



## OHSU-PSU School of Public Health

BSTA 509PE / CPH 509PE / EPI 504PE / ESHH 509PE / HSMP 509PE / PHE 504PE  
Practice Experience

### Course Description

The Practice Experience involves the student working in an organization in public, private, or community settings engaged in public health activities. It is an opportunity for the student to apply knowledge and skills from their MPH degree coursework to important public health problems in real-life settings. Students should produce at least two products from their Practice Experience that demonstrate the attainment of at least 3 foundational and 2 program competencies. Group projects are approvable if the roles and contributions of the individual students involved are clearly distinguishable. Each individual student will create his/her own work products and portfolio.

### Credit Hours and Grading

A minimum of 4 credits is required. This corresponds to 160 contact hours “on-site”. The contact hours must take place during the academic terms when the student is registered for Practice Experience credits. Practice Experience credit will not be retroactively applied to previous experiences. Students may take all 4 credits in a single term or split them across two contiguous terms, i.e., 2-and-2.

The Practice Experience will be evaluated as a letter grade, A-F. If the credits are split across two terms, the student will receive a letter grade in each respective term. Consistent with the performance expectations for all required courses in the School of Public Health, a grade less than a B-minus will require the student to repeat the Practice Experience.

### Prerequisite Enrollment Information

Students may take their Practice Experience credits any time after they have successfully completed 42 graduate credits in their MPH degree program, including the core required courses and selected program required courses (please consult your program’s guidelines). This requirement helps to ensure that students have sufficient public health knowledge to apply to their Practice Experience and to build a reasonable substantive portfolio.

In the term prior to enrollment, students must submit and receive approval of their Practice Experience Learning Contract. The Learning Contract identifies the organization where the Practice Experience will occur, the Site Preceptor, and the specific learning activities, work products, and competencies to be addressed.

It is recommended that students enroll in the Practice Experience during the last term (or two terms) of enrollment in the Program. Enrollment in the Practice Experience course should be coordinated with the Integrated Experienced & Paper course. Enrollment in the Integrative Experience & Paper course can occur simultaneously with enrollment in Practice Experience, but not before. If the Practice Experience credits are split across two terms, enrolling in the Integrative Experience & Paper course during the second term of Practice Experience is permitted. Students taking both courses simultaneously should note that an Incomplete in the Practice Experience will necessitate receiving an Incomplete in the Integrative Experience & Paper course until the Practice Experience is completed. This is because the Integrative Experience & Paper course is considered a culminating experience. For some students it may be advantageous to enroll in the Integrative Experience & Paper course in the term following completion of the Practice Experience, i.e., their final term in the program.

## Faculty Information

Each MPH degree program has designated a faculty member to serve as the Practice Experience Coordinator (consult your Student Handbook for current listing). The Practice Experience Coordinator for each program will receive and approve the student proposals (Learning Contract) and Mid-Way Reports. A panel of reviewers from the School's faculty will grade the student's oral presentation and final portfolio.

## Course Meeting Day and Time

Online modules describing the Practice Experience requirements and procedures are available on the Sakai website to all matriculated students (<link>). In addition, a classroom/online orientation will be held each academic term to assist students in preparation for fulfilling the Practice Experience requirement.

During the finals week of each academic term, students completing their Practice Experience will present a summary of their experience to peers and faculty. This presentation will cover organizational setting, role and responsibilities, work products and their significance for public health practice, and competencies developed.

## Course Objectives

The Practice Experience will require students to demonstrate a minimum 3 foundational competencies and 2 program-specific competencies. Students select competencies relevant to their particular Practice Experience work in consultation with their Practice Experience Coordinator and the site preceptor. The competencies to be addressed are identified in the Learning Contract prior to registering for Practice Experience credits (details in "The Learning Contract" below). Upon completion of the Practice Experience, students will create a portfolio that demonstrates their attainment of the specific competencies identified in their approved Learning Contract.

## Student Learning Outcomes

At completion of the Practice Experience, students will have:

1. Applied knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to practical experience
2. Demonstrate and further develop an understanding of how structural bias, racism, and other social inequities undermine health and are barriers to health equity.
3. Gained hands-on experience in the field of public health
4. Produced products that demonstrate attainment of a minimum of 3 foundational and 2 program specific competencies
5. Developed a portfolio to highlight the Practice Experience and their attainment of competencies

## Required Texts and Readings

None

## Attendance Requirements

Students are required to view the online Sakai modules. Students will be expected to journal their hours and activities. While the journal will not be submitted as part of the Practice Experience's final portfolio, the journal may assist the student in the development of the portfolio and in some cases may be helpful for the Integrative Paper.

