

**Preceptor Handbook**

**Master of Public Health Program**



**To preserve, promote, and improve the health and wellbeing of populations, communities, and individuals. To fulfill this mission, we foster collaborations among public health and the health professions in education, research, and service.**

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## Introduction

Every year, almost 100 students in the Master of Public Health (MPH) Program at the University of Florida serve as interns in public health agencies and related organizations. Internships provide opportunities to apply skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to the real world of public health. And these applied experiences, in turn, strengthen our students' competence in the key activities of our field.

We are very fortunate to work with a growing number of agencies and organizations in the development of internship opportunities for our students. As the number of students, internship sites, and preceptors has grown, so have requests for clarification of policies and general guidance about how to assure solid learning experiences for MPH interns while also meeting the needs of the agency or organization.

This *Preceptor Handbook* is an effort to address the questions posed thus far by students and preceptors. We anticipate that more issues will emerge in the future. As they do, the handbook will be updated. The most recent version of the handbook will always be available at our website: [www.mph.ufl.edu](http://www.mph.ufl.edu).

The first two sections of the handbook provide background information on the College of Public Health and Health Professions and the MPH Program, with special emphasis on development of professional competencies, a hallmark of our program. The next section, *The Special Role of the Preceptor*, begins on page 13. This section addresses many of the specific issues and questions that our preceptors have posed to us during the past five years. The final three sections provide information that is likely to be helpful to all preceptors: relevant course syllabi, guidelines for special projects and internships by concentration, and the forms that students and preceptors are asked to complete.

We hope this handbook is helpful to you. If you have suggestions or questions, please feel free to contact us.

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## COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS (PHHP) OVERVIEW

The Master of Public Health Program is offered by the College of Public Health and Health Professions (PHHP), one of six colleges that comprise the University of Florida Health Science Center. The other colleges are Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Medicine. Established in 1958, the College was the first of its type in the United States dedicated to educating students of many different health professions in an academic health center. In 2003, the College expanded beyond its original focus on health professions to embrace public health as integral to its mission and goals. We envision our long history of national leadership in the education of health professionals to continue far into the future through development and application of innovative models of education, research, and service that derive from collaboration among public health disciplines and the health professions.

The mission of the College is:

**To preserve, promote, and improve the health and wellbeing of populations, communities, and individuals. To fulfill this mission, we foster collaborations among public health and the health professions in education, research, and service.**

Consistent with its mission, the College has three primary goals:

**Provide excellent educational programs that prepare graduates to address the multifaceted health needs of populations, communities, and individuals,**

**Conduct quality research and disseminate findings that are responsive to priority health needs,**

**Serve as active participants and leaders in University, public health, health practice, and health services communities through collaborative approaches to intervention, professional practice, and policy.**

We emphasize the development of intellectual resources and skills that can help our graduates address today's complex health problems and pursue fulfilling careers in a variety of health arenas. The College strives to impart the following values to all of our students:

- **Commitment to excellence**
- **Diversity**
- **Integrity**
- **Respect for human dignity**
- **Social responsibility**

## **MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH) PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The standard Master of Public Health program is a 2-year, 48-credit program. Selected students with terminal degrees in health-related fields may complete the MPH in an accelerated 42-credit program. The first three semesters usually involve traditional coursework, while the last semester is devoted to a practice-based internship, which includes a special project. The internship rounds out the MPH by providing opportunities to apply many of the skills introduced in the classroom to the real world of public health. The special project is completed during the internship and may be one of several projects undertaken within a single internship. All students present their special projects – in oral and poster presentation format as well as in written form -- during Public Health Day in the final semester of their programs. These presentations require consideration of the project in the larger context of public health as a cross-disciplinary field and in relation to the competencies expected of all MPH graduates.

Faculty, students and preceptors attend Public Health Day presentations and engage in lively dialogue about the students' projects.

