

University of Victoria School of Public Health and Social Policy
Master of Public Health Thesis Route

The Master's thesis route is an option for MPH students who are interested in completing a thesis rather than a Culminating Report. Students who choose the MPH Master's thesis route complete all courses required of Report-based MPH students, including the 450-hour Practicum (PHSP 589), except for the Culminating Report course (PHSP 508B). Instead of PHSP 508B, thesis-based students enrol in PHSP 599 (Thesis). Thesis program requirements are determined by the Faculty of Graduate Studies <https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/index.php>. Students who intend to pursue the Master's thesis route are strongly advised to discuss this option with PHSP staff (Catherine Worthington, Director; Gill Dolding, Academic Advisor; Heather Ulmer, Practicum Coordinator) before the end of their first year in the program.

Timeline: Full-time MPH students who choose the thesis route will be able to complete the MPH Program within a 3-year time period (see suggested target dates for thesis activities, below). All students must complete program requirements, including the thesis, within a 5-year period, according to the University of Victoria Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations.

Full-time MPH students should approach a potential faculty thesis supervisor by the Spring/Summer of the first year in the MPH Program, and part-time MPH students should approach a potential faculty supervisor by the spring in the second year of the MPH program. Thesis students should consult regularly with their supervisors for guidance in thesis proposal development. Thesis students will be able to use some assignment work in PHSP 506 (Public Health Research) to assist in the development of thesis proposal drafts.

Thesis students are encouraged to explore Practicum placement possibilities within research-intensive centres, organizations or community agencies. As thesis students will not be required to enrol in the Culminating Report course (PHSP 508B), they are strongly advised to continue the development of their thesis proposals during the term (or second term) they are in Practicum. After completion of the Practicum, a thesis student will be expected to submit a thesis proposal to their supervisor, and upon approval, to develop an ethics application for submission to the University of Victoria's Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) <https://www.uvic.ca/research-services/ethics-and-compliance/human-ethics/index.php>

Only after approval from the UVic HREB has been received, a student may begin data collection and analysis. Assuming HREB approval has been received in the Spring/Summer after the Practicum concludes and that a student works full-time on the thesis, they should be able to complete the thesis by early in the following calendar year. For thesis guidelines, see <https://www.uvic.ca/students/graduate/thesis-dissertation/index.php>

An examination committee is composed of the student's supervisor, a committee member from within the School of Public Health and Social Policy, and an external examiner (from UVic but outside of PHSP). The student's supervisor and PHSP committee member will be consulted during the thesis work. Once the student's supervisor is satisfied with the thesis, an oral defense will be scheduled (this must be scheduled at least a month before the defense date). In order to graduate in May, students will be required to submit a final, approved version of their thesis by the final business day in April, and to also have completed all other Graduate Studies requirements by this date.

For general Faculty of Graduate Studies information on timelines and completion of degree requirements, see the following checklist for Master's & PhD Students:

https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/assets/docs/checklists/Checklist%20for%20Master_phD.pdf