**Student Admission, Recruitment and Funding**

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**ADMISSIONS**

Detailed information regarding GSPH admissions is available on the [**GSPH website**](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=96) and the [**Department of Epidemiology website**](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/admission.asp)

* **Admissions deadlines – fall and spring terms** (students are not typically admitted in summer term). Soft deadlines are published on the above websites, but the department often chooses to continue reviewing applications after these dates. Hard deadlines are published as well; typically, applications are not reviewed beyond these dates.
* **Fall term**
* **Soft deadline** – first week of January (typically January 2 - 4)
* **Hard deadline, US applicants** – June 1
* **GSR application deadline** (for doctoral program applicants desiring funding) – coincides with soft and hard deadlines above
* **GSPH deadline recommended for international applicants** – mid March (March 15)

This deadline is posted on the GSPH admissions web page after the soft deadline has passed to ensure there is adequate time for the University’s Office of International Services to process required visa related documents

* **Spring term**
* **Soft deadline, US applicants** -November 1
* **Soft deadline, international applicants** – August 1

**Overview of the admissions process and advisor/advisee assignment**

* Prospective student applies to GSPH electronically via School of Public Health Application System (SOPHAS), an application clearinghouse used by 36 out of 44 CEPH accredited schools of public health
* Applications are received by GSPH Student Affairs. International applications are forwarded to Office of International Services (OIS) for interpretation and assessment, and later to each department. Applications of US citizens and permanent residents are forwarded directly to each department
* Epidemiology Student Services staff ensures applications are available for web based review by the Admissions Committee via the SOPHAS system. Members utilize evaluation and scoring forms to rank candidates.
* Those submitting **master’s program** applications are first reviewed at the departmental level. They are then reviewed and approved/disapproved by GSPH Student Affairs. Applicants accepted at both levels receive a congratulatory e-mail and admission offer packets by mail from GSPH Student Affairs, and subsequently, a welcome e-mail from the Student Services staff.
* Accepted master’s applicants are initially assigned a temporary advisor (same temporary advisor for all applicants – currently Dr. Kristen Mertz). Permanent advisors are assigned later when applicants accept their admission offers and pay the required deposit.
* The Epidemiology Student Services staff will forward permanent advisors an electronic copy of their advisees’ SOPHAS applications and CVs for their retention.
* Those submitting **doctoral program** applications are linked with an academic advisor when they are accepted at the departmental level.
* An academic advisor is identified for each applicant qualified for admission.
* Academic advisors are also asked if they are able to provide funding for applicants, although they are not required to provide funding in order to act as student advisors.
* All applications of applicants with advisors are subsequently reviewed by GSPH Student Affairs.
* If applicants are accepted at this level, they receive a congratulatory e-mail from GSPH and an admissions offer packet by mail from GSPH Student Affairs, as well as a welcome e-mail from the Student Services staff (advisors are copied).
* On behalf of the Admissions Committee, academic advisors of accepted doctoral applicants may be contacted by Dr. Kristen Mertz and asked to offer **priority funding**  to outstanding applicants. Refer to the Recruitment section below for additional information about the priority funding process.

**Recruitment**

**Communication with prospective students**

* Prospective students may contact faculty to inquire about the possibility of funding if they are accepted (GSR positions or other student work opportunities), program requirements, course syllabi, the likelihood of their acceptance should they apply to one of our degree programs, or the probability that specific faculty members may be able to act as their academic advisor (they may have similar research interests).
* Faculty should review the Faculty Handbook for information regarding these questions; they may contact the Student Services staff if they need additional assistance.
* Faculty should contact Lori Smith, Student Services Coordinator, to determine if a specific applicant or prospective student may be eligible for a funded position.

**Departmental applicant/prospect visit policy**

* Refer to the final section of the Student Related Processes and Policies section of the Faculty Handbook for policy information.

