

PittPublicHealth

Practicum/Internship Fact Sheet

The Practicum experience is

- An essential part of public health training.
- Designed to give students the opportunity to apply their skill sets in a real world setting.
- A way for students to build practical skills that they will need for career success.
- An opportunity for mentoring of students by a faculty advisor and a professional preceptor from host organization.

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH; ceph.org) accreditation requirements state that “*activities meeting the applied practice experience [practica or internships] should be mutually beneficial to both the site and student.*”

The purpose of the practicum is

- To allow students to apply classroom content to projects and assignments in practice-based settings.

The Requirements and Documentation

- CEPH requirements call for two products (deliverables) to be completed during and/or after the practicum concludes. These can be items completed as part of the experience at the organization or agency or items required by the academic program.
 - Specific examples can be found in [D5 MPH Applied Practice Experiences in the CEPH criteria](#).
 - Each program can tailor their required products.
 - Each student must demonstrate attainment of at least five competencies. Three must be from the list of CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies (available on page 2 or in [CEPH criterion D5](#)) and up to two can be from the departmental advanced competency list.
- **Learning agreement:** form on pages 3 and 4, assists the student, organization preceptor, and academic advisor to plan the objectives and activities to be completed during the practicum.
- **Duration:** The duration of the practicum for academic credit can be one academic semester, to fulfill the required minimum of 200 hours of mentored work at the host organization, or it can be extended to multiple semesters. Specific requirements vary by department. Work can be completed off-site if applicable and agreed upon by the preceptor and the student.
- **The Practicum Preceptor:**
 - Orients student to the host organization by acquainting the student with the physical and organizational structure of the organization and with the organization’s mission.
 - Assists the student as they complete the practicum learning agreement.
 - Oversees the work of the student during the practicum.
 - Arranges for regular meetings with the student that will, as necessary, include the faculty advisor.
 - Completes midpoint evaluation (if required by department) and final student evaluation.
- **The Student:**
 - Works with the preceptor throughout the practicum to complete the specific activities and/or specific products for the host organization identified in the learning agreement.
 - Is responsible for keeping the faculty advisor informed of changes, obstacles and successes.
 - Completes midpoint evaluation (if required by department) and final self-evaluation.
- **The Faculty Advisor:**
 - Supervises the work through regular meetings with the student
 - If necessary, meets either in person or by phone, with the practicum preceptor and the student.
 - Completes final evaluation and submits grade.
 - If the activities and/or products change during the course of the student’s time with the host organization, this is to be noted as an addendum to the learning agreement form by the mentor and faculty advisor.

CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies

Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health	
1.	Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
2.	Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
3.	Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
4.	Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice
Public Health & Health Care Systems	
5.	Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
6.	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	
7.	Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health
8.	Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs
9.	Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention
10.	Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management
11.	Select methods to evaluate public health programs
Policy in Public Health	
12.	Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
13.	Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes
14.	Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
15.	Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity
Leadership	
16.	Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making
17.	Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges
18.	Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
19.	Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
20.	Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content
Interprofessional Practice	
21.	Perform effectively on interprofessional teams
Systems Thinking	
22.	Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

The MPH Foundational Competencies as defined by the 2016 CEPH Accreditation Criteria.

Practicum/Internship Learning Agreement

Student Contact Information

Student Name: _____

Department: _____ Pitt E-mail: _____

Cell Phone: _____ On-Site Phone: _____

Faculty Advisor's Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Practicum Host Organization: _____

Host Organization Address: _____

Preceptor's Contact Information

Preceptor's Name: _____

Preceptor's Title: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Address (if different from organization address): _____

Approximate Start Date: _____ Approximate End Date: _____

Will completion of practicum take more than 1 semester: ___ Yes ___ No

Summary of Planned Activities to be Completed

Competencies*: *Identify the five competencies that will be attained through the activities during the practicum/internship. Three competencies must be selected from the CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies (available [here](#)) and two must be from the departmental advanced competency list.*

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

4: _____

5: _____

Contribution: *Briefly describe how the combined activities tie into a project or contribute to services that will benefit the host organization.*

Public Health Relevance/ Importance: *Briefly state how the project impacts populations.*

Deliverables*: *A minimum of two deliverables are to be identified and completed at the end of the experience.*

1: _____

2: _____

Approval Signatures

_____	_____	_____
Faculty Advisor	Preceptor	Student
_____	_____	_____
Date	Date	Date

*CEPH Requirements