

Orientation to the Practice Experience and Integrative Project

OHSU-PSU School of Public Health

(Recorded by Dr. Bill Lambert on September 23, 2020)

The Practice Experience

What is the practice experience?

It is essentially a “field experience” or “internship” that is ***best viewed as an opportunity for your professional growth.***

In the PE you will:

- demonstrate and apply your program-acquired knowledge
- learn new skills from working professionals
- build a network of contacts and references in public health, and
- critically reflect on your competencies in the context of this applied experience

In the PE, you have considerable control but also considerable responsibility

- In planning, you will select the placement that you feel best aligns with your interests and the skills that you wish to develop.
- In your proposal, you will define the learning competencies that you will practice.
- During the PE you will be accountable for your performance to the public health team that you are working with.
 - You will receive feedback that is dependent on your professional demeanor, adaptability, follow-thru, and accountability.

This is an important investment that you make in yourself.

Overview of the PE

- 160 contact hours with the organization are required.
- The 4 credits may be split across two terms (2 + 2) or taken in a single term.
 - If completed over 2 terms, plan to work ~10 hours per week
 - Completed in 1 term, plan to work ~20 hours per week
- On a day-to-day basis your work will be guided by your Site Preceptor
 - As needed, consult your Faculty Advisor and PE Coordinator.
- You may work as part of a group of students at the site, but you must report your learning as an individual.

Preparing for the Practice Experience

- You may enroll in the Practice Experience after you have completed 36 credits of coursework.
 - This includes all 5 core MPH courses, and
 - any coursework that supports the competencies you will address in the PE (eg, statistical analysis, survey construction and qualitative analysis, program evaluation)
- In advance, you must assemble a “Learning Contract” that describes:
 - the organization
 - your role and responsibilities
 - your objectives and work products
 - the specific competencies that you will address
 - mapping of these competency objectives to your completed coursework, and
 - has signature approval from both your Site Preceptor and your Faculty Advisor

Selecting your site

First, think about what interests you...

- What are your professional goals?
- What kind of work environment is important to you?
- What experiences and skills do you want to gain?

What can't I do?

- No community work or direct contact with community members, as per OHSU COVID restrictions for students – you must plan a PE that can be completed remotely
- You cannot work with a Primary Faculty in SPH as your preceptor
 - However, you can work on a project of a Primary Faculty and be supervised by a mid-level Preceptor.
- You may not deliver medical procedures or clinical services
 - However, you can evaluate them as part of research programs or quality improvement activities.

Can I be paid for my Practice Experience?

- Yes!
- However there are requirements listed in the Affiliation Agreement.
 - Most notably, the organization cannot transfer funds to OHSU to in turn pay you. You must be paid directly by them.
- If you are already employed by the organization where you want to do your PE, you must define a project that is above and beyond your usual duties and responsibilities.
 - Remember, the intent of the PE is to apply your newly gained public health knowledge and to extend your personal experience into new areas.

OHSU is requiring students to work remotely on their Practice Experiences.

- We acknowledge the many challenges for the Practice Experience at this time.
- Agencies and organizations are focusing on pandemic response and cut-backs have been made in staffing.
- Our Program Directors and Practice Experience Coordinators are flexible in supporting and approving your remote arrangements.
- The SPH is actively seeking options for students – watch your emails and consult the School's website.

How do I start?

You are responsible for finding an organization to work with:

- Check SPH website and monitor list-serv announcements
- Use your personal contacts and connections
- Speak with your Faculty Adviser and mentors
- Ask other students and recent alumni
- Attend the Oral (Virtual) Presentations of fellow students

Examples of student placements

- Public health agencies
 - City, County, State
- Non-Governmental Organizations
 - Public health projects (eg, violence prevention, housing, substance abuse treatment)
- Private sector
 - Employee health, safety and wellness
- Academic
 - Health services research
 - Community health program

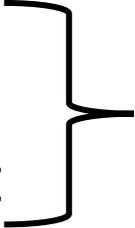
Topic areas of former students...

- Assessing opioid use in the Oregon Medicaid population
- Creating a Quality Improvement committee in a health care organization
- Equity screening of health communication processes
- Evaluating county-level disaster preparedness
- Assessing social determinants of health at a FQHC
- Equity issues in brownfields development
- Food security in at-risk pediatric populations
- Adverse birth outcomes in Pacific NW American Indians
- Pollution prevention in auto repair and construction businesses

Resources to help you:

1. “The Practice Experience Handbook” is your single best resource.
2. You can download this step-by-step guide and forms on the SPH website:
https://ohsu-psu-sph.org/ipe_pe_ip/
3. The Sakai site for the Practice Experience (becomes available when you are registered)
 - Echo360 recorded modules (how-to’s, guidelines and expectations)
 - Submission locations for documents
 - Grading and administrative actions will occur via this platform

The major events in the Practice Experience

1. Submission of the Learning Contract
 2. Submission of an Affiliation Agreement
 3. Submission of a Midway Report
 4. Presentation & submission of final products
 - Oral Presentation
 - Portfolio (work products and CV/resume)
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- This is your “proposal”

The components of the Learning Contract

- Organization description
- Site Preceptor (supervisor)
- Program description (mission and values)
- Your specific role and responsibilities
- Anticipated positionality and equity lens
- At least three foundational competencies to be addressed
- At least two program competencies to be addressed
- Mapping of competencies to your completed coursework

The Affiliation Agreement

- Establishes a legal relationship between the hosting organization and OHSU.
- The majority of this document addresses roles and responsibilities of the host and OHSU.
- The human resources or legal department of the hosting organization signs off.
- Over the past year the SPH has established organizational-level agreements with most county departments of health and many community organizations. Check with Andrew Wyman to see if an AA is in place for your site.

