

**University of Texas School of Public Health
Practicum Evaluation
Executive Summary – Spring 2012**

Introduction

One hundred eighteen students from all four degree programs completed a practicum experience during the Spring 2012 semester. Students and community preceptors were asked to complete an evaluation through Survey Monkey™. Student and preceptor response rates were 84% and 86%, respectively. The key findings are listed below.

Primary Campus and Division

- 66% Houston, 34% regional campuses
- 29% Epidemiology; 22% Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences; 22% General program; 16% Management, Policy & Community Health; 7% Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences; 4% Biostatistics

Students

- Locations: University/college system (31%), hospital/clinic (25%), community service organizations (13%), health departments (9%), more than one (7%), government (6%), foundation (4%), business/corporate (2%), federal (2%), international (1%), primary/secondary education (0%)
- 95% of students thought the practicum was very effective (72%) or effective (23%) as a learning experience
- Final products: report (38%), more than one product (31%), training/procedure manual (10%), presentation (8%), journal article (6%), instrument/protocol (3%), promotional material (2%), or thesis (1%)
- The practicum was very effective (63%) or effective (34%) in giving students a better understanding of public health practice
- 84% of students registered for 3 credit hours or more (registrar's data)
- Student hours per week: 16 or more (34%), 12-15 hours (45%); 98% considered the weekly hours to be appropriate
- 62% of students reported contact with their preceptor 14 or more times
- Overall ratings of preceptors were positive: 93% very good and 5% good
- 97% of students highly recommend (63%) or recommend (34%) their community preceptors
- 97% of students highly recommend (61%) or recommend (36%) their faculty sponsor
- 97% of students highly recommend (49%) or recommend (48%) their practicum site

Community Preceptors

- 79% of preceptors rated their student's final product as excellent (57%) or above average (22%); 10% of students had an incomplete mainly because the final product was a publication
- 97% reported that student proficiency in using appropriate methods was very effective (75%) or effective (22%)
- Preceptors rated overall student performance as very good (75%) or good (18%)
- 80% of preceptors reported meeting with the student 10 times or more
- 93% of preceptors found the student's weekly time commitment was appropriate
- 95% of preceptors are willing to accept another student

Student Comments

- My preceptor was very flexible when it came to my obligations as a student and a staff member.
- Since the department I was in was small, I was able to have daily face to face contact with my preceptor. She was always available and welcomed my questions and hesitations kindly
- Preceptor is great to work with. She knows I was there to learn, so she guided me in every possible way but also made sure I took the lead in areas.
- They were great preceptors and experts in their fields.
- Outstanding mentor. I had fun working with him.
- My preceptor was very flexible when it came to my obligations as a student and a staff member.

My community preceptor was...

- Preceptor is an educator. Understands her field and good at teaching and has great human relation.
- He is one of the best in the field and his constant encouragement is what kept me going despite my heavy course load this semester.
- The greatest preceptor I could have wished for. Given my hectic schedule, she was flexible in providing opportunities for me to make sure I get the experience I wanted.
- Amazing and supportive! He was always checking on me to make sure I was happy with my progress in the project and was always up for suggestions for improvement and full of encouragement.
- Awesome! She is now helping me look for full time employment and introducing me to her professional contacts.
- Accomplished in his field, he has great research ideas and analytic mindset. For me personally, during the period of my learning experience he has grown from an adviser and mentor to a professional idol.

Community Preceptor Comments

- Student has understood a new and evolving subject in a fairly short period of time and has put in a lot of effort in obtaining over 400 meaningful journal articles to be used in a study.
- Student is very timely in completing necessary tasks. He also understood the importance of his work and generated a report to show investigators interesting trends with important implications for our project protocols.
- He is an excellent student. He is a quick learner. He has a strong working ethic and is very bright and committed. Student has definitively done a great job and because of him I will continue to receive students. He is always willing to learn and explore new concepts. He is a self-motivated learner and is able to interact with a multidisciplinary team.
- Student was very proactive and energetic in his work. He asked great questions and was able to make connections between the data he was analyzing and the meaning it had for our water system and the public that we serve.
- Student is very hard working and is an excellent team player.
- She was the second student we've had from your program and we really enjoy the caliber and quality of the students. Keep up the good work.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the University of Texas Health Science Center School of Public Health, the Office of Public Health Practice extends our warmest gratitude to the organizations and community preceptors who graciously allowed our students to gain practice experience. Without your continued support and feedback, we would not be able to offer this invaluable experience to our students.