



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
School of Public Health

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PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE MANUAL  
FOR  
MHA, MPH AND DRPH DEGREE  
PROGRAMS

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EFFECTIVE SPRING 2022

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Practicum Experience Policies and Procedures .....	4
Objectives .....	4
Student Performance Expectations .....	4
Requirements .....	5
Work Plan And Other Documentation.....	6
Periodic Reports .....	7
Final Report.....	8
Presentation .....	8
Practicum Experience Products and Deliverables.....	9
Preceptor Evaluation Form.....	9
ePortfolio Requirements .....	9
Grading .....	9
Responsibilities.....	10
Student.....	10
Practicum Preceptor .....	11
Department Practicum Coordinator.....	12
Office of Public Health Practice .....	12
For Students - Steps to Completing Practicum Experience .....	13
Before The Practicum Experience .....	13
During The Practicum Experience .....	14
.....	15
.....	15
After The Practicum Experience .....	15
For Practicum Preceptors.....	17
Before the Practicum Experience .....	17
Defining the Experience: Work plan and Practicum Portal.....	18
During the Practicum Experience.....	19
After the Practicum Experience .....	21
For Department practicum Coordinators .....	22
Before the Practicum Experience .....	22
During the Practicum Experience.....	23
After the Practicum Experience .....	23
Addendums: Program Specific Information.....	24

Environmental and Occupational Health –Addendum.....	25
Epidemiology and Biostatistics - Addendum.....	27
Health Policy and Management – Addendum: Master of Health Administration.....	30
Health Policy and Management – Addendum: Master of Public Health.....	34
Health Promotion & Community Health Sciences – Addendum.....	39
MHA Competencies .....	42
MPH & DrPH Foundational Competencies .....	44
MPH Foundational Competencies .....	445
MPH Concentration Competencies .....	47
DRPH Foundational Competencies .....	49
DRPH Concentration Competencies .....	50

# PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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## OBJECTIVES

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The purpose of the Texas A&M School of Public Health (SPH) practicum experience is to provide students with an opportunity to apply the concepts, strategies and tools acquired throughout the course of their classroom studies. Regardless of the exact nature of the practicum facility, activities, preceptor, or specific student goals, the overall objectives of the experience are to:

- Expand knowledge of basic public health and health services practices.
- Increase awareness of the complexity of the problems and concerns involved in the public health and health services arena.
- Facilitate a stronger understanding of the relationships among public health organizations, health service organizations, and other governmental entities.
- Afford the opportunity to provide valuable service(s) to the host site organization by participating in and/or completing projects or other work assignments.
- Increase appreciation of cultural differences in populations served by public health and health services professionals.
- Provide an opportunity to apply training and concepts learned in coursework.
- Increase self-confidence as a professional in the public health and health services arena.
- Develop opportunities for references, job placement, and professional contacts.

It is not our expectation or intention that every practicum experience will serve or accomplish all of the above objectives; however, it is expected that the practicum experience will include many, if not most of these objectives.

## STUDENT PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

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Students are responsible for the arrangement of activities of their practicum experience and must be sure that curriculum objectives of the degree program in which they are enrolled are met. Department Heads, Faculty Advisors, other faculty, and Department Practicum Coordinators are available to assist students in defining their practicum experience objectives and to suggest host site contacts. Students may initiate contacts, or they may be made on the student's behalf by a faculty member or Department Practicum Coordinator.

The practicum experience may not duplicate current or previous work experiences, but rather, build on the student's background and expertise. By creating the challenge of learning new perspectives and the employment of new practices, the student may be better prepared for a career in public health and health services. Regardless of the type of practicum experience, students are responsible for determining and confirming the location and activities. Once a selection has been made, the practicum experience must be approved by the Department Practicum Coordinator.

Although students are responsible for this aspect of their curriculum, they must work with their Department Practicum Coordinator, to assure approvals are received for academic credit. Students must take special care to be clear about the

*Students will not be permitted to register for practicum credit without a final work plan, with all required signatures.*

*The work plan must be submitted prior to the start of the practicum experience.*

role and expectations of the Department Practicum Coordinator as practicum experience arrangements are being finalized. A complete practicum experience work plan signed by the student, Practicum Preceptor, and Department Practicum Coordinator is required for all students regardless of degree program.

**All practicum experience arrangements and activities are ultimately the responsibility of the student but are subject to approval by the Department Practicum Coordinator.**

## REQUIREMENTS

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Students in MPH and MHA degree programs are required to complete a three (3) credit hour practicum experience as part of their curriculum. Students in DrPH degree programs are required to complete nine (9) or more credit hours, depending on department guidelines, as part of their curriculum. To be eligible for their practicum experience, students must be in good academic standing; they cannot be on academic probation or facing any student conduct disciplinary actions.

In special circumstances a student in MPH and MHA degree programs may receive up to six (6) hours of academic credit. The student's Department Head must approve, in advance, any practicum experience that is to be more than three (3) credit hours. The number of contact hours required for academic credit is defined by degree programs.

### MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS

Students pursuing the Master of Health Administration (MHA) degree are expected to gain supervised experience in his/her chosen area of professional development, to learn new methods and perspectives that link health administration theory and practice, to interact with and participate with additional mentors, and to expand their network of contacts.

### MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH STUDENTS

Students pursuing the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree are expected to gain supervised experience in a professional public health setting which will allow them to successfully demonstrate competency attainment through an applied practice experience. More specifically, each student must select and demonstrate attainment of a minimum of five competencies. Three competencies must be [MPH foundational competencies](#) and the remaining two competencies may be either [MPH foundational competencies](#) or [concentration-specific competencies](#).

### DOCTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH STUDENTS

Students pursuing the Doctor of Public Health must, regardless of previous experiences (amount or level), must complete an applied practice experience for an organization that advances public health practice. Each DrPH student must, with their practicum coordinator, identify at least five [DrPH foundational](#) or [concentration-specific competencies](#) that will be attained. At least one of the five selected competencies must be from the domain of [Leadership, Management, and Governance](#).

Although specific departmental guidelines may vary, all students will be expected to complete the following minimum requirements:

1. Work Plan
2. Periodic Reports

3. Project Deliverables
4. Final Report
5. Final Presentation
6. Preceptor Evaluation Form

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## WORK PLAN AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

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The work plan is the formal agreement between the student, Practicum Preceptor, and Department Practicum Coordinator. At a minimum, the work plan must identify the required number of competencies that will be attained by the experience. Each competency that is identified must have specific objectives, proposed activities, and target products or materials that will demonstrate attainment. The Practicum Preceptor and Department Practicum Coordinator must approve the practicum experience site and all practicum experience objectives, activities, and products. Signing of the work plan by each party indicates approval and allows the student to be cleared to register and begin the practicum experience.

All work plans must be submitted to the Practicum Portal [tx.ag/practicumportal](http://tx.ag/practicumportal). Access to the approved work plan template is granted after students complete online training modules through Canvas. To begin training modules students must request access to the online training modules through their Department Practicum Coordinator and Department Administrator. Once a student has successfully completed the online training modules, the Office of Public Health Practice will send the approved work plan template.

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## IRB APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

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Often, within the context of a practicum experience, students are asked to conduct research for a host organization or agency. Students must be aware that before gathering or analyzing any data from human subjects for an organization, agency, or community within the context of the required practicum experience, both the student and Department Practicum Coordinator are required to review the proposed research to determine whether or not Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval will be required prior to beginning the research and from whom approval should be obtained. The Practicum IRB Approval Decision Tree (<https://public-health.tamu.edu/practice/documents/international-practicum-experience-form-packet.pdf>) can be used to help make a determination of the need for IRB approval. Once a determination is reached, the appropriate selection should be made on the practicum experience work plan form.

Students are encouraged to conduct research that may require a full IRB review when opportunities arise. However, in these cases, the student should be aware that the IRB application for review and approval must be prepared the semester prior to beginning their study. In all other cases, Department Practicum Coordinators will likely guide students to comparable learning opportunities considered exempt, expedited, or covered by existing an IRB review.

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## INTERNATIONAL PRACTICUM EXPERIENCES

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International practicum experiences can be a wonderful experience and greatly enhance a student's education. Travel to high-risk areas, as designated by the Texas A&M University System, require prior approval. In addition, students are required to purchase insurance through the Texas A&M University System to assure coverage meets guidelines and requirements.

Students who pursue an international practicum experience must complete the following additional paperwork before leaving the country, as well as all other practicum experience paperwork:

- Student International Practicum Experience Travel Form,
- HSC Request for Travel,
- International Travel Questionnaire.

Forms must be submitted to the Office of Public Health Practice at least 45-days prior to departure for the international site, late forms will not be processed. In addition to all other practicum experience approvals, international travel must be approved by Texas A&M Health Risk Management in order for academic credit to be received.

***Students interested in pursuing an international practicum experience should be aware of early deadline requirements for submitting paperwork to the Office of Public Health Practice.***

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## AFFILIATION AGREEMENTS

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Some organizations and agencies may require an Affiliation Agreement be in place prior to students engaging in a practicum experience. All Affiliation Agreements for practicum experiences are managed by the Office of Public Health Practice. Affiliation Agreements are made between the school and the organization/agency and may only be signed by those with appropriate institutional authority.

Discuss with your Department Practicum Coordinator whether or not an Affiliation Agreement exists. If needed, please contact [publichealthpractice@tamu.edu](mailto:publichealthpractice@tamu.edu) for additional information regarding Affiliation Agreements.

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## PERIODIC REPORTS

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Throughout the practicum experience, students are required to submit written periodic reports to their Department Practicum Coordinator and/or Practicum Preceptor. Students should verify the correct entities to include with their Department Practicum Coordinator and also use any provided templates. The purpose of a periodic report is to:

1. Provide the Department Practicum Coordinator with information describing the progress of the practicum experience;
2. Provide a guide to direct experiential learning;
3. Allow the student to reflect and link to classroom experiences; and
4. Assist the student in preparation of a final report.

The frequency and due dates for periodic reports are to be negotiated with the Department Practicum Coordinator prior to the beginning of the practicum experience. Each report should be sent as an electronic attachment via email to designated entities. An average report will vary in length from one to two pages (single-spaced). Periodic reports must address the following, in addition to any department specific requirements:

1. Activities
  - a. List the most important (enlightening) activities of the period. Include dates and times only as needed for clarity.

- b. Include interesting meetings, either group meetings or with individuals, duties assigned, other organizations visited, training completed, projects worked on, and other significant activities.
2. Key Learning Experience(s)
  - a. Write one or two paragraphs about the key learning experience(s) of the period. Describe how the experience(s) has added to your knowledge base and relate it to your responsibilities or to your coursework.
  - b. Describe how the key experience(s) relate to the objectives in the work plan.

No client or host site individual names are to be used in written material without consent. Students must be aware of issues related to patient, client, and corporate confidentiality (see "[Ethical Guidelines for Students](#)").

## FINAL REPORT

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At the conclusion of the practicum experience all students are required to submit a final report. The final report should include:

- A summary of major projects and activities engaged in over the course of the practicum experience.
- An assessment addressing how competencies selected for the practicum experience were met through the established objective, activities and deliverables.
  - This aspect of the final report is the most important and should thoroughly address each of the competencies identified.
- Evaluative statements about the Practicum Preceptor and practicum experience host site.
- A thoughtful reflection on how the practicum experience contributed to the student's overall educational experience and professional development.

