Methods (3 credits)
- GCH 601 - Introduction to Biostatistics (3 credits)
- GCH 645 - U.S. and Global Public Health Systems (3 credits)
- GCH 691 - Project Management in Public Health (3 credits)
- GCH 712 - Introduction to Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 792 - Culminating Experience (0 credits)*

Practicum Requirement (3 credits)
- GCH 780 - Practicum Seminar (0 credits)*
- GCH 790 - Practicum in Public Health (3 credits)
* These courses do not carry any credits, because they usually meet for one hour or less each week. These courses are required for the program of study but do not incur any added tuition costs.

Epidemiology Concentration

Concentration Requirements (9 credits)
- GCH 722 - Infectious Disease Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 732 - Chronic Disease Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 804 - Advanced Quantitative Data Analysis for Health Care Research I (3 credits)

Choose one of the following research methods courses (3 credits)
- GCH 726 - Advanced Methods in Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 782 – International Research Ethics and Methods (3 credits)
- GCH 805 - Advanced Quantitative Data Analysis for Health Care Research II (3 credits)

Choose one of the following exposure courses (3 credits)
- GCH 742 – Behavioral Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 752 - Nutritional Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 762 - Environmental Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 772 – Social Epidemiology (3 credits)

Elective: 3 credits as approved by advisor
Global & Community Health Concentration

Concentration Requirements (9 credits)

- GCH 610 - Health Behavior Theory (3 credits)
- GCH 611 - Health Program Planning and Evaluation (3 credits)
- GCH 651 - Behavioral Research Methods (3 credits)

Choose one of the following global courses (3 credits)

- GCH 640 - Global Infectious Diseases (3 credits)
- GCH 650 - Global Non-Communicable Diseases (3 credits)
- NUTR 630 - Global Nutrition (3 credits)

Electives: 6 credits as approved by advisor

The above information is based on the 2015–2016 University Catalog and is subject to change without notice or obligation. It is not to be regarded as a contract. Please refer to the catalog for full course descriptions, department information, and university policy governing graduate degree programs at catalog.gmu.edu.

Practicum Requirement

The required 200-hour practicum gives students the opportunity to practice and improve professional skills in a supervised practice setting and is completed in two parts. The first part is completed while enrolled in GCH 780 Practicum Seminar. This zero-credit course helps students identify and arrange their practicum placements in a structured environment. This class will have some class meetings, but will not meet every week, allowing students time to locate their practicum placement sites in the field. Students must complete GCH 780 the semester before enrolling in GCH 790.

In GCH 790, students perform work as interns at their selected placement sites for a minimum of 200 contact hours and make final presentations of their experiences to the faculty, fellow students, and invited guests. Students are eligible for enrollment in GCH 790 when they have completed at least 21 credits in the program. Students are advised to take GCH 790 in their final semester of the program.

Culminating Experience

The Culminating Experience course (GCH 792) guides students through a praxis experience that serves to integrate knowledge obtained through coursework. This course is only required for MPH students. In this course, students synthesize skills and knowledge gained throughout the curriculum and apply what they have learned to address an issue relevant to public health. Using a project-based format, students identify a public health problem, explore potential solutions, and develop a plan of action. The final product is presented to the faculty and is used to assess student mastery of public health competencies. MPH Epidemiology students complete GCH 792 in the same semester as GCH 732: Chronic Disease Epidemiology. MPH Global and Community Health students complete GCH 792 in the same semester as GCH 611: Health Program Planning and Evaluation. GCH 792 Culminating Experience and its respective corresponding courses (GCH 611 or 732) are only offered in the Fall semester and should therefore be taken in the last Fall semester of a student’s program of study.
Master of Science in Global Health

Program of Study
Students must complete 42 credits of graduate course work. Each course can be used to fulfill only one requirement. A graduate course in which a grade of C or below is earned may be repeated only once. Graduate students may repeat no more than two courses in their stated program of study. Students must maintain a 3.00 GPA to graduate from the master’s program. Students may take classes on a part-time or full-time basis, but must complete all program requirements within six years of first enrollment.

