



Public Health Practicum (PUBH 5662) Supervised Field Training Summer 2009

Faculty Instructors: Dr. E. Lee Rosenthal, MPH; elrosenthal@utep.edu; 747-8233

Practicum Coordinator: NA

Academic Credit: 6 hours

In-Class Meeting Dates/Times, Other Requirements: See page 4

Class Location: TBN

Method of Delivery: The course combines face-to-face contact with distance-learning

The practicum is designed to provide MPH students with the opportunity to integrate the knowledge and skills developed during their academic program in a structured, supervised, real-world professional setting under the direction of a site supervisor in a public health agency or organization. Students will be supported by a dedicated team including the Practicum Site Supervisor, Faculty Instructor/Practicum Coordinator, Faculty Mentor/Instructors, and the MPH Director.

Students take the practicum at the conclusion of their MPH core courses, typically at the end of the first two academic semesters (Fall & Spring). The practicum usually takes place during Summer semesters I and II although some students may elect to do so over a longer or later in their studies depending upon their individual circumstances. Practicum placements are made on an individual basis. These depend on the professional/career interests and goals of each student as well as the availability of openings in participating approved public health agencies/organizations. The specific foci, duties, and approach of each practicum assignment will vary due to the diverse nature of practicum sites but must be consistent with the general educational objectives of the MPH program, the College of Health Sciences, UTEP and the CEPH accrediting agency.

Students will work at the practicum site under the direct supervision of the Site Supervisor during their field experience. All decisions on the practicum site, major objectives, and activities are to be mutually agreed upon in advance and put in writing by the parties involved: the student, Practicum Site Supervisor, Faculty Instructor/Practicum Coordinator, and Faculty Mentor. The specific roles and responsibilities of each practicum partners are outlined in the MPH Practicum Handbook.

General Learning Objectives

The practicum field experience is intended to provide students with:

1. Hands-on opportunities to test and integrate public health theory, concepts, knowledge, and skills in a real-world practice setting.
2. An introduction to the critical roles and responsibilities of public health and social service agencies including those serving Hispanic and border communities.
3. Increased understanding and awareness of public health practice as it relates to administrative, organizational, and policy issues, funding mechanisms, community relationships, program coordination, and challenges faced by agencies and organizations in addressing critical public health issues in communities.
4. Opportunities to develop written, oral communication and other technical skills through on-the-job training experiences.
5. Opportunities to develop leadership and management skills, group process skills and professional confidence by giving them the opportunity to assume responsibility for program planning, implementation, evaluation and other essential public health functions.

6. Opportunities to contribute to the critical analysis of public health problems and their solutions.
7. Complete defined project(s) in core public health functions and defined areas of public health practice (e.g., health needs assessment, policy development, social marketing or educational campaigns).
8. Gain/expand/develop skills and knowledge in an area of interest not covered in depth elsewhere in the student's educational plan.
9. Demonstrate competence and leadership, teamwork, communication skills and creativity during the performance of public health practice activities in a professional setting.

Examples of Practicum Field Training Activities. The scope and content of field training activities in the public health agency/organization should be typical of those that are performed by an entry level public health professional. Examples of these include but are not limited to:

- Assessment of community health, nutrition, and other needs
- Grant proposal writing for community agencies
- Development, testing, and evaluation of community health and nutrition education materials and/or curricula.
- Primary or secondary data collection, analysis and other research on specific public health issues (e.g., heart disease, cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, air pollution, nutrition, child abuse)
- Health promotion program development, implementation, and/or evaluation
- Community coalition building
- Identification and coordination of community resources
- Public health policy analysis on specific issues (e.g. food insecurity and hunger)
- Public health advocacy for community groups (e.g., migrant and seasonal farm workers)

Field Training Hours. Students must finalize their field placement prior to the add/drop period. Actual work hours are negotiated between the student and the agency. Practicum Field Site Supervisors will be sent an e-mail by the Instructor/Coordinator every two weeks and/or 60 hours requesting confirmation of student work hours. Students are required to complete a minimum of 240 clock hours/6 credits (40 clock hours = 1 credit) at their practicum field site. The 240 hours does not include technical aspects of practicum requirements such as completing required forms, obtaining required signatures, and other work that a student may be required to do such as writing reflective journals and creating the electronic portfolio.