**Departmental recruitment tools**

* Priority Funding to outstanding doctoral program applicants to encourage timely acceptance of GSPH admission offers
* Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) positions to qualified accepted doctoral program applicants seeking funding support
* Trainee positions (associated with grants managed by Epidemiology faculty members)
* Departmental scholarships
* GSPH (school-wide) scholarships
* Scholarships sponsored by the GSPH Center for Minority Health
* Epidemiology Data Center scholarship – Detre Scholarship
* K. Leroy Irvis Fellowships

Refer to the following **Student Funding** section below for more information.

**STUDENT FUNDING**

[**GSPH Scholarships**](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=107)

**Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) positions**

* **Definition** – GSRs are positions offered to selected doctoral program applicants (PhD or DrPH) or current doctoral program students seeking funding support. Responsibilities may involve work related to a student’s individual dissertation preparation or they may encompass tasks associated with another project identified by a faculty GSR supervisor.
* **Eligibility** – Only doctoral program applicants who have been extended offers of admission by GSPH and continuing doctoral program students desiring funding are eligible for GSRs. Master’s degree applicants and continuing students are not eligible.
* Although many eligible accepted applicants (as well as some unfunded continuing students) typically apply for GSR positions, the department does not guarantee positions to all who seek them due to the large volume of GSR applications received versus the number of positions made available by faculty.
* **Terms of GSR support**

Continuation of appointment to subsequent terms is contingent upon continuing availability of funding and level of student’s academic performance

* Fall and spring term appointments are typically offered together (with the exception of Priority Funding [1-year] GSR appointments). Refer to the Priority Funding section of this document below for more information.
* Fall or spring term separate appointments may also be offered
* Summer term appointments are always offered separately
* GSRs must begin work on the official start date of the term in which they are appointed and must work until the official end date of the term in which their appointments conclude, even if their classes end prior to the official end date.
* **GSR Policies**
	+ [**University**](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/GSRPolicyStatement.pdf)
	+ [**GSPH**](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=126)
* **Support received**
* Monthly stipend ($1,537.50/month – as of summer 2010)
* Full health insurance coverage (family coverage not included but available at additional cost to student).
* Full tuition coverage
* **GSR paperwork**
* **GSR appointment letter**
* Letters detail the terms of the GSR position contract between the student and the Department of Epidemiology, and must be signed by the student and returned to the department by the requested date.

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***Appointment letters state that GSRs are required to attend the Department of Epidemiology weekly Seminar course (EPIDEM 2250) each term it is offered (fall and spring terms). GSRs must sign in when attending each seminar, as attendance is monitored.***

* GSR supervisors may opt not to offer reappointments to students. [University GSR Policy (section 3)](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/GSRPolicyStatement.pdf) identifies possible justifications for this.
* GSR Term Evaluation Forms (referenced below) comments submitted by supervisors related to insufficient student research effort, poor academic progress, etc. may be referenced as justification for not offering reappointments.
* [**GSR Objectives Form**](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/documents/handbook/GSRObjectivesform.pdf)
* [**GSR Term Evaluation Form**](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/documents/handbook/GSR_Term_Evaluation_Form1-10.pdf)
* **GSR costs**
* **Faculty pays stipends, fringes (health insurance) and indirect expenses**
* **Epidemiology department pays tuition**

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***Support for GSR positions must come from a grant providing full indirect costs or must be available through departmental research and development funds.***

***Contact Linda Deluco at*** ***deluco@edc.pitt.edu*** ***with questions about the costs of offering GSR positions or appropriate funding sources.***

* **Procedures for offering a GSR position**
* Contact Linda Deluco at Deluco@edc.pitt.edu to confirm that the anticipated funding source is adequate and appropriate.
* Contact Lori Smith at smithl@edc.pitt.edu to notify her of the new GSR slot and what/how many terms it is anticipated to cover.
* Contact Lori Smith or Gwen O’Brien (obrieng@edc.pitt.edu) who will provide faculty with a username and password necessary to access to the **GSR Online Review System** (a link) <http://www.edc.pitt.edu/gsronline/>, which resides on the department’s website and includes GSR Consideration Request forms (GSR applications) submitted by accepted doctoral applicants and current doctoral students seeking funding, as well as their CVs and SOPHAS GSPH applications.

