

**Student Guide to the MPH Culminating Experience -  
Appendix**

The University of Texas School of Public Health

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**Table 1 Comparison of Processes in Primary Research vs Systematic Review**

	<b>Primary Research Study</b>	<b>Systematic Review</b>
1.	<i>Identify specific gaps in knowledge that a new study could fill</i>	<i>Identify specific gaps in knowledge that a new review could fill</i>
2.	<i>Specify study aims/questions/hypotheses</i>	<i>Specify review aims/questions/hypotheses</i>
3.	<i>Set inclusion criteria for participants/units</i>	<i>Set inclusion criteria for primary studies</i>
4.	<i>Design a recruitment strategy for relevant participants/units (include process for obtaining informed consent)</i>	<i>Design a search strategy for relevant primary studies or other sources of evidence</i>
5.	<i>Screen potential participants/units against the inclusion criteria</i>	<i>Screen potential primary studies against the inclusion criteria</i>
6.	<i>Decide on measures and design the data collection protocol, using psychometrically sound measures</i>	<i>Decide which study characteristics to code and develop the coding protocol, using coding forms and standard terms</i>
7.	<i>Apply the data collection protocol – train data collectors, consider methods to improve data reliability and validity</i>	<i>Apply the coding protocol – train coders, consider methods to improve data reliability and validity</i>
8.	<i>Design tables to display participant characteristics</i>	<i>Design evidence tables to display study characteristics</i>
9.	<i>Select an appropriate metric to represent the magnitude of the findings and assess the likelihood that these findings could be the result of chance</i>	<i>Select an appropriate metric to represent the magnitude of the effect and assess the likelihood that these findings could be the result of chance (when appropriate)</i>
10.	<i>Analyze the data, using appropriate procedures, and display the results, following relevant guidelines for reporting</i>	<i>Analyze the data, using appropriate procedures, and display the results, following relevant guidelines for reporting</i>
11.	<i>Draw conclusions based on the data, discuss alternate interpretations in light of the study's strengths and limitations, and identify implications and gaps in the literature</i>	<i>Draw conclusions based on the data, discuss alternate interpretations in light of the study's strengths and limitations, and identify implications and gaps in the literature</i>

**Table 2: Comparison of the content that may be required for different types of WCE\***

<b>Research Thesis</b>	<b>Policy Analysis or Practice Issue Analysis</b>	<b>Systematic Review</b>	<b>Practice-Based</b>
<p><b>Background/Introduction and Public Health Significance</b></p> <p>Review of the relevant literature</p> <p>Justification of the public health significance</p> <p>Statement of the problem</p>	<p><b>Background/Introduction and Public Health Significance</b></p> <p>Review of the relevant literature</p> <p>Justification of the public health significance</p> <p>Statement of the problem</p>	<p><b>Background/Rationale of the Proposed Project and the and Public Health Significance</b></p> <p>Review of the relevant literature (especially previous reviews) and identification of gap(s) in our knowledge</p> <p>Public health significance of the gap(s) [filling the gap(s)]</p>	<p><b>Background/Introduction and Public Health Significance</b></p> <p>Review of the relevant literature</p> <p>Background and public health significance</p> <p>Statement of the problem/issue</p> <p>Identify gaps in knowledge</p>
<p><b>Specific Aims, Hypotheses, Research Questions, Objectives</b></p> <p>Statement of the research question, hypothesis and specific aims or objectives</p> <p>Brief discussion of the rationale for the proposed project</p> <p>Brief description of the approach that will be used to meet the stated goals</p>	<p><b>Specific Aims, Purpose, Questions, Comparisons</b></p> <p>Statement of the purpose of the policy or practice analysis and specific aims or objectives</p> <p>Brief discussion of the rationale for the proposed project</p> <p>Brief description of the approach that will be used to meet the stated goals</p>	<p><b>Specific Aims, Research Questions, Objectives</b></p> <p>Statement of the research question specific aims or objectives</p> <p>Brief description of the approach that will be used to meet the stated aims</p>	<p><b>Specific Aims, Purpose, Questions, Objectives</b></p> <p>Statement of specific aims and purpose of the enquiry</p> <p>Brief discussion of the rationale for the proposed project</p> <p>Brief description of the approach that will be used to meet the stated aims</p>
<p><b>Preliminary Studies</b></p> <p>Summary of any work that has been completed prior to proposal approval that is to be included in the CE</p>	<p><b>Preliminary Studies</b></p> <p>Summary of any work that has been completed prior to proposal approval that is to be included in the CE</p>	<p><b>Preliminary Studies</b></p> <p>Summary of any work that has been completed prior to proposal approval that is to be included in the CE</p>	<p><b>Preliminary Studies</b></p> <p>Summary of any work that has been completed prior to proposal approval that is to be included in the CE</p>

