DEADLINES FOR COMPLETING AN MPH IN HEALTH SCIENCES

IF YOU’VE COMPLETED ALL OF THE FOLLOWING

1. Finished all coursework (maintaining a minimum 3.00 GPA)
2. Completed your practicum and practicum project
3. Selected a supervisor and a topic for your capstone (10-12 months before your presentation)

THEN FOLLOW THE TIMELINE BELOW

For more detailed information, see the following pages
1. **SELECT A TOPIC FOR THE CAPSTONE PAPER.**  **10-12 MONTHS** before your presentation, think about a possible capstone project. The topic and format of the capstone project is flexible and is developed through discussions between the student and supervisor. Students will be encouraged to start thinking about a capstone topic during the practicum semester. For more information on capstones, see [http://www.sfu.ca/fhs/future-students/graduate/master-of-public-health/master-project.html](http://www.sfu.ca/fhs/future-students/graduate/master-of-public-health/master-project.html).

2. **ENSURE THAT ETHICS APPROVAL IS OBTAINED IF REQUIRED.** Please note that appropriate ethics approval may need to be obtained for any paper that uses data gathered from human subjects. Even in cases where the data is de-identified, a determination should be sought from the SFU Research Ethics Board - see [http://www.sfu.ca/ore/DoIRequireEthicsApproval.html](http://www.sfu.ca/ore/DoIRequireEthicsApproval.html). Typically, capstone projects that have a research focus involve a secondary data analysis, using an existing data set. However, the MPH capstone may also involve the primary collection and analysis of data. Data collection for the capstone is usually in the context of an ongoing study, but it is also possible (although not recommended) for MPH students to initiate an original study under the guidance of a faculty member. In the latter case, the student should allow substantial lead time for research planning and ethics approval.

3. **PREPARE THE CAPSTONE PAPER OUTLINE & TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION.**  **8 MONTHS** before your presentation, it is strongly recommended (though not required) that, in consultation with their supervisor, students develop a detailed outline of their capstone paper **BEFORE** they begin to work on the text. Students undertaking a research-oriented capstone may need to first develop a more detailed research proposal before undertaking any research activities. This is particularly the case for capstone projects that require submission to the Office for Research Ethics. This will be followed by the development of an outline for the capstone paper. The supervisor will review and make comments to help guide the student.

4. **PREPARE A SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETING THE CAPSTONE PAPER.** This must include proposed dates of completion for drafts/sections of the paper, selection of the secondary reader, allocation of time for reviews by the supervisor and the final review by the secondary reader, as well as a projected oral presentation date.

5. **PREPARE THE CAPSTONE PAPER.** The capstone paper is a more extensive analysis than a term paper and cannot take the form of a chronology of the work undertaken during the practicum. Students are encouraged to link their capstones to the practicum by exploring one or more areas/activities from the practicum in greater depth. For example, this may include the analysis and interpretation of data collected during the practicum. The capstone paper is a culminating event and should represent an effort to demonstrate core public health competencies. Detailed guidelines for the capstone with regard to content, references, formatting, etc., are available from the FHS website at [http://www.sfu.ca/fhs/future-students/graduate/master-of-public-health/master-project.html](http://www.sfu.ca/fhs/future-students/graduate/master-of-public-health/master-project.html). The paper should be presented and organized in a format in accordance with project/thesis templates that are available from the Library web site, [http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/thesis/templates](http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/thesis/templates). Please note that not all sections/headers may be relevant to the capstone paper.

6. **ENROLL IN HSCI 897 – THE MASTER’S PROJECT.**  **BEFORE REGISTRATION OPENS FOR THE FOLLOWING SEMESTER IN WHICH STUDENTS PLAN TO** present their capstone, students must REQUEST PERMISSION TO register in the Master’s Project (HSCI 897) by emailing the
Guidelines for completing an MPH capstone project in the Faculty of Health Sciences  

Graduate Program Assistant, noting your section choice: G100 (on-campus section) or G200 (off-campus section) Students not able to complete in that semester may request permission to register in a second semester by emailing the Graduate Program Assistant, noting your section of choice: G300 (on-campus continuing section) or G400 (off-campus continuing section).

7. SELECT THE SECOND READER. **6 WEEKS** before the oral presentation, a second reader should be chosen who has appropriate expertise to undertake a detailed review and who is available for the proposed date of presentation. The student and supervisor work together to identify an appropriate second reader but the supervisor is responsible for issuing the invitation to the second reader. Typically, the second reader is another SFU faculty member, though a second reader can also be from another university, research institution or appropriate public health related setting. A second reader that is not a member of the Faculty of Health Sciences, or from another SFU Faculty or Department, will have a minimum of a Masters Degree. In addition:
   - The second reader will be specifically qualified to review content and methodology of the capstone and should be a recognized scholar and/or practitioner in the field of the capstone topic.
   - The second reader should preferably have an academic appointment or affiliation but this is not a required condition.
   - The second reader shall submit a full CV for consideration detailing scholarly contributions and experience in the field of the capstone topic.