### **Concentrations**

MPH students are admitted into one of six concentration areas, from which the number and type of advanced specialty course credits are determined. The concentration areas are Biostatistics, Environmental Health, Epidemiology, Public Health Management and Policy, Public Health Practice, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

### **Graduation Requirements**

The major characteristics and graduation requirements of the 48-credit MPH curriculum are:

- One course in each of the five core areas (15 credits)
- Seminar in Contemporary Public Health Issues (1 credit)
- Core Courses in an area of concentration (15-21 credits)
- Elective courses relevant to the chosen concentration and individual career goals (up to 12 credits). Some students use 3 of these credits for a practicum or supervised research project.
- Public Health Internship (5-8 credits)
- Major paper and presentation (credit assigned through the Seminar in Contemporary Public Health Issues)

### **Competencies Expected of MPH Students**

All students in the MPH Program are expected to master a set of public health competencies during the course of their studies. The MPH core competencies are adapted from the Ten Essential Public Health Services developed by several agencies within the US Public Health Service to expand upon the three core functions of public health -- assessment, policy development, and assurance. Learning objectives for the five MPH core courses were selected to contribute to the competencies. The learning objectives also reflect the topics that will be covered in the Certification in Public Health examination, which students are encouraged to take after graduation from the program. Additional competencies specific to each concentration were developed by the faculty, based on standards in the field. The decisions students make about courses and other learning experiences are guided by their relationships to achieving the competencies.

### **MPH Core Competencies and Learning Experiences**

Graduates of the MPH degree program are expected to have entry-level competence in the following essential public health services:

1. Monitoring health status to identify and solve community health problems
2. Diagnosing and investigating health problems and health hazards in the community using an ecological framework
3. Informing, educating, and empowering people about health issues
4. Mobilizing community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems
5. Developing policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts
6. Using laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety
7. Linking people to needed personal health services and assuring the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable
8. Evaluating effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services
9. Conducting research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems
10. Communicating effectively with public health constituencies in oral and written forms

### **Program Concentration Competencies**

Each concentration offers a unique curriculum of courses designed to assure that students gain the skills necessary to become competent practitioners. (Public Health Practice concentration students may have a blend of the five concentrations below.)

#### Biostatistics Competencies

1. Apply standard probability distributions to public health outcomes.
2. Apply and interpret common statistical descriptive and inferential methods, including confidence intervals and hypothesis tests in one-sample, two-sample, and multivariable regression settings.
3. Build and interpret appropriate multivariate regression models to analyze public health data.
4. Develop practical skills in using statistical software packages for data management and analysis of public health data.
5. Develop written reports based on statistical analyses.

#### Environmental Health Competencies

1. Examine the direct and indirect human and ecological health effects of major environmental agents.
2. Develop a quantitative risk assessment framework for environmental hazards.
3. Apply knowledge of environmental legislation to case studies to determine jurisdiction and approach.
4. Apply approaches for assessing environmental exposures, including exposure assessment design and methods.
5. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and appropriate communication when engaged in public health practice and research.

#### Epidemiology Competencies

1. Assess potential confounders in epidemiology studies.
2. Evaluate interaction, effect modification, and mediation in epidemiology studies.
3. Evaluate the multifactorial etiology and pathophysiology of chronic diseases.
4. Apply criteria for identification, prevention, and control of infectious agents.
5. Manage, analyze and interpret large-scale epidemiologic data.

#### Population Health Management

1. Integrate systems thinking theory to incorporate multiple stakeholders at state and local levels to address a public health issue.

2. Create an evaluation plan for a public health initiative.
3. Apply principles and theory of budget preparation, managerial accounting, and financial management to organizations in the health sector.
4. Develop a survey instrument that validly examines public health research questions and produces data that addresses health implications and their relationship to policy and contexts.
5. Conduct an economic analysis of a major health policy issue.

#### Social and Behavioral Sciences

1. Evaluate public health social and behavioral science research so that research decisions, strengths and limitations are addressed.
2. Integrate social and behavioral science theories and concepts in the development of interventions/solutions to public health problems.
3. Design and conduct a community needs assessment.
4. Design, implement and evaluate a public health intervention
5. Design and develop effective communication products that convey health information to diverse audiences that increase recipients' knowledge and positively impact attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

#### **Competency Development**

Each student maintains an Electronic *MPH Portfolio* during the Master of Public Health program. The Portfolio serves as:

1) A guide to self-assessment of achievement of the MPH and concentration-specific competencies, and 2) a compendium of documents that demonstrate accomplishments during the MPH program. Key elements include:

- Tables of competencies, both MPH core and concentration-specific competencies
- A CV and/or a resume
- Writing samples from courses
- Special Project report and power point or poster presentation

The competency tables in the *MPH Portfolio* help students, advisors, faculty members and preceptors track progress on achievement of competencies and identify any areas that are deficient. Faculty and preceptors can then work with students to identify additional learning experiences that will address those shortcomings before graduation. Students are strongly encouraged to work with their preceptors to select internship activities that strengthen competence in appropriate areas. Ongoing assessment information should be utilized by the preceptor and the student to help modify activities during the internship. At the completion of the internship, preceptors are asked to submit a written assessment of the student's performance. The assessment includes both MPH and concentration-specific competencies. Please see the Preceptor Evaluation Form for more details.

