The goals of the Comprehensive Examination are to demonstrate not only a student's mastery of his/her chosen subject area, but also the ability to integrate material acquired in their program of study and to apply this understanding to issues that may confront public health professionals. As such, the exams should reflect the students ability to integrate across their coursework rather than just be a retesting if individual courses. The Comprehensive Examinations administered to students in the MPH/MSPH degree programs are designed to reflect not only each program's objectives but the overall concentration objectives as well. The Field Experience, Special Project/Thesis are not interchangeable with the comprehensive examination.

Core Exam: For MPH students this tests mastery related to all of the five core areas –biostatistics, epidemiology, health policy and management, environmental and occupational Health and social and behavioral sciences as applied to health. For MSPH students this tests mastery related to epidemiology, biostatistics and one other selected core area. This section is developed by a college committee comprised of faculty who consistently teach the core courses and is administered to all students taking the exam regardless of their home department. This exam consists of multiple choice questions.

The exam is graded on a pass/fail basis. Failure to obtain a score of 70% or more on the exam will require the student to retake the failed parts. One retake of each exam is permitted. The exam retake is only permitted the next semester.

Requirements for the Comprehensive Examination

A. Eligibility for the Core Exam

To be eligible to sit for the exam a student must have

1. Completed all required core courses or enrolled in the last core course.
2. Attained at least a 3.0 GPA and be in good academic standing.
3. No course work (excluding field experience, special project, and thesis) with a grade of incomplete.
4. Written approval of advisor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
5. Registered for at least two credits in the semester the exam is taken (not required to be registered in order to retake the exam the following semester).

B. Registration Procedures

All students seeking to sit for the comprehensive exam must submit an Application for Comprehensive Examination form six weeks prior to the exam date. This includes retakes, if the advisor requires the retake to be during the regularly scheduled exam time. The Office of Academics shall:

1. Review the student's transcript and certify the student to take the exam.
2. Notify each student, department chair and advisor of the student's eligibility to take the exam.
3. Arrange for space, proctor, collection and distribution of exams departments for grading (for regularly scheduled exams).
4. Take responsibility for grading the core exam.
5. Send letters to students informing them of their grade within 11 working days of the exam (a copy will be kept on record).

The Educational Outcomes Committee is responsible for monitoring the quality of the core exam. The department will assure that a faculty member who is familiar with the department's exams is available the day of the exam for consultation and questions regarding the core exam.