

**University of Texas School of Public Health
Practicum Evaluation
Executive Summary – Spring 2011**

Introduction

Ninety-one students from all four degree programs completed a practicum experience during the Spring 2011 semester. Students and community preceptors were asked to complete an evaluation through Survey Monkey™. Student and preceptor response rates were 81% and 87%, respectively. The key findings are listed below.

Primary Campus and Division

- 81% Houston, 19% regional campuses
- 31% Epidemiology; 24% Management, Policy & Community Health; 13% General program; 13% Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences; 9% Biostatistics; 8% Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences

Students

- Locations: University/college system (28%), hospital/clinic (29%), health departments (9%), government (7%), community service organizations (5%), business/corporate (4%), foundation (4%), federal (3%), international (1%), primary/secondary education (1%)
- 92% of students thought the practicum was very effective (70%) or effective (22%) as a learning experience
- Final products: report (45%), more than one product (12%), journal article (11%), instrument/protocol (10%), presentation (8%), training/procedure manual (4%), promotional material (4%) or thesis (1%)
- The practicum was very effective (48%) or effective (40%) in giving students a better understanding of public health practice
- 95% of students registered for 3 credit hours or more (registrar's data)
- Student hours per week: 16 or more (35%), 12-15 hours (33%); 96% considered the weekly hours to be appropriate
- 63% of students reported contact with their preceptor 14 or more times
- Overall ratings of preceptors were positive: 83% very good and 12% good
- 91% of students highly recommend (60%) or recommend (31%) their community preceptors
- 88% of students highly recommend (48%) or recommend (40%) their faculty sponsor
- 89% of students highly recommend (49%) or recommend (40%) their practicum site

Community Preceptors

- 74% of preceptors rated their student's final product as excellent (47%) or above average (31%); 6% had an incomplete mainly because the final product was a publication
- 89% reported that student proficiency in using appropriate methods was very effective (67%) or effective (22%)
- Preceptors rated overall student performance as very good (76%) or good (15%)
- 80% of preceptors reported meeting with the student 10 times or more
- 89% of preceptors found the student's weekly time commitment was appropriate
- 91% of preceptors are willing to accept another student

Student Comments

- Although he is very busy, he always found time to discuss about the project and provide guidance for the future steps.
- AMAZING!
- Phenomenal Public Health leader and visionary!
- Truly a motivational leader in the field of dementia care and gerontology. She knows a lot about managing the disease of dementia, and is very flexible in allowing students to create the practicum of their choice.

My community preceptor was...

- An expert in the area of my practicum and best mentor and colleague so that I never felt any burden during my practicum.
- Dr. Murray's style of teaching was perfect for me, in that I was generally allowed to work very independently. During times I needed guidance, she always provided good feedback and never pushed me to do anything that wasn't in my best interest. I felt that she always did her best to treat me with respect and maintain an open line of communication.
- Excellent!! The best I could have ever asked for, she was always asking after my welfare and we had a review of my progress every month without my even requesting a review.
- She had excellent leadership qualities, very goal oriented and always welcomed my view point, very prompt in replying emails, would assign work and always follow up with me to see if I have any doubts. Very approachable, kind and friendly.
- Terrific. Almost always available when I needed to talk to her, and was not just a preceptor, but also served as a career mentor.

Community Preceptor Comments

- Student worked on data from Project Saving Smiles (PSS), a community and evidence-based primary preventive oral health strategy. The PSS is one of the Houston Department of Health and Human Services' best practices that meet its goal of serving the Houston community. It has attained this status because of on-going evaluations with the assistance of the UTSPH students. Student is well on her way to becoming an excellent public health epidemiologist. Thank you for sending her to us.
- Dr. Rosenau was a wonderful partner with whom to coordinate this experience. She consistently helped provide the scholarly material and direction to make this effort a success. Student was amicable and a pleasure with whom to work.
- Student was a pleasure to work with and a competent student. We'd love to have her back as part of our project team.
- Thanks for the opportunity to be a part of the educational process.

Acknowledgements

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