Practicum Orientation

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE
Welcome

There are two presentations included in this Online Orientation:

I. Orientation to the Practicum and its Requirements

II. Introduction to the Essential Services of Public Health
Welcome

After you finish viewing both presentations, you will be directed to complete an **ONLINE QUIZ**.

This **quiz**, along with the **learning contract** [https://sph.uth.edu/practicum/forms/](https://sph.uth.edu/practicum/forms/), must be completed before you can obtain the approval code to register for your practicum.
Learning Objectives

• Understand the purpose and goals of your practicum
• Identify the requirements of your practicum
• Learn the necessary steps to successfully begin and complete your practicum
• Understand the roles and responsibilities of key participants in your practicum
• Gain information and resources to aid you in succeeding academically and developing professionally
Part I:

Practicum Orientation

OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE
What is a Practicum?

• A practical application of classroom learning and acquired skills into a real-world setting
• A requirement of MPH and DrPH degrees, in compliance with standards of the Council on Education for Public Health
• An opportunity for students to demonstrate public health competencies
What is a Practicum?

• A unique learning opportunity for students to be engaged in and evaluated by professional public health practitioners
• A chance for the student to apply skills and knowledge to actual needs of the community
• An opportunity for students to define and refine professional interests and goals
• A forum for exploring public health careers
Minimum Requirements

- Completion of this online orientation & quiz
- Submission of completed & electronically approvals of learning contract
- Registration for a minimum of 3 credit hours of PH 9997 and active participation in the online practicum seminar via Blackboard
- Completion of assigned projects during practicum and a final product
- Creation of practicum eMagazine page summarizing your experience
- Completion of final evaluations
What can I do for my practicum?

- Complete a needs assessment
- Develop a program or conduct a program evaluation
- Collect and/or analyze data
- Complete a policy analysis
- Conduct a pilot research project
- Design an intervention or education campaign
- Conduct disease surveillance

This list is designed to give you an idea of what a practicum may involve. Your project should be related to your interests and professional goals.
Where can I do my practicum?

It is up to the student to identify a host organization for the practicum. Talk to your advisor, faculty, the UTSPH Office of Public Health Practice, other students, community mentors, and professional contacts for ideas.

- Government agency
- Healthcare facility
- Non-profit organization
- Health research entity
- Research institute
- Private company
Who is Involved in my Practicum?

**Student**

**Community Preceptor**
A member of the host organization whose needs are aligned with the student’s profession interests and who agrees to mentor and support the student during the practicum.

**Faculty Sponsor**
Your advisor or a faculty member with whom you have a supportive academic relationship or whose interest or research relates to your project.
Roles & Responsibilities

- Student
- Faculty Sponsor
- Community Preceptor
In consultation with advisor, identifies a potential site and project
- Appropriate for major division
- Appropriate for concentration(s)
- Selects a Community Preceptor and Faculty Sponsor
- Makes arrangements with host site
- Completes example learning contract then submits online Learning Contract [https://sph.uth.tmc.edu/practicum/forms/](https://sph.uth.tmc.edu/practicum/forms/) for all electronic approvals
- Registers for and completes PH9997 and the associated online seminar
- Functions professionally and follows policies and procedures of the host organization
- Completes all assignments related to the practicum and the final product
- Maintains communication with faculty sponsor as needed
- Completes an evaluation of the practicum toward end of semester – example at link above
The faculty sponsor assists you in defining your learning objectives, meets with you as needed during the practicum. Assists the student in identifying and selecting a practicum site
• Advises and assists the student in completing the Learning Contract (see example, link above)
• Monitors progress of the practicum
• Maintains contact with student and community preceptor
Acknowledges completion of practicum with a grade (P/F) - based on Community Preceptor evaluation (see example, link above) and completion of online seminar
The community preceptor assists you in matching your learning objectives to the project, provides you with an orientation to the organization, provides project supervision and mentoring.

- Assists in developing a practicum that meets the student’s interests and the needs of the host site
- Assists the student in completing the Learning Contract (see example)
- Maintains contact with student and faculty sponsor and participates in meetings, as requested
- Completes an evaluation (see example) of the student and their experience toward end of semester
The Learning Contract

An agreement between the student, community preceptor and faculty sponsor that identifies the student’s learning objectives of the practicum and outlines the student’s work.