Format, length, and additional required components are determined by the Department Practicum Coordinator or specified in departmental practicum experience addendums.

## PRESENTATION

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***All students are required to give a presentation to departmental or SPH faculty and students.***

Specific guidelines for the nature, timing, and content of presentations will be determined by the Department Practicum Coordinator, or specified in departmental practicum experience policies and procedures.

If students make a formal public presentation over the course of their degree program during a research symposium or similar activity (beyond a class-specific assignment), this requirement may be waived with approval of the Department Practicum Coordinator, and the student's Department Head or delegate (e.g. Program Director). Likewise, if students give formal presentations at their practicum site, the SPH presentation requirement may be waived, with the approval of the Department Practicum Coordinator, and Department Head.



## PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE PRODUCTS AND DELIVERABLES

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Students must provide copies of at least two products or deliverables from their practicum experience that demonstrate the attainment of competencies selected in the work plan to the school to receive academic credit. These materials will become part of the student's ePortfolio and may be visible to the public. It is possible that some products and deliverables may not be shared outside of the organization. The student should verify with their Practicum Preceptor what can and cannot be shared through the ePortfolio requirement. Students should discuss with their Department Practicum Coordinator any concerns and to identify alternatives to meet this requirement when actual products and deliverables cannot be shared outside of the organization.

## PRECEPTOR EVALUATION FORM

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Students will be evaluated by their Practicum Preceptor at the conclusion of the practicum. The Practicum Preceptor's evaluation of the student will be considered in determining the student's satisfactory completion of the practicum experience.

## EPORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

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All students, regardless of degree program, are required to upload their practicum experience work plans, final report, and final presentation slides to their ePortfolio. In addition, students pursuing MPH and DrPH degrees must upload a minimum of two deliverables/products from the experience. These deliverables/products must demonstrate completion of work plan objectives. Some practicum experience deliverables/products may contain proprietary or confidential information that cannot be shared. Students must work with their Department Practicum Coordinator to meet this requirement.

Failure to post required practicum experience materials will result in a student's grade to be held or a hold on a student's account preventing graduation.

## GRADING

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Upon completion of the practicum experience, the Department Practicum Coordinator will award a grade of either an "S" or a "U" for satisfactory or unsatisfactory work based on satisfactory completion of the requirements outlined above and any additional requirements outlined in departmental policy. If a student defaults on the terms of the work plan, the student may receive an 'unsatisfactory' grade and thus no academic credit for the practicum experience.

If, during the course of the practicum experience, the Practicum Preceptor or the Department Practicum Coordinator determines a student is having difficulty functioning in a particular setting, the student may be reassigned or asked to withdraw and retake the practicum experience during a future semester. If the student's behavior is determined to be unprofessional, unethical, or outside the rules of the agency or university, the student may be given an unsatisfactory ("U") grade and thus no academic credit will be received for the practicum experience, and/or they may be removed from the degree program depending upon individual circumstances.

Likewise, if during the course of the practicum experience the student deems the activities as inappropriate or not contributing to the educational experience, the student may request a review by the Department Practicum Coordinator, the student's Department Head, the Director of Public Health

Practice, or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. If the practicum experience is determined to be inconsistent with the philosophy or guidelines for practicum experiences, the student will be permitted to affiliate with another agency to fulfill the practicum experience requirement. If necessary, the Department Practicum Coordinator will assist the student with identifying an alternate practicum experience site.

Finally, if a student completes a practicum experience but is unable to successfully address all competencies selected in their work plan, they may still receive academic credit for work completed. However, they must work with their Department Practicum Coordinator to identify and complete additional applied practice experiences until the minimum requirements for competency attainment are met. Students will not be cleared for graduation until they have successfully met minimum competency requirements for the practicum experience/applied practice.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

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In the effort to plan, organize, and execute a successful practicum experience, the student is expected to take the primary role and can expect assistance from their Department Practicum Coordinator and Practicum Preceptor. In addition, the Office of Public Health Practice provides administrative support to all parties in the process.

## STUDENT

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All practicum experience arrangements are ultimately the responsibility of the student and subject to departmental approval. The student is primarily responsible for sending out inquiries, setting up meetings, ensuring communications among those involved, and making preliminary arrangements. The student is encouraged to seek information and advice from former students, current students who have completed their practicum experience, their faculty advisor, other faculty, and the Department Practicum Coordinator.

Students are responsible professionally and financially for their practicum experience at all stages. Although some sites provide some support, the student is responsible for living, travel, and correspondence arrangements prior to and during the practicum experience. Funding may be available through the host institution or limited grants may be found to reimburse or partially support travel directly related to some practicum experiences. Students are encouraged to clarify whether the host site will reimburse travel expenses to conferences and/or meetings during or following the practicum experience for the purpose of presenting the project's final report or publication(s).

Students may receive a salary or wages for their practicum experience depending solely on the host institution. Payment may be made hourly, periodically, or on a monthly basis, or a specified amount may be agreed upon for the entire experience. In early discussions with the Practicum Preceptor, allowances for sick leave and/or vacation time should be clarified and, if needed, a course of action to restore time taken before the completion of the practicum experience.

Students are responsible for their own health insurance coverage during the experience. While enrolled at SPH, students may be covered by student health insurance; however, other arrangements may be needed to receive care out of the service area. Students are also held responsible for their own income tax and social security payments, as well as any compensation received during the practicum experience. The host site may require professional liability insurance. Students should obtain a copy

of the liability insurance certificate that covers them while they are practicum students. This is available from the Office of Public Health Practice.

The work plan is used to ensure explicit communication of practicum experience arrangements and expectations, but it should not be interpreted as a legal document or contract. The student, Practicum Preceptor, and Department Practicum Coordinator will determine the exact nature of the practicum experience commitment (i.e., start and completion dates, total number of weeks, or number of days worked per week, or hours per day, etc.). Department Practicum Coordinators have final approval of practicum experience placement, competencies, objectives, and activities. Each student is personally liable for their own behavior and performance during their practicum experience.

The student is responsible for completing all assignments and components of the practicum experience in a timely manner. Written reports, papers, and other products are required and must be cataloged in the student's ePortfolio. This documentation may be developed in collaboration with faculty and agency personnel, but its timely completion and submission are solely the responsibility of the student.

#### ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

- All information related to clients of the host agency is to remain confidential.
- Students must follow standards of academic integrity as outlined by TAMU student rules. Any student identified as having engaged in any acts of academic dishonesty while engaged in practicum experience activities will be subject to the same standards and review process outlined in student rules, including the possibility of dismissal.
- Students should be guided by the Aggie Honor Code and the rules, guidelines and expectations of their host organization.
- Students are encouraged to discuss with the Department Practicum Coordinator any activities they believe may potentially compromise legal or ethical standards.
- Students may undertake only those program activities explicitly assigned or authorized by host site personnel or their Department Practicum Coordinator.
- Students should immediately report harassment of any form they might experience while participating in their practicum to the Practicum Preceptor, Department Head, the Department Practicum Coordinator, or the Director of Public Health Practice.
- Students must report any unusual or inappropriate behavior by the host agency, personnel, or clients to the Practicum Preceptor, Department Head, the Department Practicum Coordinator, or the Director of Public Health Practice.
- Students may not visit clients socially during regular working hours without explicit approval of the Practicum Preceptor.
- Students may not correspond with or for clients regarding matters of a professional nature without explicit approval of the Practicum Preceptor.

#### PRACTICUM PRECEPTOR

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A role of a Practicum Preceptor is to guide the student's experience in a supportive and professionally stimulating environment. During the practicum experience, they serve as a professional role model and facilitate the student's identification with the profession. A Practicum Preceptor's role is similar to that of a work supervisor and employer with the addition of a strong educational focus. The Practicum Preceptor is the point of contact for a student within individual practicum experience locations and

will function as his/her immediate supervisor. The Practicum Preceptor, or an alternate host site representative, will provide workplace guidance and knowledge.

However, the time commitment to the student is larger than just the time the student is under the Practicum Preceptor's direction; involvement begins before the actual experience and extends beyond the practicum experience completion. The Practicum Preceptor will work with the student and the Department Practicum Coordinator to develop a work plan *prior to the initiation* of the practicum experience. At the completion of the practicum, the Practicum Preceptor will assist the Department Practicum Coordinator in evaluating the student's performance by completing the Preceptor Evaluation Form.

## DEPARTMENT PRACTICUM COORDINATOR

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Each department has a Department Practicum Coordinator whose roles include:

- Acting as a resource for assisting the student in identifying possible practicum experience locations;
- Assisting the student in developing an appropriate work plan;
- Approving work plan, assigning periodic report timeline and securing completed practicum evaluations; and
- Functioning as the SPH point of contact during the practicum experience.

The Department Practicum Coordinator maintains the records associated with each student's practicum experience, monitors the progress of each student during her/his practicum experience, and submits the final practicum experience grade. Following each student's practicum experience, the Department Practicum Coordinator is responsible for gathering the final evaluations from the Practicum Preceptor and gathering documentation of the required student presentations.

## OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE

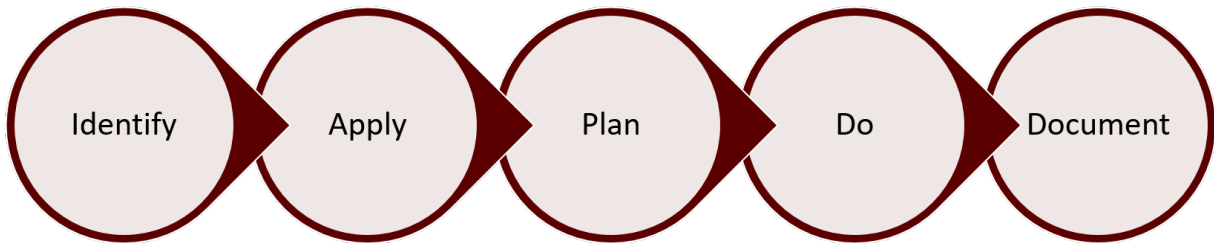
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The Office of Public Health Practice assists students, departments, and preceptors with the following logistical elements of the practicum experience:

- Granting access to online Practicum Experience training modules and logistical/technical support for Practicum Portal;
- International Practicum Experience packet processing and tracking;
- Management and oversight of practicum experience related Affiliation Agreements and related requirements
- Hosting Spring Practicum Fair

## FOR STUDENTS - STEPS TO COMPLETING PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

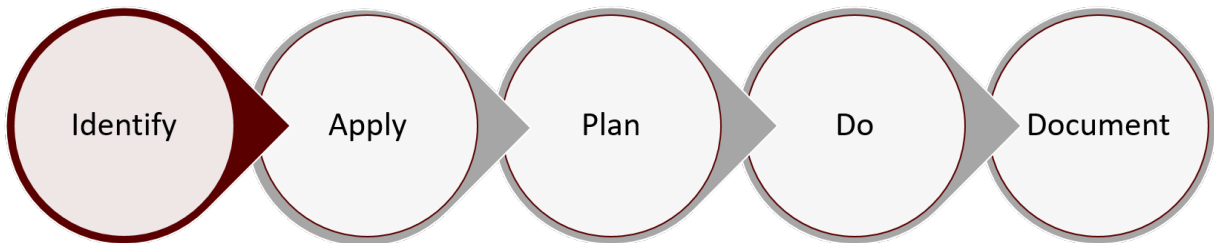
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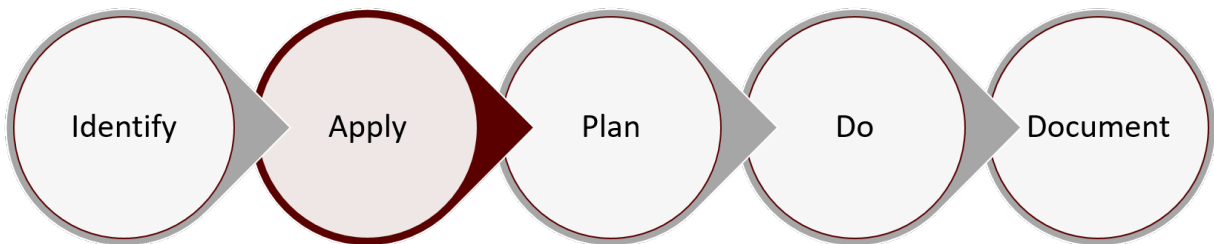
It is never too early to start thinking about practicum experience. The first step to a successful practicum experience is understanding practicum experience requirements outlined in this document and completing the online required practicum training. The semester before planned completion of the practicum experience the student needs to complete the steps highlighted in the sections below. Completion of the online training will assure students have access to all required documentation and the Practicum Portal.

