**Office of Public Health Practice**  
Health Promotion and Behavioral Science  
Student Practicum Evaluations  
AY 2007-08

## INTRODUCTION

A practicum is a planned, supervised, and evaluated “hands-on” experience that allows students to use the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom. The practicum is directly related to the academic goals and professional interests of the students. The practicum is population based and addresses a need identified by the host organization. The practicum is an essential part of the curriculum and is a requirement of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the accrediting body of Schools of Public Health.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, 30 health promotion/behavioral science students completed a practicum evaluation. Students and community preceptors completed evaluations at the end of the semester. About two weeks before the end of the semester, Survey Monkey™ formatted evaluation forms were sent to students and community preceptors via email. Students and preceptors were contacted three times after the electronic evaluations were distributed. The average annual response rates for students and community preceptors were 96% and 88% respectively.

In an effort to increase response rates, students and preceptors were contacted three times after the electronic evaluations were distributed.

## STUDENT RESPONSES

### Division

Health Promotion/Behavioral Science (n = 30)

### Type of Organization

- 36.7% Hospital/Clinic
- 26.6% University/College
- 10.0% Community Service Organization
- 10.0% Foundation
- 6.7% Business/Corporate
- 6.7% Local Health Department
- 3.3% State/Regional Health Department

### Sites

- Children's Hospital of Michigan
- University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Komen For the Cure
- University of Texas Health Science Center, School of Public Health
- Texas Children's Hospital
- City of Houston Department of Health and Human Services
• University of Houston – Downtown
• Neighborhood Centers Inc.
• Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston
• Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (TAHPERD)
• World Health Organization
• March of Dimes
• Cenergy International
• The Methodist Hospital

Practicum Topics
• Clinical Outcome of T3b and T3c Staged Renal Cell Carcinoma Patients
• Chemotherapy Symptoms Management
• Breast Cancer Screening and Treatment in Southeast Texas
• Platinum Based Chemotherapy on Renal Functions Among Cancer Patients
• Lung Cancer
• Cancer Prevention
• Delays in the Diagnosis and Referrals of Hematologic Malignancies
• Intervention with Rural African American Women HIV Risk Acquisition
• Update Triage and Intake Tool for Efficient Delivery of Specialized Pediatric Medical Care
• Teach a Risk Avoidance Program for Middle School Students
• To Develop and Test the Online Course
• Renal Cell Carcinoma
• “You do the Math” and “Road Map to Cancer Prevention”
• Implement HIV/STI and Pregnancy Prevention Program to Middle School Youth
• Childhood Obesity
• Subtle Prejudice
• Assure Competent Public Health Workforce
• Managing Disaster Victims
• Burmese Refugees
• Fitness and Academic Tests
• Following Health, Nutrition and Breast-Feeding Habits in Israeli Infants
• Premature Babies
• HIV/AIDS and Homosexual Men
• Issues and Management of Public Health
• Behavior Change in Recently Diagnosed HIV Positive Individuals
• Statistical Analysis and Data Management
• Employee Wellness, Well Managed Program
Final Product
- 55.2% Report
- 17.2% Instrument/Protocol
- 13.8% Training/Procedural Manual
- 6.9% Thesis
- 3.5% Journal Article
- 3.5% Presentation

Weekly Time Commitment by Student (Hours/Week)
- 72% of health promotion/behavioral science students spent 12 hours or more per week working on practicum related activities
- 79% of students counted their practicum experience for 3 credit hours or more

Source for Locating Practicum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Developed</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend/Colleague/Student</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Employment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Public Health Practice</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effectiveness of Learning Experience
As indicated in the table below, students reported that their practicum provided an effective learning experience across eight competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating on a scale of 5.00</th>
<th>SPH Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing skills to work as a team member</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating work environment to accomplish objectives</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing problem-solving skills</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with diverse groups and cultures</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the health goals of the organization</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulating an idea from conception to completion</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing an understanding of public health practice</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing leadership skills</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Satisfaction with Practicum
- All students reported that the practicum experience was effective, with 76% reporting that the experience was very effective
- 97% of students reported that their practicum prepared them for job opportunities

Recommendation of Site
- All students reported that they would recommend their community site, with 31% reporting that they would highly recommend their community site

Student Contact with Preceptors during Practice Experience
- 69% of health promotion students reported that they met with their community preceptor 10 times or more
- Face-to-face and email were the most common forms of communication
- 97% of health promotion students reported that the weekly commitment was appropriate

Community Preceptor Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating on a Scale of 5.00 Average</th>
<th>SPH Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experienced in his/her field of work</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible and open to making changes to suit my needs as a student</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to offer suggestions and directions when needed</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>4.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available to answer questions and provide support</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available to provide useful feedback concerning my work</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Satisfaction with Community Preceptors
- All of community preceptors were rated as average or above, with 90% rated as very good
Faculty Sponsor Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating on a Scale of 5.00 Average</th>
<th>SPH Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flexible to suit my needs as a student</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to offer suggestions when needed</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available to provide useful feedback concerning my work</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful in accomplishing project milestones</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Satisfaction with Faculty Sponsors
- 97% of faculty sponsors were rated as average or above, with 69% rated as very good

CONCLUSIONS
This evaluation demonstrates the win-win nature of applying classroom learning to the “real world.” Students overwhelmingly reported that the practice experience helped them develop problem solving skills and become more familiar with public health practice. Community preceptors were highly impressed with the students’ skills, motivation, maturity, and initiative. Overall, 96% of the community preceptors reported that they would be willing to accept students for future practice experiences; and 97% of the students believed their practice experience was complimentary in preparing them for the job market.