Practicum Grading. Students in the practicum will be given a grade of Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). The quality of work is required to reflect a "B" or better (80%). The unsatisfactory completion of and/or failure to turn in any of the course requirements will result in a grade of "U" being assigned for PUBH 5662.

Course Requirements. In addition to satisfactorily performing 240 clock hours at their field site, students are required to complete the following:

Reflective Journal. The reflective journal is designed to be a self-reflection and synthesis of a student's practicum experiences. It also can help in addressing questions or concerns that may develop during the practicum experience and assist the Practicum Site Supervisor and Faculty Instructor/ Mentor to refine or adapt the agreed upon learning objectives and outcomes as needed. The reflective journal contents will be submitted electronically after the completion of each 60-hour work period to the Practicum Instructor/Coordinator and the Faculty Mentor. Each of the four reflective journal segments that students will submit must specifically address the following questions:

1. Describe the specific activities you performed during this period as part of your practicum experience.
2. Analyze the progress that you made regarding the specific project objectives outlined in your

practicum field learning contract.

3. Provide reflective observations on your critical evaluation of successes and challenges that you have encountered during the prior 60-hour work period. Your reflective observations must evaluate the following:

- **Theory vs. Public Health Practice.** Describe your experiences at the agency/organization that are similar to or different from the theoretical concepts that you learned during your MPH coursework. To what extent is the theory that you previously learned during class work actually used or could be used in these types of situations?
- **Critical examination.** Think about what you formerly thought about an issue, concept or problem and compare this with what you have learned or are learning in the practicum.
- **Evidence of learning/skill development.** Reflect on what you are learning during your practicum experience. What specific skills and/or competencies have you been learning and/or enhancing during your experience?
- **Professional Development.** What situations, if any, have you encountered during your practicum which require ethical consideration and good judgment?
- **Communication and Interpersonal Relations.** Describe your relationship with your Practicum Site Supervisor and the staff in the agency/organization. Describe and discuss the role of your field supervisor and manner in which you and the other staff members interact with her or him.
- **Management/Leadership.** Discuss the management/leadership styles and skills that you have observed among the various staff in your practicum agency/organization.

Midpoint Evaluation. This form is filled out by the student in conjunction with their Field Site Supervisor at the midpoint of their practicum experience (120 hours) or before if required. The form must be submitted and reviewed by the Practicum Coordinator and Faculty Instructor/ Mentor.

Practicum Electronic Portfolio (e-portfolio). The e-portfolio is a collection of documents that is developed by the practicum students demonstrating evidence of their accomplishments and commitment to public health. The e-portfolio is designed to demonstrate that students have carried out a self-reflection of their practicum experience. It also is designed to highlight their capabilities as a future public health professional to prospective employers and others. The electronic portfolio main website is located on the web at: <http://www.epselin.com>.

Please note that your e-portfolio must contain the following five basic elements:

1. **Introduction.** Please provide information on your academic and professional background, your practicum site, and the types of projects/other activities that you conducted during the course of your training.
2. **Statement of Personal and Public Health Career Mission/Goals.** Please write a paragraph describing your personal characteristics, professional and career aspirations, and guiding principles. The statement should focus on what you see as the meaning of public health for you personally and how you view your role as a future public health professional. It should demonstrate your commitment to the field of public health. In addition, you should write an additional 3-5 statements in which you describe what you wish to achieve as a public health professional upon graduation. These can be short-term, medium-term, and/or long-term goals.
3. **Professional Resume or Curriculum Vita (CV).** Post a copy of your current resume or CV which describes your educational and professional experience.
4. **Electronic Powerpoint Poster.** Students will design an electronic powerpoint poster that describes their practicum field training project. The guidelines for the e-poster and poster examples will be discussed in an upcoming seminar (see time table below) .

