

Office of Public Health Practice
San Antonio Regional Campus
Student Practicum Evaluations
AY 2006-07

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 2006-2007 academic year, 14 students from Dallas Regional Campus 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. The average annual response rates for students and community preceptors were 94% and 76% respectively.

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

STUDENT RESPONSES

Primary Campus Location

San Antonio (n = 14)

Division

- 100% General

Type of Organization

- 29% Community Service Organization
- 21% Health Department
- 14% Business/Corporate
- 14% Hospital/Clinic
- 14% International
- 7% University/College System

Sites

- Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital
- Community First Health Plans
- University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio
- La Fe Hispanic Policy and Advocacy center
- Abundance Ministries/Alliance for Wellness

- Texas Department of State Health Services
- South Texas Environmental Education and Research
- Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty-Istanbul University
- Pan American Health Organization
- Metro Health
- Children's Association for Maximum Potential
- JOVEN

Practicum Topics

- Understand health care accessibility for maternal and child health
- Coordinating plans to build a pediatric dental clinic
- How health problem is addressed within a public health organization
- Differences in hospital utilization between Hispanics and Non Hispanics
- Management of a medical trip by a non-governmental organization
- Evolution of antibiotic resistance in *S. aureus* and impact on community
- Environmental and public health concerns of US-Mexico border residents
- Understand Emergency/Disaster Preparedness entails
- Determine what type of infrastructure exists for public health
- Effectiveness of CD-ROM produced by Pan American Health Organization
- Familiarize with general concepts promoting healthier lifestyles
- Count children with disabilities by age and type of disability
- Observing a non-profit agency develops a vision and gets funding

Final Product

- 57% Report
- 14% Presentation
- 7.1% Instrument Protocol
- 7.1% Journal Article
- 7.1% Thesis
- 7.1% Training/Procedure Manual

Weekly Time Commitment by Student (Hours/Week)

- 93% students enrolled at the San Antonio Regional Campus spent 12 hours or more working on practicum related activities
- 93% students enrolled at the San Antonio Regional Campus counted their practicum experience for 3 credit hours or more

Source for Locating Practicum

Faculty	5
Current Employer	2
Office of Public Health Practice	3
Friend/Colleague	2
Internship Career Fair	1
Self Developed	1
Total	14

Effectiveness of Learning Experience

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

Question	Rating on a scale of 5.00 Average	SPH Average
Developing skills to work as a team member	4.15	4.46
Navigating work environment to accomplish objectives	4.15	4.45
Developing problem-solving skills	4.07	4.49
Working with diverse groups and cultures	4.00	4.41
Understanding the structure of the community organization	4.43	4.42
Formulating an idea from conception to completion	4.14	4.48
Developing an understanding of public health practice	4.36	4.39
Developing leadership skills	4.18	4.31

Student Satisfaction with Practicum

- 79% of students reported that the practicum experience was effective, with 50% indicating that the practicum was very effective
- 71% 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 36% reporting that they would highly recommend their community site

Student Contact with Preceptors during Practice Experience

- 71% of students met with their community preceptor 10 times or more
- Face-to-face was the most common form of communication
- 71% of students reported that the weekly commitment was appropriate

Community Preceptor Attributes

Question	Rating on a Scale of 5.00 Average	SPH Average
Experienced in his/her field of work	4.71	4.78
Flexible and open to making changes to suit my needs as a student	4.50	4.70
Willing to offer suggestions and directions when needed	4.36	4.56

Available to answer questions and provide support	4.64	4.65
Helpful in accomplishing project milestones	4.29	4.52
Available to provide useful feedback concerning my work	4.36	4.55

Student Satisfaction with Community Preceptors

- 93% community preceptors were rated as above average, with 71% rated as very good

Faculty Sponsor Attributes

Question	Rating on a Scale of 5.00 Average	SPH Average
Flexible to suit my needs as a student	3.93	4.51
Willing to offer suggestions when needed	4.21	4.54
Available to provide useful feedback concerning my work	4.50	4.44
Helpful in accomplishing project milestones	4.30	4.37

Student Satisfaction with Faculty Sponsors

- 93% sponsors were rated as above average, with 43% 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, 95% of the community preceptors reported that they would be willing to accept students for future practice experiences; and 91% of the students believed their practice experience was complimentary in preparing them for the job market.