Master of Public Health Program

Practicum Manual

Academic Year 2014-2015

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www.med.UND.edu/mph
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION TO THE PRACTICUM</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLIC HEALTH COMPETENCIES AND THE PRACTICUM</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE PRACTICUM PROCESS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting a Practicum Organization and Preceptor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing the Practicum Proposal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolling in the Practicum</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing the Practicum</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating the Practicum</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPECIFICATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicum Organization</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preceptor</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPH Academic Coordinator</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicum Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPH Student</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: PRACTICUM FORMS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B: PRACTICUM CHECKLIST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated: 8.11.2014 MPH Practicum Manual
INTRODUCTION TO THE PRACTICUM

The Practicum is a planned, supervised, and evaluated practical experience. It is an essential component of the MPH Program, which accounts for 3 academic credits and requires a minimum 240-hour experience. The Practicum provides an opportunity to apply public health learning from the classroom in a practical setting and to strengthen public health competencies. In short, the Practicum is a hands-on experience in the field of public health that provides opportunities to apply and test public health concepts and theories in a practical setting and improve learning related to the MPH Program’s competencies.

The Practicum is conducted in partnership with an agency or organization (hereafter “the Practicum Organization”) that provides a public health service, in the broad sense of public health. The Practicum Organization may be a public health department, another government agency, such as the Indian Health Service, or a non-governmental organization, such as a hospital, other health care provider, or a community organization. A Practicum Team assists the student to define, plan, and implement the Practicum. The team consists of a Preceptor, who works in the Practicum Organization, the Practicum Faculty Advisor, and the MPH Academic Coordinator, who oversees the Practicum process and ensures that all requirements of the Practicum are met. All team members must approve the Practicum before work begins. Both the student and the Practicum Organization should benefit from the Practicum.

The overall objectives for the student during the Practicum are to:

- Apply knowledge, techniques, and tools acquired in the classroom;
- Gain practical experience in a public health and/or community health setting;
- Develop and/or enhance public health competencies;
- Learn how one particular organization functions; and
- Explore a potential career choice.

Professional conduct are essential to the Practicum experience. As an individual training to be a public health professional, each MPH student is expected to conduct him or herself according to the high professional standards of the MPH Program, UND, and the Practicum Organization.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMPETENCIES AND THE PRACTICUM

The curriculum for the MPH degree is competency-based in order to comply with efforts to improve the quality, relevance, and accountability of graduate public health education. The Practicum is designed to extend and deepen public health competencies. The Practicum must include an experience that will enhance at least two of the MPH Program’s core public health competencies.

The core public health competencies include:

- **Biostatistics Competency**: Develop statistical reasoning; and apply statistical methods in addressing, analyzing, and solving problems related to public health.
- **Health Policy and Management Competency**: Understand the organization, cost, financing, quality, and equity of the health care delivery system; the role of the health care delivery system in maintaining the health of populations; and current health management and policy issues.
• Epidemiology Competency: Understand patterns of disease and injury in human populations; how this knowledge is derived; and how this knowledge is used to control health problems in populations.
• Environmental and Occupational Health Competency: Understand the environmental and occupational factors, including biological, physical and chemical factors, which affect the health of communities and workers.
• Social and Behavioral Science Competency: Understand the behavioral, social, and cultural factors related to individual and population health and health disparities over the life course; and how this knowledge is used to improve population health.

THE PRACTICUM PROCESS

The Practicum process consists of selecting a Practicum Organization and Preceptor; identifying a project that meets the approval of the Practicum Team; writing a Practicum Proposal that describes the project; completing all requirements to begin the Practicum and enrolling for the course; implementing the Practicum as outlined in the Practicum Proposal; and finally, providing all required forms in order to be graded. Each of these steps is discussed below. The forms required are listed here:

• Forms required prior to enrollment in the Practicum:
  o Form A: Practicum Organization & Preceptor
  o Form B: Practicum Proposal

• Forms required in order to receive a grade in the Practicum:
  o Form C: Practicum Logbook
  o Form D: Preceptor's Evaluation
  o Form E: Student's Evaluation

In addition to providing the forms listed above, the student must provide the final product or report, (Practicum Product) to the MPH Academic Coordinator before the grade can be assigned.