The Learning Contract clarifies:

- Goals and objectives
- Methods
- Timelines
- A Final Product (may be a report, poster, grant, journal article, etc.)

A LEARNING CONTRACT MUST BE COMPLETED, SUBMITTED AND APPROVED BEFORE YOU START YOUR PRACTICUM
What next?
Steps to a Successful Practicum

- Preparing for the Practicum
- Carrying out the Practicum
- Completion of the Practicum

A [CHECKLIST](https://sph.uth.edu/practicum/checklist/) is available online to help you successfully complete the necessary steps of your Practicum.
Preparing for the Practicum

1. Complete the Online Quiz
2. Discuss interests and potential practicum sites with your advisor
3. Check out practicum opportunities posted by the Office of Public Health Practice
   - Contact potential host entities & select a site
   - Choose a community preceptor and faculty sponsor
   - Complete and submit a signed Learning Contract for electronic approvals
Carrying out the Practicum

1. **Register for PH 9997: Public Health Practicum**
   - You should complete a minimum of a 3-credit hour practicum
     - You may register for up to 9 credit hours, though only 3 hrs may be used to satisfy the total minimum hours required by your degree plan (all 3 credit hours do NOT have to be taken the same semester)
     - The number of credit hours should take into consideration the number of hours on site (1 credit hour = 60 hours in the field throughout the semester) and the difficulty of your learning objectives

2. **Participate in the Online Seminar via Blackboard**
   - You are automatically enrolled in the Online Seminar after registering for PH 9997; Seminar material is made available through Blackboard shortly after the semester begins

3. **Complete all project assignments and work as outlined in the Learning Contract**
Completion of the Practicum

• Complete the final product, as outlined in the Learning Contract, which meets the needs of your Community Preceptor

• Complete the Online Seminar; students are required to have:
  – completed all reflection activities throughout the practicum semester
  – submitted an eMagazine page of their project
    [https://sph.uth.edu/academics/public-health-practice/#tabs-2](https://sph.uth.edu/academics/public-health-practice/#tabs-2)
  – Complete and submit practicum evaluation forms of the practicum and of the practicum seminar that will be sent to you through email
International Students
Guidelines [https://sph.uth.tmc.edu/practicum/checklist/](https://sph.uth.tmc.edu/practicum/checklist/) for international students on F-1 visas sponsored by UTHealth are posted on the Practicum website. All procedures must be followed.

International Practica
Students planning an international practicum experience should follow the additional steps for meeting International Travel Requirements [https://sph.uth.tmc.edu/content/uploads/2010/08/International-Travel-Requirements2.pdf](https://sph.uth.tmc.edu/content/uploads/2010/08/International-Travel-Requirements2.pdf).
Part II:

Orientation to the Essential Services of Public Health

PRACTICE OFFICE
The Centers for Disease Control
National Public Health Performance Standards Program

Orientation to the Essential Public Health Services
A little history...

- Three core functions (1988 IOM Report)
  - Assessment
  - Policy Development
  - Assurance
- Core Functions Public Health Steering Committee (1994)
  - *Public Health in America* statement
Essential Public Health Services

• Developed by the Core Public Health Functions Steering Committee (1994)
  – Included reps from national organizations and federal agencies
  – Charge: To provide a description and definition of public health
  – Developed the “Public Health in America” statement
Vision:
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Mission:
Promote Physical and Mental Health and Prevent Disease, Injury, and Disability
Public Health

- Prevents epidemics and the spread of disease
- Protects against environmental hazards
- Prevents injuries
- Promotes and encourages healthy behaviors
- Responds to disasters and assists communities in recovery
- Assures the quality and accessibility of health services
Essential Services of Public Health

- Monitor health status
- Diagnose and investigate
- Inform, educate, and empower
- Mobilize community partnerships
- Develop policies and plans
- Enforce laws and regulations
- Link people to needed services / assure care
- Assure a competent workforce
- Evaluate health services
- Research
The Essential Services as a Framework

• Used as a foundation for the National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHPSP) instruments
• Provides a foundation for any public health activity
• Describes public health at both the state and local levels
• NPHPSP Instruments include sections addressing each essential service
National Public Health Performance Standards Program - NPHPSP

Assessment Instruments
- State public health system
- Local public health system
- Local governance

Partners
- [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) – Centers for Disease Control
- [APHA](https://www.apha.org) – American of Public Health Association
- [ASTHO](https://www.astho.org) - Association of State & Territorial Health Officials
- [NACCHO](https://www.naccho.org) - National Association of County & City Health Officials
- [NALBOH](https://www.nalboh.org) - National Association of Local Boards of Health
- [NNPHI](https://www.nnphi.org) - National Network of Public Health Institutes
- [PHF](https://www.phf.org) – Public Health Foundation
The EPHS “in English”

1. Understand health issues at the state and community levels (Or “what’s going on in our state/community? Do we know how healthy we are?”)