### BEFORE THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

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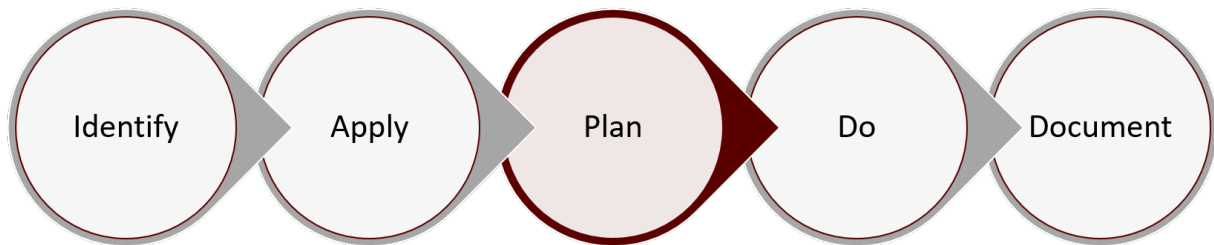
The student should schedule a meeting with their Department Practicum Coordinator to discuss eligibility to complete a practicum experience no later than the beginning of the semester prior to the practicum experience. This discussion should include *overall goals* for practicum experience based on student experiences. Based on goals, the student should gather information on potential opportunities and sites. There are numerous avenues to identify potential practicum experiences including websites, visiting speakers, emailed announcements, the Spring Practicum Fair, current and former students, faculty, family, and friends. During this time the student should update their résumé. Once potential targets are identified, the student moves to the application stage.



By the middle of the semester prior to the practicum experience semester the student should have narrowed their search, made contact with potential sites and begun the application process or negotiations for conducting a practicum experience. All communication regarding a practicum

experience should be conducted in a professional manner. The application process may include submitting applications and/or participating in interviews.

It is important for the student to work closely with their Department Practicum Coordinator as they apply for or make contact with sites regarding a practicum to ensure the opportunity will fulfill requirements and meet the goals desired. Once the student receives an offer or secures a practicum experience opportunity, they move to the formal planning process.

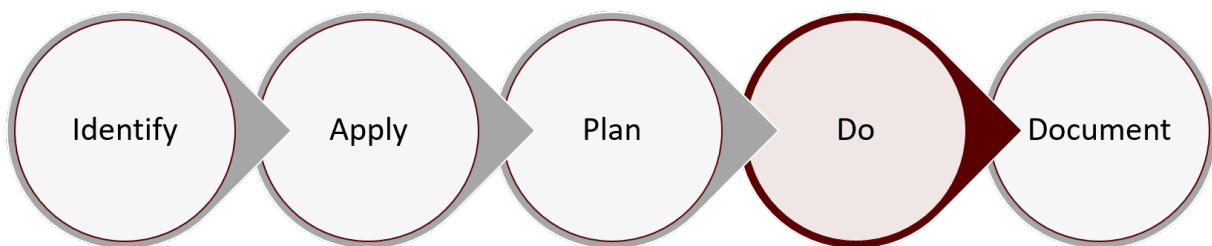


Once a practicum experience site and opportunity is secured, the student must *complete the formal work plan*. **ALL WORK PLANS MUST BE FULLY APPROVED WITH SIGNATURES PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THROUGH THE PRACTICUM PORTAL.** [tx.ag/practicumportal](http://tx.ag/practicumportal). Access to the formal work plan template is granted by the Office of Public Health Practice after a student has completed all required online practicum experience training. Through discussions with their Department Practicum Coordinator and Practicum Site Preceptor, the student should *create the work plan including objectives aligned to competencies, activities, and deliverables*. In addition, the work plan should *highlight any observations or meeting experiences*. **IT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT THE STUDENT REVIEW THIS PLAN WITH THEIR DEPARTMENT PRACTICUM COORDINATOR TO DETERMINE IF AN IRB APPLICATION IS REQUIRED** (<https://public-health.tamu.edu/practice/documents/practicum-irb-approval-decision-tree-2.2.18.pdf>) Once the student and Practicum Preceptor agree and approve the finalized work plan the document is sent to the Department Practicum Coordinator for final approval. Approval signatures from both the Practicum Preceptor and Department Practicum Coordinator are required on the draft work plan in order for students to submit in the Practicum Portal.

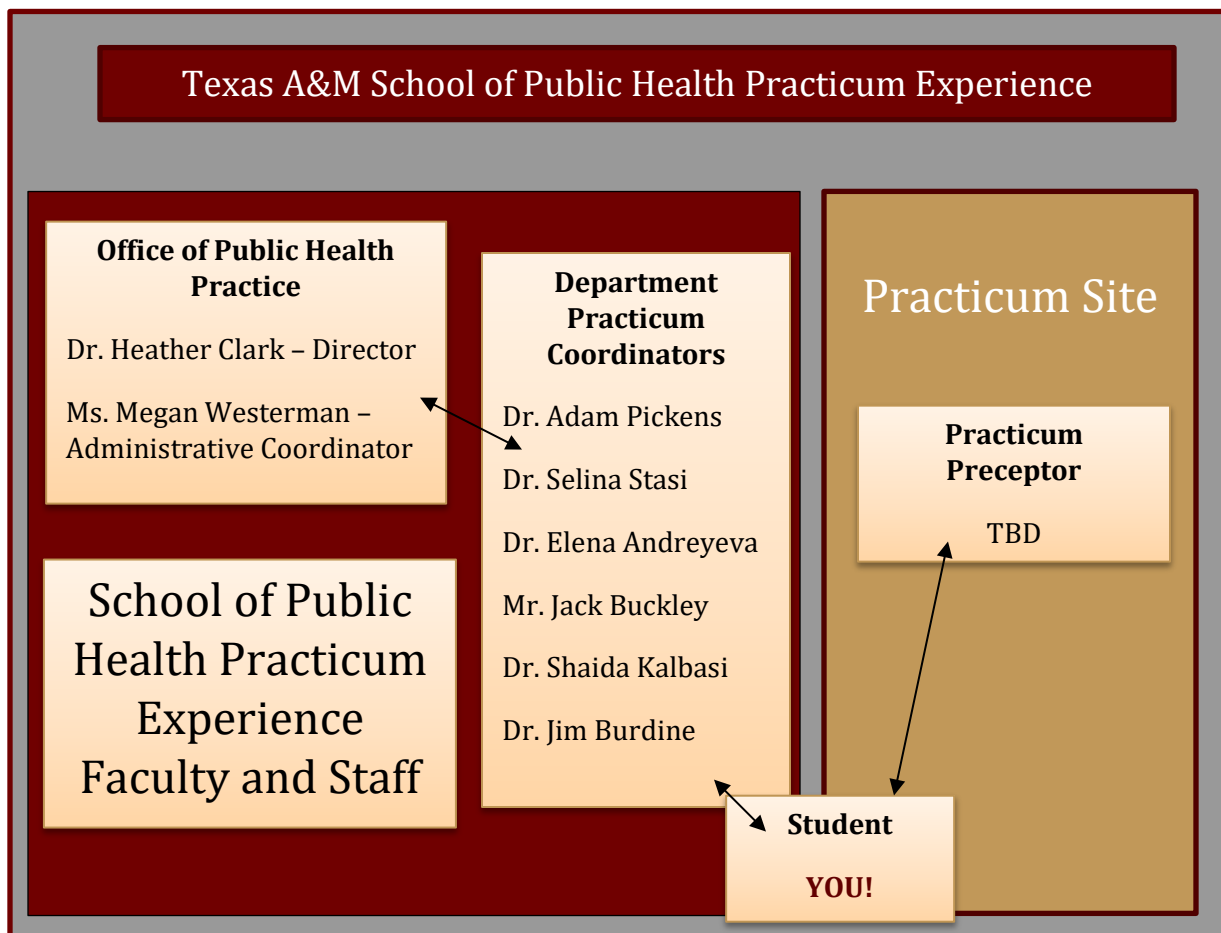
The student cannot begin or register for practicum experience until all paperwork is signed and approved. Registration blocks for academic credit are in place for all students. The Department Practicum Coordinator will provide the final approval for the work plan and once approved will remove the registration block allowing the student to register for academic credit.

## DURING THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

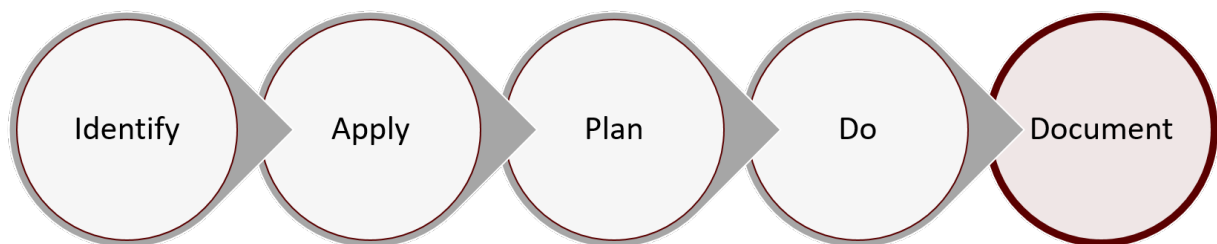
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Once the student begins the practicum experience, they are required to *submit periodic reports* to designated entities. Departmental requirements must be addressed and frequency of the report submission is set by the Department Practicum Coordinator. Late submissions of these required reports will impact a student's ability to obtain academic credit for the practicum experience, *deadlines must be met*. The student should continue to review their work plan throughout the practicum experience to ensure that competencies, objectives, and deliverables are being met. Should a student encounter any issues during the practicum experience they should contact their Department Practicum Coordinator.



#### AFTER THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE



Soon after the completion of the practicum experience, the student is required to complete several additional steps to receive academic credit. First, a *final report* must be submitted to the Department

Practicum Coordinator. In addition, copies of deliverables related to practicum experience objectives and activities must be provided. Some departments require additional documentation at the conclusion of the practicum experience; the student should review department addendums for specific requirements. Department Practicum Coordinators will work to acquire a complete student evaluation form from the student's Practicum Preceptor.