***Note if any accepted applicants on the GSR Online Review System are identified as Priority Funding recipients (more information about priority funding is provided below). Initial consideration should be given to these candidates, as it is the department’s desire that these individuals be transitioned from receiving departmental funding as soon as possible to receiving funds from faculty with GSR positions to fill.***

* Contact the applicant/student(s) you consider good candidates for your position and explain the academic and financial benefits.
* If accepted applicants/continuing students **do** accept your GSR offer inform them that they will receive an official offer e-mail from Lori Smith on behalf of the Department of Epidemiology Chair. They must respond by e-mail to this offer.
* If accepted applicants/continuing students **do not** accept your GSR offer request a reason for this. If an offer from another institution was accepted, ask for the institution’s name and information concerning the offer. Attempt to compare this offer to our offer (it might be comparable). If the other offer is more desirable to the candidate, request him/her to contact you if his/her plans change.
* E-mail Lori Smith concerning the outcomes of these phone conversations. Lori will update Linda Deluco.
* **Official GSR offers are made centrally by the department** and will be forwarded by Lori Smith on behalf of the department chair. Official e-mail responses from candidates will be retained by the department.

***Contact Lori Smith at*** ***smithl@edc.pitt.edu*** ***with questions concerning procedures for offering GSR positions.***

* **Addressing problems involving GSRs**
* GSR supervisors should note any performance problems throughout GSR appointment terms and discuss these with their students to provide them with opportunities to address deficiencies.
* Problems should be documented on the GSR Term Evaluation Form for annual submission to the department chair. Evaluation Forms may be submitted more frequently to document discussions and recommendations.
* If the GSR supervisor and the student’s academic advisor are two different individuals, communication concerning any problems or performance deficiencies should take place.
* Issues that cannot be resolved among students and supervisors should be brought to the attention of the department chair for resolution, as per University GSR policy (link to policy is included previously in this document). If problems cannot be resolved by the department chair, they may be brought to the attention of the GSPH Assistant or Associate Dean for Student Affairs by the department and the student.
* It may be possible for GSRs to move to another position supported by another Epidemiology faculty supervisor if both supervisors and the student agree that this would be an effective strategy for resolving student difficulties.
* GSR positions may be terminated if performance problems are not resolved, as per [University GSR Policy (section 6)](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/GSRPolicyStatement.pdf). Students may initiate an appeals process if they wish.
* GSPH GSR Policy recommends that students and their GSR supervisors make every attempt to resolve GSR problems at the departmental level, before involving the GSPH Assistant or Associate Dean for Student Affairs. GSRs and students who cannot resolve their differences should convey their perspectives on the situation to the Department of Epidemiology chair, who will attempt to facilitate a resolution. Problems that cannot be resolved will be brought to the attention of the GSPH Assistant or Associate Deans for Student Affairs by the department for further mediation.
* GSR Evaluation Forms completed by GSR supervisors and submitted to the department should clearly document any student issues/problems contributing to the termination action, and any efforts made to assist the student with resolving these problems
* Refer to the **Mentoring** section of the Faculty Handbook for more information about resources available to faculty who must address student grievances.

**Priority Funding**

* **Definition** - Priority funding is a commitment on the part of the department to provide a stipend as well as full tuition and health insurance coverage for **one** year (fall, spring and summer) as a recruitment incentive to outstanding doctoral program applicants who have received GSPH admission offers. **These are short term GSR positions**.

