Public Health
PUBH 4080
Internship Manual
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The Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services’ Public Health Program works to prepare students for the professional world. Public health professionals promote health and identify, prevent, and solve health problems at community, local, national, and global levels. This program prepares students with the knowledge and skills to promote health. It draws on knowledge from the social, behavioral, and health sciences.

Our degree program is well suited for students invested in building healthy communities here in the DFW area, nationally, and globally. We are situated in an academic department that promotes interdisciplinary solutions to health issues that affect diverse communities across the lifespan. Due to the broad, generalist focus of this program, upon completion individuals may pursue careers within public health departments, hospitals, non-profit agencies, and government agencies. Graduates can also continue on to pursue advanced degrees in Public Health, Health Administration, Medicine, Business, and more.

The internship is the final course that students must complete to earn the Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health. The course has both a classroom and a service learning component.

Students will identify a public health problem, conduct a literature review of the problem, and devise a solution to solving the problem. Students use the knowledge they have gained from all their courses in public health to critically analyze a public health problem.

The service learning component requires students to spend 100 hours practicing public health in the professional world. This integrative experience helps students achieve cross-cutting competencies in communication, diversity and culture, leadership, professionalism, integration of theory and practice, and public health knowledge and skills.

The purpose of this manual is to introduce you to the goals and objectives of the Public Health internship. This manual is designed to guide you through the general requirements of the course, detail the process to become eligible to register for the course, and prepare you for reaching out to a possible internship site. The manual also includes a list of student, internship site, and faculty responsibilities.
**Purpose of the Internship Experience**

The purpose of the Public Health internship is three-fold. It is designed to help students gain an understanding of the diverse responsibilities of professionals in public health. The experience is expected to provide students with opportunities to participate in public health activities. Finally, it is an opportunity for public health students to establish professional contacts and networks.

The type of work carried out by public health professionals is diverse, making it challenging to determine where to look for an internship site. Referring to the core responsibilities of public health is the recommended way to guide your search. Assessment, policy development, and assurance encompass those core responsibilities. They are detailed in the figure below.

We ensure students gain public health experience by requiring the internship experience to align with at least three of the 10 Essential Public Health Services. These services encapsulate the work done in public health.

Your internship must involve working with an agency or organization that offers at least three of the 10 Essential Public Health Services. Review the ten services and examples in the following pages. The Internship Introduction video and additional resources on the Canvas page include information related to the services.

**10 Essential Public Health Services**
Purpose of the Internship Experience continued

The 10 Essential Public Health Services are detailed below:

1. **Monitor** health status to identify community health problems.
2. **Diagnose and investigate** health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. **Inform, educate and empower** people about health issues.
4. **Mobilize** community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
5. **Develop policies and plans** that support individual and community health efforts.
6. **Enforce** laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. **Link** people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. **Assure** a competent public health and personal health care workforce.
9. **Evaluate** effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. **Research** for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.


Examples of where these services may be offered:

Federal, state, county, and local public health offices
These offices offer many services to their communities, ranging from assessment, program and policy development, and assurance. Areas of focus could include monitoring disease occurrence, investigating environmentally hazardous situations, connecting people with social services, providing medical care and community outreach, and health education.

Municipalities (Cities and Towns)
Many municipalities offer public health services similar to the services provided by state and county public health agencies. Municipalities often monitor water safety, inform their communities of issues that pose a threat to health, and provide services to ensure the safety of community members such as emergency medical response.

Other government agencies
Texas Health and Human Services
   Example: Disability Services
   Emergency Preparedness
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Policymakers, hospital systems, and non-profit organizations also offer three or more of the ten essential public health services to their communities. You can find a number of suggestions for potential sites in the area in the Internship Site Ideas document posted on Canvas. Reach out to the Capstone course instructor if you need additional guidance.
Objectives of the Internship

1. To learn the function, structure, and goals of the agency/organization and how they relate to the essential public health services.
2. To apply professional competencies in public health.
3. To participate in public health-related activities.
4. To understand how the agency/organization fits into the public health system.
5. To identify and understand the health issues the agency/organization addresses.
6. To develop skills in problem identification, analysis, and problem-solving within a professional public health setting.
7. To develop skills in written and verbal communication.
8. To learn how to establish and maintain significant relationships with fellow staff and community members, including persons of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Procedure for Arranging an Internship Site

Once you have completed the Internship Introduction requirements (watch the Introduction video and answer at least 80% of the questions correctly on the Introduction to the Course quiz), you may reach out to the HPS advising office to gain access to register for the PUBH 4080 Capstone course. Remember, you are required to view the Internship Introduction video, review the Internship Student Manual, and make at least an 80% on the Introduction to the Course quiz. HPS Advising office email: HPSAdvisingServices@unt.edu