The student ***is required*** to give a formal presentation on his/her practicum experience. Departments vary in arrangements for practicum experience presentations; Department Practicum Coordinators and Administrators will work with the student to meet this requirement. In some cases, the student presents at his/her site, though ultimately it is at the Department Practicum Coordinator's discretion, along with the Department Head, to determine if a presentation completed on site or in another formal professional venue can be used for the presentation requirement.

Prior to a grade being released, all required documentation must be posted to the student's ePortfolio. Failure to post required materials by stated deadlines can impact the ability of a student to register for further course work or graduation.



## FOR PRACTICUM PRECEPTORS

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The role of the Practicum Preceptor is highly valued by Texas A&M School of Public Health and we hope to build an ongoing relationship between Practicum Preceptors, host site organizations, and our programs, along with current and future students.

Classroom learning alone is not sufficient preparation for students completing one of our Master's degrees. A planned, supervised, and evaluated field placement experience is a very important element of the Texas A&M School of Public Health (SPH) professional degree programs. The student must have an opportunity to participate in and observe the actual conduct of public health and health service professionals. As practicing health professionals, Practicum Preceptors have the opportunity to guide and shape the preparation and education of future public health professionals.

**THE GOAL OF A STUDENT'S PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE IS TO PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE IN THE APPLICATION OF BASIC CONCEPTS AND SPECIALTY KNOWLEDGE TO THE SOLUTION OF HEALTH PROBLEMS. THE OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE ARE TO:**

- **Expand knowledge of basic public health and health services practices.**
- **Adapt to critical thinking and increase awareness of the complexity of the problems and concerns involved in the public health and health services arena.**
- **Facilitate a stronger understanding of the relationships among public health organizations, other health service organizations, and other governmental entities.**
- **Contribute to public health practice at the host site organization by participating in and/or completing projects or other work assignments.**
- **Increase appreciation of cultural differences in populations served by public health and health services professionals.**
- **Provide an opportunity to apply training and concepts learned in coursework.**
- **Increase self-confidence as a professional in the public health and health services arena.**
- **Develop opportunities for references, job placement, and professional contacts.**

It is not our expectation or intention that every practicum experience will serve or accomplish all of the above objectives; however, it is expected that the practicum experience will include many, if not most of these objectives. The specific objectives for the practicum experience that relate to these overall programmatic objectives will occur during the collaborative process between the Practicum Preceptor, and the student and his/her Department Practicum Coordinator while developing a work plan.

## BEFORE THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

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When Practicum Preceptor is approached by a student regarding a practicum experience, it is important to discuss realistic objectives and expectations, as well as probe for direction they may have received from their Department Practicum Coordinator. If a Practicum Preceptor decides to move forward with the student, the student and the student's Department Practicum Coordinator, the preceptor should collaboratively develop an appropriate work plan. A good work plan contains a balance of professional exposure, skill application, realistic and meaningful objectives, and the opportunity to provide a valuable contribution to the organization. The Office of Public Health Practice anticipate a screening process from practicum sites. This may include, but is not limited to, an

application, interview, background check, etc. Students wishing to complete their practicum are expected to comply with all organizational requirements.

## DEFINING THE EXPERIENCE: WORK PLAN AND THE PRACTICUM PORTAL

The student’s work plan is the formal agreement between the student, Practicum Preceptor, and Department Practicum Coordinator. At a minimum, the work plan must identify the required number of competencies that will be attained by the experience and an agreed upon time frame/schedule. Each competency identified must have specific objectives, proposed activities, and defined products that will demonstrate attainment. The Practicum Preceptor and Department Practicum Coordinator must approve the practicum experience work plan and all practicum experience objectives, activities, and products/deliverables. Signing of the work plan by each party indicates approval and allows the student to be cleared for course registration and begin the practicum experience.

Quick Links

- \*Submit Completely Approved Student Work Plan\*
- All Received Practicum Opportunities
- Practicum Manual Fall 2021
- Public Health Practice Home Page
- Practicum Experience Documents
- International Practicum Travel Forms

Practicum 101 Series and Materials

- Practicum 101 Fall 2021 Recordings
- Doctoral Students - Practicum 101 Spring 2021
- Form - Practicum Checklist for Success
- EMAIL TO POSSIBLE PRECEPTOR SITES (TEMPLATE)
- Developing a Strong Work Plan
- Form - Meeting Observation Template
- \*NEW\* SPH Practicum ePortfolio Instructions

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
School of Public Health  
Office of Public Health Practice

\*\*REGARDING PRACTICUM OPPORTUNITIES\*\*

Please note: Not all opportunities below will still be available or may have changed policies for hosting students due to COVID-19. Always check with the listed organization point of contact if you have questions about opportunities.

2021-2022 Practicum Opportunities

	Date Received by SPH	Filled	Organization	Practicum Description
⊞	11-09-2021		Harris County Public Health (HPCH)	Chronic Disease Prevention-Physical Activity–Bilingual Spanish-English.pdf
⊞	11-09-2021		Harris County Public Health (HPCH)	Community Health Services Team.pdf
⊞	11-09-2021		Harris County Public Health (HPCH)	Early Childhood Education.pdf
⊞	11-09-2021		Harris County Public Health (HPCH)	Epidemiology, Surveillance, & Evaluation.pdf
⊞	11-09-2021		Harris County Public Health (HPCH)	Expanded Mobile Health Team.pdf
⊞	11-09-2021		Harris County Public Health (HPCH)	Obesity Reduction Team.pdf
⊞	11-01-2021		ROSE ACADEMIES-UGANDA	Preparing_for_Parenthood - ROSE ACADEMIES-UGANDA.pdf
⊞	11-01-2021		Uganda Village Project	Uganda Village Project 2022 Intern Job Description.pdf

All work plans must be submitted through the Practicum Portal [tx.ag/practicumportal](https://tx.ag/practicumportal) seen above. Practicum Preceptors will no longer need a login and password for the Practicum Portal. Once the student submits an approved work plan, the Department Practicum Coordinator, Practicum Preceptor, and student will receive an email copy of the work plan for their records. Practicum Preceptors will receive an email to complete the practicum evaluation form at the conclusion of the experience. Any challenges or issues encountered with the Practicum Portal may be directed to the Office of Public Health Practice at [publichealthpractice@tamu.edu](mailto:publichealthpractice@tamu.edu).

It is important to ensure other personnel in the organization are oriented to practicum experience expectations and the student’s specific assignment. Adequate provisions should be provided for the student to have access to appropriate workspace and support services. If appropriate, the Practicum Preceptor should ensure that pre-arrival arrangements have been made with other offices (e.g., human resources, employee health, orientation, etc.) and that these arrangements have been communicated to the student with enough time to complete prior to the anticipated start date.

## DURING THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

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Once the practicum experience has begun, the Practicum Preceptor should assure that the student is oriented to the organization. If financial compensation is part of the agreement, the Practicum Preceptor should ensure that payroll procedures and work expectations are clearly understood (e.g., timecards, procedures for tardiness and absences, hours of work, worker's compensation insurance, etc.). If a specific skill set is required of the student, the Practicum Preceptor should arrange for the necessary instruction and training.

Practicum Preceptors should review the work plan with the student and arrange to have regular, scheduled contact with or access by the student. These meetings may also be with the Practicum Preceptor's designee. Student(s) should be provided with adequate space, supplies, and computing resources to perform their practicum experience activities. If a student is working remotely for the practicum experience, the Practicum Preceptor should assure that the student has access to supplies and computing resources needed. In either case, these resources are modest; nevertheless, the student should be able to produce and store work in a secure area, as well as receive and send mail, phone, and e-mail messages. If the student is working remotely, explicit discussions of how work can be shared/transmitted and expectations for off-site storage of any work should be discussed, documented, and agreed to by all parties.

All supplies, materials, and computing resources provided during the practicum experience remain the property of the host organization; the student is responsible for returning the aforementioned work-related items prior to, or immediately upon the completion of, the practicum experience. The student must obtain permission from the host organization and their Practicum Preceptor to keep copies of any of the organization's reports, data, correspondence, or other related material. Please note that students must provide copies of products/deliverables to the school as part of their academic requirements. Should any information need to be redacted or if a product/deliverable cannot be shared outside the organization, please work with the student and the Department Practicum Coordinator to address the academic requirement.

As called for in the work plan, and if feasible, Practicum Preceptors are asked to provide opportunities for the student to attend a variety of board, group, community, or other appropriate meetings. If practical, the opportunity to observe the relationship between the organization and other local, regional, and/or national organizations is appreciated. Providing opportunities for the student to become familiar with the relationships between the organization, its constituents, clientele, community, and/or specific populations served is instrumental in professional growth. Throughout the practicum, students should receive constructive feedback regarding performance.

At the end of the practicum experience, Practicum Preceptors should meet with the student to evaluate his/her performance and provide valuable feedback on his/her activities and overall professionalism. Practicum Preceptors should complete the Practicum Preceptor Evaluation Form and will receive an email notification to do so from the Practicum Portal. If appropriate, Practicum Preceptor may write a letter of recommendation for the student. A well-written letter at this time may prevent numerous requests for recommendation in the future; this letter will be very useful to the student during his/her search for future employment opportunities.

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## ETHICAL AND PERFORMANCE CONCERNS

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If, at any time during the practicum experience, there is any issue or concern relating to the student's performance, ethical or professional conduct, please contact the Department Practicum Coordinator immediately. The following are guidelines given to all SPH students regarding expectations for proper ethical conduct during the practicum experience. Students are selected into our program based, in part, on their integrity and strength of character. However, we also recognize that as students, they are learning about professional standards for ethical behavior. Practicum Preceptors are asked to join us in assuring that students understand the importance of ethical behavior and, to the extent possible, work collaboratively with us if any issue or concern with professional standards or ethics arises during a practicum experience.

### ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

- All information related to clients of the host agency is to remain confidential.
- Students must follow standards of academic integrity as outlined by TAMU student rules. Any student identified as having engaged in any acts of academic dishonesty while engaged in practicum experience activities will be subject to the same standards and review process outlined in student rules, including the possibility of dismissal.
- Students should be guided by the Aggie Honor Code and the rules, guidelines and expectations of their host organization.
- Students are encouraged to discuss with the Department Practicum Coordinator any activities they believe may potentially compromise legal or ethical standards.
- Students may undertake only those program activities explicitly assigned or authorized by host site personnel or their Department Practicum Coordinator.
- Students should immediately report any harassment of any form they might experience while participating in their practicum experience to the Practicum Preceptor, the Department Practicum Coordinator, and the Director of Public Health Practice.
- Students must report any unusual or inappropriate behavior by the host agency, personnel, or clients to the Practicum Preceptor, Department Head, and/or the Department Practicum Coordinator.
- Students may not visit clients socially during regular working hours without explicit approval of the Practicum Preceptor.
- Students may not correspond with or for clients regarding matters of a professional nature without explicit approval of the Practicum Preceptor.

### PERFORMANCE CONCERNS

During the course of the practicum experience, if the Practicum Preceptor or the Department Practicum Coordinator determines that a student is having difficulty functioning in a particular setting, he or she may reassign the student or ask him or her to take time out until the next semester. If a student's behavior is determined to be unprofessional, unethical, or outside the rules of the organization or university, the student may face certain consequences. Depending on the behavior, the student may be awarded a grade of "U" for the practicum experience (thus not receiving academic credit) and/or potentially being dismissed from the program.