Global Health Core (15 credits)
- GCH 543 – Global Health (3 credits)
- NUTR 630 – Global Nutrition (3 credits)
- GCH 640 – Global Infectious Disease (3 credits)
- GCH 645 – U.S. and Global Public Health Systems (3 credits)
- GCH 650 – Global Non-Communicable Diseases (3 credits)

Research Core (15 credits)
- GCH 601 – Introduction to Biostatistics (3 credits)
- GCH 712 – Introduction to Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 782 – International Research Ethics and Methods (3 credits)
- GCH 804 – Advanced Quantitative Data Analysis for Health Care Research I (3 credits)

And one of the following research courses:
- GCH 651 – Behavioral Research Methods (3 credits)
- GCH 726 – Advanced Methods in Epidemiology (3 credits)
- GCH 805 – Advanced Quantitative Data Analysis for Health Care Research II (3 credits)

Capstone Experience (3 credits)
- GCH 794 – Global Health Research Capstone (3 credits)

Electives: 9 credits from approved courses (see Catalog for full list of approved electives)
Graduate Certificate in Public Health

Candidates must have 18 graduate credits and a minimum GPA of 3.00 in course work, with no more than 3 credits with a grade of C to earn the certificate.

Required Courses (18 credits)

- GCH 560 – Environmental Health (3 credits)
- GCH 600 – Health Promotion Methods (3 credits)
- GCH 601 – Introduction to Biostatistics (3 credits)
- GCH 645 – U.S. and Global Public Health (3 credits)
- GCH 691 – Project Management in Public Health (3 credits)
- GCH 712 – Introduction to Epidemiology (3 credits)
Course Planning

Academic Advisement

Dr. Ali Weinstein, Graduate Program Coordinator serves as the advisor for all of the graduate students in the Department of Global and Community Health. She is available to discuss course scheduling, programs of study, and any academic issues. Students are encouraged to contact Dr. Weinstein via email to schedule meetings to discuss these types of issues/questions. Students should have this discussion in the middle of fall term to plan for spring classes and in the middle of spring term to plan for summer and fall classes. Students who do not discuss course planning on a regular basis risk taking courses in the wrong order, missing important requirements, and potentially delaying graduation. Ignorance of program changes or requirements does not constitute a valid reason for those requirements to be substituted. For questions/mentoring in specific topic areas, students are encouraged to research the faculty areas of expertise and schedule a meeting with an appropriate faculty member.

An Appointment Plus online scheduling tool is available to make appointments with faculty, which is available on the DGCH homepage. It is the first place students should look when trying to schedule appointments. However, not all faculty use this system and, for those faculty members, students will need to contact individually.

Helpful hints when contacting faculty:
1. Establish during initial contact the faculty member’s preferred means for communicating (phone, email, in person).
2. Ask the faculty member’s preferred means for making appointments (online scheduler, by phone, by email).
3. Students should plan that faculty may not be available during university breaks, holidays, and weekends.
Master Schedule

In order to help students with academic planning, courses will be offered each year in accordance with the Master Schedule described below. Please note that the weekly meeting days and times will change each term. Check the Schedule of Classes on Patriot Web each term for specific meeting times, dates, and locations.

