

THE LEARNING CONTRACT

The components of the Learning Contract are listed below. You can find an editable version on the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health website on the Practice Experience page.

Section 1: Student information
Section 2: Practice Site & Preceptor information
Section 3: Practice Experience information
Section 4: Current resume/CV
Section 5: Readiness reflection
Section 6: Student's career goals
Section 7: Practice experience overview and public health focus
Section 8: Statement about positionality and equity
Section 9: Competency map & products
Section 10: Description of final deliverables
Other Documentation: Non-clinical training agreement
Other Documentation: Off-campus authorization screenshot (if applicable)
Other Documentation: IRB documentation (if applicable)

SECTIONS 1-5: STUDENT AND SITE INFORMATION

Section 1 is your student information. Remember to use your OHSU student ID number if you register through OHSU and your PSU ID number if you register through PSU.

Section 2 is your PE site and Preceptor information.

Section 3 asks if you watched the PE orientation video, the term(s) of enrollment for the PE, and the deadline for submitting your final materials.

Section 4 is your CV/resume. Please ensure that you update it before attaching it.

SECTION 5: READINESS REFLECTION

Please reflect on how your MPH coursework and previous/current work experience have equipped you with the skills and knowledge you need to complete your PE. Students should not agree to do a PE that they do not have the skills and knowledge to complete. Mention specific courses and previous/current work experiences that have prepared you for your PE.

SECTION 6: STUDENT'S CAREER GOALS

Write career goals for the short-term (1-2 years beyond graduation) and long-term (5 years beyond graduation). In 1-2 paragraphs, describe the positions you hope to hold, including settings, the scope of work, responsibilities, and expectations. You must also include a statement highlighting how your PE will help you achieve your career goals. Career goals should build upon experience to date and competencies attained in your MPH program.

SECTION 7: PRACTICE EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW AND PUBLIC HEALTH FOCUS

You should include at least two or three overarching goals for the PE, a description of what you will be doing, and at least 2 products that you will attach to your portfolio that will demonstrate your attainment of competencies. Describe the specific setting, your scope of work, and your responsibilities. Include a statement highlighting the public health relevancy of your PE and how the experience will build upon the competencies you have attained in your MPH program.

SECTION 8: STATEMENT ABOUT POSITIONALITY AND EQUITY

The OHSU-PSU School of Public Health is committed to equity as a fundamental component of public health. Every MPH student must demonstrate Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) Foundational Competency #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.” We believe that all students should develop the skills necessary to engage in reflective practice about equity in the context of public health. Reflective practice requires explicit attention to power dynamics as they relate to the positionality of public health professionals based on gender, sexual orientation, ability, cultural, racial/ethnic, educational, and other forms of identity.

Positionality refers to the social and political contexts that shape your identity. Reflection on positionality requires recognizing that your identity influences and potentially biases your understanding of the world around you. As researchers in academic institutions or public health professionals working in the community, our positionality can represent power and privilege within the formal institutions where we do our work. We produce scientific knowledge that is often privileged over other types of knowledge. We must recognize that our positionalities inform how we engage in public health work and evaluate and challenge privilege to disrupt traditional power structures. Acknowledging power dynamics requires continued self-evaluation and conscious awareness of our positionality vis-à-vis the communities in which we work.

For the PE, you should be reflective about your positionality. Consider the following guiding questions:

- What is your positionality vis-à-vis the population or community in which you conduct research or work?
- Who defines the goals of the work that you do?
- Who is involved in the decision-making process?
- What are the levels of power-sharing?
- Whose voices are typically privileged and elevated, and whose are often silenced or ignored?
- Are the planned methods of conducting or sharing the work structured in ways that further reinforce or challenge traditional power structures?

For this section of the learning contract, we ask that you think in advance and reflect on positionality and equity within the context of the work you plan to do.