Selecting a Practicum Organization and Preceptor
Students are introduced to the Practicum at Orientation, as well as at a Practicum Presentation early in the spring of their first year. There are several key ideas conveyed in these presentations. First, the Practicum is a practical public health experience that benefits the Preceptor’s organization, as well as furthers the student’s learning and professional goals. Second, the Practicum should ideally take place toward the end of the student’s MPH core studies. Summer after the first year is a good time to complete the Practicum, but it can be done at other times during the year as well. It can also be extended up to 3 terms by registering for 1 credit/term. Third, the Practicum can take many forms, including:

• Research project, or part of a research project
• Community health intervention, or part of one
• Public policy analysis, or part of one

Updated: 8.11.2014  MPH Practicum Manual 3
• Other project that relates to the planning, implementing, managing, or evaluating of a public health service, program, or initiative

Practicum affiliation agreements have been developed with local, national, and international public health sites. For a complete list of existing Practicum sites, contact the MPH Academic Coordinator. Students can also request a Practicum site without an existing affiliation agreement, but this must be done a minimum of 6 months in advance of the Practicum start date to ensure that a working agreement can be established.

After the spring Practicum Presentation, the student must meet with the Practicum Faculty Advisor to begin the process of identifying the Practicum Organization and Preceptor and developing the Practicum Proposal. The Practicum Faculty Advisor must approve a plan before the student contacts a potential Preceptor.

Practicums in the Place of Employment
Students can use their place of employment as the Practicum Organization if the following conditions are met:

• Practicum project is unique and separate from the student’s employment responsibilities
• Practicum Preceptor is not the student’s usual supervisor

Writing the Practicum Proposal
Developing a Practicum Proposal (Form B), which must be approved by the student’s Practicum Team, ensures a well-defined project with clear goals and an identified Practicum Product that signals completion of the student’s obligation. The student is ready to proceed to the next step once the Practicum Team has signed the Practicum Proposal.

All students must have an approved Practicum Proposal before they enroll for the Practicum.

For students intending to complete their Practicum during the summer, a draft Practicum Proposal must be submitted to the Practicum Faculty Advisor by April 15. A final Practicum Proposal is due before enrolling for the Practicum.

The Practicum Proposal must contain all of the following elements in this order:

A. Background
   a. Practicum Organization and its Public Health Mission
      Describe the public health service(s) that the Practicum Organization provides
b. **Preceptor’s Role in Practicum Organization**
Describe the Preceptor’s role in providing the public health service(s) of the Practicum Organization, as well as his/her role relative to your project.

**B. Project Description**

a. **Brief Summary of the project**
The Practicum Proposal should summarize what the Practicum is intended to accomplish and how you plan to go about this; that is, describe very generally how you will address the problem, question, or issue.

b. **Goals and Objectives (in bullet form)**
   i. The Practicum Proposal should state the goal(s) for the Practicum and the associated objectives. The goal(s) and objectives will be the basis for evaluating the student’s performance during the Practicum.
   ii. Include “product(s)” or “deliverable(s)” as one of the Practicum’s goals. This is the Practicum Product.
   iii. One of the objectives must be a presentation to the relevant audience for the Practicum project, which will usually be within the Practicum Organization.
   iv. Goals are broad, generalized statements about what you want to achieve, the “targets” to be reached. Objectives are the steps you take to reach your goal(s). Objectives should be SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-limited. Each objective should begin with an active verb, for example, identify, define, development, investigate, prepare, write, etc. *The goal is where we want to be. The objectives are the steps needed to get there.*
   v. If Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required to complete the Practicum, one of the objectives will be to complete the application to the UND IRB, with responsibility for protecting the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in research. See the UND IRB website for information about conducting research at UND and the forms needed to apply for IRB approval of research projects at: [http://und.edu/research/resources/human-subjects/forms.cfm](http://und.edu/research/resources/human-subjects/forms.cfm).