## THE SPECIAL ROLE OF THE PRECEPTOR

Preceptors play critical roles in the education of MPH students. They have the knowledge and experience to guide students to new opportunities and to demonstrate how skills introduced in the classroom are implemented in the real world. Preceptors for MPH students have:

- A working knowledge and practical experience in the project areas assigned to the student
- Substantial experience in the agency or organization
- An interest in and commitment to helping a graduate student
- Time to commit to mentor a student

In this section, we describe some of the ways in which preceptors have contributed to successful student experiences and we identify roles and responsibilities of preceptors, students, and the MPH Program.

The phrase internship/special project is used frequently below because the role of the preceptor often spans these activities. However, they are different activities from the perspective of the student and the MPH program. Thus some definitions may be helpful:

*Internship:* Every MPH student is required to complete an internship of 5-8 credits, or 240–384 contact hours. The internship must be conducted in a public health or related setting, and it may include many projects and other activities selected to strengthen the competence of the individual student. Students register for PHC 6946 for the internship course. They may split their time and credits across semesters, if appropriate, but the internship is usually undertaken after all or most required classroom-based coursework is completed.

*Special Project:* During the internship experience, each student is required to complete a special project, which serves as the basis of a written report and an oral presentation. The special project may be one of several activities undertaken during an internship. However, it should be a substantial project which involves identification of a question/problem/issue, review of relevant literature, application of appropriate public health methods, description of results, and identification of strengths and weaknesses. If a student is part of a team working on a large project, the student's special project is the piece for which s/he is responsible. The content of special project reports is described in the syllabus for PHC 6601. Public Health Day is scheduled every semester for special project presentations, and preceptors are encouraged to participate.

Syllabi with details about each of these courses are included in the Course Syllabi section of this handbook.

### Suggestions for Successful Internships

#### Work together to develop an internship and special project

One of the first tasks that preceptors carry out with students is the development of objectives that will assist the student to strengthen public health competencies, while meeting the organizational needs of the preceptor and agency. Since students in the public health practice concentration select competencies from two or more other concentrations, they usually engage in internship experiences that are common across their selected concentrations. Faculty Advisors help students and preceptors identify these activities.

### **Focus on competencies to be strengthened during the internship**

Review the student's portfolio at the beginning of the internship to assess which competencies students still need to develop or strengthen helps to keep all parties on task.

### **Be familiar with internship and special project requirements**

The internship and special project conducted by the student must meet the requirements of the course syllabi. If there are special issues regarding the internship or special project, such as confidentiality concerns that might prevent the student from presenting proprietary data, please contact the student's Faculty Advisor to discuss the issues and how to address them.

### **Arrange an orientation to the agency**

Properly introducing the student to the agency or organization is crucial to the overall success of the internship and special project. Beginning with an orientation, the preceptor provides the environment in which the student can gain confidence in his or her ability to perform successfully as a public health practitioner.

### **Find the right pace**

Frequently, the preceptor and the student are working together for the first time during the internship. A thoughtful assessment of the student's abilities helps to avoid assigning too much responsibility too soon or withholding responsibilities that s/he may be able to complete.

### **Schedule regular meetings**

Regular meetings in which the student updates the preceptor on progress and identifies any problems or issues are key to successful internships. Students are required to maintain a log of hours and internship assignments. This log can be signed weekly or monthly by the preceptor to assure that not only the hour requirement for the internship/practicum is met but that the student is on track with previously established goals and objectives.

### **Contact the MPH Program**

Communication is key! Questions will arise, many of which can be handled with a quick phone call or email. Don't hesitate to contact the MPH Internship Coordinator or the student's faculty advisor to discuss any issue that may arise.

### **Collaborate on the Special Project Report and Presentation**

To the extent possible, preceptors are encouraged to review their students' reports and allow students to present their reports to members of the organization for discussion and feedback. These opportunities not only provide additional hands-on experiences and formal feedback to the agency, but they also help students prepare for their Public Health Day presentations.