8. SUBMIT THE READINESS TO PRESENT MASTER’S PROJECT AND SCHEDULING OF MASTERS DEGREE COMPLETION FORMS. **5 WEEKS** before the presentation date, students must submit the following completed forms to the Graduate Program Assistant: the Readiness to Present Master’s Project (an FHS form available at [https://www.sfu.ca/fhs/current-students/graduates/forms-and-links.html](https://www.sfu.ca/fhs/current-students/graduates/forms-and-links.html) and the Scheduling of Master’s Degree Completion form [https://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/forms.html](https://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/forms.html). If the second reader is an adjunct professor or external to SFU, their CV (maximum two pages) must accompany the ‘Scheduling’ form. If these forms are received less than five weeks before the first proposed presentation date of the capstone, the student’s senior supervisor must send an email to the Manager, Graduate Programs and Director, Graduate Programs explaining the extenuating circumstances that resulted in the delayed paperwork. The Graduate Program Assistant will confirm the date, time, and location of the presentation with a Connect calendar invite once the details are confirmed. Capstone presentations are open to faculty and students in the Faculty of Health Sciences, and are normally advertised by email.

9. SEND CAPSTONE PAPER TO SECOND READER. **TWO WEEKS** before the oral presentation, the student sends the final paper to the second reader for review. The paper will be evaluated according to the criteria outlined in [http://www.sfu.ca/fhs/future-students/graduate/master-of-public-health/master-project.html](http://www.sfu.ca/fhs/future-students/graduate/master-of-public-health/master-project.html). The second reader reserves their comments and questions for the oral presentation, and should not discuss revisions to the paper with the student before the oral presentation.

10. THE ORAL PRESENTATION OF THE CAPSTONE PAPER. The senior supervisor will chair the oral presentation and discussion of the capstone paper. The oral presentation by the student will be about 20 minutes in length followed by a question-and-answer period. The secondary reader will be offered the first opportunity to present their review and ask questions, followed by the supervisor. Typically, there is more than one round of questions from the secondary reader and supervisor. The audience is then invited to pose questions to
the student. Once questions are completed, the supervisor and the second reader will ask the student and audience to leave in order to formally evaluate the capstone project, including the completion of a “Master’s Project Assessment” form to evaluate whether the learning objectives of the capstone have been met and whether the competencies identified in the “Readiness to Present” form were demonstrated in the presentation. The student is then asked to return to receive feedback on the capstone. The student, supervisor and the second reader will discuss the paper and agree on what, if any, revisions are required to meet the expectations of the capstone. While the student will not be “passed” or “failed” on the basis of their presentation, the supervisory committee may find that as a result of the presentation and questions, additional development of the capstone paper is required. Responses to the requested revisions will be reviewed by the supervisor.

11. **COMPLETE THE ‘RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD OF DEGREE’ FORM.** All signatures will be obtained immediately after the presentation from the supervisor and second reader on the “Project Approval Page” and “Recommendation for Award of Degree” form. Once any revisions are completed to the satisfaction of the supervisor, the supervisor must confirm in writing to the Graduate Program Assistant that revisions are complete. This will signify successful completion of the capstone and the student will receive a grade of “Complete” for HSCI 897 and the recommendation paperwork will be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies. If all other requirements (course units and the practicum) have been met, the student will be eligible for convocation assuming they have applied.

12. **SUBMISSION OF CAPSTONE PAPER FOR PUBLICATION TO SUMMIT.** Once a capstone paper has been completed, the student will email a PDF copy of the final version to the Graduate Program Assistant. If the student signed the non-exclusive license agreement, the paper will be published to the SFU Library Summit Repository [http://summit.sfu.ca/](http://summit.sfu.ca/). If the non-exclusive license agreement was not signed, the capstone paper will be saved for FHS’ records only and will not be published.

13. **COMPLETING SURVEY AND STAYING CONNECTED** Students are required to complete an exit survey prior to graduation; submission of your grade for HSCI 897 requires you to confirm that this survey has been completed. This survey helps us evaluate and improve our programs. Each stream has a different survey and the links are provided below:
   
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Once the survey is complete, please email the Graduate Program Assistant with the Subject line: Completion of Exit Survey.

We like to keep connected with our alumni! We will send you updates on what is happening in FHS, job postings, invitations for relevant events, etc. You can help us stay in touch by providing your new email addresses or other contact information as it becomes available. You can always read about new developments and accomplishments on the FHS website.
More Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact Jen Van Rassel, Graduate Program Assistant by telephone (778-782-7036) or email mph_assistant@sfu.ca.