A minimum of 160 contact hours with the public health organization/project is expected for 4 credits of Practice Experience.

Students are expected to attend and present an oral summary of their work at the Practice Experience presentations session held during the finals week of each term. For students residing outside of the Portland metropolitan area, participation and presentations will be conducted via video conferencing.

### Outline Sakai Modules

Module	Topic
1	Overview of the Purpose of Practice Experience
2	How to Identify and Propose Your Practice Experience
3	Mapping Learning Activities & Experiences to Competencies (Learning Contract)
4	Understanding Structural Bias and Positionality
5	Assembling a Portfolio
6	Program-specific Guidelines and Expectations
7	Assembling your Practice Experience Oral Presentation
8	Introduction to the Integrative Experience & Paper Requirement

### Specific Grading Standards

Assignment	Percent of Grade
Mid-Way Report	25
Oral Presentation	25
Final Portfolio	50

### Academic Accessibility and Accommodation

The OHSU-PSU School of Public Health values diversity and inclusion. We are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. Our goal is to create learning environments that are equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or program/course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, we want to know.

For students with disabilities enrolled in the graduate SPH programs, the [Office of Student Access Services](#) at OHSU will begin the process with you of determining reasonable accommodations and facilitating access. The [Disability Resource Center at Portland State](#) collaborates with Student Access Services at OHSU in regards to all SPH graduate students. The OHSU Office for Student Access is located in Baird Hall 1036B and can be reached at [studentaccess@ohsu.edu](mailto:studentaccess@ohsu.edu) or 503-494-0082.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, please contact the appropriate office to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations are not retroactive and that some accommodations take time to implement; we encourage you to make contact with the appropriate office as soon as possible.

### Commitment to Equity and Inclusion

If you encounter sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, age, national origin or ancestry, veteran or military status, marital status, pregnancy or parenting status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other protected status, please contact the [OHSU Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Department](#) at 503-494-5148 or [aaeo@ohsu.edu](mailto:aaeo@ohsu.edu).

Title IX of the Educational Amendment Act of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions. Inquiries about Title IX compliance or sex/gender discrimination and harassment at OHSU may be directed to the [OHSU Title IX Coordinator](#), Laura Stadum, at 503-494-0258, [titleix@ohsu.edu](mailto:titleix@ohsu.edu) or [staduml@ohsu.edu](mailto:staduml@ohsu.edu).

The [Office of Equity & Compliance](#) is responsible for monitoring Portland State University's Title IX compliance. Portland State University's Title IX Coordinator is Julie Caron, 503-725-4410, [jucaron@pdx.edu](mailto:jucaron@pdx.edu).

### School of Public Health Handbook

All students are responsible for following the policies and expectations outlined in the student handbook for their program of study. Students are responsible for their own academic work and are expected to have read and practice principles of academic honesty, as presented in the handbook at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BylPaVvxPFBSYFIWGH5VF93eGc/view>

### Technical Support

The OHSU Information Technology Group Help Desk is available to assist students with email account or network account access issues between 6 am and 6 pm Monday through Friday at telephone 503-494-2222. For technical support using the Sakai Course Management System, please contact the Sakai Help Desk at email [sakai@ohsu.edu](mailto:sakai@ohsu.edu) or telephone 877-972-5249.

### The Learning Contract

In the term prior to enrolling for Practice Experience credits, students will complete and submit the Learning Contract form (see program Student Practice Experience Guidelines). This form will describe the organizational setting, site preceptor, the learning activities, work products and the foundational and program competencies to be addressed. The student is responsible for filing out the form in consultation with the Site Preceptor and their Faculty Advisor, both of whom sign the form to indicate their approval of the plan. The form is then submitted to the program Practice Experience Coordinator for final approval. This is due week 5 of term prior to registration.

### Oral Presentation

At the conclusion of their Practice Experience (week 10), students will deliver a presentation to share the highlights of their experience with peers and faculty. The format will be a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation that describes the organizational setting, student role and responsibility, work products and their public health significance, including recommendations for future actions, and the competencies developed. A ten-minute question and answer period will allow further exploration of the topic with the audience. Please consult your program Practice Experience Guidelines for additional guidance.