## **Roles and**

## **Responsibilities**

### **Preceptor**

*Prior to placement, the preceptor should:*

- Identify a project or set of projects for a student to complete. Sample assignments and objectives

for each concentration are located in the Guidelines section of this handbook.

- Interview interested student(s) who contact the preceptor (you). If the student appears to be a match for the agency, confirm placement with him or her.
- Review the student's portfolio and discuss competencies that the student will work to develop during the course of the internship.
- Review the student's Internship Proposal Form and workplan to be sure you and the student agree on the projects and work assignments to be completed.
- If you are in agreement, sign the form so the student can register for the course. The form will also be signed by the MPH Internship Coordinator and the student's faculty advisor. You will receive an electronic copy of the form once it has been approved.

*Once the placement has been made, the preceptor should:*

- Arrange a schedule with the student for completing the necessary hours.
- Give the student an orientation to the site early in the field experience. This will assist in a smooth transition into the site and optimize the use of available resources.
- Provide adequate office space and office materials for the student if necessary.
- Explain to the student your expectations of his or her conduct. The areas of dress, conduct, scheduling of hours, and general characteristics of the Internship should be discussed.
- Allow sufficient time for supervision and instruction in the form of routine interactions.
- Guide the student in his or her next steps throughout the project as needed and ask to review work periodically.
- Provide the student with constructive feedback.
- Afford the student the time and patience needed for an optimal learning experience.
- Keep a record of the student's progress, hours at the site, and copies of his or her work.
- The preceptor should provide constructive feedback privately to the student.
  - Feedback should be specific and timely, based on observation of behavior and skills.
  - Feedback should include descriptions of specific behaviors with both positive and negative statements.
  - In the event that the preceptor and student cannot resolve an issue, the MPH Internship Coordinator and the student's Faculty Advisor should be contacted.
- Complete the final evaluation of the student.

## **Student**

The student is responsible for choosing a special project/internship of interest and for contacting the potential agency/preceptor. Once a placement has been made, the student is expected to:

- Function as a professional: This should be reflected in projects and activities performed by the student as well as relationships with the preceptor, other agency staff, etc.
- Be professional in appearance, both in dress and conduct.
- Adhere to the schedule predetermined with the preceptor.
- Notify the preceptor if there is a possibility of being late or absent.
- Practice professional courtesy when communicating with clients and other health professionals.
- Clearly identify him or herself as a student when interacting with the public or with other health professionals.
- Report directly to the preceptor: The relationship between the student and the preceptor should be one of student-teacher rather than employer-employee, or co-workers. The student-teacher

relationship should be built on mutual respect, trust, communication, and understanding

- Complete an evaluation of the agency/preceptor at the end of the experience.
- Communicate concerns and problems to the preceptor and the MPH Internship Coordinator.
- Fulfill the learning goals, course objectives, and assignments.
- Follow agency policies and procedures (including policies on confidentiality, documentation, dress code, etc.)
- Develop a paper and presentation based on the Special Project for delivery on Public Health Day
- Initiate a three-way conversation among student, preceptor, and Faculty Advisor to assess the progress of the Internship and preparation of the final written and oral reports. This can be done by conference call or meeting.

### **Master of Public Health Program and Faculty**

Assist the student in clarifying educational goals and competencies to be strengthened by the placement. Assist the student in selecting potential sites for the field experience.

- Arrange affiliation agreements
- Respond to the needs of the student and preceptor during the placement and provide consultation to students and preceptors upon request
- Review and critique student's presentation prior to Public Health Day.
- Maintain regular communication with preceptors and students during the course of the internship
- Notify the preceptor of the date and time of the student's presentation on Public Health Day
- Review and grade student paper and presentation about the special project.

# Course Syllabi

## PHC 6946 Syllabus Public Health Internship

### Instructor

Each student's Faculty Advisor serves as instructor for PHC 6946. Faculty Advisors 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 Faculty Advisor.

### 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

MPH students are required to complete at least 5 internship credits. One credit requires 48 contact hours.

### Grading

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

### Requirements

#### *During the Semester Before Your Internship*

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

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

View all required sessions of the Internship Preparation seminar series.

