

**University of Texas School of Public Health
Practicum Evaluation
Executive Summary – Spring 2010**

Introduction

Sixty-nine students from all four degree programs completed a practicum experience during the Spring 2010 semester. Students and community preceptors were asked to complete an evaluation through Survey Monkey™. Student and preceptor response rates were 87% and 88%, respectively. The key findings are listed below.

Primary Campus and Division

- 75% Houston, 25% regional campuses
- 32% Epidemiology; 17% General program; 23% Management, Policy & Community Health; 13% Biostatistics; 8% Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences; 7% Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences

Students

- Locations: University/college system (38%), hospital/clinic (25%), others (17%), health departments (9%), community service organizations (7%), or government (5%)
- 93% of students thought the practicum was very effective (73%) or effective (20%) as a learning experience
- Final products: report (45%), instrument/protocol (15%), journal article (12%), thesis (7%), training/procedure manual (7%), presentation (5%), or more than one product (10%)
- The practicum was very effective (60%) or effective (28%) in giving students a better understanding of public health practice
- 48% of students registered for 3 credit hours
- Student hours per week: 16 or more (45%), 12-15 hours (32%); 98% considered the weekly hours to be appropriate
- 62% of students reported contact with their preceptor 14 or more times
- Overall ratings of preceptors were positive: 85% very good, 12% good
- 96% of students highly recommend (58%) or recommend (38%) their community preceptors
- 93% of students highly recommend (50%) or recommend (43%) their faculty advisor
- Over 96% of students highly recommend (58%) or recommend (38%) their practicum site

Community Preceptors

- 82% of preceptors rated their student's final product as excellent (56%) or above average (26%)
- 95% reported that student proficiency in using appropriate methods was very effective (61%) or effective (34%)
- Preceptors rated overall student performance as very good (72%) or good (20%)
- 80% of preceptors reported meeting with the student 10 times or more
- 97% of preceptors found the student's weekly time commitment was appropriate
- 95% of preceptors are willing to accept another student

Student Comments

- Having internship in Health Department really give me a broad view and in-depth training concerning public health issues. I am really glad that I can acquire a huge variety of hands-on experience here, thanks.
- I think it is helpful to have graduate students from the public health field collaborating on this project. It has opportunity for good synergy.
- Individuals were friendly and were always helpful in helping understand or gather information.
- Preceptor and faculty sponsor have such a wonderful collaboration that working amongst them was solely about the purpose at hand-- implementing the intervention for the benefit of the community members. It was a wonderful experience that I wish everyone can have.
- The work culture is very professional and at the same time friendly. Open to provide information. I learnt a lot of things apart from academics.
- This place is a wonderful environment to understand the complex system of healthcare providers and government agencies. The work environment is supportive and caring.
- You must be an independent worker but there is plenty of things to do regarding public health at this site. My practicum resulted in an application to continue with a culminating experience. It was approved so I will be continuing work at my community site.

My community preceptor was...

- Awesome, he is my mentor. I learned genetic epidemiology because of him.
- Excellent! Explained everything and gave me adequate time - genuinely interested in my progress.
- My community preceptor and I developed methods of assessment from the beginning and availed time for us to meet on a regular basis to assess progress.
- Very enthusiastic about the project, which made me and the other interns interested. She is extremely kind hearted and willing to help.

Community Preceptor Comments

- I'll happily accept other interns from the University of Texas School of Public Health, especially if they are as competent and skilled as this student.
- I thoroughly enjoy working with students and providing them with an experience that builds on their interests and strengths. The students I have worked with have been very valuable to our organization. Please keep sending them our way. Thank you!
- Good placement and good work.
- An outstanding student.

Acknowledgements

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