c. **Practicum’s Contribution and Importance to Practicum Organization**

**C. Contributions to MPH Learning**

a. **Relationship to Mission of MPH and Student’s Specialization**
Discuss how the Practicum relates to the mission of your concentration: Population Health Analytics or Health Management and Policy

b. **Core Competencies Addressed by the Practicum**
The Practicum Proposal should identify the Core Competencies that will be strengthened through the Practicum experience. *At least one Core Competency should be addressed during the Practicum experience.*

**D. Timeline**
Create a timeline that shows the time allotted to each goal and objective. The Practicum Proposal should include a timeline that estimates how long it will take to complete each objective including the “product” or “deliverable” of the Practicum and the presentation you will make at the conclusion of the Practicum. Include an estimate of the number of hours that it will take to complete each step in the process, which will total to 240 hours.
When the Practicum Proposal is complete, the student must send Form B - the Proposal - to the Preceptor. Once the Preceptor has reviewed and approved the Proposal, s/he must sign Form B.

Enrolling in the Practicum

Once the Preceptor has approved and signed the Practicum Proposal (Form B), the signed copy must be given to the MPH Academic Coordinator along with Form A: Practicum Organization & Preceptor. The MPH Academic Coordinator and the Practicum Faculty Advisor then review, approve, and sign the Practicum Proposal, and the MPH Academic Coordinator gives the student permission to enroll. Students may register for 1 to 3 credits, repeated up to 3 times as needed to obtain a total of 3 credits. MPH 594 requires a permission number to enter in Campus Connection in order to enroll.

All students must have a Practicum Proposal approved by the Practicum Team before they enroll for the Practicum.

Please note that before given permission to enroll, students also need to have completed:

- All MPH core courses (or be in the last semester of core courses) and be in good academic standing
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) training in Human Subjects Protection
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) Training
- Any requirements of the Practicum Organization such as immunizations
- A criminal background check

Training in Human Subjects Protection

Training must be completed at least 1 month before registering for the Practicum hours. UND uses the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) course, an online training program. MPH students are required to complete the course for Social/Behavioral Researchers and provide a PDF or printout of the certificate of completion to the MPH Academic Coordinator. Instructions for completing Human Subjects Protection training are found on the Institutional Review Board website: [http://und.edu/research/resources/human-subjects/human-subject-education.cfm](http://und.edu/research/resources/human-subjects/human-subject-education.cfm)

HIPAA Training

Training must be completed at least 1 month before registering for the Practicum hours. MPH students are required to complete the training and provide a PDF or printout of the certificate of completion to the MPH Academic Coordinator. Instructions on how to complete HIPAA Training should be obtained from the MPH Academic Coordinator.

Criminal Background Check

A certified background check is required at least 1 month before registering for the Practicum hours. If it has been more than one year since the student’s last background check, another background check is required before enrolling in the Practicum. The MPH Academic Coordinator will provide instructions.
Completing the Practicum
The student must meet regularly with the Preceptor to review progress, gain input and advice, solve problems that have arisen, and ensure that the student is meeting the goals of the Practicum. All students must maintain a Practicum Logbook (Form C) throughout in order to document that they have fulfilled the 240-hour requirement of the Practicum. When the Preceptor is satisfied that the Practicum is complete (that is, has met the goals and objectives of the Practicum), s/he completes the Preceptor’s Evaluation (Form D) and provides it to the MPH Academic Coordinator. The student completes the Student’s Evaluation (Form E) and provides this, the Practicum Logbook (Form C), and the final project (Practicum Product) to the MPH Academic Coordinator. The MPH Academic Coordinator will review all forms for completion.

Evaluating the Practicum
When all forms and the Practicum Product are provided to and reviewed by the MPH Academic Coordinator, the Practicum can be evaluated. The Practicum is graded by the Practicum Faculty Advisor based upon the Preceptor’s evaluation of the student’s performance and the Faculty Advisor’s assessment of the Practicum Product.

SPECIFICATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Practicum Organization

- Provide a mentored, practical learning experience related to public health for the student.
- Provide a qualified person (employee or affiliate) to mentor the student (the Preceptor).
- Certify that it has in place policies that protect the student and employees from sexual harassment and discrimination while they are onsite during the Practicum. The Practicum Organization agrees to provide the University with copies of its non-discrimination and sexual harassment policies, if requested.
- Provide the student with a name badge, as necessary.
- Provide an orientation to the student at the beginning of the experience, which includes an overview of site’s mission and goals and physical facilities, personnel and other operational systems needed for the student to function appropriately at the site.
- Ensure that the student is in compliance with requirements of the Practicum Organization, which may include vaccinations or health insurance and may be in addition to the requirements of the MPH Program.

Preceptor

- Guide development of the Practicum Proposal and approve its final form (Form B) with signature.
- Supervise the student during the conduct of the Practicum and communicate to the student any deficiencies of performance and provide the student with an opportunity to correct any deficient areas prior to the completion of the experience.
Communicate progress and coordinate grading with the Practicum Faculty Advisor and/or the MPH Academic Coordinator.

Review and sign the student’s Practicum Logbook (Form C), which records hours worked and tasks performed.

Complete an evaluation of the student’s work on the Practicum (Form D) and provide to the MPH Academic Coordinator.

Treat as confidential student educational records, which are subject to the Federal Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

**MPH Academic Coordinator**

- Provide the student with a copy of the *Practicum Manual* and all required Practicum Forms.
- Meet with the student to describe the Practicum and brainstorm possible Practicum projects, if requested.
- Provide a list of possible Practicum Organizations with contact persons for which the MPH Program has a Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to serve as a Practicum Organization.
- Provide information on the IRB process, if necessary for a Practicum.
- Review the Practicum Proposal (*Form B*) to ensure that it is complete and approve with signature.
- Ensure that the student has completed sufficient coursework to conduct the Practicum.
- Ensure that student completes a background check within 1 year prior to approving the student for the Practicum.
- Ensure that the student has completed CITI training in protection of human subjects and HIPPA training before undertaking the Practicum.
- Ensure that the student meets all policy requirements of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and UND.
- Intercede on the student’s behalf if necessary to clarify student and Preceptor roles and facilitate understanding and agreement as to goals, conduct, commitment, and deliverables.
- Provide permission for student to register for the Practicum.
- Collect and review for completion all required forms (Forms A, B, C, D, and E) and the Practicum Product. Provide approved forms and the Practicum Product to the Practicum Faculty Advisor for review and assignment of grade.
- Ensure that all requirements of the Practicum are met.
- Ensure that the student receives a grade for the Practicum.
- Notify the Practicum Organization if at any time a student files a grievance in which the Practicum Organization is a party.

**Practicum Faculty Advisor**

- Guide development of the Practicum Proposal and approve its final form (*Form B*) with signature.
- Interact with the Preceptor and MPH Academic Coordinator, as appropriate and needed, to solve problems related to Practicum implementation.
- Review all forms and the Practicum Product and assign the student’s grade.

*Updated: 8.11.2014  MPH Practicum Manual*
MPH Student

- Develop a Practicum Proposal that describes the project – its purpose, rationale, goals, timeline, and products – and obtain approval of the Practicum Proposal (*Form B*) from the Practicum Team.
- Meet regularly with the Preceptor during the course of conducting the Practicum.
- Comply with the policies, procedures, and operational standards of the Practicum Organization.
- Behave professionally at all times, including attention to punctuality, meeting deadlines and Practicum Organization dress code.
- Provide the Practicum Product to the Preceptor and MPH Academic Coordinator at completion.
- Complete all forms required for the Practicum including the Practicum Logbook (*Form C*), the Student’s Evaluation (*Form E*). Provide these to the MPH Academic Coordinator. The Preceptor will have access to the results of the student evaluation upon request.
- Comply with the Practicum Organization’s privacy rules and policies related thereto and sign any necessary confidentiality agreements.
- Complete CITI training in protection of human subjects, HIPAA training, and Background Check (if required).

**PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS**

Students must consistently demonstrate the core attributes of professionalism. The UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences has defined the following behaviors as indicators of professionalism:

- Commitment to Excellence
- Honesty and Integrity
- Respect for Others
- Empathy and Compassion
- Professional Responsibility
- Social Responsibility
- Altruism

Students must possess the emotional health necessary for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of sound judgment, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with members of the academic program and community. They must have a high level of compassion for others, motivation to serve, integrity, and a consciousness of social values and possess sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems. Academic dishonesty and professional misconduct are considered unacceptable. If there is doubt about whether or not conduct is appropriate, students should query the guidance provided on the website for the UND Code of Student Life policy.


The MPH Program expects MPH students to dress appropriately in business/business casual attire. Students are expected to demonstrate good judgment and professionalism at all times when present at the Practicum Organization.
APPENDIX A: PRACTICUM FORMS

The following forms must be completed for the Practicum and submitted to the MPH Academic Coordinator:

- **Form A: Practicum Organization & Preceptor**
  - To be completed and submitted by the student to the MPH Academic Coordinator before the student registers for MPH 594 Practicum

- **Form B: Practicum Proposal**
  - To be completed and approved by the student’s Practicum Team before the student registers for MPH 594 Practicum

- **Form C: Practicum Logbook**
  - To be completed and submitted by the student to the MPH Academic Coordinator in order to receive a grade for MPH 594 Practicum

- **Form D: Preceptor’s Evaluation**
  - To be completed and submitted by the Preceptor to the MPH Academic Coordinator when the Practicum deliverable(s) are completed, in order to receive a grade for MPH 594 Practicum

- **Form E: Student’s Evaluation**
  - To be completed and submitted by the student to the MPH Academic Coordinator, in order to receive a grade for MPH 594 Practicum

All forms must be typed. If you have any questions about the Practicum’s purpose and process, please contact the MPH Academic Coordinator:

Ashley Evenson, MPH Academic Coordinator
School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Room 2370
501 North Columbia Road, Stop 9037
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, ND 58202-9037
ashley.n.evenson@med.und.edu
Tel: 701-777-6368
Fax: 701-777-0980

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MPH Practicum Forms
FORM A: PRACTICUM ORGANIZATION & PRECEPTOR

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Preceptor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student ID #</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Email Address</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daytime Telephone #</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialization</td>
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Practicum Organization

Name:
Address:
City/State/Zip:
FORM B: PRACTICUM PROPOSAL

Name of Student:

Practicum Title:

Practicum Proposal starts here - See Student Practicum Manual for Instructions.
Practicum Proposal Signatures (Form B continued):

**Student:** I am committed to completing the Practicum project outlined in this Practicum Proposal, under the supervision of the Preceptor named below.

<table>
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<th>Student’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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**Preceptor:** I have read the Practicum Proposal, approve of this Practicum and agree to provide guidance to the student during its implementation.

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<th>Preceptor’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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**Practicum Faculty Advisor and MPH Academic Coordinator:** I approve of this Practicum and agree to provide guidance to the student during its implementation.

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<tr>
<th>Practicum Faculty Advisor’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<th>MPH Academic Coordinator’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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# FORM C: PRACTICUM LOGBOOK

**Name of Student:**

**Practicum Title:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Start/End Time</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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Note: Use as many sheets as necessary to log your hours.

________________________  ____________________
Preceptor’s Signature    Date
FORM D: PRECEPTOR'S EVALUATION

Thank you for participating as a Practicum Preceptor for University of North Dakota MPH program and for completing this evaluation of the student’s performance. When you have completed this form, please return it via mail, fax, or electronically with a pdf file to:

Ashley Evenson, MPH Academic Coordinator  
School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Room 2370  
501 North Columbia Road, Stop 9037  
University of North Dakota  
Grand Forks, ND 58202-9037  
ashley.n.evenson@med.und.edu  
Tel: 701-777-6368, Fax: 701-777-0980

Please feel free to use additional space as needed. We will be happy for any information you may provide that helps us to serve our students and your organization better.

| Name of Student: |
| Practicum Title: |

1. Please evaluate the student’s Practicum performance on all of the following attributes:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Inadequate Opportunity to Observe</th>
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<td>Written communication skills</td>
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<td>Oral communication skills</td>
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<td>Demonstration of intellectual ability</td>
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<td>Motivation on this project</td>
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<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
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<td>Ability to work collaboratively with diverse communities and constituencies</td>
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<td>Standards of personal integrity; compassion, honesty, and respect for all people</td>
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<td>Judgment and independence displayed</td>
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2. Please rate the student’s performance on achieving the goals and measurable objectives of the Practicum: (Student should add these from the Practicum Proposal)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practicum Goals &amp; Objectives</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
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3. Please rate the quality of the Practicum deliverable(s): [please check one]

   ______ Poor   ______ Average   ______ Very Good   ______ Outstanding

   If ‘Poor’, please explain.