Master Schedule: DGCH Courses

Fall Courses:
GCH 543 – Global Health
GCH 601 – Introduction to Biostatistics
GCH 650 – Global Non-Communicable Diseases
GCH 712 – Introduction to Epidemiology
GCH 772 – Social Epidemiology
GCH 782 – International Research Ethics & Methods
GCH 805 – Adv Quantitative Data Analy I

GCH 600 – Health Promotion Methods
GCH 611 – Health Program Planning & Evaluation
GCH 651 – Behavioral Research Methods
GCH 732 – Chronic Disease Epidemiology
GCH 780 – Practicum Seminar
GCH 792 – Culminating Experience

Spring Courses:
GCH 560 – Environmental Health
GCH 610 – Health Behavior Theory
GCH 640 – Global Infectious Diseases
GCH 645 – U.S. and Global Public Health Systems
GCH 691 – Project Management in Public Health
GCH 722 – Infectious Disease Epidemiology
GCH 762 – Environmental Epidemiology
GCH 780 – Practicum Seminar
GCH 790 – Practicum in Public Health
GCH 794 – Global Health Research Capstone
GCH 804 – Adv Quantitative Data Analy II

Summer Courses:
GCH 560 – Environmental Health
GCH 726 – Adv Methods in Epidemiology
GCH 571 – HIV/AIDS: Concep/Prinpl/Intervtn
GCH 790 – Practicum in Public Health

Note that some programs require courses that are offered by other departments at Mason (indicated by a course prefix other than GCH). Check with the respective departments to identify when these courses are offered. Courses may be offered in additional semesters from time to time. However, students coming into this catalog year should anticipate that courses will be offered as indicated here. The department reserves the right to make alterations based on unusual circumstances. Electives in the department may not be listed here, and students can check with the Graduate Program Coordinator regarding when the course may be taught.
Recommended Course Sequences

On the next few pages are recommended course sequences for the MPH (Epidemiology Concentration), MPH (Global and Community Health Concentration), and MS in Global Health program. Students should contact their academic advisor for help with course planning in the graduate certificate program.
Recommended Course Sequences: MPH (Epidemiology Concentration)

Option 1: for students attending full-time (2 academic years)

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EX/RM/EL Select an Exposure course, Research Methods course, or Elective course. In total, one exposure course, one research methods course, and one elective are required for the degree. See Program of Study for list of required courses.

* Indicates a zero-credit course that does not contribute to the overall credits earned for the term.
**Recommended Course Sequences: MPH (Global and Community Health Concentration)**

**Option 1: for students attending full-time (2 academic years)**

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**Code Legend:**

G/EL Select a Global course or Elective course. In total, one Global course and two elective courses are required for the degree. See Program of Study for list of required courses.

* Indicates a zero-credit course that does not contribute to the overall credits earned for the term.
Recommended Course Sequences: MS in Global Health

Option 1: Full-Time Study

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GCH 543</td>
<td>GCH 645</td>
<td>NUTR 630</td>
<td>GCH 650</td>
<td>GCH 640</td>
<td>R/EL</td>
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<td>GCH 794</td>
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<td>GCH 601</td>
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<td>GCH 712</td>
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<td>EL</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6 credits 6 credits 3 credits 6 credits 6 credits 3 credits 6 credits 6 credits

Code Legend:

R/EL Means choose a Research course or Elective course. In total, one Research course and three elective courses are required for the degree. See Program of Study for list of required courses.
Academic Policies

The following sections describe important policies that students should be aware of during their studies at Mason. The policies described below are taken from the University Catalog. This Handbook is meant to serve as a quick reference to official policies and procedures of the University and is not intended to supplant or override information in the University Catalog. The University Catalog has the most current information, and students are encouraged to consult the University Catalog as well in reference to specific requirements and policies.

Adequate Progress

Graduate Degree Programs

- Only graduate courses may apply to the graduate degree.
- A minimum of 18 credits must be taken in degree status, after admission to the program.
- Each course can be used to fulfill only one requirement within a graduate degree program.
- Students must maintain a 3.00 GPA to graduate. The GPA calculation excludes transfer credits.
- Graduate students earning a grade below B- in a course may retake the course once.
- Graduate students may repeat no more than two courses in their stated program of study.
- Fully admitted graduate students who accumulate grades of F in two graduate courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or below) in graduate courses qualify for dismissal.