SECTION 9: COMPETENCY MAP & PRODUCTS

Carefully consider the tasks you will undertake to achieve the project’s goals. Develop a map (in table form) to outline the competencies you will demonstrate as you complete those tasks. You will also need to consider what Practice Experience products and deliverables best demonstrate the attainment of those competencies.

All students must demonstrate attainment of CEPH Foundational Competency #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.” You must select at least 2 additional CEPH foundational competencies and 2 competencies from your specific MPH program.

Draft an initial competency map and then work with your faculty advisor and/or program’s Practice Experience Coordinator to revise and finalize it.

The competency map starts with the competencies you will demonstrate and apply through your PE. However, beginning with the project goals may be easier. You should break down all tasks and activities necessary to achieve each goal and then determine how they link to the competencies. After this initial mapping process, you can input the information into the competency map.

Competency Mapping

Competency	Project goal	Tasks/activities required to meet the goal	Practice Experience Deliverable or Product
CEPH Foundational Competency #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.	Practice Experience Goal for all MPH Students <i>Your project may also have a separate equity goal – if so, list it here as well.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective practice around positionality and equity in the context of Practice Experience • <i>If other tasks meet this goal, list them here.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio • <i>If you produce products that demonstrate this attainment – list them here.</i>
State CEPH foundational competency listed in your learning contract	List which project goal(s) your competency relates to	List specific tasks/activities that help you meet the goal and are connected to the competency	List specific products and Practice Experience deliverables that demonstrate attainment of competency
State CEPH foundational competency listed in your learning contract			
State program competency listed in your learning contract			
State program competency listed in your learning contract			

Connect each project goal with an overview of the necessary tasks/activities

Example 1: If the project goal is to design and implement a survey for a specific purpose, associated tasks might include: researching existing instruments; researching best practices related to the topic; developing a comprehensive research protocol; developing survey questions; fielding the survey (data collection); analyzing the data; interpreting the findings; and, drafting a summary report.

Example 2: If the project goal is to develop health education materials on the importance of vaccinations, associated tasks might include: identifying the central message, identifying important stakeholders for input and feedback, identifying the appropriate audience, reviewing recent literature on health literacy, developing the materials and soliciting input from appropriate people (i.e., experts for accuracy, community members for clarity and message), connecting with the appropriate people in the organization for approval and dissemination.

Example 3: If the project goal is to conduct a statistical analysis of an existing data set, describe the steps involved or identify specific activities: formulation of research question/hypotheses, data management and cleaning, coding, generation of preliminary findings, presentation to site/agency team, finalization and write-up of results.

Connect each project goal with a specific CEPH foundational or program competency.

- You must select 3 CEPH foundational (one of which must be CEPH Foundational Competency #6) and 2 program competencies. What competencies will you demonstrate as a result of meeting the project goals and completing the associated tasks?

Example 1: Analyzing data from a cross-sectional study to evaluate HIV testing practices, prevalence, and linkage to care could be connected to CEPH Foundational Competency #1 “Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice.”

Example 2: Developing a presentation on the findings from the same cross-sectional study could be connected to CEPH Foundational Competency #19 “Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.”

List the Practice Experience product(s) that you will attach to your portfolio as evidence of competency attainment

- What products will you develop during your PE?

Examples of Practice Experience products: surveys, recorded presentations, videos, websites, posters, training manuals, policy analysis, curriculum, grant proposals, needs assessment, literature review, meeting minutes, statistical data analysis output, environmental data summaries, educational or outreach materials, etc....

You need to produce at least 2 products, but you are welcome to include more. If relevant, you can also list PE deliverables (i.e., portfolio and presentation). However, your PE deliverables do not count towards the 2 products required for the Learning Contract and Portfolio.

One product may be associated with multiple project goals and competencies. For example, a survey you designed to collect information about a community’s needs and how a program is or is not meeting those needs may demonstrate your attainment of at least CEPH Foundational Competencies. In this case, Competency #7 (Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities’ health) and Foundational Competency #11 (Select methods to evaluate public health programs) would apply.