

HPL CERTIFICATE FAQs

1. Registration

I submitted my request to change my certificate, but I'm not registered in HPL?

Certificate Change requests must be submitted to the SPH Registrar. It may take up to 2 weeks to process.

What is the Schedule Builder?

Schedule Builder allows for the compilation of various schedule permutations to determine what options might be preferred for enrollment. Direct enrollment can then also occur from the Schedule Builder page. In MyBU Student, there are a few ways to plan for and then register for classes. This [video](#) walks through using Schedule Builder to prepare for and enroll in classes.

I don't know what courses to take, can I meet with you to discuss?

Please review the [HPL Certificate Bulletin](#) for all HPL Certificate courses. Begin identifying courses you're interested in.

Meet with your advisor and be prepared to discuss your planned coursework.

If you're still unsure, we do have office hours with the certificate director and certificate manager. Be on the lookout for an email reminding students with information on when and how to attend.

I'm a 4+1 student. Do I need a registration code to register for classes?

No registration code is required to register for courses at SPH. 4+1 students will receive an email describing when and how to register for courses at SPH. If it says you need a registration code, please email the BUSPH Registrar's Office (sphregr@bu.edu) for further assistance.

I can't register for PMXXX or LWYYY. The course says, "Remaining open seats in this class are reserved"?

Courses that have reserved seats at the time of registration are for students who are officially enrolled in HPL. If you recently submitted a certificate change request form, it may not have been processed yet by the Registrar, so you are unable to register for the course. However, reserved seats expire 2 weeks after registration opens —so you should fill out a waitlist form. The waitlist form is available on the SPH forms page here: <http://www.bu.edu/sph/forms>.

What is Career PREP? How do I register for it?

Must complete prior to graduation. Career Prep is a career development course students must complete prior to graduation. Dual degree students should consult the academic bulletin for official degree requirements as they differ from the roadmap.

You can find more information on Career PREP here: <https://www.bu.edu/sph/careers/for-students/career-prep/>

How do I check my progress for the MPH degree while in the HPL certificate?

Check out the [Advising Degree Progress & What -If Reports guide](#). This guide covers the Degree Progress and What-If Reports from the student perspective. MyBU Student Degree Progress presents to students the requirements of their Degree Progress Report, including what has or has not been satisfied. The What-If function allows students to review Degree Progress details for alternative programs, plans, or other scenarios.

I don't have an HPL advisor. How and when will one be assigned to me?

Please e-mail the HPL certificate's program manager to request an HPL advisor.

Until one is assigned to you—and that usually doesn't take long—please e-mail the program manager or program director with any questions about course choices or other advising questions.

2. Courses

Do I have to take any of the HPL certificate courses in a specific order?

PM760 and either PM735 or PM833 are typically the first courses students take in the certificate. The remaining courses are elective courses which can be taken at any time during your MPH journey.

How do I learn which courses will be offered next semester?

Course offerings will be emailed a few weeks prior to Registration. Courses listed in these documents are subject to change.

Can I take courses not listed on the HPL Roadmap and have them count towards HPL?

Only approved required courses and electives listed can count towards the HPL Certificate.

Are any HPL courses offered in the summer?

No, there are no HPL Certificate courses offered in the summer.

How can I learn which courses are offered in the other certificates?

Please contact the certificate program director or the certificate program coordinator directly for the most up-to-date course offerings for other certificates.

I'm doing two certificates. How many credits can count towards both?

You may double-count a maximum of 4 credits between two certificates.

Which “money” course should I take in the HPL Certificate? What is the difference between the two courses?

Which “money” course should I take in the HPL Certificate?

PM735 and PM833 are both great courses! These courses overlap only a little, so many HPL students take both. What is the difference between the two?

PM735 Health Care Finance aims to help you understand how money works in health care—and how you can use it as a tool to fix problems you care about. It assumes no special background. It rests on the view that competitive free markets don’t work well in health care—and that government efforts in the U.S. have not been very effective. The result is anarchy. This helps explain why costs are so high while many people are uninsured, volumes of care are low, and outcomes are both unequal and low. The course analyzes the origins of anarchy, reasons it persists, and ways to win medical security for all people.