Topics include:

- Selecting an internship site and a special project
- Institutional Review Board: What You MUST Know
- Academic Integrity

- Presenting Research Data
- Preparation of the final paper and presentation
- Competencies

Arrange to meet with the Internship Coordinator and your Faculty Advisor individually via an Internet meeting or telephone 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. Your Faculty Advisor is assigned to you upon pre-approval of your internship site and proposed special project by the Internship Coordinator. The Faculty Advisor will give final approval on the internship proposal and workplan.

Begin researching and contacting potential internship sites, for example

- National and International Organizations
- Government Organizations
- Local Departments of Health
- Community Centers
- American Public Health Association
- State Public Health Associations

Update MPH Portfolio and prepare for interviews

- Create or revise resume or curriculum vitae
- Select writing samples
- Contact possible references
- Practice interview skills
- Confirm, with the Internship Coordinator and your Faculty Advisor how your 5 credit hours will be distributed - within one semester or across two semesters. 1 credit = 48 internship
- 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 a resume or curriculum vitae

The interview process:

- Discuss goals, objectives, competencies, possible projects, internal IRB requirements, time frames, and expectations.

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 Faculty Advisor 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 different IRBs at UF with slightly different requirements.

If IRB approval is required, prepare and submit an application as early in the semester as possible. Please keep in mind that with some agencies, there may be additional approvals needed.

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 the Internship Proposal form and acquire original signatures from your faculty advisor, your Internship Preceptor, and the MPH Internship Coordinator. Digital pdf signatures are preferred but forms may be printed, signed and faxed or scanned and emailed to the Internship Coordinator for a signature.

**Registration in PHC 6946 is restricted to students with signed Internship and Special Project Proposal Forms.**

### ***During the Public Health Internship***

- 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 on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Contact your Faculty Advisor and preceptor at least about once each month throughout the semester(s) 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
- Complete the Faculty Advisor qualtrics Evaluation
- 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

**PHC 6601**  
**Seminar in Contemporary Public Health Issues Syllabus**  
**Fall Semester Thursday, 11:45AM-1:40 PM, according to schedule**  
**Spring Semester, Monday, 11:45AM-1:40PM, according to schedule**  
**Location: TBA per schedules**  
**Credit: 1 credit**

### **Description**

This course is designed to provide a framework for students to integrate a variety of public health topics, issues, and skills into a culminating experience for the MPH program. The course is offered fall and spring with variable one hour sessions in each semester for campus students. Online students will be enrolled in an eLearning course “Public Health Seminars—Online MPH” in order to fulfill the requirement. MPH students are required to attend 16 contact hours of the sessions during their course of study, complete a major paper and a presentation during the final semester of the program, develop a portfolio of professional accomplishments, and complete the MPH Exit Survey. Since many students are not on campus during the final semester while they conduct their internships, it is wise to attend all sessions of this course early in the program. Seminar sessions consist of required MPH program professional development sessions and a mix of seminars offered by the College of Public Health and Health Professions and its various departments. . Most of the professional development sessions and all of the internship preparation sessions are required.

### **Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the interrelationships among the five core areas of public health;
2. Document and discuss public health accomplishments, including achievement of MPH and concentration competencies;
3. Interact professionally with faculty, staff, and peers in a variety of formal and informal settings; and
4. Present a complete project undertaken during the internship in written and oral/poster presentation form, thus strengthening competence in communication.

### **Content**

Seminar sessions are offered on professional development topics as well as contemporary public health issues, with special emphasis on three interdisciplinary topics considered essential to the contemporary practice of public health:

- **Communication:** The ability to give, solicit and receive oral, written, graphic, and numerical information, taking into consideration target audience and using a variety of mechanisms in both formal and informal settings.
- **Leadership:** The ability to create and communicate a shared vision for a better future, champion solutions to organizational and community challenges and energize commitment to goals.
- **Professionalism and Ethics:** The ability to demonstrate ethical choices, values and professional practices implicit in public health decisions, giving consideration to the effect of choices on community stewardship, equity, social justice and accountability, as well as to commit to personal and institutional development.

Sessions are offered on the role of MPH and concentration competencies in public health education, developing a major paper and presentation, academic integrity, selecting an internship and special project, Institutional Review Board requirements on research involving human subjects, interviewing skills, and resume construction. Specific sessions are required of new students and other sessions of students in the semester preceding their internships. Required sessions are identified on the seminar schedule for each semester.