Likewise, if during the course of the practicum experience the student deems that their activities are inappropriate or not contributing to their educational experience, the student may request a review of the circumstance by the Department Practicum Coordinator. If the practicum experience is

determined to be inconsistent with the philosophy or guidelines for practicum experiences, the student will be permitted to affiliate with another organization to fulfill the practicum experience requirement.

#### AFTER THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

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We hope, following this experience, Practicum Preceptors will want to maintain contact with SPH faculty regarding future opportunities for other students, ways to improve the student experience or contribution to the organization, and other mutual interests. Department Practicum Coordinators and/or other faculty are key contacts regarding requests for students to assist with meeting the organization's specific needs, including requests for students with specific skills to assist with forthcoming projects.

## FOR DEPARTMENT PRACTICUM COORDINATORS

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Each SPH department has a Department Practicum Coordinator who manages the academic logistics associated with student practicum experiences including assisting students to identify practicum experience opportunities, work plan development, and documentation required for the practicum experience.

### BEFORE THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

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Before the practicum experience semester, the Departmental Practicum Coordinator works with the Department Administrator to identify students eligible to complete practicum experiences. This list of eligible students is provided to the Office of Public Health Practice to enroll them in online required practicum experience training. Once students have successfully completed this training they will be provided with the Work Plan Draft by the Office of Public Health Practice.

Departments have various processes to assist students in identifying opportunities; however, a key role of the Department Practicum Coordinator is serving as a resource of practicum experience identification. In advising a student who is preparing to undertake a practicum experience, his/her career interest should be discussed and guidance toward a chosen field/profession should be a high priority discussion topic. The Department Practicum Coordinator and the SPH Office of Public Health Practice have information on previous practicum experience locations and other possibilities/ideas for all departments.

Students must register for their practicum experience academic credit during the semester in which the practicum experience is completed. Because many students are full-time professionals, it is often necessary for the practicum experience to be scheduled for only a few hours per week stretched out over a long period of time, usually spanning two or more semesters. When practicum experiences involve an extended time frame, it required that **registration occur for the semester when the practicum experience will be completed.** In these cases, the work plan must be approved AND submitted to the Practicum Portal.

A practicum experience may be crafted within the organization that employs the student. However, the practicum experience should **not** be a part of the student's regular job responsibilities; rather it should extend the student's experiences and refine additional skills beyond his/her "normal" work tasks.

As a general rule, six credit hours are awarded in highly unusual, individual circumstances. The norm is three credit hours and many students accept fulltime 10- or 12-week practicum experiences in various federal agencies at this scale. In expressly approved circumstances, a student may complete two practicum experiences, thus taking on responsibility of two separate projects.

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) review and approval may be required for a practicum experience. This requirement is dependent on the nature of any research the student conducts as part of his/her practicum experience activities. Department Practicum Coordinators are charged with reviewing the <https://public-health.tamu.edu/practice/documents/practicum-irb-approval-decision-tree-2.2.18.pdf> with the student during the development of the work plan to determine if an IRB proposal and approval is required. The determination reached needs to be documented in the appropriate section of the work plan. If IRB review and approval is necessary, a copy of the IRB approval letter and the

students CITI certificate must be submitted to include in the student's permanent practicum experience file, maintained by the department.

### DURING THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

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During the practicum experience, the Department Practicum Coordinator monitors the progress of each student during his/her experience through periodic reports from students. As the student engages in formal and professional settings, he/she should begin to see the application and outcomes of concepts learned and discussed in academic settings. These reports, as well as other communications with the student, provide an opportunity to extend the classroom to the field. Responding to submitted periodic reports allows the Department Practicum Coordinator to share constructive feedback and guidance to the student.

In addition, the Department Practicum Coordinator may be contacted by the Practicum Preceptor should any concerns about the student arise.

### AFTER THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

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Following each student's practicum experience, the Department Practicum Coordinator assures that the student has successfully met all requirements including completion of the final reporting and presentation, as well as posting of required documentation to the ePortfolio. In addition, the Department Practicum Coordinator will assure that a completed evaluation from the Practicum Preceptor is posted in the Practicum Portal. Should an evaluation reveal a less than satisfactory performance by the student, the Department Practicum Coordinator will discuss further with the Practicum Preceptor then meet with the student prior to posting an unsatisfactory grade. Satisfactory grades will only be posted when all requirements have been met.

## ADDENDUMS: PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION

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- Environmental and Occupational Health
- Epidemiology and Biostatistics
- Health Policy Management – Master of Health Administration
- Health Policy Management - Master of Public Health
- Health Policy and Community Health Sciences



## ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH –ADDENDUM

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### *GENERAL DESCRIPTION*

The Environmental and Occupational Health (EOH) practicum experience is intended to place graduate students in organizational settings to afford the student an experiential learning opportunity. The goal of the program is to allow students to integrate their academic background with practical, real world experiences. It is the belief of the faculty and student body that such an experience is vital to producing the future leaders of the healthcare industry. Students must not be considered as “scholastically deficient” as defined in the Graduate and Professional Catalog (Scholastic Requirements section), when initiating and while engaged in their practicum. Students who are considered scholastically deficient are not eligible for practicum work and registration.

### *CONTACT HOURS*

A minimum of 200 hours of internship experience (e.g. 20 hours per week for 10 weeks) is required for students to receive 3 hours of course credit. In addition to the 200 contact hours, students are required to complete practicum experience time frames as noted on work plan. Arrangements for additional hours of credit must first be approved by the student’s department and then submitted to the SPH Administration for approval.

### **REQUIRED ELEMENTS**

#### *WORK PLAN*

EOH students are required to complete a work plan in order to be cleared to register for academic credit. Students must allow sufficient time for the Department Practicum Coordinator and on-site Practicum Preceptor to review and approve the document prior to registration deadlines. Information on preparing the work plan and the required forms can be found in the SPH Practicum Experience Manual.

#### *PERIODIC REPORTS*

Each graduate student who completes a practicum experience must complete a series of Periodic Reports regarding their practicum experiences as required in the Practicum Experience Manual. The purpose of the periodic report requirements is to:

- 1) Describe and document activities on an ongoing basis to the Department Practicum Coordinator
- 2) Provide the basis for developing a presentation to faculty and students
- 3) Document internship experiences that may be incorporated into student’s remaining coursework.

Periodic Reports should be in standard Memo Format and are to be turned in weekly or bi-weekly depending on the pace of the practicum experience. A required 8-10 completed reports is the minimum. A sample of the required memo format can be found on the course Blackboard site.

#### *FINAL REPORT/PRESENTATION*

A summary report (final report) of the practicum experience emphasizing insights and lessons learned is required and should be submitted within one week of completing the practicum experience. This is in addition to any work products or “deliverables” completed as part of the practicum

experience unless specifically waived ahead of time by the Department Practicum Coordinator. The same memo format for periodic reports should be used; it should be approximately 4 pages in length and be an insightful critique of the practicum experience as a learning experience. If students have thoughtfully written key learning experiences in their periodic reports, this Final Report is an easy recap/summary. It is expected that students will make evaluative statements about their experience, Practicum Preceptor, work context or organization, the ties between the experience and coursework, and the value of the practicum experience to their SPH graduate education.

In addition, students will be expected to give a presentation of their experiences/findings. Preferably this will be done on-site to appropriate personnel, however, if this is not possible, students can schedule a presentation in an SPH classroom. If the latter is the case, students will be expected to schedule the presentation at least 2 weeks in advance to allow time for faculty and students to schedule to attend. If allowed by the Practicum Preceptor/company, students are required to send the final presentation to the Department Practicum Coordinator upon completion.

### *PRACTICUM PRECEPTOR EVALUATION*

Near or at the end of the practicum experience, the Practicum Preceptor must complete the SPH evaluation form that will be emailed from the Practicum Portal [tx.ag/practicumportal](http://tx.ag/practicumportal).

### *ASSESSMENT*

Upon completion of the practicum experience, the Department Practicum Coordinator will award a grade of Satisfactory (“S”), Incomplete (“I”), or Unsatisfactory (“U”) based on completion of the requirements outlined in this addendum, including:

- 1) periodic reports
- 2) final report
- 3) the oral presentation
- 4) completed contact hours
- 5) fulfillment of the work plan objectives
- 6) fulfillment of the work plan time requirements

## EPIDEMIOLOGY AND BIOSTATISTICS - ADDENDUM

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### *GENERAL DESCRIPTION*

The overall goal of the practicum experience for MPH students in the Epidemiology and Biostatistics concentrations is to provide students with the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills developed in their graduate training to the collection, management, analysis, and interpretation of health data. Possible settings include programs within the Texas Department of State Health Services at the state, regional, or local health office level, private non-profit organizations, or as part of an epidemiological study at an academic institution other than SPH. Possible practicum experience assignments vary greatly. Examples of some practicum experience activities include: preparing a review of the epidemiological literature of a public health topic; participating in an outbreak investigation; developing a survey for data collection; evaluating the data quality of a “raw” data set; conducting a preliminary analysis of existing public health surveillance data.

MPH students in the Epidemiology or Biostatistics concentration are ultimately responsible for arranging their own practicum experience and need to follow the general SPH timeline and requirements for the administration of the practicum experience. An Epidemiology and Biostatistics faculty member, generally the student’s Academic Faculty Advisor, works with the student to structure the practicum experience and provide input as the work progresses. The student is required to prepare a written report at the conclusion of the practicum experience and to make a presentation of the project in an appropriate setting.

### *CONTACT HOURS*

A minimum of 200 hours of internship experience (e.g. 20 hours per week for 10 weeks) is required for students to receive 3 hours of course credit. Arrangements for additional hours of credit must be approved by the student’s department and then submitted to the SPH Administration for approval. Students will need to clarify the expectations for work hours with the host Practicum Preceptor prior to starting the practicum experience, particularly in the case of a paid practicum experience. Because of the analytic nature of Epidemiology and Biostatistics student practicum experiences, many of our students are able to negotiate for a copy of the data set to use in their practicum experience, allowing them to work primarily off-site. It will still generally be necessary, however, to meet several times over the course of the practicum experience with the Practicum Preceptor, either on-site or via teleconferencing.

### *DATA CONFIDENTIALITY*

As an Epidemiology and Biostatistics student practicum experience typically involves data in some form, students should be particularly attentive to issues of data confidentiality. Students may be required to sign a data confidentiality release with the sponsoring agency before they are allowed access to their project data. Whether or not a formal agreement is signed, students are ethically obligated to take appropriate measures to protect the privacy of individuals and keep all information about individuals confidential during and after their practicum experience. These measures include keeping any confidential data in secure areas and not allowing access to these data by any person not directly affiliated with the project. Students should review the American College of Epidemiology Ethics Guidelines at [www.acepidemiology.org/policystmts/EthicsGuide.htm](http://www.acepidemiology.org/policystmts/EthicsGuide.htm) before beginning their practicum experience to ensure familiarity with the possible aspects of data confidentiality they may encounter during their practicum experience. Where appropriate, data collection protocols need to be in agreement with SPH and receive approval by the Texas A&M University System Institutional Review Board (IRB).

