

DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

About the Department

The objective of the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health (OEH) is to unite in an interdisciplinary training and research program, persons grounded in natural, physical, and health sciences in order to develop an understanding of human response to the environment as well as the response of the environment to the activities of humans. Toward this end, the department has developed flexible and diversified programs of graduate study, **field training**, and basic and applied research to accommodate students with a wide range of academic and occupational backgrounds. Most courses are offered in the late afternoon and evening format, for the convenience of practicing professionals.

The Department of Occupational and Environmental Health has been recognized as a national leader in industrial hygiene education. The Master of Science (M.S.) program in Industrial Hygiene and Environmental Health Sciences is accredited by the Applied and Natural Science Accreditation Commission of ABET, <http://www.abet.org>, under the General Criteria and the Industrial Hygiene Program Criteria. ABET accreditation is the only program accreditation recognized by the American Board of Industrial Hygiene, and is the hallmark of excellence for industrial hygiene education. The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center is one of only **twenty-three universities** nationwide with an accredited graduate industrial hygiene program.

Mission

Our mission is to understand and solve challenges to occupational and environmental health through innovative education, research, and service. We apply physical science, social science, and translational science to anticipate, assess, and mitigate occupational and environmental hazards that may endanger human health. We prepare practitioners and researchers for careers creating healthier, safer workplaces and protecting the environment.

The environment encompasses not only the natural surroundings - the air, the water, the plants and animals used for food - but also shelter, modes of transportation and all other products of technology, including pollutants and waste materials; all of which interact to affect health. Environmental considerations become increasingly important during these times of changing emphasis in the fields of energy, economics, and technology.

Professional Degrees Offered

- Master of Public Health (MPH) degree in Environmental Health

Graduate Degrees Offered

- Master of Science (MS) degree in Industrial Hygiene & Environmental Health Sciences
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Occupational and Environmental Health

Field Practice Requirement for the MS in IH/EHS

The purpose of the field practice requirement is for the student to gain practical experience in industrial hygiene and/or environmental health in an actual workplace setting. The field practice experience supports the student outcomes/competencies, including the competency to perform effectively on interprofessional teams.

To meet the field practice requirements, the student must:

1. Work at least 160 hours in the field setting. This work should be primarily focused on specific professional goals agreed upon in advance (preferably in writing) between the student and the preceptor (supervisor). Note: OUHSC policy requires a memorandum of understanding with the field practice site.
2. Obtain a written performance evaluation from the field practice supervisor. Either the HCOPH evaluation form or the company's evaluation form may be used.
3. Submit at least two professional work products created by the student for the field practice site, together with a brief report explaining the context of the work products.
 - Work products may include written programs, procedures, methods, reports, memos, PowerPoint presentations, surveys, data summaries, etc.
 - Work products may be redacted at the field practice site as deemed necessary to protect privacy and confidentiality, before being released to the student's academic advisor.

Students who enter the program with two years or more of full-time professional experience in occupational or environmental health or safety will be deemed to have satisfied the field practice requirement if they provide the following documentation, which shall be placed in the student's official file:

- A narrative description of their professional work experience in the field, including a description of how they performed on interprofessional teams and brief descriptions of their major accomplishments.
- A written performance evaluation or letter of support from their employer, dated in the most recent year of employment, which shall be no more than 5 years before the student's planned date of graduation.

Additionally, students who enter the program with less than two years of full-time professional experience, but continue working full-time during the program and attain 2 years or more of full-time experience before completing the program will be deemed to have satisfied the field practice requirement if they provide the above documentation.

Master's Thesis Progress Policy

The thesis is intended to be completed in two semesters, with two hours of enrollment in Research for Master's Thesis per semester. In order to complete the thesis in a timely manner, an approved Prospectus must be completed by the end of the first semester of enrollment in thesis hours. Failure to have a Prospectus formally approved by the student's committee prior to the end of the first semester of thesis enrollment will require the award of a grade of Unsatisfactory ("U"). An acceptable draft thesis should be submitted by the end of the second semester of thesis enrollment. Failure to comply with this deadline will result in the award of a "U" grade if the thesis advisor judges the student's progress to be unsatisfactory. Failure to submit an acceptable draft thesis by the

end of the third semester of thesis enrollment will require the award of a "U" grade. Upon the awarding of a second "U" grade in Research for Master's Thesis, whether consecutive or not, the thesis process will be terminated due to unsatisfactory progress, the student will be denied further enrollment, and the degree program will be terminated. Students are limited to a total of four semesters (eight credit hours) of enrollment in Research for Master's Thesis. Failure to complete all requirements for the thesis within this period will result in termination of the thesis process for lack of progress, denial of further admission, and termination of the degree program.