In addition, campus-based MPH students in the first year, including students in the combined bachelor's/MPH program, are required to participate in three special sessions that involve interprofessional learning in health (IPLH). Each of the three sessions counts for two contact hours in PHC 6601. Please see the attached document, *Interprofessional Learning in Health*, and the IPLH syllabus for additional information.

## Requirements

To receive a grade for PHC 6601, students must meet the following **requirements**:

- Attend at least 16 contact hours from seminar sessions, including IPLH, during the course of the MPH program
- Attend all required seminar sessions
- Attend 6 Public Health Day presentations by other students during the semesters before their own internships; at least 2 sessions in the student's own concentration, and at least 2 online sessions
- Present a Special Project in oral or poster form on Public Health Day
- Complete the MPH portfolio documenting accomplishments, including achievement of MPH and concentration competencies
- Complete the online MPH Exit Survey

## Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to behave professionally throughout this course. Examples of professional behavior include:

- Participating actively in the discussion of the topic after the presentation
- Registering upon arrival at each session
- Being on time and staying until class is dismissed
- Turning off cell phones, pagers, iPads, and laptops during class

## Registration

Students register for one credit of PHC 6601 during the last semester in the MPH program. Each student's faculty advisor serves as the instructor of record.

## Common Reader Discussion

During a student's orientation, one hour is devoted to discussion of a book of public health significance. Students who enter the program in summer or fall, including those in the bachelor's/MPH combined program, are expected to read the book and come prepared for the discussion. The book is identified in early summer and all new students are notified. This session is a highlight of the fall semester, since students in all concentrations get to know each other and many of the faculty through this venue. Lunch is also available!

## Major Paper and Presentations

Each student develops a scholarly paper based on a project undertaken as part of his/her internship. The paper includes an in-depth discussion of the manner in which all five of the core disciplines and MPH competencies are involved in the project. Students are expected to use this opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the broad field of public health. Written reports should be 15-20 single spaced pages, exclusive of graphics and references. The faculty advisor must approve the major paper draft three weeks before the student will be scheduled for a presentation. Students must submit their drafts and final paper to the Assignment link on the eLearning course site at <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>. This submission will validate the originality of the paper. Students should make all resubmissions of their paper via this same link. Specific guidelines for developing the paper and presentation, meeting with faculty advisors, and tips on presenting are available throughout the eLearning PHC 6601 course site.

An oral or poster presentation based on the paper is made during a Public Health Day near the end of the student's final semester in the program. The dates of Public Health Days are announced at the beginning of the semester, and specific times for each presentation are posted the week of Public Health Day. Campus-based students will select their preferred presentation method – oral or poster -- one calendar month into their final semester, and will inform

both their faculty advisor and the internship coordinator. Online students will make oral presentations unless arrangements are made to attend Public Health Day in person. These oral/poster and written reports constitute the culminating experience and the final comprehensive examination for the MPH program. Awards are made for high scoring presentations based on criteria outlined in the Special Project Assessment Form, which will be used to assess both oral and poster presentations. **Students are expected to upload their presentation (power point or poster) and an abstract one day prior to Public Health day.** On Public Health Day students are expected to bring several copies of the abstract with them for distribution to the audience. Online students' abstracts will be provided by the program; abstracts will need to be uploaded by noon ET the day before Public Health Day.

**For oral presentations, each student is allocated 30 minutes: 20 minutes for the formal presentation, followed by a 10 minute question and answer period. Students who conduct poster presentations will be assigned a one hour time period during which they will be available to discuss the poster and the larger project in detail with faculty and fellow students. Each poster presenter should be prepared to provide a brief 1-2 minute presentation for fellow students and a 6 minute presentation for faculty reviewers. The two presentation methods require a number of different skills, thus seminar sessions on various presentation skills are required for campus students during the semester before the internship begins.**

All students and preceptors are invited to attend Public Health Day. One faculty member will attend each oral or poster presentation and provide feedback to the student and faculty advisor.