Research Thesis	Policy Analysis or Practice Issue Analysis	Systematic Review	Practice-Based
<p><b>Methods</b></p> <p>Details of the specific methods that will be used to address the study aims</p> <p><b>Subsections of the methods are listed below:</b></p> <p>Study design</p> <p>Study setting, including locations and dates</p> <p>Study subjects</p> <p>Sample size calculations and/or study power</p> <p>Data collection</p> <p>Literature search strategies</p> <p>Data analysis, including statistical, laboratory and other methods that you will use to address your study aims, hypotheses or objectives</p> <p>Human subjects, animal subjects, and/or safety considerations</p>	<p><b>Methods</b></p> <p>Details of the specific analytic methods that will be used to address the study aims</p> <p><b>Subsections of the methods are listed below:</b></p> <p>Policy analysis approach and justification</p> <p>Study setting (ie. What governmental units/geographic areas are covered/relevant?)</p> <p>Policy(ies) to be studied</p> <p>Data collection</p> <p>Literature search strategies</p> <p>Plan for displaying data and analysis</p>	<p><b>Methods</b></p> <p>Details of the specific methods that will be used to address the study aims</p> <p><b>Subsections of the methods are listed below:</b></p> <p>Inclusion/exclusion criteria for primary studies</p> <p>Search strategy for finding studies and procedures for selecting them</p> <p>Variables to be coded (data extraction) and procedures for coding, including methods of assessing risk of bias (study quality)</p> <p>Plan for displaying data, including mock evidence tables you will use to organize and systematically present study characteristics</p> <p>Data analysis, including qualitative and/or quantitative analysis, e.g., your plans for standardizing study measures of association or effect and synthesis</p>	<p><b>Methods</b></p> <p>Details of the specific procedures/approach that will be used to address the aims</p> <p><b>Subsections of the methods are listed below:</b></p> <p>Study Design/Approach</p> <p>Detailed description of setting and methods for data gathering and analysis</p> <p>Demographics</p> <p>Procedures/approaches</p> <p>Data management</p> <p>Records/data retention protection</p> <p>Plan for displaying data</p>

<b>Research Thesis</b>	<b>Policy Analysis or Practice Issue Analysis</b>	<b>Systematic Review</b>	<b>Practice-Based</b>
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<p><b>Results or Findings</b></p> <p>Present the results or findings from the study</p> <p>May include tables and figures</p>	<p><b>Results or Findings</b></p> <p>Present the results or findings from the study</p> <p>May include tables and figures</p>	<p><b>Results or Findings</b></p> <p>Flow chart to display search results and study eligibility</p> <p>Evidence tables In case of meta-analysis, may include forest plots, funnel plots, and other diagnostic figures</p> <p><i>Summarize</i> but do not simply recite the results displayed in the evidence tables and figures; do not make judgments or comments</p>	<p><b>Results or Findings</b></p> <p>Present the results or findings from the practice-based inquiry without comment or discussion</p> <p>May include tables and figures</p>
<p><b>Discussion/Conclusions/Recommendations</b></p> <p>Discuss the results in relation to what is already known about the topic</p> <p>Present conclusions and/or recommendations that be made based on the results</p> <p>Describe the strengths and limitations of the project</p>	<p><b>Discussion/Conclusions/Recommendations</b></p> <p>Discuss the results in relation to what is already known about the topic</p> <p>Present conclusions and/or recommendations that be made based on the results</p> <p>Describe the strengths and limitations of the project</p>	<p><b>Discussion/Conclusions/Recommendations</b></p> <p>Discuss the results in relation to what is already known about the topic</p> <p>Present conclusions and/or recommendations that be made based on the results</p> <p>Describe the strengths and limitations of the project</p>	<p><b>Discussion/Conclusions/Recommendations</b></p> <p>Discuss results of the project relative to what is already known about the topic</p> <p>Present conclusions and/or recommendations that can be made based on the results</p> <p>Describe strengths and limitations</p>
<p><b>References/Bibliography</b></p>	<p><b>References/Bibliography</b></p>	<p><b>References/Bibliography</b> including citations of studies included in the review</p>	<p><b>References/Bibliography</b></p>

<b>Research Thesis</b>	<b>Policy Analysis or Practice Issue Analysis</b>	<b>Systematic Review</b>	<b>Practice-Based</b>
<b>Appendices</b>  Data collection instruments  Protocols  Manuals of Procedure	<b>Appendices</b>  Codebook, definitions, and data collection forms (if applicable)	<b>Appendices</b>  Search protocols (specific terms and Boolean logic) for each database searched  Codebook, definitions, and data collection forms  Optional: List of studies excluded (can use print-outs from Ref Works)	<b>Appendices</b>  Codebook, definitions, and data collection forms (if applicable)

\*Please note: Work with your WCE committee to determine the final outline for your proposal and final document. All outlines in this table are to provide general guidance only.