Graduate Certificate Programs

- Only graduate courses may apply toward the graduate certificate.
- Candidates must have a minimum GPA of 3.00 in course work presented on the certificate application, which may include no more than 3 credits of C. The GPA calculation excludes transfer credits.
- Students may be enrolled in one graduate certificate program while they pursue a master’s or doctoral degree. Students who have completed a graduate certificate may subsequently be approved to apply many of the credit hours for that one certificate to a graduate degree, as long as they were taken within six years of official enrollment into the degree program. There is no limitation on the sharing of credits between the graduate degree and one certificate.

Time Limits

Graduate Degree Programs

- Master’s degree students have six years from the time of first enrollment as a degree-seeking student to complete their degrees.
- Switching programs or moving from non-degree to degree status does not restart the six-year time limit.
- International students attending in F-1 or J-1 status also have more restrictive time limits; contact the Office of International Programs and Services for information.
- Students who are given permission to re-enroll following an absence from Mason may not count the six-year time limit as beginning on the date of re-enrollment.
- Students who will not meet published time limits because of circumstances beyond their control may petition for an extension.
• Failure to meet the time limits or to secure approval of an extension request may result in termination from the program.

Graduate Certificate Programs
• For Master’s students also enrolled in graduate certificate programs: The time limits coincide with the six-year time limit for master’s degrees or the six-year time limit for advancement to candidacy in a doctoral degree. Master’s and doctoral time limit rules apply.
• For students enrolled only in graduate certificate programs: The time limit for completion is six years from the date of admission to the graduate certificate program. International students attending in F-1 or J-1 status have more restrictive time limits; contact the Office of International Programs and Services for information.
• The time limit is not extended because of an absence and subsequent re-enrollment into the graduate certificate program.
• Failure to meet the time limit or to secure an extension request may result in termination from the program.

Transfer of Course Credit

Graduate Degree Programs
• Transfer of credit requires the approval of the Graduate Program Coordinator and Dean of the college. They will determine whether the credit is eligible for transfer and applicable to the specific certificate or degree program.
• To be eligible for transfer credit, the credit must be graduate credit earned at another accredited university, earned at another institution and recommended for graduate credit in the American Council on Education guidebook, or earned at Mason while in non-degree status or enrolled through extended studies.
• The credit must have been earned within six years prior to first enrollment as an admitted student in the specific certificate or degree program, and a minimum grade of B (3.00) must have been earned.
• The course must be applicable toward a degree at the institution offering the course. Extension and in-service courses that are not intended by the institution offering the courses to be applied to a degree program are not eligible for transfer credit to Mason. The credits cannot have been previously applied toward a degree at another institution or Mason; however, up to 3 credits previously applied to a degree program at another institution may be transferred into a certificate program at Mason.
• Note that credits accepted for transfer do not compute into any Mason GPA.
• Limits on the number of credits that can be transferred derive from the degree requirements given below.

Graduate Certificate Programs
• A maximum of 3 graduate credits taken at another institution can be transferred into a graduate certificate program.
• All other policies regarding transfer of credit to graduate degree programs apply to graduate certificate programs (see above).
Requesting Transfer Credit

- Requests to transfer credit should be made at the time of initial registration as a degree-seeking student.
- Request should be made to the Graduate Program Coordinator in writing (email), along with:
  - A copy of the syllabi from each course to be transferred, and
  - Transcripts showing that the course was completed with a grade of B or better, unless these transcripts are already in the student’s application file.

Course Substitutions

The Department has the authority to grant course substitutions to help students meet degree requirements in unusual circumstances. Course substitutions are not meant to allow students to circumvent degree requirements, and will not be granted because of competing outside demands, inconvenience, financial reasons, or other non-academic concerns. Substitute courses must cover a substantial amount of identical material as the course being replaced in order to be considered. Course substitutions must be approved by an advisor and the Dean’s office. Students should not select course substitutions on their own or assume that courses that sound similar will automatically be replaced.

