

Degree Classification Key (SPH only)

Correct degree classification is crucial to ensuring appropriate data collection and organization throughout the self-study. Many criteria require that the SPH focus on public health degrees and concentrations only.

SPH should contact CEPH staff immediately in any cases of confusion about appropriate degree classification.

1. Is the degree a public health degree, an “other degree” or does the degree include a mix of public health and other concentrations?
 - The MPH and DrPH are ALWAYS public health degrees.
 - Degrees such as DPT, MPP, MSW, etc. are other degrees.
 - In a school that offers PhD degrees in epidemiology, global health, and community health, the PhD is a public health degree.
 - In a school that offers PhD degrees in epidemiology, global health and social work, the PhD has a mix of public health and other concentrations.
2. For degrees that include a mix of public health and other concentrations, each concentration must be classified as public health or other.
 - In a school that offers BS degrees in exercise science and community health, the BS in community health is a public health degree offering and the BS in exercise science is an other degree offering.
3. For public health graduate degrees, is the degree professional or academic?
 - The MPH and DrPH are ALWAYS professional degrees.
 - Degrees that are intended to prepare public health practitioners in a manner equivalent to the MPH or DrPH are professional degrees.
 - For example, in some institutions, the MSPH is intended to function in a manner equivalent to the MPH degree. In these institutions, the MSPH is a professional degree.
 - In some institutions, the MSPH is intended to prepare students for doctoral study and/or research-based careers. In these institutions, the MSPH is an academic degree.
 - MS and PhD are typically academic degrees. They would only be professional degrees if they are used in place of, and intended to prepare students for public health practice in a manner equivalent to, MPH or DrPH degrees.
4. For public health degrees and concentrations, is the degree/concentration offered in a distance-based or executive format?
 - Degrees/concentrations are only considered distance-based if the degree/concentration can be obtained completely via distance learning or with minimal face-to-face interaction required. Minimal face-to-face interaction might include summer or other limited residency requirements, in-person orientation, in-person delivery of final projects, etc.
 - Degrees/concentrations are considered to be offered in an executive format if they require substantial place-based attendance but are offered in condensed time periods. Typically, executive-format degrees also require specific work experience or qualifications for admission.