### **Content of Paper and Presentation**

The written and oral/poster reports should include the following content as appropriate to the topic:

#### Background

- Summary of critical literature
- Rationale and/or need for the project
- Objectives or specific aims

#### Description of methods

- Hypotheses
- Specific identification of methods used in needs assessments, policy analysis, epidemiological analysis, financial management, program planning, evaluation, etc., noting how methods of concentrations other than your own were used
- Justification of methods
- Stakeholder involvement, as appropriate

#### Results

- Description of findings/outcomes
- Relationship of findings to objectives, aims, or hypotheses
- Appropriate use of tables, charts, and other graphics
- Interpretation of findings

#### Discussion

- Relationship of findings to literature cited in the summary of critical literature
- Strengths and limitations
- Generalizability

## Implications

- Implications for research and/or practice
- Relationship of this project to the internship experience
- MPH and concentration competencies strengthened by this project
- Lessons learned from this project/recommendations for future projects

Two faculty members representing different concentrations assess the quality of the content. In general, the project itself should demonstrate your ability to apply one or more of your concentration competencies. Your ability to integrate the MPH core competencies should be evident throughout the paper and presentation. For example, a project may involve biostatistical analysis and an epidemiological research design to produce results that will inform policy decisions.

Before Public Health Days, students are given opportunities to practice their presentations. They receive feedback on the content as well as presentation style and delivery methods.

Students are expected to consult regularly with their faculty advisors and preceptors as they develop their reports. At a minimum, students should have a meeting with the faculty at mid-term to evaluate progress and decide on subsequent meetings.

## Faculty

Guest experts and faculty of the MPH program, the College of Public Health and Health Professions, and other Health Science Center colleges at UF contribute to the seminar sessions. Students may also earn credit for seminars presented through departmental seminar sessions, the Distinguished Scholar Lecture Series, and the keynote address on PPHP Research Day in the spring.

## Portfolio

The MPH Portfolio serves as: 1) a guide to self-assessment of achievement of the MPH and concentration-specific competencies, and 2) a compendium of documents that demonstrate accomplishments during the MPH program. Key elements include:

- Tables tracking accomplishment of MPH core and concentration-specific competencies
- A CV and/or a resume
- Writing samples from courses
- Special Project report and power point or poster presentation

Students may also identify other materials they would like to have available for potential employers. See <http://mph.ufl.edu/internship/mph-portfolio/> for additional information and guidance regarding MPH Portfolios.

## Exit Survey

As a final course requirement, graduating students complete the online MPH Exit Survey. Students are expected to complete the survey immediately after their presentations on PH Day. The Exit Survey provides students the opportunity to document the strengths of the MPH Program and give suggestions for improvement. This information is very important to continuous improvement of the quality and effectiveness of the program.

## Grading

The course uses the standard letter grade format of the University of Florida. In order to receive a grade for the

course, students **MUST** meet all requirements identified above. A letter grade is derived from participation in 16 contact hours of seminars (including all required seminars), attendance at 6 Public Health Day presentations prior to the semester in which they present, completion of the MPH Portfolio, submission of a special project paper (60%), completion of an oral/poster presentation (30%), and attention to guidance from faculty advisor and preceptor (10%).

**Schedules** are posted on the MPH Web site prior to the beginning of each semester.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

To obtain academic accommodations, first register with the Dean of Students' Office. Online students may register through the Dean of Student's website at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>. The Dean of Students' Office will provide documentation to be given to the course instructor at the time you request the accommodation. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students' coursework.

### *Academic Integrity/Honesty Statement*

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida Honor Code, which recognizes that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Cheating or plagiarism in any form is not acceptable.

### *Counseling and Student Health*

Students may occasionally have personal issues that arise in the course of pursuing higher education or that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing problems affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and to seek confidential assistance at the UF Counseling & Wellness Center, 352-392-1575. Visit their web site for more information: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/>.

The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services, including primary care, women's health care, immunizations, mental health care, and pharmacy services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: [www.health.ufl.edu/shcc](http://www.health.ufl.edu/shcc)

Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from:

Alachua County Crisis Center: (352) 264-6789.

***BUT – Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.***

## **Guidelines for Internships and Special Projects**

### **Purpose**

The MPH internship is designed to (1) provide a variety of opportunities in which the student can enrich mastery of the MPH competencies and apply the skills learned across the MPH and (2) advance the student's understanding of their concentration area and public health in a real-world application and setting. The internship can be in a variety of settings (public health agency, community based organization, federal agency, international public health organizations, etc.).

### **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 5-8 internship credits.

### **Internship v Special Project**

- Internship is broad and may have many projects and activities
- Special project is narrow and involves one in-depth project
- The project must be an application of one or more concentration and MPH competencies (see lists of competencies on the PH website and in student portfolios).