Research organizations you would like to work with. Think of the five core disciplines in public health – epidemiology, health policy and management, biostatistics, social and behavioral sciences, and environmental health sciences. Seek out organizations that offer services related to those disciplines. You could also look for organizations that carry out public health work related to disease screening and prevention, ensuring health equity, environmental health, worker’s health, ensuring access to safe and healthy food, injury and violence prevention, dental health, maternal and child health, addiction prevention, health education, access to quality health care, and hospital administration. A list of potential internship sites is available on the Canvas course page titled Student Internship Site Ideas.

Once you have narrowed your search, reach out to one organization at a time. Please note - it is important to secure a site as soon as possible because some agencies may have additional steps for you to complete before you can work with them (ex. background check).

When you secure a site, get the contact information of the person who will supervise your work. Arrange a meeting with your Internship site supervisor, if necessary. You may begin to arrange plans for the internship. Once you have made arrangements, the agency/organization must sign the Partner Agreement document. This signed agreement must be submitted to the Capstone course instructor. Your internship hours will be counted once the semester begins.
**Student Responsibilities**

It is your responsibility to select a site for your internship experience. If you need help, please let us know. Secure a site now because some agencies have screening requirements such as a background check policy that may take several weeks to complete.

Once you have connected and are offered the opportunity to complete your internship with an agency/organization, secure the contact information of the person who will guide your work (Internship Site Coordinator).

Meet with your Internship Site Coordinator to discuss the internship details including but not limited to the agency/organization’s professional requirements, internship experience requirements, goals and objectives of your time with the agency/organization, internship timeline, assigned activities, etc.

Once you have made arrangements and agreed on the internship details with the Internship Site Coordinator, have them sign the Partner Agreement. The signed Partner Agreement must be submitted to the Capstone course instructor.

Students are required to conduct themselves professionally at their internship site at all times. This includes professional interactions between site employees, adherence to the site dress code, and prompt contact with the Internship Site Coordinator if the student is late or unable to attend.

A minimum of 100 hours of supervised experience is required.

Students are responsible to complete all required duties of the internships

Please call or e-mail the Capstone course instructor if you have any questions or run onto any issues related to working with your internship site.

Note that internship supervisors may write letters of recommendation on your behalf. Make sure you do your best possible work.

Along with the work you carry out at your internship site, you are required to complete additional coursework including weekly assignments. Details regarding coursework will be available in class once the semester begins.

Students are encouraged to limit the number of courses taken during their internship semester to 12 hours, including the Capstone course. Students should also consider commitments outside of coursework such as jobs, family responsibilities, and extracurricular activities when deciding how many courses to take during this semester.
**Internship Site Supervisor Responsibilities**

The agency/organization will make available an experienced on-site supervisor who is directly involved in providing public health services. This on-site supervisor must be available to provide close, one-on-one supervision to the student on a daily basis. The on-site supervisor should have experience in public health and be also experienced in the management or supervision of public health trainees.

The on-site supervisor is given the Partner Agreement.

The on-site supervisor should acknowledge his/her willingness to supervise the student by signing the Partner Agreement.

Each on-site supervisor is asked to initially assist the student to develop a preliminary internship activity plan, such as the number of hours expected to work each week or each month.

The on-site supervisor’s role for Internship students will be to provide the student orientation and observation experiences to familiarize them with the agency/organization or facility policies and procedures, role, activity of the public health professionals in that setting, type of clients/families that they serve, etc.

The on-supervisor will assign tasks to the student, depending upon the student’s level of readiness and prior experience.

The on-site supervisor must agree to complete two standard student site performance evaluation reports at mid-term and at the end of the semester. Each evaluation report provides a checklist plus a written narrative that summarizes the student’s progress in terms of strengths and areas that require improvement in the skills and competencies of a Public Health Professional.

All ethical and HIPPA guidelines for the protection of client confidentiality and client information will be strictly adhered to by the student and the University.
**Faculty Responsibilities**

Responsibilities of the Public Health Capstone Instructor

1. The Public Health program will provide a designated faculty member each semester as an internship coordinator and course instructor.

2. The Capstone course instructor is responsible for being available to the Internship Site Coordinator if any questions or issues arise. They will also process evaluation forms, and any other information needed to allow the Internship Site Coordinator to fulfill their student supervision task efficiently and effectively.

4. The internship instructor is responsible for determining the final course grade for each student, using the site supervisor’s evaluation and performance on coursework.