4. Was this experience helpful to your organization? [please check one]

   ______ Yes   ______ No   ______ Not Sure

   If ‘No’ or ‘Not Sure’, please explain.

5. Would you consider serving as a Practicum Preceptor again? [please check one]

   ______ Yes   ______ No   ______ Not Sure

   If ‘No’ or ‘Not Sure’, please explain.

6. Please provide any suggestions either for the student or for future Practicum experiences, in general.

________________________________   ____________________
Preceptor’s Signature    Date
FORM E: STUDENT’S EVALUATION

Name of Student: 
Practicum Title: 

1. **Overall, how would you rate your Practicum experience?** [please check one]
   - _____ Poor
   - _____ Average
   - _____ Very Good
   - _____ Outstanding

   Please explain the reasons for your Practicum rating.

2. **Do you think this experience will be helpful to you in your career as a public health professional?** [please check one]
   - _____ Yes
   - _____ No
   - _____ Not Sure

   Please explain the reasons for your answer.

3. **Do you think this experience was helpful to the Practicum Organization?**
   - _____ Yes
   - _____ No
   - _____ Not Sure

   Please explain the reasons for your answer.
4. How would you rate the supervision of your Preceptor?
   _____ Poor   _____ Average   _____ Very Good   _____ Outstanding

   Please explain the reasons for your Preceptor rating.

5. Do you think your Preceptor evaluated your Practicum accurately?
   _____ Yes   _____ No   _____ Not Sure

   Please explain the reasons for your answer.

6. Would you recommend this Practicum Organization to other MPH students?
   _____ Yes   _____ No   _____ Not Sure

   Please explain the reasons for your answer.

7. Would you recommend your Preceptor to other MPH students?
   _____ Yes   _____ No   _____ Not Sure

   Please explain the reasons for your answer.

________________________________   _______________
Student’s Signature    Date

Updated: 8.11.2014  MPH Practicum Forms
APPENDIX B: PRACTICUM CHECKLIST

The following checklist is provided to help guide you through the Practicum. The completed checklist does not need to be turned in.

Please note that all forms must be typed.

PRIOR TO ENROLLING IN PRACTICUM, YOU MUST:

__________ Meet with Practicum Faculty Advisor to discuss and identify potential Practicum Organization, Preceptor, and Practicum project

__________ Contact potential Practicum Organization and Preceptor and identify Practicum project. (If choosing a new Practicum Organization, an agreement must be initiated at least 6 months prior to enrolling in the Practicum.)

__________ Complete all MPH core courses (or be in the last semester of core courses)

__________ Complete Institutional Review Board (IRB) training in Human Subjects Protection (at least 30 days prior)

__________ Complete Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) Training (at least 30 days prior)

__________ Complete any requirements of Practicum Organization, such as immunizations

__________ Complete criminal background check, if more than one year will have elapsed since last check

__________ Provide Form A: Practicum Organization & Preceptor

__________ Provide Form B: Practicum Proposal (must be approved and signed by Practicum Team)

TO RECEIVE GRADE IN PRACTICUM, YOU MUST PROVIDE TO MPH ACADEMIC COORDINATOR:

__________ Form C: Practicum Logbook (completed by student and signed by Preceptor)

__________ Form D: Preceptor’s Evaluation (completed and signed by Preceptor after the Practicum deliverable(s) are submitted to the Preceptor)

__________ Form E: Student’s Evaluation (completed and signed by student after Practicum deliverables are submitted)

__________ Practicum Product(s)/Deliverable(s) (e.g., Report, Research Paper)

Updated: 8.11.2014

Practicum Checklist