Student Status

Active Status

- Active status is defined as being enrolled for at least 1 credit of course work. Students who fail to enroll in at least 1 credit of course work at Mason for two or more consecutive semesters are considered inactive.
- A full-time graduate student is defined as one who registers for nine (9) or more credit hours per semester. A full-time graduate student who has been awarded a graduate assistantship must enroll in a minimum of six (6) credit hours during each semester in the contract term. Graduate students may not take more than twelve (12) credit hours per semester, excluding the summer semester during which they may take a maximum of nine (9) credit hours. The respective Dean, upon the recommendation of the Department Chair, must approve exceptions.

Re-Enrollment

- Permission to re-enroll in a program must be obtained by all master’s and doctoral degree students who have failed to enroll in at least 1 credit of course work for two or more consecutive semesters at Mason.
- A program may allow a student to petition to graduate under any catalog in effect while the student was enrolled. All program components, including concentrations, must appear in the catalog for the year selected. The final decision as to catalog year rests with the unit dean or director. Forms are available from the Office of the University Registrar at registrar.gmu.edu/forms.
Program Withdrawal

- Degree-seeking students may officially resign from their academic program with the approval of their Department and their Dean. The Voluntary Resignation form must be approved by the student's program and Student Accounts, and then submitted to the Office of the University Registrar for notation on the transcript. Resignations after the drop period will result in grades of W on the student's transcript for that semester and removal from any future registered courses. Program resignation is final.

Changing Programs or Concentrations

Students are admitted for specific programs and concentrations within programs and are expected to complete the programs for which they were admitted. Students may request to change concentrations (e.g. MPH-Epidemiology to MPH-Global and Community Health), but approval for these requests is not automatic, and students should not expect all courses to transfer from one concentration to another. Changing programs (e.g. MS to MPH) requires a new application and students should meet and discuss options with advisors or directors from both the current program and the prospective program. Guidelines for making such requests are provided below.

Changing Programs

Students who wish to switch from one program to another, whether it is within the same department or not, must meet the admission criteria of the new program and adhere to the new programs policies. In order to change a program, students must officially apply and be accepted into the new program. Students who are currently enrolled in one program at Mason do not receive special consideration when applying to a new program.

Note: Changing from the MS Global Health to any concentration within the MPH is considered a program change.

Changing Concentrations

Students in the MPH program who wish to switch from one concentration to the other should consult with the Graduate Program Coordinator regarding the procedure to request a concentration change.

Applying for Graduation

Applications for graduation should be made through Patriot Web. Details on the timelines and instructions for the application process is located at this website: http://registrar.gmu.edu/students/graduation/
**Student Conduct**

**Communication and Mason Email**

All Mason students are provided with a Mason email account. Students are expected to use their Mason email accounts when communicating with university faculty and staff. University officials will use electronic mail as the most expeditious means of communicating with students. Students are responsible for:

- Activating their Mason email accounts
- The content of all university communication sent by e-mail
- Checking their Mason email accounts regularly

University faculty, staff, and administration are not responsible for and will not respond to any email sent via non-Mason accounts. This measure is taken to protect student privacy and ensure that email messages are not lost through spam filters. Please see [mail.gmu.edu](http://mail.gmu.edu) for further information about your e-mail and other communication services.

**Honor Code**

Mason shares in the tradition of an honor system that has existed in Virginia since 1842. The code is an integral part of university life. On the application for admission, students sign a statement agreeing to conform to and uphold the Honor Code. Students are responsible, therefore, for understanding the code's provisions. In the spirit of the code, a student’s word is a declaration of good faith acceptable as truth in all academic matters. Cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing of academic work and related materials constitute Honor Code violations. To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty members must report all alleged violations to the Honor Committee. Any student who has knowledge of, but does not report, a violation may be accused of lying under the Honor Code. Students are responsible for knowing and complying with the complete student honor code, which can be found in the Graduate Catalog. For additional information, see Mason's Office for Academic Integrity at [http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/](http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/).

