

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

Introduction

Sixty-six MPH students completed the student evaluation during the Spring 2009 semester. Using SurveyMonkey™ procedures students and community preceptors evaluated the practicum experience. Response rates for students and community preceptors were 94% and 90%, respectively. The following data highlight the major findings.

Primary Campus and Division

- 82% of students were in Houston, while 18% were at regional campuses
- 33% in Epidemiology, 18% in Management, Policy, and Community Health, 12% in Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences, 14% in Biostatistics, and 6% in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

Students

- University (29%) and hospital/clinic (39%) accounted for 68% of the locations
- Most students considered the practicum an effective learning experience; 65% reporting that it was very good and 29% reporting that it was good
- The final product for 79% of the students was a report or presentation
- The practicum was effective (94%) in giving students a better understanding of public health
- 67% of the students registered for three credit hours or more
- 73% of students reported spending more than 12 hours per week on practice related activities
- 88% of the students had contact with their community preceptor more than 6 times, most communication was face-to-face
- All preceptors received a favorable rating with 82% being very good
- All students reported that they would recommend their community preceptor with 64% reporting that they would highly recommend
- 99% of students reported that they would recommend their faculty sponsor with 55% reporting that they would highly recommend

Community Preceptors

- 84% of the final products were excellent (46%) or above average (38%)
- 90% reported that student's proficiency in using appropriate methods were very good (58%) and good (32%)
- Community preceptors were very pleased with students abilities to fulfill the duties of the practicum with 94% rating student performance as good (21%) or very good (73%)
- 95% reported meeting with the student more than six times
- 94% reported that the weekly time commitment was appropriate

Student Comments

- Excellent experience.
- His projects are good and have the potential for a great practicum experience but at the end of the day it does not culminate as such.
- Great mentor!
- Good experience with community preceptor.
- She is knowledgeable and interested in helping. She was instrumental as a project team member.
- Very kind and experienced in his field of work.
- Very knowledgeable and friendly. My mentor made me feel as though I was a part of their team rather than an intern/volunteer.
- He and his staff overall were excellent. I could not have asked for a better experience or more wonderful people to work with. They truly enjoy what they do and take the time to aid anyone who is interested in policy and making a difference.
- She is excellent.
- He is a great professor to work with and gives full liberty to the student to develop the project according to his/her needs. That is an excellent strategy to use.
- Exceptional.

Community Preceptor Comments

- We appreciate sharing a small part in this student's education. We welcome the opportunity to have other students in the future.
- He is a top student.
- He has performed in an outstanding manner and has demonstrated a true commitment to public health education.
- Excellent student.
- We appreciated the contributions that he made, and are eager to recruit additional students.
- He has been a pleasure to work with.
- She is an exceptional young woman. Bright, thoughtful and flexible. Enjoyed having her.
- Interesting experience.
- Her contribution to health policy in our legislative package was invaluable.
- Thanks. He helped us out by doing a report and I think we helped him out.
- She is a great volunteer. Eager to help out in any area needed.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the University of Texas Health Science Center School of Public Health, the Office of Public Health Practice extends our warmest gratitude to the organizations and community preceptors who graciously allowed our students to gain practice experience. Without your continued support and feedback, we would not be able to offer this invaluable experience to our students.