

## University of Texas School of Public Health Practicum Evaluation Executive Summary – Summer 2013

### Introduction

One hundred and thirty-one students from all four degree programs completed a practicum experience during the Summer 2013 semester (seven from dietetic program). Students and community preceptors were asked to complete an evaluation through Survey Monkey™. Student and preceptor response rates were 98% and 93%, respectively. The key findings are listed below.

### Primary Campus and Division

- 56% Houston, 44% regional campuses
- 25% Epidemiology; 23% General program; 18% Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences; 18% Management, Policy & Community Health; 7% Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences; 6% Biostatistics

### Students

- Locations: University/college system (29%), hospital/clinic (15%), community service organizations (13%), health departments (10%), business/corporate (5%), foundation (5%), international (mixed with more than one), more than one (5%), government (3%), primary/secondary education (2%), federal (1%)
- 88% of students thought the practicum was very effective (58%) or effective (29%) as a learning experience
- Final products: More than one product (37%), report (29%), presentation (13%), journal article (7%), instrument/protocol (6%), training/procedure manual (5%), promotional material (3%), thesis (2%)
- The practicum was very effective (56%) or effective (40%) in giving students a better understanding of public health practice
- 88% of students registered for 3 credit hours or more (registrar's data)
- Student hours per week: 16 or more (67%), 12-15 hours (24%); 90% considered the weekly hours to be appropriate
- 76% of students reported contact with their preceptor 14 or more times
- Overall ratings of preceptors were positive: 78% very good and 18% good
- 93% of students highly recommend (60%) or recommend (33%) their community preceptors
- 90% of students highly recommend (38%) or recommend (52%) their faculty sponsor
- 93% of students highly recommend (50%) or recommend (43%) their practicum site

### Community Preceptors

- 87% of preceptors rated their student's final product as excellent (50%) or above average (37%); 4% of students had an incomplete product mainly because the final product was an instrument/protocol or report
- 97% reported that student proficiency in using appropriate methods was very effective (76%) or effective (21%)
- Preceptors rated overall student performance as very good (81%) or good (17%)
- 75% of preceptors reported meeting with the student 10 times or more
- 97% of preceptors found the student's weekly time commitment was appropriate
- 95% of preceptors are willing to accept another student

### **Student Comments**

- He is an excellent teacher and mentor.
- He is very knowledgeable, has a lot of experience in public health as he has worked in spearheading many nation-wide projects in India as well as other Asian countries. Just from listening to his stories - you can learn a lot about public health.
- He was so helpful in getting my project lined up and advising me as my project went along. He found time to talk and email me even when he had personal emergencies (e.g., house flooding twice).
- She knows a lot about the community and how you can motivate behavioral change.
- The preceptor was willing to make changes to the project when a conflict arose. A+.

### **My community preceptor was...**

- Amazing!! The one thing I appreciated the most was communication and keeping me engaged.
- He was great - he will help make anyone's practicum experience a great learning experience. Whatever is your interest, he can help put together a good practicum - from site visits to research to NGO work. During my stay, he was very helpful with all of my research. Without him, I do not think my practicum would have been possible at this site.
- I couldn't have asked for a better community preceptor. My preceptor was always upbeat and passionate about her work; her positive energy added to the great work environment.
- My community preceptor is extremely knowledgeable in the area of PH in which I was involved. He made sure I participated in things that would help me learn more. But above all he was like a teacher sharing his vast knowledge in this short amount of time. I had the best mentor and learned a lot.
- My preceptor and project supervisor were both amazing! They were incredibly supportive, very helpful in providing direction and structure, and they always let me know about and participate in learning opportunities.
- The two people I consider as good leaders in my workplace are my mentor (preceptor) and my manager. Initially when I was starting the practicum, though I had enough theoretical knowledge I have had never applied it in a practical setting. Therefore I did not fully comprehend the process and what was expected from me. Reflecting back now I realize how they started with relatively easy tasks to begin with and gradually assigned more complicated tasks allowing me enough time to catch up and not to burn me out. This is a vital quality of a good leadership and I believe I am thriving at my new place thanks to the fair but firm guidance both of them gave me in navigating through the process.

### **Community Preceptor Comments**

- The student developed an immediate rapport with the other summer Interns as well as the program staff to which she was assigned. It was amazing to watch her knowledge base expand the more she worked in the field. She is a clear thinker and offered excellent suggestions of how to modify some tasks to make them more useful to our objective(s). She was able to stay on-task and remained committed to the experience for the entire period
- I really appreciate this experience. Thank you. I have hired the student as a temporary employee because of our need and the student's skills, ability, knowledge, and capacity,
- It was a pleasure to host this student. His family is from the valley so it was nice that he shared his personal experience with classmates to expand on different teaching segments.
- The student has done great work and has been very well received by high-ranking officials...lots of compliments!!
- We're sad to see her go! She has become a valued member of our team and has successfully worked with our team's strengths and weaknesses to accomplish her projects.
- This student was an amazing asset to the team. We are in the process of hiring her!

### **Acknowledgements**

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