

PHC 6946

Public Health Internship

Instructor

Each student's supervisory committee chair serves as instructor for PHC 6946. Supervisory chairs are involved in selection and approval of internship sites and special projects; development of documents for IRB approval, if necessary; supervision of the internship; and assignment of a final grade.

Purpose

To enable MPH students to apply entry-level competencies acquired in the classroom setting to public health practice through experiential activities.

Description

The internship provides an opportunity for each student to work in a public health setting in a position that carries responsibility and is of particular interest. Each placement is different, but all of them depend upon completion of most concentration coursework, the ability to work with minimal supervision, and permission of the student's supervisory committee.

Objectives

At the completion of the Public Health Internship, the student will be able to:

1. Describe newly acquired knowledge in one or more specific public health area
2. Apply one or more MPH competency with the skill expected from a practical experience
3. Apply one or more concentration competency with the skill expected from a practical experience
4. Demonstrate professional work habits

Credits

This is a variable credit course reflecting the number of hours the student is engaged at the internship site. One credit = 48 internship contact hours. MPH students are required to complete at least 5 internship credits, but take as many as 8 credits. Beginning fall 2009, students enroll for 1 PHC 6946 credit the semester before beginning the field-based portion of the internship.

Grading

This course is graded as Pass/Fail (S/U).

Requirements

During the Semester Before Field Work

Register for PHC 6945 for 1 credit

Complete the Internship Questionnaire and submit it to the MPH Internship Coordinator

Update the self-assessment of competencies (both MPH and concentration-specific) in your MPH Portfolio

Attend all sessions of the Pre-internship seminar series. Topics include:

- Arranging internships and special projects
- IRB requirements and submission process
- Preceptor Day, with visits by many internship preceptors from previous semesters
- Interviewing skills
- Presentation techniques

- Preparing the final paper and presentation

Meet with the Internship Coordinator and your Supervisory Committee Chair individually for ideas and guidance. The lists of competencies in your MPH Portfolio will help you identify the skills and knowledge areas you would like to strengthen during your internship.

Begin researching and contacting potential internship sites and/or preceptors, for example

- National Organizations
- Government Organizations
- Local Departments of Health
- Community Centers
- American Public Health Association
- Florida Public Health Association

Update MPH Portfolio and prepare for interviews

- Create resume or curriculum vitae
- Select writing samples
- Contact and speak with possible references
- Practice interview skills
- Confirm, with the Internship Coordinator and your Supervisory Chair, the number of credits and contact hours you will need for your internship and how you would like to distribute them within one semester or across two semesters. 1 credit = 48 internship contact hours.
- Become familiar with the MPH Preceptor Handbook

Contact final site selections:

- Submit a letter of interest – Be sure to identify specific projects you would like to work on at that particular site
- Submit resume or curriculum vitae

The interview process:

- Take your MPH Portfolio to the interview
- Use this time to determine the scope of potential field experiences and activities available at the site
- Discuss goals, objectives, competencies, possible projects, timeframes, and expectations.
If the field site does not meet your expectations, meet with the Internship Coordinator and/or your Supervisory Chair to discuss alternative sites and options.

Contact the Internship Coordinator as soon as possible if the chosen internship site requires a formal contract or affiliation agreement with the college.

Meet with your Supervisory Committee Chair to determine whether or not your internship or any part of it will require IRB approval. Information about IRB requirements may be found at:

<http://irb.ufl.edu/education/trainreq.htm> . Note that there are two IRBs at UF in Gainesville with slightly different requirements.

If IRB approval is required, prepare and submit an application as early in the semester as possible.

Complete the Internship and Special Project Proposal Form:

- This includes a description of the internship and projects that will be undertaken

- In the workplan, describe in detail at least one *special* project and provide sufficient information to determine whether the project can be completed in the time allotted to this internship.
- Goals must specify the strengthening of *at least* one MPH competency and one concentration competency
- Sign these forms and acquire original signatures from your Supervisory Chair, your Internship Preceptor, and the MPH Internship Coordinator

Submit the completed and signed Internship and Special Project Proposal Form (available in interactive pdf format at www.mph.ufl.edu) with original signatures to the Program Assistant. **Registration in PHC 6946 is restricted to students with signed Internship and Special Project Proposal Forms.**

During the Public Health Internship Itself

Conduct your special project

Engage in other projects at the internship agency or organization

Participate in meetings and all other professional activities that your schedule allows. Learn everything you can about the agency or organization.

Maintain a log of hours worked throughout the internship period and have it signed by your preceptor.

Contact your Supervisory Committee Chair and preceptor about once each month through the semester or project to discuss progress, review plans for the final paper and presentation, and receive feedback.

Upon Completion of Public Health Internship

Ask your preceptor to complete the Internship Evaluation Form

You complete the Agency and Preceptor Evaluation Form

Prepare a short factual report that includes:

- A signed log of hours
- Names of projects/assignments undertaken and whether they were completed during the internship

Note: The special project paper and presentation are requirements of PHC 6601. Please see the next section of the Handbook for that course syllabus.