2. Identify and respond to health problems or threats (Or “Are we ready to respond to health problems or threats? How quickly do we find out about problems? How effective is our response?”)

3. Keep people informed about health issues and healthy choices. (Or “How well do we keep all people and segments of our State informed about health issues?”)
The EPHS “in English”

4. Engage people and organizations in health issues. *(Or “How well do we really get people and organizations engaged in health issues?”)*

5. Plan and implement sound health policies. *(Or “What policies promote health in our State? How effective are we in planning and in setting health policies?”)*

6. Enforce public health laws and regulations. *(Or “When we enforce health regulations are we up-to-date, technically competent, fair and effective?”)*
The EPHS “in English”

7. Make sure people receive the medical care they need. (*Or “Are people receiving the medical care they need?”*)

8. Maintain a competent public health and medical workforce. (*Or “Do we have a competent public health staff? How can we be sure that our staff stays current?”*)

9. Evaluate and improve programs. (*Or “Are we doing any good? Are we doing things right? Are we doing the right things?”*)

10. Support innovation and identify and use best practices. (*Or “Are we discovering and using new ways to get the job done?”*)
Monitor Health to Identify and Solve Community Health Problems

• Accurate, periodic assessment of the community’s health status, including:
  – Identification of health risks
  – Attention to vital statistics and disparities
  – Identifications of assets and resources

• Utilization of methods and technology (e.g., GIS) to interpret and communicate data

• Population health registries
Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems and Hazards in the Community

- Timely identification and investigation of health threats
- Availability of diagnostic services, including laboratory capacity
- Response plans to address major health threats
Inform, Educate, and Empower People About Health Issues

- Initiatives using health education and communication sciences to:
  - Build knowledge and shape attitudes
  - Inform decision-making choice
  - Develop skills and behaviors for healthy living

- Health education and health promotion partnerships within the community to support healthy living

- Media advocacy and social marketing
Mobilize Community Partnerships to Identify and Solve Health Problems

- Constituency development and identification of system partners and stakeholders
- Coalition development
- Formal and informal partnerships to promote health improvement
Develop Policies and Plans that Support Individual and Community Health Efforts

- Policy development to protect health and guide public health practice
- Community and state planning
- Alignment of resources to assure successful planning
Enforce Laws and Regulations That Protect Health and Ensure Safety

- Review, evaluation, and revision of legal authority, laws, and regulations
- Education about laws and regulations
- Advocating of regulations needed to protect and promote health
- Support of compliance efforts and enforcement as needed
Link People to Needed Personal Health Services and Assure the Provision of Health Care when Otherwise Unavailable

- Identifying populations with barriers to care
- Effective entry into a coordinated system of clinical care
- Ongoing care management
- Culturally appropriate and targeted health information for at-risk population groups
- Transportation and other enabling services
Assure a Competent Public and Personal Healthcare Workforce

- Assessment of the public health and personal health workforce

- Maintaining public health workforce standards
  - Efficient processes for licensing / credentialing requirements
  - Use of public health competencies

- Quality improvement and life-long learning
  - Leadership development
  - Cultural competence
Evaluate Effectiveness, Accessibility, and Quality of Personal and Population-based Health Services

☐ Evaluation answers
  - Are we doing things right?
  - Are we doing the right things?

☐ Evaluation must be ongoing and should examine:
  - Personal health services
  - Population-based services
  - The public health system

☐ Evaluation should drive resource allocation and program improvement
Research for New Insights and Innovative Solutions to Health Problems

- Identification and monitoring of innovative solutions and cutting-edge research to advance public health

- Linkages between public health practice and academic / research settings

- Epidemiological studies, health policy analyses and health systems research.
QUIZ

https://sph.uth.edu/practica/external/learning_contract/login