

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

Introduction

One hundred eighteen students from all four degree programs completed a practicum experience during the Summer 2012 semester. Students and community preceptors were asked to complete an evaluation through Survey Monkey™. Student and preceptor response rates were 92% and 96%, respectively. The key findings are listed below.

Primary Campus and Division

- 57% Houston, 43% regional campuses
- 27% General program; 22% Epidemiology; 22% Management, Policy & Community Health; 20% Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences; 6% Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences; 4% Biostatistics

Students

- Locations: Hospital/clinic (21%), university/college system (20%), community service organizations (18%), health departments (13%), more than one (12%), business/corporate (6%), government (4%), foundation (2%), international (2%) [*12 students (7%) had international practicum that are included in more than one section*], federal (1%), primary/secondary education (1%)
- 90% of students thought the practicum was very effective (62%) or effective (28%) as a learning experience
- Final products: More than one product (35%), report (30), presentation (15%), thesis 12%, training/procedure manual (7%), instrument/protocol (6%), promotional material (3%), or journal article (3%)
- The practicum was very effective (62%) or effective (29%) in giving students a better understanding of public health practice
- 92% of students registered for 3 credit hours or more (registrar's data)
- Student hours per week: 16 or more (55%), 12-15 hours (32%); 91% 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: 81% very good and 15% good
- 93% of students highly recommend (60%) or recommend (33%) their community preceptors
- 93% of students highly recommend (44%) or recommend (49%) their faculty sponsor
- 90% of students highly recommend (44%) or recommend (46%) their practicum site

Community Preceptors

- 84% of preceptors rated their student's final product as excellent (60%) or above average (24%); 5% of students had an incomplete mainly because the final product was a publication
- 96% reported that student proficiency in using appropriate methods was very effective (73%) or effective (20%)
- Preceptors rated overall student performance as very good (82%) or good (13%)
- 84% of preceptors reported meeting with the student 10 times or more
- 99% of preceptors found the student's weekly time commitment was appropriate
- 99% of preceptors are willing to accept another student

Student Comments

- Dr. Cormier fostered my learning and encouraged me to develop new skills and expand upon skills I already had.

- I think that my community preceptor was a great person to work with, and I learned a lot from her. Even though she was not at every one of the session that I had with the students, she was always involved in some way or the other. She took us to public health events regarding childhood obesity, which was relevant to the work that we were doing. She gave us the resources that we needed to make YAHL a great experience for the students that participated!
- My community preceptor was receptive to my needs as a student and was helpful to accommodate such needs to help me have a successful experience.
- Roger Perales has a lot of experience in the field of public health and therefore was a wonderful preceptor who was obviously passionate about his job and public health.
- Very helpful, knowledgeable, and willing to provide cultural activities while at the site location.

My community preceptor was...

- Dr. Butte was simply outstanding! She encouraged me to air my views and participate in decision making!
- Dr. Strom was very patient while we waited for MDACC to approve my GRA status. She arranged my meeting with a post doc to get a better understanding of occupational epidemiology. She has been a great mentor and I look forward to continuing my working experience with her.
- Dr. Tapia was so joyful and always excited each day to have us come listen to speakers. She took great pride in her work and the importance in public health in her community.
- My Community Preceptor was a great advocate for the community. She had great ideas as to how to improve the health of the community. She was always willing to talk to me, and help me clear any problems or obstacles that we encountered throughout the summer. Even if she could not meet face-to-face she was willing to communicate either by phone or via email. I really enjoyed working with her.
- My preceptor was very nice to work with. She gave really good feedback. Although the feedback was really direct sometimes, she said it with enough grace for me and other workers to receive it without reluctance.
- Very responsive and available to communicate with via different modes of communication. She was very helpful to try to put me into contact with different people that I needed to collaborate with.

Community Preceptor Comments

- This student was exposed to most of the aspects of the Women With IMPACT program. Even though her focus area was evaluation, she assisted with recruitment, enrollment, child care, preparation of food and tangible reinforcement items, and she attended planning meetings and workshops. I believe her time with this program gave her a real-world experience in regards to health program planning, implementation, and evaluation. She did a great job and even though we hate to see her go, we know that she will do very well in the future!
- This student was my second MPH intern and I am currently working with my third. So grateful for your students' expertise and passionate contributions to our work.
- I am completely satisfied with the work of this student. She co-authored a conference presentation and was a great help during my research semester.
- I truly appreciate the work of the students...they are well prepared and committed to the effort needed.
- He was an outstanding addition to our team during the Summer. In addition to his project, he gave valuable input on a number of important community projects.
- She was a great practicum student and we are so thankful for her work. This is really going to help us improve our program. I look forward to hosting another practicum student in the future.

Acknowledgements

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