## *WORK PLAN*

Epidemiology and Biostatistics students are required to complete a work plan in order to be cleared to register for academic credit. Students must allow sufficient time for the Department Practicum Coordinator and on-site Practicum Preceptor to review and approve the document prior to registration deadlines. Information on preparing the work plan and the required forms can be found in the SPH Practicum Manual.

## *PERIODIC REPORTS*

The SPH Practicum Manual notes that these reports should address two areas: (1) activities and (2) key learning experiences. Because of the departmental emphasis on developing skills in data collection, management and analysis, activity in these areas should be emphasized in your periodic reports. Students may need to include additional materials such as drafts of data collection instruments, data tables, output from data analysis activities, etc. in order to provide sufficient information on their practicum experience progress to their Department Practicum Coordinator. For Epidemiology and Biostatistics students, the purposes for the Periodic Report requirements are primarily to:

1. Describe and document your practicum experience activities (e.g., survey development, design of study, literature review, data entry, database building, data cleaning, and data analysis) on an ongoing basis to your Department Practicum Coordinator for administrative record keeping.
  - a. This will allow your Department Practicum Coordinator to assist you in your data collection and/or data analysis plan as you progress through the project.
2. Document the development of a data management system suitable for this and future projects.
  - a. Some of the procedures students are encouraged to develop include: creating data dictionaries; organizing, naming and tracking analytic data files; organizing analytic output from statistical packages; creating dummy tables to assist you in determining what data analyses to run.
3. Document key learning experiences.
4. Provide the basis for your oral presentation.

Periodic Reports should be in standard Memo Format and are to be turned by weekly or bi-weekly depending on the pace of the practicum experience. There needs to be no less than 8-10 completed reports using the template provided on Canvas.

## *FINAL REPORT*

Epidemiology and Biostatistics students are not required to prepare a separate practicum experience portfolio, rather the final report is the means by which students are to summarize and present their practicum experience. The report should be no more than 10 pages in length and address, at a minimum, the following:

1. How the objectives stated in the work plan were or were not met.
2. The actual results of any data collection, management or analysis activities.
3. Key learning experiences (i.e., how epidemiology or biostatistics in your academic curricula are applied to public health).

## *PRESENTATION*

All students completing a practicum experience are required to make an oral presentation regarding their practicum experience and the results of their data collection/management/analysis activities. The presentation should be 15 to 20 minutes in length supported by PowerPoint or other appropriate presentation media. SPH will advertise the oral presentation within SPH and encourage attendance by both students and faculty. Students may also meet this requirement through a presentation completed at the practicum experience site. In this instance, a copy of the presentation materials needs to be supplied to and approved by the Department Practicum Coordinator.

Students are responsible for making arrangements for their presentation. They should arrange the date and time of the presentation through the Department Practicum Coordinator. The Department Administrator can assist students with the logistics of reserving a room and the materials needed for the presentation. Students are also responsible for submitting copies of all periodic and final reports, deliverables and all presentation materials to the department and assuring correct materials are placed in their ePortfolio.

## HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – ADDENDUM: MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

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### *GENERAL DESCRIPTION*

The Department of Health Policy & Management (HPM) established a Practicum experience to place graduate students in organizational settings to afford the student an experiential learning opportunity. The goal of the Practicum is to allow students to integrate their academic background with practical real-world experience. It is our belief that such an experience is vital to producing excellent future health administration leaders.

The benefits of the Practicum experience are four-fold: 1) the program helps shape and define a student's career goals through exposure to health policy and management while still in school. 2) The combination of academic studies and professional experience synergistically produces an enriched learning environment. 3) It affords an opportunity for students to further refine their innate and acquired competencies. 4) Share their experiences with incoming students.

Exposure to a healthcare setting in a 10-12 week summer practicum experience offers the student some advantages usually associated with 12-18 month post-graduate fellowships. The influences and experiences gained from the Practicum experience will help guide the student in his/her last year of studies into a field of health policy and management most suitable for the individual and the Practicum experience site. Students returning from their Practicum experience are also able to apply their practice knowledge and experience to their second year of course work. The insights and nuances gained by the students have a tremendous impact on their ability to grasp and negotiate the more detailed academic material characteristic of the program's second year course load.

Our department offers two master's level graduate degrees: the Master of Public Health (MPH) and the Master of Health Administration (MHA). Although the two curriculums share much in common and often MPH and MHA students are shoulder-to-shoulder in the same classes, the programs prepare our students for divergent career paths after graduation. Consequently, the Practicum experience sites hosting our students for are often quite different for the degree programs. The requirements for successful completion of a Practicum experience are also somewhat different. In addition, for both career trajectories in our department, we add some requirements beyond what is required for SPH overall. This section of the SPH Practicum Experience Manual is specific for our department. If you have questions about any of the Practicum experience, please contact the Department Practicum Coordinators for the respective MPH and MHA programs. Department Practicum Coordinators are a resource for students.

### *CONTACT HOURS*

A minimum of 400 hours of practicum experience (e.g. 40 hours per week for 10 weeks) is required for MHA students to receive 3 hours of academic credit.

## *PERIODIC REPORTS*

Each student participating in a HPM-MHA Practicum experience must complete Periodic Reports during the Practicum experience as required in the general School policy. The purposes for the report requirement include:

1. To describe and document Practicum experience activities on an ongoing basis to the student's Department Practicum Coordinator.
2. To provide the basis for developing the required presentation to faculty and students.
3. To document internship experiences that may be germane to remaining coursework.
4. To affirm competency attainment in a real-world environment.

Students must be acutely aware of issues related to patient, client, and corporate confidentiality. Confidential information (to include specific individual names or proprietary information) should not be included in Periodic Reports without explicit consent from the Practicum Preceptor. Students should be willing to provide a complete copy of the Periodic Report to the Practicum Preceptor if requested.

Periodic Reports should be completed regularly during the practicum experience with a frequency agreed upon ahead of time between the student and the Department Practicum Coordinator. For a typical 10 – 12 week summer practicum experience, the reports should be every week. This will enable the students to synthesize their experience while events and activities are still fresh. In addition, if the Practicum Preceptor requires a report, this required reporting may serve for that purpose as well. Falling too far behind in submitting periodic reports may result in no credit for the experience. This is not a creative writing requirement, but the reports should be prepared in a professional manner, including appropriate grammar, prose, punctuation, etc.

All Periodic Reports should be about 2 pages single-spaced using the provided Word document template and should be submitted as an attachment to an e-mail addressed to the Department Practicum Coordinator. There should be three sections, delineated with paragraph headings as follows although they may be presented in any order.

### **1. Activities**

- Describe the most important (enlightening) activities of the week.
- Include dates and times only as needed for clarity.
- Activities that may be mentioned include project work as well as the most interesting meetings, (either committee, board, work group, or with individuals), duties assigned, other organizations visited, training activities, trips taken, etc.
- Do not submit a log of all activities. Describe in narrative form (not bullet points) selected activities and why they are important.

### **2. Key Learning Experience**

- Write about key learning experience(s) of the week.
- Describe how this has added knowledge or given insight.
- Look for linkages between curriculum/course work with both *Activities* and *Learning Experiences*.
- Describe competency exposure and attainment.

### **3. Directed Learning Questions (DLQs)**

- Use the week to learn through independent observations or conversations with others to research the questions presented.
- There are 10 DLQs. Regardless of the number of periodic reports, all 10 must be addressed.
- Use no more than the total length permitted (about 2 pages) for the periodic report to include addressing the Directed Learning Question.

#### *FINAL REPORT*

A summary report of the Practicum experience emphasizing insights and lessons learned is required shortly after completion of the Practicum experience, as dictated by your Department Practicum Coordinator. This report should be no more than 2-3 pages. Thoughtful documentation of key learning experiences in the periodic reports will make this report easy to compose. In addition to a summary of the Practicum experience, add evaluative comments about the Practicum Preceptor and host site.

#### *PRESENTATION*

All HPM-MHA students are expected to prepare and present a professional presentation of their Practicum experience. The professional presentation should be approximately 15 to 20 minutes long supported by PowerPoint and/or other appropriate presentation media. The professional presentation should include a description of the host site/organization and the student's specific role/department/assignment within the organization. The Practicum Preceptor should be identified and described. The student should present a summary of their Practicum experiences and activities and present a summary of their major learning experiences, including competencies attained. This professional presentation may be made to a group of SPH students (and faculty, as appropriate) as either part of a subsequent class or in a separate format as directed by the Department Practicum Coordinator.



## MHA DIRECTED LEARNING QUESTIONS

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DLQ 1: Describe the ownership and corporate structure of your Practicum site, referencing how it “fits” into its own, local and regional system(s) for the delivery of services

DLQ 2: In approximately 500 words, tell us about the anticipated future characteristics and requirements for healthcare at the local level of your Practicum site.

DLQ 3: Correlate your personal mission, vision and values with those of your Practicum site, describing congruence and differences.

DLQ 4: Describe the leadership culture used to maximize individual and team development while ensuring cultural awareness and inclusiveness.

DLQ 5: Describe one partnership the Practicum site has developed resulting in the accomplishment of identifiable goals.

DLQ 6: Describe the progress you have made with your MHA competencies, discussing three competencies not already highlighted in these Directed Learning Questions.

DLQ 7: Describe how verbal and non-verbal communication works in the Practicum site and how the culture of the organization is communicated.

DLQ 8: Provide an example of the use of performance improvement “tools” used by the Practicum site and the metrics employed to measure successful improvement.

DLQ 9: Provide a summary of a project management assignment you were responsible for completing, discussing the design, plan, execution and assessment of completion.

DLQ 10: Describe what you learned about yourself during this Practicum experience and how do you plan to focus on continuing competency development during the following year of academic work.

## HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – ADDENDUM: MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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### *GENERAL DESCRIPTION*

The Department of Health Policy & Management (HPM) established a practicum experience to place graduate students in organizational settings to afford the student an experiential learning opportunity. The goal of the program is to allow students to integrate their academic background with practical real-world experience. It is our belief that such an experience is vital to producing the future leaders in public health.

The benefits of the practicum experience are three-fold: 1) The program helps shape and define a student's career goals through exposure to health policy and management while still in school. 2) The combination of academic studies and professional experience synergistically produces an enriched learning environment. 3) It affords an opportunity for students to return to school and share their experiences with new incoming students.

Exposure to a public health, non-profit, or healthcare setting in an 8-12 week summer practicum experience offers the student some advantages usually associated with 12-18 month post-graduate fellowships. The influences and experiences gained from the practicum experience will help guide the student in his/her last year of studies into a field of health policy and management most suitable for the individual and the prospective organization. Students returning from their practicum experience are also able to apply their practice knowledge and experience to their second year of course work. The insights and nuances gained by the students have a tremendous impact on their ability to grasp and negotiate the more detailed academic material characteristic of the program's second year course load.

Our department offers two master's level graduate degrees: the Master of Public Health (MPH) and the Masters of Health Administration (MHA). Although the two curriculums share much in common and often MPH and MHA students are shoulder-to-shoulder in the same classes, the programs prepare our students for divergent career paths after graduation. Consequently, the practicum experience sites hosting our students are often quite different for the degree programs. The requirements for successful completion of a practicum experience are also somewhat different. In addition, for both career trajectories in our department, we add some requirements beyond what is required for SPH overall. This section of the SPH Practicum Experience Manual is specific for our department. If you have questions about any of the practicum experience program, please contact the Department Practicum Coordinator for the respective MPH and MHA programs. The Practicum Coordinators are a resource for students.