### Rubric for Evaluating the Oral Presentation

The Oral Presentation will be weighted 25% towards the final course grade. Faculty in attendance will score the presentation according to the following rubric:

<b>Demonstration of the appropriate application of student’s MPH program skills and knowledge to their practice experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clearly explains the appropriate application of skills &amp; knowledge to their practice experience</li><li>• Terms &amp; concepts chosen deliberately &amp; used correctly</li></ul>
<b>Appropriate description of the public health context, relevant social inequities, &amp; implications of the work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public health context is clearly explained</li><li>• Shows understanding of how structural bias, racism, and other social inequities relate to their practice experience; applies an equity lens</li><li>• Breadth of implications for work clearly stated</li><li>• Student may suggest next steps and/or recommend further work</li></ul>
<b>Demonstrates effective oral communication expected of a public health professional</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication strategies and public health content are audience appropriate</li><li>• Presentation leaves audience with clear understanding of experience and learning</li><li>• Slides are well organized, and have clear introduction, transitions, and conclusion</li><li>• Presentation fits within the time limit</li></ul>
<b>Responses to questions show deeper topic knowledge and create a safe environment for exchange</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responses are well reasoned and show deeper understanding of topic</li><li>• Acknowledges speakers and allows questions and comments without interrupting</li><li>• Treats questions as opportunities to clarify and expand conversation</li></ul>

## Portfolio Assignment

You will create your portfolio using Sakai.

Students demonstrate attainment of foundational and program competencies through a portfolio, which provides examples of student work (“products”) produced during the Practice Experience. The following is an outline of the Portfolio, which is due at the end of the Practice Experience.

1. Background
  - a. Your Biography
    - i. This will depend on individual students but in general, the biography should be a condensed narrative similar to what you might find in a resume. It should include name, contact info, email address, educational background, and brief overview of career goals. If pertinent and relevant, incorporate job details such as current work position, a summarized description of professional background, experiences, and accomplishments. Students might also consider adding a brief description of personal interests and activities, particularly those that intersect with their public health interests.
  - b. Overview of Practice Experience
    - i. Brief description of the purpose of the Practice Experience and the general nature of the work you conducted. Also include a brief overview of the organization in

which you worked (e.g., size, location, mission, population served, programs, etc...).

- ii. Reflect on your own positionality in relation to the organization and the community. Critically appraise your work and identify areas for increased equity in the future.
- iii. Briefly identify your main areas of responsibility and activities for which you were responsible in the Practice Experience. If you worked on a team to develop your products, describe your specific areas of responsibility and the related activities for which others were responsible.

## 2. Practice Experience Products

- a. Include at least 2 products from your internship related to at least 3 foundational competencies and at least 2 program competencies.
- b. Provide a brief description of each product.
- c. Identify intended audience(s) for each product and explain how each product reflects an appropriate communications strategy for the intended audience.
- d. Describe in detail the methods and/or approaches used to develop each product.
- e. Discuss how products presented above demonstrate your development of the specific foundational and program competencies. Identify particular skills related to specific competencies and explain how you developed them, including challenges and lessons learned.
- f. Complete the summary of portfolio products and competencies table, and include it with your portfolio submission.

## Rubric for Evaluating the Portfolio

The portfolio is weighted as 50% of the total Practice Experience course grade. A panel of program faculty will review and grade the portfolio according to the following rubric:

Criteria	Developing (B-)	Proficient (B and B+)	Exceeds (A- and A)
<b>Competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 foundational &amp; 2 program</li> <li>• Detailed description of competencies aligned with products</li> </ul>			
<b>Products</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 2 products</li> <li>• Well described &amp; individual role clearly defined</li> </ul>			
<b>Overall Portfolio</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biography</li> <li>• Organization &amp; Practice Experience overview</li> <li>• Equity &amp; positionality reflection</li> <li>• Description linking products to competencies</li> <li>• Challenges and Lessons Learned</li> </ul>			
<b>Structure and Mechanics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pages are aesthetically pleasing</li> <li>• Links work and all images viewable</li> <li>• Professional tone and style</li> <li>• Proofread (virtually free of grammar &amp; spelling errors)</li> </ul>			

## Appendix A: The 22 CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies

### Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice

### Public Health & Health Care Systems

5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
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 levels

### Planning & Management to Promote Health

7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs

### Policy in Public Health

12. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes
14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity

### Leadership

16. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges

### Communication

18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content

### Interprofessional Practice

## **21. Perform effectively on inter-professional teams**

### Systems Thinking

## **22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue**

## **Appendix B: Program Competencies by MPH Degree Program**

### **Biostatistics**

1. Apply appropriate principles of research design and population-based concepts to assess health problems.
2. Apply appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical methods to analyze risk determinants of disease and health conditions.
3. Apply descriptive and inferential statistical methods that are appropriate to the different study designs used in public health research.
4. Interpret and summarize results and communicate them to lay and professional audiences, in the context of proper public health principles and concepts.
5. Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of alternative research designs and analytic methods, and critically review and assess statistical analyses presented in public health literature.
6. Apply basic ethical principles pertaining to the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of public health data.
7. Identify cultural dimensions of conducting research, including culturally sensitive recruitment of study participants, and develop strategies for interpretation of data in the larger cultural context.

### **Environmental Systems & Human Health**

1. Communicate the relationship between environmental systems and human health, particularly in response to a changing climate.
2. Analyze how environmental hazards (chemical, physical and biological) interact with natural and built systems, including the mechanisms of their adverse effects on humans.
3. Assess and interpret relevant literature in the area of public health and environmental hazards.
4. Evaluate the risk of environmental exposures to human populations through the incorporation of exposure, toxicological, and other relevant data into risk assessment methodology.
5. Discuss how federal and state regulatory programs, guidelines and authorities impact environmental and occupational health issues.
6. Apply ethical principles that govern the practice of environmental risk assessment, management, and communication.
7. Specify approaches for assessing, preventing and controlling environmental and occupational hazards that pose risks to human health and safety.
8. Integrate, synthesize and apply theory to practice in the context of a research study, policy consequences, or environmental exposure.
9. Explain the general mechanisms of toxicity in eliciting a human health effect in response to various environmental and occupational exposures.

### **Epidemiology**

1. Apply population-based concepts of epidemiology and risk determination to the assessment of health problems.
2. Apply evidence-based knowledge of health determinants to public health issues.



3. Apply and interpret a variety of statistical methods commonly used in medical and public health research.
4. Propose and test a research hypothesis.
5. Identify ethical principles problems that arise in public health policy decisions.
6. Apply knowledge of cultural dimensions in conducting research, including culturally sensitive recruitment of study participants, and develop strategies for interpretation of data in the larger cultural context.
7. Integrate and apply relevant literature in epidemiology to public health issues and policy.
8. Communicate public health principles and concepts through various strategies across multiple sectors of the community.

### **Health Promotion**

1. Apply theory in the development, implementation, and evaluation of health promotion interventions, programs, and policies.
2. Develop interventions and programs to effect change at multiple levels, including individual, community, organization, and policy.
3. Design and implement strategies to promote health.
4. Solicit and integrate input from community and organization stakeholders.
5. Design and deliver health communication messages.
6. Evaluate and interpret results from program evaluations and other research.
7. Define health problems, frame hypotheses, design research procedures, and outline methods of analysis.
8. Apply ethical principles that govern the practice of public health promotion.
9. Demonstrate cultural competency in health promotion among all social and cultural communities.

### **Health Management & Policy**

1. Apply ethical principles and behaviors that govern the practice of health management and policy.
2. Apply theory in the development, implementation and evaluation of solutions to challenges in health management and policy.
3. Represent cultural competency with diverse cultures and communities in the practice of health management and policy.
4. Apply policy process knowledge and techniques to support development and implementation of health policy.
5. Select and employ appropriate qualitative and quantitative techniques to evaluate and manage health system performance.
6. Design and implement processes to assess and improve organizational and system performance.
7. Solicit and integrate input from health system stakeholders to advance cooperative solutions to health system challenges.
8. Design and deliver communication materials supporting the practice of health services leadership, management and policy.
9. Demonstrate critical and self-reflective thinking in the practice of health management and policy.

### **Public Health Practice**

1. Assess, analyze, and synthesize the health status of vulnerable populations.
2. Identify, develop and manage interventions to promote and protect the health of populations at risk.
3. Lead and participate in inter-professional efforts to address health inequities with community partners.
4. Conduct, participate in or apply research, which improves the health of a population.
5. Assess and integrate cultural beliefs and practices into public health interventions.
6. Develop and plan interventions utilizing principles of health systems organization and health care finance to address health disparities.
7. Apply program planning and quality improvement principles in the development, management, and/or evaluation of population health services.
8. Demonstrate basic skills in the development of a grant proposal.
9. Employ techniques to manage human, fiscal, and other public health resources.