*The Department of Epidemiology chair must approve all priority funding offers recommended by the Epidemiology Admissions Committee before they are extended.*

* **Priority funding award process**
* The Admissions Committee chair identifies candidates for priority funding and forwards names to the Student Services Coordinator and Kristen Mertz, MD, MPH, who will contact them immediately and conduct a telephone interview.
* Lori Smith, Student Services Coordinator, notifies Administrative Staff Supervisor, Linda Deluco, of the potential priority funding award.
* Kristen Mertz informs the Epidemiology Admissions Committee and the department chair of her assessment of the phone interview.
	+ The candidate will be approved or disapproved for funding by the chair, based upon the assessment and the likelihood of a member of the Epidemiology faculty to support him/her following the one-year priority funding commitment.
* Candidates must respond concerning their acceptance/rejection of funding offers via e-mail. Responses should be forwarded to Lori Smith.
	+ Assigned faculty academic advisors will follow up with applicants accepting priority funding offers to discuss research project responsibilities and course registration.

**Trainee positions**

* **Eligibility** – Predoctoral (PhD or DrPH) students or post-docs must be US citizens or permanent residents. Master’s level students are not eligible.
* **Training grant programs directed by Epidemiology faculty**

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| **TRAINING GRANT** | **PROGRAM DIRECTORS/CONTACTS** |
| **Aging Training Grant** | **Jane Cauley** |
| **AIDS Training Grant** | **Lee Harrison** |
| **Cardiovascular Epidemiology Training Grant** | **Kim Sutton-Tyrrell** |
| **Global ID Training Grant** | **Lee Harrison** |
| **Reproductive, Perinatal and Pediatric Epidemioloigy** | **Nancy Day – Director****Catherine Haggerty – Co-director** |
| **Psychiatric Epidemiology** | **Gale Richardson** |
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* **Procedures for offering trainee positions**
* Recruit a student directly from a pool of GSRs currently working for you.
* Request Lori Smith to advertise available positions as needed.
* **Support received**
* Monthly stipend (approximately $1,959.38 - includes funding to purchase health insurance coverage. Family coverage is not included but is available at additional charge to the student).
* Full tuition coverage

More information about training grants associated with the Department of Epidemiology and trainee positions is available on the **department’s website** (a link) at <http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/financialaid.asp>

**Departmental Scholarships**

* **Scholarship available** - There are five (5) departmental scholarships available to Epidemiology Department students. These scholarships may be offered to continuing students or new students.

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| **SCHOLARSHIP** | **ADMINISTRATION TERM** | **AWARD METHOD** | **APPROXIMATE VALUE** |
| Arlene Caggiula Student Award in Nutrition | Typically fall term | Tuition credit | $500 |
| 1Evelyn H. Wei Memorial Fund(travel funding) | Fall, spring or summer terms | Expense reimbursement through Student Services Office | $500 |
| Evelyn H. Wei Scholarship Award in Epidemiology | Typically fall term | Tuition credit | $2000 |
| Lewis H. Kuller Scholarship Fund | Typically fall term | GSR position | 1-year GSR position (stipend, health insurance coverage and tuition coverage) |
| 2Katherine Detre Scholarship Fund | Typically fall term | GSR stipend credit supplementing typical GSR stipend | A GSR position (fall and spring) with a $2,000 stipend (as opposed to the standard stipend amount) |

1Students receiving the Evelyn H. Wei Memorial (travel) fund must submit a brief, written summary to the Epidemiology Student Services staff after their trips describing how their travel/conference experiences have impacted their academic progress at GSPH and/or their career plans. Some of these statements will be showcased in a GSPH lobby display highlighting the purpose of this scholarship, and how it is benefitting our students.

2Applications for this scholarship are not accepted; funds are typically awarded to a highly recommended new student selected by a faculty committee through the Epidemiology Data Center (EDC).

* **Application deadlines**
* **May 28** (with the exception of the Evelyn H. Wei Memorial [travel] Fund, which is awarded throughout the academic year).

