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

Introduction
Ninety-eight students from all four degree programs completed a practicum experience during the Summer 2009 semester. Students and community preceptors were asked to complete an evaluation through Survey Monkey™. Student and preceptor response rates were 96.9% and 93%, respectively. The key findings are listed below.

Primary Campus and Division
- 56.8% Houston, 43.2% regional campuses
- 35.8% the General program; 24.2% Epidemiology; 13.7% Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences; 12.6% Management, Policy & Community Health; 11.6% Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences; 2.1% Biostatistics

Students
- Locations: University/college system (37.9%), hospital/clinic (14.7%), others including community service organizations (7.4%) and government (4.2%)
- 92% of students thought the practicum was very effective (62%) or effective (30%) as a learning experience
- Final products: report (35.8%), report and presentations (20%), creation of training/procedure manual (7.4%) or an instrument or protocol (7.4%), and others wrote journal articles, worked on theses, or more than one product
- The practicum was very effective (59%) or effective (30%) in giving students a better understanding of public health
- 85.3% of students registered for 3 credit hours
- Most students worked 16 or more hours per week (57.9%), and 20% worked 12-15 hours per week; 96.8% considered the weekly hours to be appropriate
- 61.1% of students reported contact with their preceptor 14 or more times
- Overall ratings of preceptors were all positive: 72% very good, 19% good
- Students highly recommend (50.5%) or recommend (42.1%) their faculty advisors
- 93% of students highly recommend (51%) or recommend (42%) their faculty advisor
- Over 95% of students highly recommend (57.9%) or recommend (37.9%) their practicum site

Community Preceptors
- Preceptors rated their student’s final product as excellent (49.5%) or above average (30.1%)
- 95% reported that students’ proficiency in using appropriate methods was very effective (70%) or effective (25%)
- Preceptors rated their student’s overall performance as very good (69%) or good (21.5%)
- 77% of preceptors reported meeting with the student 10 times or more
- 96.8% of preceptors found the student’s weekly time commitment was appropriate
- 91.4% of preceptors are willing to accept another student
Student Comments

- The site provides great opportunity to learn about a diversity of topics while working on your practicum!
- Definitely a good place to make a start for someone who is self-guided and motivated enough
- It is a great place to work with a diverse team, and learn who research is conducted in real world.
- I think working internationally makes you a better public health student because it broadens your perspectives on current issues in health
- It is a very conducive environment for learning, other employees are always eager to help, and a lot of other skills are acquired that might not necessary be relevant to the practicum objectives but will be useful career-wise
- This organization teaches you the importance of working as a team; it is able to adapt to the needs of its host community in delivering services, very humane and very effective.

My community preceptor was...

- Very cooperative and accommodating and ready to help when I needed guidance.
- Very professional and approachable.
- Very patient and knowledgeable about her work, always willing to offer assistance in times of need. Very visionary leader.
- Great preceptor, very helpful and concerned. Flexible in scheduling, understanding of student's time constraints

Community Preceptor Comments

- A very mature, thoughtful and insightful student
- The student was excellent to work with during the practicum. She is innovative, enthusiastic about her work, and persistent to do her best. She is a good communicator and flexible with challenges/obstacles. She is an encourager by nature and a great team-player.
- Bright, excellent interpersonal skills. Interested in topic.
- Compassion; Commitment to serving the under-served; Ability to look beneath the surface of many public health issues and understand the importance of policy.
- All the students that I have come in contact with from UT graduate programs have been great to work with.
- Having the MD/MPH students participate in this elective gave them a rare opportunity to see public health in action. We welcome MD/MPH students in the future.
- We have a lot of ongoing and new research projects, and have had a great experience with 2 persons from your program. Hence, we would welcome more students.

Acknowledgements
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