



Student Representative Master of Public Health Program

Latest rev May 2021

Role

The role of the MPH student representative is to communicate program-related issues to the MPH Program Committee on behalf of their class.

The student representative also participates in regular Graduate Education Committee (GEC) and Department meetings.

Selection

The Student Representative is elected by members of their class and serves for the entire duration of their degree. The selection process is managed by the MPH Graduate Assistant.

Principles

The student is expected to:

Contribute to the aims of the MPH Program Committee (Terms of Reference to be provided)

Attend monthly meetings of the MPH Program Committee, or identify a delegate if they are unable to attend.

Note: In the fall term, when both the first year and the second year MPH student representatives are enrolled and elected, both representatives attend the MPH Program Committee meeting.

Communicate with classmates about program-related issues. This includes both soliciting input, and conveying program decisions and rationale.

Attend monthly meetings of the Graduate Education Committee and the Department, or identify a delegate if they are unable to attend.

Note: Only one MPH student representative, the first year representative, attends these meetings.

History

Primary author	Bren Melles, Senior Program Officer	Jan 3, 2018, Updated Oct 29, 2018
Reviewed	Student reps Veronica Finamore, Laura Aguiar	Nov 7, 2018
Approved	MPH Program Committee	Nov 13, 2018
Reformatted	Bren Melles, Senior Program Officer	June 19, 2019, August 7, 2019
Revised 2020	Bren Melles, w/ student rep and Prog Comm input	Nov 13, 2019, July 21, 2020, Sep 29,
Revised	Bren Melles, added ref to summer months	May 18, 2021

MPH Student Representative

Frequently Asked Questions

What does the student rep really do?

In short, connect with classmates and communicate to the MPH Program Committee on their behalf. The student rep helps strengthen the program and improve the student learning experience for both current and future students.

How do student reps gather input and share program-related issues with classmates?

It varies. Of course, they connect with people in person when possible. In addition, student reps may use the student Facebook site, email, or other methods to gather input and share decisions - whatever it takes to ensure that everyone in the class has an opportunity to be informed and contribute.

How are student reps elected?

1. Orientation: Student Representative role introduced to all incoming students, with follow-up email
2. Fall Week 2: MPH Graduate Assistant emails detailed description of role to all students in the first year cohort and invites students to nominate or self-nominate candidates. Candidates email their name to Grad Assistant
3. By week 4: Grad Assistant contacts all nominees to confirm that they are willing to stand as a candidate
4. Week 4: Candidates are offered an opportunity to express their vision for being the Student Representative to the class. This is usually a verbal speech of up to five minutes, but may also be a written statement of up to 200 words. After sharing of candidate speeches (or statements), students in the first year cohort vote (the same day) by anonymous ballot for their preferred candidate. Note that if only one nominee agrees to stand as a candidate, students in the first year cohort will vote yes/no to support that candidate as their Representative. If the candidate is not affirmed, the process for nomination will be re-opened for an alternative candidate.
5. By end of 4: Graduate Assistant tabulates votes and emails result to the class

How long is the commitment?

The entire duration of the degree. The election process is completed in time for new first year student rep to attend the November MPH Program Committee. Student reps serve until their degree requirements are done in December of the following year, including serving throughout the summer months of year one.

How often do student reps attend meetings? (Program Committee, Graduate Education Committee (GEC), Dept)

Monthly. Dates for these meetings are provided at the beginning of the year. If the student rep cannot attend, they need to delegate someone to attend in their place. Both second year and first year reps attend Program Committee meetings. Only first year reps attend GEC and Department meetings. Program Committee continues to meet during the summer.

What does the student rep do at these monthly meetings?

Student reps participate in discussion and decisions (with the exception of "in camera" sessions where Committees discuss student progress). A report from the student rep is a standing item on the meeting agenda for the Program Committee, GEC and the Department. It is up to the student rep how they want to structure their report. A suggestion is: what's working well; what's not working well; and relevant follow-up from the previous report.

Does the student rep get any guidance figuring out their role?

The MPH Program Director and staff are available to provide guidance on navigating the role. In general, program issues (like policies, curriculum, scheduling, morale, administrative support, etc.) are addressed at the program level. Course issues (like course content, course assessment, course communication, etc.) are addressed first with the course instructor. It is not the student representative's role to advocate for their peers in their coursework.