Students pursuing an MPH degree must complete 18 hours of course work prior to registering for their practicum experience. Students must not be considered as "scholastically deficient" as defined in the Graduate and Professional Catalog (Scholastic Requirements section), when initiating and while engaged in their practicum. Students who are considered scholastically deficient are not eligible for practicum work and registration.

## *CONTACT HOURS*

A minimum of 200 hours of practicum experience (e.g. 20 hours per week for 10 weeks) is required for HPM-MPH students to receive 3 hours of course credit. Typically, HPM student practicum experiences are 20 hours per week, 10-week programs that count for 3 hours of credit. Arrangements for additional hours of credit must be approved ahead of time by the HPM Department and then submitted to the regular School approval process.

## *PERIODIC REPORTS*

Each student participating in a HPM practicum experience must complete Periodic Reports during the practicum experience as required in the general School policy. The purposes for the report requirement include:

1. To describe and document practicum experience activities on an ongoing basis to the student's Department Practicum Coordinator.
2. To provide the basis for developing the required presentation to faculty and students.
3. To document internship experiences that may be germane to remaining coursework.

Students must be acutely aware of issues related to patient, client, and organizational confidentiality. Confidential information (to include specific individual names or proprietary information) should not be included in Periodic Reports without explicit consent from the Practicum Preceptor. Students are required to copy their Practicum Preceptor on all submitted Periodic Reports.

Periodic Reports should be completed regularly during the practicum experience with a frequency agreed upon ahead of time between the student and Department Practicum Coordinator. For a typical 8 – 12 week summer practicum experience, the reports should be every other week. This will enable the student to synthesize their experience while events and activities are still fresh. In addition, if the Practicum Preceptor requires a report, this required reporting may serve for that purpose as well. Falling behind in submitting periodic reports may result in no credit for the experience. This is not a creative writing requirement.

All Periodic Reports should be no more than three pages single-spaced in the provided Word document template and should be submitted as an attachment to an e-mail addressed to the Practicum Preceptor and the Department Practicum Coordinator. The template includes three sections that should be completed for each report.

### **1. Activities**

- Describe the most important (enlightening) activities of the week.
- Include dates and times only as needed for clarity.
- Activities that may be mentioned include project work as well as the most interesting meetings, (either committee, board, work group, or with individuals), duties assigned, other organizations visited, training activities, trips taken, etc.
- Do not submit a log of all activities. **Describe in narrative form (not bullet points)** selected activities and why they are important.

### **2. Key Learning Experience**

- Write about key learning experience(s) of the week.
- Describe how this has added knowledge or given insight.

- Show linkages between curriculum/course work with both *Activities* and *Learning Experiences*.

### 3. Directed Learning Questions (DLQs)

- Through independent observations or conversations with others involved in your practicum experience, research and answer the questions provided.
- There are 10 DLQs. All 10 must be addressed in 5 reports submitted based on the schedule received. Each report will contain 2 DLQs based on the table below.

Report Number	DLQs to be addressed
Report #1	DLQ #1 and #2
Report #2	DLQ #3 and #4
Report #3	DLQ #5 and #6
Report #4	DLQ #7 and #8
Report #5	DLQ #9 and #10

- Use no more than the total length permitted (no more than 3 pages). Be sure to address the Directed Learning Questions in each periodic report.

#### *FINAL REPORT*

A summary report of the practicum experience emphasizing insights and lessons learned is required shortly after completion of the practicum experience, as dictated by your Department Practicum Coordinator. This report should be no more than 2-3 pages. Thoughtful documentation of key learning experiences in the periodic reports should make this report easy to compose. In addition to a summary of the practicum experience, add evaluative comments about the Practicum Preceptor and host site. Consider addressing the questions about the most important takeaways from your practicum in terms of your education and future career and address how you want or believe these takeaways to apply to your anticipated career.

#### *PRESENTATION*

All HPM-MPH students are expected to prepare and present a professional presentation of their practicum experience. The professional presentation should be approximately 15 to 20 minutes long (including Q/A) supported by PowerPoint and/or other appropriate presentation media. Specific guidelines for professional presentations, including date, time and required elements are provided to students towards the end of their practicum experience by the Department Practicum Coordinator.

#### *GRADING CRITERIA*

The Department Practicum Coordinator will review each report submitted for compliance, content and communication. As students are working in a professional environment, each report submitted should be of professional quality. This means that each report should sufficiently address the requirements of the report and be well written. Each report must adhere to conventional English writing guidelines pertaining to paragraphing, spelling, punctuation, grammar, flow and organization. Know that autocorrect and spell check are not always correct so it is essential that students review and edit reports BEFORE submitting. If the level of communication, compliance and/or content is not deemed to be on the professional level, students will be asked to resubmit **one** report. If that resubmitted report is deemed acceptable, this report will not count against the student's grade.

However, subsequent reports, if deemed unacceptable, will count against the student's grade. Students must have at least 4 of the 5 reports deemed acceptable in order to pass.

## MPH DIRECTED LEARNING QUESTIONS

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DLQ 1: Describe the structure of the organization you are working with. Include an organizational chart and indicate where in the organization your department is located. Provide a brief history of the organization.

DLQ 2: Describe the responsibilities and functions of the organization. What essential services are evident in the responsibilities and functions? How does the organization contribute to improving the public's health? If in a specific department within an organization, how does it contribute to the organization's impact on the public's health?

DLQ 3: Look at the personnel of the department or organization in which you work. Name the key personnel and look at their current role/position in relationship to their training and experience. How did they get to their current position? What type of public health experience do key personnel have?

DLQ 4: Who are the organization's stakeholders – both internal and external? Give a brief description of the relationship between the organization and various stakeholders.

DLQ 5: What external organizations, agencies or institutions have an impact on the way the organization operates (regulatory, licensing, accrediting, etc.)? List some of the requirements that each external entity places on the organization. What are some of the activities needed and steps taken by the organization to meet these requirements?

DLQ 6: Describe the environment in which the organization functions– what are the key opportunities and threats to its success in improving the public's health?

DLQ 7: What changes or activities has your organization been involved with in the past 5 years that reflects a response or mission to improve the public's health?

DLQ 8: Select two to three competencies from SPH competencies (see portfolio) that you have applied in your practicum experience. Provide a brief description of how these competencies were applied.

DLQ 9: Describe a major project in which you are involved. Why is the work you are doing important to the organization? What core functions and essential services are evident in the work you are doing? What have you learned from this project that you will take back to your classes and how will it contribute to your development as a public health professional?

DLQ 10: Reflect on your practicum experience. What have you learned about yourself? What do you see as your strengths and weaknesses? What additional development do you need that you should try to arrange for next year? Discuss your preparation for the experience and the value you see in it.

# HEALTH PROMOTION & COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES – ADDENDUM

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## GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Department of Health Promotion & Community Health Sciences practicum program aims to place MPH students in organizational settings, allowing them to integrate their academic background with practical real-world experiences. This is a critical growth experience for students before they enter the workplace, helping them to shape and define their career goals through exposure to actual public health activities and environments while still in school. Additionally, the combination of academic studies and professional experience should reinforce each other.

Exposure to a public health practice setting through the practicum offers students experiences that will extend into their careers. Students are expected to further their learning experiences through applying what they have learned in the programs, and the experiences and relationships developed should provide the student with insights as to the workings of agencies, interpersonal relationships, and how to work within teams.

MPH students in the Health Promotion and Community Health Sciences concentration are ultimately responsible for arranging their own practicum and need to follow the general SPH timeline and requirements for the administration of the practicum. The Department Practicum Coordinator works with the student to structure the practicum and provide input as the work progresses. The student is required to provide periodic (usually weekly) reports, a final written report at the conclusion of the practicum and to make a presentation of the project in an appropriate setting. Reports should be directed to the site Preceptor, Advisor and Practicum Coordinator. Final presentations may be done at the practicum placement site. Final presentations may be waived with the approval of the Department Practicum Coordinator.

The Advisor and Practicum Coordinator are both resources for students, but they are not responsible for finding and arranging a practicum for students.

## CONTACT HOURS

Generally, students pursuing an MPH degree will have completed most of their coursework prior to registering for their practicum. A minimum of 200 hours of practicum experience (e.g, 20 hours per week for 10 weeks) is required to receive 3 hours of course credit. This is typically achieved through 20 hour weeks over at least 10 weeks. Arrangements for additional hours of credit must be approved ahead of time by the Department Practicum Coordinator and then submitted to the regular School approval process.

## WORK PLAN

Students are required to complete a work plan in order to be cleared to register for practicum hours and to start practicum. The student's work plan must be sent to the Department Practicum Coordinator for revisions via the Work Plan Template PDF before submitting to the Practicum Portal. Students must allow sufficient time for the Department Practicum Coordinator and on-site Practicum Preceptor to review and approve the document prior to registration deadlines. Several alterations of the work plan may be requested until approval is met.

## PERIODIC REPORTS

Each student participating in a practicum must complete Periodic Reports during the practicum experience as required in the general School policy. Periodic reports should be completed weekly during the practicum or at a frequency agreed upon ahead of time between the student and the Department Practicum Coordinator. This will enable students to synthesize their experience while events and activities are still fresh. In addition, if the Practicum Preceptor requires a report, this required reporting may serve for that purpose as well. Falling behind and/or submitting periodic reports late may result in no credit for the experience. All Periodic Reports should generally be 1 to 2 pages in length, on the periodic reporting form provided. Reports should be submitted/uploaded to the Practicum Google Drive in the designated folder, which will be shared with the student's Preceptor and Department Practicum Coordinator.

*Weekly Reports will be due on Mondays at 12:00 P.M CST and should be submitted under the correct document labeling (lastname\_report#).*

Weekly Report Rubric:

- Correct titles and labeling
- Complete Sentences
- Correct Grammar
- *Activities*
  - Identify/ list activities
  - List the most important (enlightening) activities of the period. Include dates and times only as needed for clarity.
  - Include interesting meetings, either group meetings or with individuals, duties assigned, other organizations visited, training completed, projects worked on, and other significant activities.
- *Key Learning Experience(s)*
  - Write one or two paragraphs about the key learning experience(s) of the period. Describe how the experience(s) has added to your knowledge base and relate it to your responsibilities or to your coursework.
  - Describe how the key experience(s) relate to the objectives in the work plan.
  - Describe why these are important and provide examples when necessary.

Students must be acutely aware of issues related to patient, client, and organizational confidentiality. Confidential information (to include specific individual names or proprietary information) should not be included in Periodic Reports without explicit consent from the Practicum Preceptor.

## FINAL REPORT

Students are required to prepare a final report in which students summarize and present their practicum work. A template will be provided by the Department Practicum Coordinator. The report should be no more than 10 pages in length and address, at a minimum, the following:

1. How the objectives stated in the work plan were or were not met.
2. The actual results of any data collection, management or analysis activities.
3. Key learning experiences (i.e., how your public health coursework were applied in public health settings).



4. Submit with proper document name format *lastname\_finalreport*
5. Final Report will be due at 11:59 P.M. CST on the day prior to the student's presentation.