Exhibit A is the most important part of the AA

It establishes the expectations and responsibilities in the Teacher-Learner Relationship:

1. Lays out the Guiding Principles:
 - Duty
 - Integrity
 - Respect
2. Responsibilities of the Teacher
3. Responsibilities of the Student

Even if the host organization has a signed Affiliation Agreement in place, you must read & sign the document with your Site Preceptor and Faculty Advisor.

If you are working on a research project, do not overlook IRB approval

- Everyone needs to have completed CITI training
 - Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)
 - Human Subject Protection
- The IRB process takes time; *start early in the term prior.*
- Work now with your Site Preceptor and Faculty Adviser
- Non-OHSU organization: may need authorization agreement
- OHSU unit: you may be added to a current approved protocol
- If you are unsure if IRB approval is needed, work with your Faculty Advisor to submit the “Request for Determination” on OHSU’s eIRB
 - You will need to submit a full New Study description

Currently COVID-19 restrictions prohibit international placements.

Special case: International sites

- Must have a host site and a Preceptor on site
- Must complete forms for International Elective Approval & Travel Waiver of Liability
 - Online process after initial submission
- The OHSU Office of International Services provides travel screening
- Student Health will help you to meet travel requirements (and provides vaccinations)
- Must start planning several terms in advance to have all approvals in place.

Getting ready for your Practice Experience

Steps to approve your proposal *in the term prior* to registration

Work with faculty advisor to identify location for practice experience. Start filling out learning contract and affiliation agreement as needed.



Weeks 1-3

Complete practice experience learning contract. Send to Practice Experience Coordinator for review.



Week 5

Attend Practice Experience orientation (or watch video recording). Contact Practice Experience Coordinator with learning contract draft.



Week 3

Learning Contract Deadline. Make sure all signatures completed, and form is sent to Practice Experience Administrator



Week 7

Registration into Practice Experience. Students need to prepare for Practice Experience next quarter.



Weeks 8-9



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The products of the Practice Experience

1. Midway Report

- Use form on the SPH website https://ohsu-psu-sph.org/ipe_pe_ip/
- Progress, accomplishments, barriers and trouble shooting
- Submit on Sakai by end of Week 5 (or end of first term if splitting across 2 terms)

2. Final reports

- 20-min Oral Presentation during Finals Week
- Portfolio (work products and CV)
- Submit on Sakai by the end of Week 10

For more details, consult the Practice Experience Handbook on the School's website: https://ohsu-psu-sph.org/ipe_pe_ip/

Steps of your Practice Experience

Activities and deadlines *during* the term of work

Practice Experience Starts

If you have any questions contact your coordinator.



Weeks 1-4

Portfolio and Presentation

Make sure your portfolio is keeping up with the work, and that it addresses the competencies. Start working on your presentation to be presented during finals week.



Weeks 6-9

Presentations

For those who have finished their practice experience they will be giving a 20 minute oral presentation on their experience.



Finals week

Week 5

Midway report - 1Q

If you are doing the experience in one quarter then your midway report is due week 5!

Week 10

Midway report due – 2Q

If you are doing the experience in two quarters, then your midway report is due week 10 of the first quarter.



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Grading of the Practice Experience

- Your program's Practice Experience Coordinator will assign a letter grade A-F for your overall performance.
- Your grade is based on two components:
 1. Oral presentation (slides and speaking)
 2. Portfolio (work products and CV)
- Your work will be graded A-F by your program's PE Coordinator.
 - If you choose to split your PE across two terms 2 + 2 credits, your Midway Report grade will be assigned a PASS/NO PASS grade for the first term.

The Integrative Project

Description

- During the Integrative Project you will develop a high-quality written product of professional standard.
- The paper must demonstrate your ability to integrate competencies gained in your program.
- It may be derived from your Practice Experience or it may be a separate written product.
- The form of the paper will vary by student and program.
- The Integrative Project can be completed after, or simultaneously with, the Practice Experience.

