

University of Texas School of Public Health Practicum Evaluation Executive Summary – Fall 2009

Introduction

Ninety-two students from all four degree programs completed a practicum experience during the Fall 2009 semester. Students and community preceptors were asked to complete an evaluation through Survey Monkey™. Student and preceptor response rates were 89% and 80%, respectively. The key findings are listed below.

Primary Campus and Division

- 68.3% Houston, 31.7% regional campuses
- 31.7% Epidemiology; 29.3% the General program; 15.9% Management, Policy & Community Health; 12.2% Biostatistics; 7.3% Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences; 3.7% Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences

Students

- Locations: University/college system (31.7%), hospital/clinic (22%), others including health departments (11%), community service organizations (8.5%)
- 93.9% of students thought the practicum was very effective (63.4%) or effective (30.5%) as a learning experience
- Final products: report (47.6%), instrument/protocol (8.5%), presentation (7.3%), thesis (7.3%), journal article (4.9%), promotion material (3.7%), training/procedure manual (2.4%), or more than one product (17.1%)
- The practicum was very effective (65.9%) or effective (24.4%) in giving students a better understanding of public health practice
- 61% of students registered for 3 credit hours
- Student hours per week: 16 or more (45.1%), 12-15 hours (25.6%); 96.3% considered the weekly hours to be appropriate
- 52.4% of students reported contact with their preceptor 14 or more times
- Overall ratings of preceptors were positive: 82.9% very good, 11% good
- 96.3% Students highly recommend (56.1%) or recommend (40.2%) their community preceptors
- 97.6% of students highly recommend (48.8%) or recommend (48.8%) their faculty advisor
- Over 90% of students highly recommend (43.9%) or recommend (48.8%) their practicum site

Community Preceptors

- 82% of preceptors rated their student's final product as excellent (43%) or above average (39%)
- 89% reported that student proficiency in using appropriate methods was very effective (65%) or effective (25%)
- Preceptors rated overall student performance as very good (72%) or good (22%)
- 76% of preceptors reported meeting with the student 8 times or more
- 95% of preceptors found the student's weekly time commitment was appropriate
- 99% of preceptors are willing to accept another student

Student Comments

- My site was fantastic in supporting me and welcoming me. I felt needed and appreciated during my time there. It was a great way to share my knowledge and learn from them.
- I find this community site a hidden treasure; it supports the community and is a great proponent of improved women and infants' health...
- The faculty and staff were very co-operative and helped me to have confidence in what I was doing. When the going was tough, they helped me with their inputs and made my learning process a truly memorable one.
- The community site and members of the university were invaluable resource personnel. The outreach worker that assisted me...left a lifelong impression on me and taught me invaluable lessons...From my experience, many of my classmates want to have the opportunity to participate in a similar practicum.

My community preceptor was...

- Very helpful, insightful and provided me great opportunities in achieving and learning the most from my practicum experience.
- The community preceptor valued my role in the planning processes, was readily available for any questions or concerns, and was exceptionally accepting of any new ideas or changes.
- She was very knowledgeable in her field and was very organized. She helped me to learn to think analytically and critically, thus enabling me to look at an issue from varying angles and make the optimum choice. This enabled me to develop my decision making skills and learn from my mistakes.
- Outstanding

Community Preceptor Comments

- [The student] is not only learning about the process of organ donation and transplantation through the practicum, she is helping our organization immensely with her project.
- [This student] is a credit to UT Houston SPH. She will represent UT well in all future endeavors. It has been a pleasure having her work with us.
- Thank you for the opportunity to give back to students- I have truly enjoyed being a part of the beginning of UT Austin's MPH program.
- I really enjoyed working with [this student]. It was a mutual win-win placement and we benefitted from her work with our bureau.
- This experience was great and the Houston Department of Health and Human Services Adult Viral Hepatitis program would love to continue supporting the practicum program.
- It was a pleasure to work with [this student from] the School of Public Health. I look forward to working with the school again.
- Please send more students!

Acknowledgements

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