PH MPH Applied Practice Experiences

MPH APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCES (APE)

The 2016 Criteria require MPH students to demonstrate competency attainment through applied practice experiences. While this may be achieved through a traditional practicum or internship, the criteria allow for more innovative approaches as well. The APE may also take the form of course-based activities, activities linked to service learning, co-curricular activities, or a blend of forcredit and/or not-for-credit activities, for example.

To demonstrate compliance, students link the work that they do in applied settings to the foundational and concentration competencies. Each student must compile a portfolio of at least two work products that link to five foundational and concentration competencies (at least three of which must be MPH foundational competencies).

Applied Practice Experiences

Work setting with public health professionals

Final portfolio of ≥ 2 work products tied to 5 competencies

Mutually beneficial

At least 3 must be MPH foundational competencies

SUCCESSFUL APPROACHES TO THE APE



ALIGNING COMPETENCIES WITH THE REAL WORLD

HARVARD UNIVERSITY (SPH)

Challenge: Students have difficulty connecting academic competencies to real-world workplace

expectations

Solution: Bring real-world examples into the classroom

H Engage students in a
Variety of exercises
O mapping defined
competencies to realworld settings

Before the internship, students write a short paper detailing the skills they want to build.

After the internship, the Career Office brings current job postings & position descriptions to class and maps the requirements back to the competencies.

By focusing on skills, students develop a clearer idea of what they actually hope to achieve from their internship.
This often differs from their ideas before writing the paper.

The mapping exercise helps students clearly identify their skills related to the jobs for which they will actually apply.

FLEXIBLE APPROACHES TO COMPLETING THE APE



CONSORTIUM OF EASTERN OHIO (PHP)

Challenge: Accommodating students who are employed full-time

ACTION

Solution: Consultancy approach

Focus on project
management skills,
allowing students to
complete their APE off
site as consultants to
their placement
organization.

Students work remotely with their internship preceptor, using various communication technologies to complete their projects.

Provides flexibility to students who are employed full-time or have other responsibilities outside the classroom. This approach also provides experience in soughtafter professional project management skills.

The consultancy approach resulted in minimal disruption from COVID-19 closures.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA (SPH)

Challenge: One-size-fits-all standardized internship program is not desired and/or feasible

Solution: Course-based approach

Maximize flexibility in completing the APE by integrating a variety of experiences throughout the curriculum.

- Interprofessional education
- Field experience
- •Study abroad
- •USF Health Service Corps
- Community-based service learning

Students complete
practice experiences
throughout the
curriculum and document
these activities in their eportfolio.

During the APE course at the end of the program, students work with faculty to submit two products and map them to competencies. Students experience a wide variety of practice settings.

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With faculty advisors, students select practice experiences best suited to their professional goals and experiences.

This approach allows flexibility for students with professional public health experience.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PRECEPTORS



UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA (PHP)

Challenge: Limited number of nearby appropriate agencies and heavy agency workloads may make it challenging to take on student supervision

Solution: Connect with community organizations to learn about their needs and establish a partnership with preceptors invested in the program; make it easier and more beneficial to host public health students



EASTERN VIRGINIA MEDICAL SCHOOL (PHP)

Challenge: Desire for more meaningful experiences for students and preceptors **Solution:** Students develop professional goals and plans starting on day one



MANAGING A LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS



EMORY UNIVERSITY (SPH)

Challenge: Managing a large cohort of students each semester **Solution:** Combining staff, faculty, and technological resources

ACTION

Distribute responsibilities among professional staff and faculty advisors & tracking student progress with an online platform

Each department includes I-2 associate directors of academic programs.
These professional staff members help prepare students in the APE requirements and provide oversight of the student experience

Faculty advisors approve internship sites, preceptors, products, and comptencies.

All activities are logged in an online portal

Students have "localized" resources who know them & their curricula well.

Online portal allows consistent management of students throughout the different stages of the experience & provides one-stop access for students, faculty & staff.

MAPPING THE APE TO FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

As described above, the APE must result in two work products that align with five competencies. Of these five competencies, three must be foundational competencies defined in Criterion D2. The following examples highlight ways in which various experiences can be mapped to foundational competencies. These examples do not include the mapped concentration competencies, as these competencies vary by unit and degree offering.

Drug diversion initiative for the Baltimore public defender's office

Students worked to develop, implement, and evaluate a community-based drug diversion policy.

FC 6: Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities, and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community, and societal level

FC 9: Design a population-based policy, program, budget, or initiative FC 15: Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity FC 20: Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content

Example APE courtesy of University of Maryland, Baltimore (PHP)

Strategic plan for oral health non-profit organization

Students engage with organizational leaders and stakeholders to develop and present a strategic plan.

FC 13: Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes

FC 16: Apply principles of leadership, governance, and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration, and guiding decision making

FC 18: Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors

Example APE courtesy of the Consortium of Eastern Ohio (PHP)

Employee wellness/occupational health program at a big box store

Students design and implement a wellness program for employees at various levels within a large corporation.

FC 7: Assess population needs, assets, and capacities that affect communities' health

FC 8: Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs

FC 19: Communicate audienceappropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation

Example APE courtesy of Walden University (PHP)