PM833 Health Economics is an introduction to the field of health economics and its application to US health policy. It emphasizes the trade-offs involved in various choices within the health care economy, with particular attention to the debate between pro-market and government regulatory approaches to health care policy. There are two primary goals in this course. The first goal is to understand the economic theory of health and healthcare markets. The second is to learn to apply economic concepts to current issues of health care policy.

I want to count GH854 or GH888 towards the HPL Certificate, but I matriculated before Fall 2024. Do I need to complete a course substitution form?

Yes, if you matriculated before Fall 2024, you must complete a [Course Substitution Form](#). Complete all fields. In the justification section, write that “HPL Certificate Director has approved this course as an elective for HPL certificate students.”

Once the form is complete, please submit it to the certificate director for a signature. Then you will submit the form to the registrar.

If you matriculated after Fall 2024, these courses will automatically count towards the certificate so you won’t need to complete the course substitution form.

3. Integrative Learning Experience (ILE)

What is the ILE? Can you provide an overview?

The ILE integrates and applies skills and knowledge gained from HPL courses and MPH core courses. These include

- ✓ using systematic approaches to analyze current health policy issues;

- ✓ evaluating policies' effectiveness, efficiency, and equity;
- ✓ developing policy proposals that recognize political constraints; and
- ✓ determining factors that influence the success of implementation.

Each student's ILE's final products are a policy memo and a presentation resting on the memo. The presentation takes place at a mock hearing before a state or federal legislative committee, a state agency such as the Department of Public Health, a state or federal court, or a regulatory agency such as the Food and Drug Administration. That hearing could take place in the present day or in the near future.

More information will be provided by the Certificate Director and Certificate Manager during the ILE Kickoff Meeting (date and time TBA).

How do I register for the ILE?

Students take the ILE in their last semester. To register for this course, you will need to fill out a graduation application by the [appropriate deadline](#). Once the SPH Registrar's Office has deemed that you are on track to complete all remaining degree requirements in the given semester, the Registrar will register you for your ILE.

You'll need to resolve any graduation application issues by the ILE registration deadline, which is listed on the [BUSPH Academic Calendar](#). The ILE registration deadline is also listed in the BUSPH registration email and your grad app confirmation email.

It is your responsibility to make sure that you check your schedule and ensure that you have been registered for your ILE by the ILE registration deadline. If you have any graduation application questions, please consult the [SPH Graduation Application FAQ](#) page.

I have two functional certificates, do I have to do both ILEs?

No, you choose which functional certificate you would like to do your ILE.

Can I do the ILE over the summer?

Yes. Be on the lookout for announcements about the HPL ILE being conducted over the summer.

I'm registered for the ILE, when will I hear from the certificate on next steps?

Within two weeks of the semester starting, the certificate manager will reach out and send you a survey asking you to choose your top 3 topics.

You will then be placed into small groups and will be notified via email your topic, group members, and HPL faculty facilitator. From there, your faculty facilitator will meet with you and guide you through the remainder of the ILE process.

4. Practicum

Is the practicum an HPL requirement or a school-wide requirement?

The practicum is an SPH requirement.

Still, if you seek a practicum to build skills or advance your professional work in HPL, your HPL faculty advisor or the [Career and Practicum Office](#) will be happy to discuss possible practicum strategies or possible sites that might work best for you.

Does the practicum have to be done in your last semester?

No, the practicum can be done at any time after you have completed the 16-credit SPH core. It can be completed over several semesters.

Where can I find answers to questions about the practicum?

Please review the [SPH Practicum website](#) where there are several resources or contact the Practicum office directly at sphpract@bu.edu. The Practicum team can provide general practicum advising and practicum support.

5. HPL Student Organization

I want to join the HPL Student Organization, who do I contact?

Please contact HPLSO at hplso@bu.edu if you're interested in joining or want to get involved.