**Responsible Use of Computing Policy**

The Responsible Use of Computing (RUC) Policy applies to all academic and operational departments and offices at all university locations owned or leased. The policies and procedures provided herein apply to all Mason faculty, staff, students, visitors, and contractors. The university provides and maintains general computing services, including web and Internet resources, and telecommunication technology to support the education, research, and work of its faculty, staff, and students. At the same time, Mason wishes to protect all users’ rights to an open exchange of ideas and information. This policy sets forth the responsibilities of each member of the Mason community in preserving the security, confidentiality, availability, and integrity of Mason computing resources. To accomplish these ends, this policy supports investigations of complaints involving Mason computing abuse, including sexual harassment, honor code, federal, state, applicable industry, and local law violations.
University faculty and staff members, as state employees, are subject to the Freedom of Information Act, §2.2-3700, et seq., of the Code of Virginia, and all applicable state and federal rules and regulations. While this policy endeavors to maintain user confidentiality, it cannot create, nor should faculty or staff members presume, any expectation of privacy. Violations of this policy may result in revocation of access, suspension of accounts, disciplinary action, or prosecution. Evidence of illegal activity will be turned over to the appropriate authorities. It is the responsibility of all users of Mason computing resources to read and follow this entire policy, which can be found in the Graduate Catalog, and all applicable laws and procedures (user sign-on agreement). To report violations of this policy, or any related university policy, e-mail the Security Review Panel (SRP) at StopIt@gmu.edu or abuse@gmu.edu.

Professional Conduct

All CHHS students are expected to conduct themselves professionally at all times. This means that certain behavior is prohibited, including verbal abuse, insubordination, and behavior that threatens the safety of a client, another student, a faculty member, or other health care provider when the behavior occurs within the context of an academic program. CHHS reserves the right to place on probation, suspend, or dismiss any student in its programs who engages in such conduct. Students disciplined for such reasons have the right to appeal to their Department Chair.

Grade Appeals

Although faculty members are generally the best judges of student performance, there may be times when a student believes a grade is unfair. In such cases, the student should ask the faculty member to reconsider the grade. If the student is not satisfied, an appeal may be made to the head of the unit offering the course (the department chair, institute director, or designee). The recipient of the appeal should ask the student to return to the faculty member who assigned the grade for further consultation.

If the instructor is no longer associated with the university, the local administrator of the unit offering the course will appoint a faculty surrogate, who will assume magisterial authority of the instructor of record at this level of appeal.

If a mutually satisfactory agreement is not reached, the student may request that the chair form a committee of three faculty peers of the faculty member who assigned the grade. If the chair believes the student’s complaint is not legitimate, this reservation is reported to the chair’s supervisor, usually the dean. No review is conducted unless the dean believes the complaint has merit.

The faculty member or the student may challenge and have replaced one of the three members of the committee without giving a reason for the challenge. The committee meets separately with the faculty member and the student to explore the full particulars of the case. A nonparticipating observer of the student’s choice may attend the meeting. Every effort is made to avoid an adversarial relationship.

After the committee has reviewed the case thoroughly, it issues to the chair (with a copy to the faculty member) a written recommendation that includes the reasons for its findings. At this time,
the faculty member has an opportunity to take the recommended action, if any. If the matter is not
resolved at this point, the chair considers the committee recommendation and makes a
recommendation to the dean. The decision of the dean is not subject to further appeal. If the dean
decides that a change of grade is appropriate and the faculty member refuses to make the
change, then the dean may direct the Office of the University Registrar to do so.

Grade appeals are not accepted after the last day of classes of the following semester (spring for
fall grades, fall for spring and summer grades).

The Provost’s Office does not consider grade appeals, nor does the University Academic Appeals
Committee.