Examples

- A program evaluation plan or report
- A high-quality draft journal manuscript
- A grant proposal
- A health promotion or community engagement program plan
- An economic analysis
- A policy-related document

At minimum, the Integrative Project paper will contain:

- A thoroughly defined overview, background and significance
- A thorough literature review
- A discussion or critical analysis that demonstrates integration of at least three foundational and three program competencies
- A statement of the student's reflective practice around equity and their positionality
 - Depending on the form of the written paper, it may an addendum addressing equity and positionality will be accepted

Objectives

We expect the student will demonstrate:

- A thorough knowledge of a public health issue
- The ability to articulate an “equity lens” and an understanding of their positionality in the selected public health issue
- The ability to apply existing theory and empirical evidence
- The ability to articulate the public health implications of a policy, program, or research study
- Effective written communication

Proposing your Integrative Project

Using a provided 1-page form, in consultation with your Faculty Advisor, you will briefly describe:

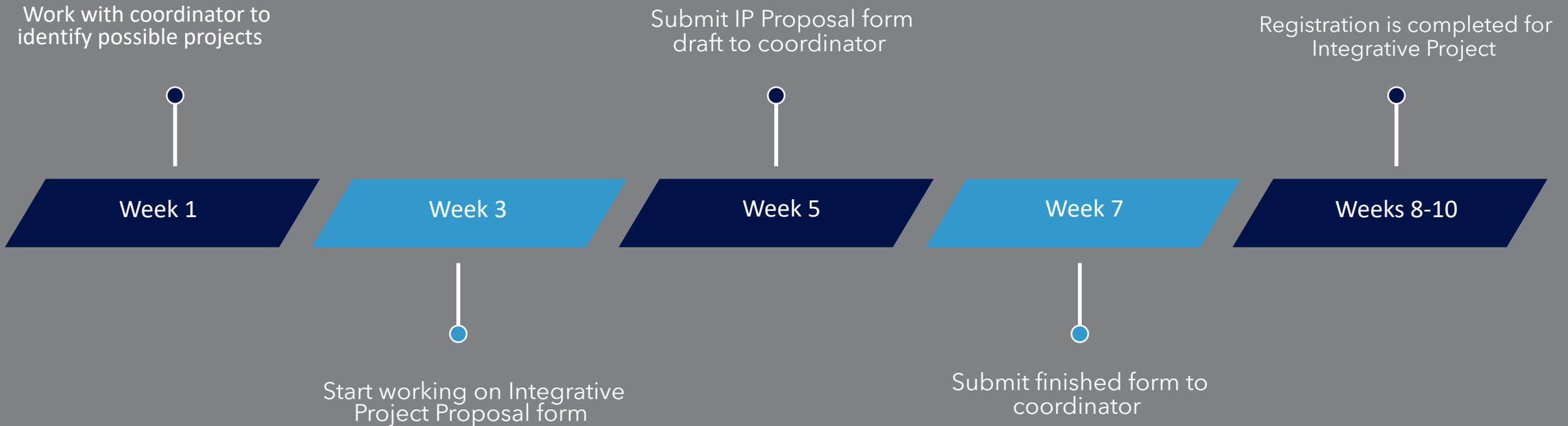
- the topic area and scope
- applicability to their professional goals
- sources of empirical evidence
- three or more foundational competencies to be addressed
- three or more program competencies to be addressed
- the primary public health implications

The proposal will be reviewed and approved by your program's IP Coordinator.

A Sakai site is established for the submission of your paper.

Getting ready for you Integrative Project

Steps to approve your proposal in the term prior to registration



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Writing resources and supports

- Students are encouraged to begin their writing work as early as possible in the term.
- Your Faculty Advisor or IP Coordinator will assist with content and analysis.
- For support on how to approach and organize the writing of a paper, consult the PSU Writing Center.
- See https://ohsu-psu-sph.org/academic_resources/, scroll down to “Learning and Coaching.”
- Both the OHSU Teaching and Learning Center and the PSU Learning Center can build your skills in project planning and time management.

Steps for your Integrative Project

Activities and deadlines *during* the term of work

Prepare outline and assemble literature

Outline due by end of Week 3.



Weeks 1-3

First draft of paper due

Submit to your advisor and/or coordinator by end of Week 7.



Week 7

Final paper due

Submit to your advisor and/or coordinator by end of Finals Week.



Finals Week

Weeks 4-6



Write first draft of paper.

Weeks 8-10



Polish and improve your paper.



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Evaluation of your Integrative Project paper

- Your paper will be reviewed by your faculty advisor and/or program coordinator.
- The grading rubric follows the student learning objectives in the syllabus (knowledge of issue, application of theory, evidence, integration of competencies, equity lens, and quality of writing).
- You will be assigned a letter grade of A-F for this 1-credit course.
 1. The content and quality of your writing.
 2. Your ability to integrate foundational and program competencies.

--- Concluding Remarks ---

What can you do now?

- Read the Practice Experience Handbook
- Attend the Oral (Virtual) Presentations of your student peers (held during finals week each term)
- Update your CV/resume
- Learn how to do a brief informational interview
- Research potential organizations and public health teams
- Email and followup with a phone call to introduce yourself:
 - Show interest in their mission
 - Ask about areas where your skills match and where you can contribute
 - Be prepared to describe the PE objective and broad requirements
 - Start monitoring list-servs, talk to advisors and to other other students

Due dates

Both the Practice Experience Proposal package (“The Learning Contract”) and the Integrative Project Proposal are both due by the end of the 7th week of the term.

This deadline allows time for review and approval. Once all paperwork is signed and in place, the Dean’s Office will move ahead to register you for course credits.

--- End ---