5. Work Samples. As applicable and with the permission of your Practicum Site Supervisor, please electronically attach any pertinent examples of photographs, posters, or other materials that you created as part of your practicum experience and would like to showcase such as technical reports, grant proposals, health surveys, health or nutrition education materials, etc.

Time Table for Completion of Field Training Forms and Requirements

Form	Completed by and Followed Up by	Deadline
Practicum Interest Form	Student and Practicum Coordinator	March 15 th
Agency Application to be a Field Site	Agency and Practicum Coordinator	April 15 th
Mandatory Practicum Meeting with Interns	Faculty Mentors and Practicum Coordinator and Students	Spring 09, by May 15 th
Institutional Affiliation Agreement	Agency supervisor/UTEP CHS designee and Practicum Instructor	June 1 th
Practicum Equivalent Experience form	Practicum Student	If applicable
List of Approved Practicum Sites	Practicum Instructor	For review upon request
Domestic/International Travel Form	Student	If applicable
Time Card	Student; approved by Agency Supervisor	Every 60 Hours (approx every 2 weeks)
Practicum Learning Agreement (student scope of work, learning objectives)	Student; approved by Agency Supervisor, Faculty Mentor and Practicum Coordinator	June 15 ^h (finalized within first 60 hours on site)
Reflective Journals	Student	Every 60 Hours
Midpoint Evaluation	Student/Field Site Supervisor	At 120 Hours
Meeting with Preceptors	Practicum Instructor	By June 15 th
E-Portfolio SEMINAR	Practicum Instructor and Student	June 15 th
Ethics SEMINAR	Practicum Instructor and Student	June 29 th
Student's Progress Discussion	Faculty Instructor/Mentor and Field Supervisor	Week of July 6 ^h
Electronic Power Point Poster SEMINAR	Practicum Instructor and Student	July 13 th
Practicum Course Progress	Practicum Instructor and MPH Director	Week of July 13
Electronic Portfolio and EXHIBITS DUE	Student	TBN
Student Self-Evaluation	Student	August 1 st
Field Supervisor's Final	Agency	At 240 Hours

Evaluation of Student	Supervisor/Student	
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LIST OF MPH PROGRAM FACULTY MENTORS

The following full-time, doctorally prepared UTEP Department of Health Promotion faculty are eligible to serve as faculty mentors for students enrolled in the MPH practicum. Students are free to contact a faculty mentor with professional experience and/or interest that is compatible with their professional and career interests. If a student is not able to identify a faculty mentor or the mentor is not available during the practicum period, Dr. Rosenthal or Dr. Weigel will serve as the mentor.

- **Rodrigo X. Armijos, MD, ScD.** Infectious disease prevention & control; vaccine development, air pollutant exposure, immune response & disease. Tel: 747-8309; email: rxarmijos@utep.edu
- **Maria Duarte-Gardea, PhD, RD, LD.** Nutrition & breast cancer, diabetes prevention. Tel: 747-7252; email: moduarte@utep.edu
- **E. Lee Rosenthal, MPH, PhD.** Community health development; eliminating health disparities; community health workers; health policy, Tel: 747-8233; email: elrosenthal@utep.edu
- **Brenda Smith, PhD, CHES.** Human sexuality; aging; intimate partner violence; health behavior; Tel: 747-7296; email: sbrenda@utep.edu
- **Sharon Thompson, PhD, MPH, CHES.** U.S.-Mexico border health issues; health education/promotion in underserved communities. Tel: 747-7271; email: sthompson@utep.edu
- **Joe Tomaka, PhD.** Social psychology & health; behavioral approaches to alcohol; risk reduction; stress; coping and cardiovascular reactivity to stress; Tel: 747-7237; jtomaka@utep.edu
- **M. Margaret Weigel, PhD.** Infectious disease, reproductive, & nutritional epidemiology; Hispanic/border and global health/nutrition; Tel: 747-8308; email: mmweigel@utep.edu

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