* **How students apply**
* Students should download a departmental [scholarship application form](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/handbook_FAQFormsAndDocuments.asp) and review of scholarship descriptions and eligibility requirements in the online [Student Handbook](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/documents/handbook/STUDENT_HANDBOOK_STUDENT_SCHOLARSHIPS_5-10-10_lss.pdf) to verify that eligibility requirements have been met.
* Students’ faculty academic advisors must submit an e-mail or memo in support of each student application.
* Applications are submitted to Lori Smith, Student Services Coordinator, at smithl@edc.pitt.edu or delivered to A537 Crabtree Hall.

*Before applying for the department’s travel scholarship (Evelyn H. Wei Memorial Fund), students with GSRs or trainee positions must first verify that the funds they seek are not available through their supervisors’ funding source. Supervisors must write a letter stating that no other funding is available to the applicant for this purpose*

* **How decisions are made**
* Students with GSR or trainee positions are ineligible for scholarships providing tuition credit. For the Evelyn H. Wei Memorial Fund (travel scholarship), priority consideration is given to students planning travel to the annual American Public Health Association (ASPH), typically held in November.
* The Department of Epidemiology chair, in conjunction with a faculty committee, reviews applications and selects scholarship recipients.

More information concerning eligibility and selection criteria for departmental scholarships is available in the [Student Handbook](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/documents/handbook/STUDENT_HANDBOOK_STUDENT_SCHOLARSHIPS_8-17-09_lss.pdf).

**K. Leroy Irvis Fellowships**

* The purpose of the K. Leroy Irvis Fellowship Program is to enhance the diversity of the University of Pittsburgh's graduate student populations and eventually the professorate. This program enables schools to successfully recruit, enroll, retain, and graduate exceptionally qualified students who also contribute to the University's and the school's diversity missions.

The Office of the Provost provides each K. Leroy Irvis Fellow for the first fall and spring terms with a full tuition scholarship, a living stipend at or slightly above the level of the University's TF stipend, and comprehensive individual health insurance, should the student elect coverage.

* GSPH departments are periodically invited by the GSPH Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Mary Derkach, to nominate outstanding new students for these fellowships. The Epidemiology Department chair will select a student (if any meet the eligibility requirements) and submit the nomination.
	+ Eligible students must be US citizens and must be African American or Hispanic
	+ Contact Lori Smith, Student Services Coordinator, for more information concerning K. Leroy Irvis Fellowships.

**Student Employment Opportunities**

* Students can work no more than 20 hours per week in on-campus positions in fall and spring terms. More hours may be worked in summer term.
* **University employment listings** - The Epidemiology Student Services Office receives bi-weekly listings of hourly paid positions that are posted by schools across the University. Students can check with the Student Services staff (Lori Smith or Gwen O’Brien) for current information.
* A binder of these position listings is also accessible in the GSPH Career Services Office in 114 Parran Hall.
* **University part-time staff positions** – The [**University Office of Human Resources**](http://www.hr.pitt.edu/employment/default.htm) provides information concerning part-time staff positions.
* **GSPH-wide hourly paid positions** – Students should talk with their academic advisors, instructors, lab supervisors, the GSPH Student Affairs staff, the Epidemiology Student Services staff, etc. to determine if hourly paid positions are available. They should also check the bulletin boards throughout the school to monitor job availability.
	+ An announcement will be made in Fall 2010 concerning the online posting of GSPH hourly paid student positions in the [GSPH Career Services](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=290) program, GSPHFutures. More details about this job posting system will be available soon.
* **UPMC (University of Pittsburgh Medical Center) positions** - Students may search the UPMC website to learn more about these opportunities.



***International students MUST typically visit the Office of International Services (OIS) to obtain the appropriate approvals BEFORE accepting an hourly paid position on campus, depending upon their Visa status.***

[**Small Grants Program**](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/financialaid.asp#SmallGrant)

[**Other sources of funding**](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=107)