## PRESENTATION

Students completing a practicum are expected to make a presentation regarding their practicum experience and the results of their activities, many times at their worksite. A copy of the presentation materials needs to be supplied to and approved by the Department Practicum Coordinator. Additionally, students will be asked to present in end of term practicum presentation. The presentation should be 15 to 20 minutes in length, supported by PowerPoint or other appropriate presentation media. If the presentation is done at the SPH, it will be advertised to students, faculty and other interested parties.

Students are responsible for making arrangements for their presentations, either with their Preceptor or their Department Practicum Coordinator. The Department Administrator can assist students with the logistics of reserving a room and the materials needed for the presentation. Students are also responsible for submitting copies of all periodic and final reports and all presentation materials to the Department Practicum Coordinator, according to school policy.

*Final presentation slides will be due at 11:59 P.M. CST on the day prior to presentations and should be submitted under the correct document labeling (lastname\_finalpresentation).*

## GRADING CRITERIA

The Department Practicum Coordinator will review each report submitted for compliance, content and communication. As students are working in a professional environment, each report submitted should be of professional quality. This means that each report should sufficiently address the requirements of the report and be well written. Each report must adhere to conventional English writing guidelines pertaining to paragraphing, spelling, punctuation, grammar, flow and organization. Know that autocorrect and spell check are not always correct so it is essential that students review and edit reports BEFORE submitting. If the level of communication, compliance and/or content is not deemed to be on the professional level, students will be asked to resubmit **one** report. If that resubmitted report is deemed acceptable, this report will not count against the student's grade. However, subsequent reports, if deemed unacceptable, will count against the student's grade. Students must have at least 4 of the 5 reports deemed acceptable in order to pass.

## MHA COMPETENCIES

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### DOMAIN: HEALTH CARE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY

Relationship between health care operations and their communities and local, state, regional, and national organizations and policies

1. Public and Population Health Assessment: Historic, current, and anticipated future characteristics and requirements for health care at local, state, regional, and national markets
2. Delivery, Organization, and Financing of Health Services and Health Systems: Resources, structure, process, and outcomes associated with providing health care informed by theory, data, and analytic methods
3. Policy Analysis: Creation, analysis, and implications for the rules governing health care structures and delivery systems
4. Legal and Ethical Bases for Health Services and Health Systems: Laws, regulations, and social or other norms that formally or informally provide a guidance for health care delivery

### DOMAIN: LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Motivation and empowerment of organizational resources to achieve a shared vision

5. Ethics, Accountability, and Self-Assessment: Professional and personal values and responsibilities that result in ongoing self-reflection, professional awareness, learning, and development
6. Organizational Dynamics: Organizational behavior methods and human resource strategies to maximize individual and team development while ensuring cultural awareness and inclusiveness
7. Problem Solving, Decision Making, and Critical Thinking: Data, analytic methods, and judgment used in support of leadership decisions
8. Team Building and Collaboration: Partnerships that result in functional, motivated, skill-based groups formed to accomplish identifiable goals.

### DOMAIN: MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Control and organization of health services delivery

9. Strategic Planning: Market and community needs served by defined alternatives, goals, and programs which are supported by appropriate implementation methods
10. Financial Management: Read, understand, and analyze financial statements and audited financial reports
11. Business Planning: Develop and manage budgets, conduct financial analysis; identify opportunities and threats to organizations using relevant information
12. Communication: Verbal and non-verbal communication to effectively convey pertinent information
13. Performance Improvement: Data, information, analytic tools, and judgment used to guide goal setting for individuals, teams, and organizations
14. Project Management: Design, plan, execute, and assess tasks and develop appropriate timelines related to performance, structure, and outcomes in the pursuit of stated goals

### DOMAIN: ANALYTIC AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Successful accomplishment of tasks in health services delivery

15. Systems Thinking: Interrelationships between and among constituent parts of an organization

16. Data Analysis and Information Management: Data, information, technology and supporting structures used in completing assigned tasks
17. Quantitative Methods for Health Services Delivery: Economic, financial, statistical, and other discipline-specific techniques needed to understand, model, assess, and inform health care decision making and address health care questions

## MPH & DRPH FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

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### PROFESSIONAL & SCIENCE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

1. Explain public health history, philosophy and values.
2. Identify the core functions of public health and the 10 Essential Services.
3. Explain the role of quantitative and qualitative methods and sciences in describing and assessing a population's health.
4. List major causes and trends of morbidity and mortality in the US or other community relevant to the school or program.
5. Discuss the science of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention in population health, including health promotion, screening, etc.
6. Explain the critical importance of evidence in advancing public health knowledge.

### FACTORS RELATED TO HUMAN HEALTH

7. Explain effects of environmental factors on a population's health.
8. Explain biological and genetic factors that affect a population's health.
9. Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population's health.
10. Explain the social, political and economic determinants of health and how they contribute to population health and health inequities.
11. Explain how globalization affects global burdens of disease.
12. Explain an ecological perspective on the connections among human health, animal health and ecosystem health (e.g., One Health)

## MPH FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

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### EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES TO PUBLIC HEALTH

13. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice.
14. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context.
15. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate.
16. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice.

### PUBLIC HEALTH & HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS

17. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings.
18. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels.

### PLANNING & MANAGEMENT TO PROMOTE HEALTH

19. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health.
20. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs.
21. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention.
22. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management.
23. Select methods to evaluate public health programs.

### POLICY IN PUBLIC HEALTH

24. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence.
25. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes.
26. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations.
27. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity.

### LEADERSHIP

28. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making.
29. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges.

### COMMUNICATION

30. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors.
31. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.
32. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content.

### INTERPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

33. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams.

## SYSTEMS THINKING

34. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue.

## MPH CONCENTRATION COMPETENCIES

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### BIOSTATISTICS

1. Translate research questions or aims into testable hypotheses and propose appropriate statistical methods to test those hypotheses.
2. Apply statistical methods that assure a study is adequately powered for achieving scientific aims or testing a specific research hypothesis.
3. Evaluate and recommend study designs based on identified strengths and weaknesses and desired study goals.
4. Analyze and interpret data using a variety of advanced analytical tools.
5. Communicate commonly used statistical ideas and methods to collaborators in non-technical terms.

### HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

1. Use policy and management tools to evaluate implications of specific programs, policies, and interventions on organizations and populations.
2. Develop and justify budgets that support programs and organizations in the public health and health care sectors.
3. Communicate evidence-based options to address public health management and policy problems.
4. Apply project management and strategic management tools to create public health program goals, strategies, and objectives.
5. Recommend and justify policies or organizational initiatives for implementation after examining their feasibility and implications.

### HEALTH PROMOTION AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES

1. Analyze the determinants of health at both individual and social levels to identify intervention points.
2. Apply behavioral theories, concepts, and tools in addressing health problems in different populations and at different levels.
3. Judge appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods at various stages of health promotion program development, implementation and evaluation.
4. Develop and defend communication materials to inform policymakers and community members.
5. Apply program management principles and tools to develop a program management plan, organize resources and work, and address frequently encountered problems.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

1. Develop and implement strategies for mitigating environmental health hazards.
2. Explain the synergistic and multiplicative factors that influence solutions for environmental health hazards.
3. Evaluate policies to reduce environmental health risks and hazards.
4. Apply the current best practices for risk assessment and risk communication.
5. Describe federal and state regulatory programs, guidelines and authorities that control environmental health issues.

## EPIDEMIOLOGY

1. Select epidemiologic methods that are appropriate to address epidemiologic content areas.
2. Analyze strengths and limitations of study designs for providing evidence for causal associations.
3. Apply appropriate advanced data analysis and management techniques to analyze epidemiologic data.
4. Assess and compare different reporting formats to communicate epidemiologic data to a variety of audiences.
5. Explain the role of epidemiology in developing, implementing, and evaluating health policy.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

1. Evaluate occupational health risk in multiple industrial and office settings.
2. Implement theoretical and conceptual models relevant to Occupational Health risk evaluation in the lab or field.
3. Appraise experimental designs to appropriately address specific research questions in the field of Occupational Health in lab scenarios.
4. Synthesize knowledge of analytical techniques with theoretical and conceptual models in Occupational Health to solve field problems.
5. Develop and defend audience appropriate research methods and findings relevant to occupational risks and/or interventions.



## DRPH FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

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### DATA & ANALYSIS

1. Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community and population) levels.
2. Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue.
3. Explain the use and limitations of surveillance systems and national surveys in assessing, monitoring and evaluating policies and programs and to address a population's health.

### LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE

4. Propose strategies for health improvement and elimination of health inequities by organizing stakeholders, including researchers, practitioners, community leaders and other partners.
5. Communicate public health science to diverse stakeholders, including individuals at all levels of health literacy, for purposes of influencing behavior and policies.
6. Integrate knowledge, approaches, methods, values and potential contributions from multiple professions and systems in addressing public health problems.
7. Create a strategic plan.
8. Facilitate shared decision making through negotiation and consensus-building methods.
9. Create organizational change strategies.
10. Propose strategies to promote inclusion and equity within public health programs, policies and systems.
11. Assess one's own strengths and weaknesses in leadership capacities including cultural proficiency.
12. Propose human, fiscal and other resources to achieve a strategic goal.
13. Cultivate new resources and revenue streams to achieve a strategic goal.

### POLICY & PROGRAMS

14. Design a system-level intervention to address a public health issue.
15. Integrate knowledge of cultural values and practices in the design of public health policies and programs.
16. Integrate scientific information, legal and regulatory approaches, ethical frameworks and varied stakeholder interests in policy development and analysis.
17. Propose interprofessional team approaches to improving public health.

### EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

18. Assess an audience's knowledge and learning needs.
19. Deliver training or educational experiences that promote learning in academic, organizational or community settings.
20. Use best practice modalities in pedagogical practices.

## DRPH CONCENTRATION COMPETENCIES

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### EPIDEMIOLOGY

1. Use epidemiologic evidence to make inferences about the scope and magnitude of threats to public health.
2. Plan, implement, and evaluate a public health study to assess a threat to population health.
3. Utilize theoretical foundations to address critical public health issues.
4. Connect epidemiology to interdisciplinary research.
5. Prepare reports and scholarly presentations and participate in conference presentations in order to appropriately influence relevant state-of-the-art practice.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

1. Evaluate the influence of susceptibility based on a hazards' biological mode of action. Assess the impact of major environmental determinants of human disease on the likelihood of adverse effects.
2. Interpret concentrations or doses of health hazards compared with risk based and non-risk based criteria and guidelines
3. Develop intervention and prevention strategies to help vulnerable communities improve their health by reducing exposures to environmental hazards.
4. Analyze environmental data and articulate the characteristics of major physical, radiological, chemical, and biological hazards.
5. Critically assess peer-reviewed published articles related to environmental impacts on health. Analyze the strength and validity of the hypothesis, study design and methods, results, conclusions, and the public health significance.

### HEALTH PROMOTION AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES

1. Analyze critical themes in public health history in order to argue how these relate to the evolution of public health, public health problems, and the future of public health.
2. Develop appropriate conceptual models for addressing community health issues that integrate behavioral theories, concepts, and tools.
3. Design an evaluation plan appropriate for a multi-level community health/health promotion program.
4. Formulate a multi-level health promotion/community health-focused intervention, utilizing at least 2 of the 5 socio-ecological levels, and which integrates evidence-based theories and strategies.
5. Develop an organizational leadership/management plan, acquire and manage resources, supervise staff, and address frequently encountered problems in health promotion/community health contexts.