

Practice-Based Experience “Workshop”

*An Introduction to Field Placement
for WVU MPH Students*



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Learning Objectives

- * Understand the purpose and goals of a practice-based experience
- * Identify the requirements for your field placement
- * Plan the steps to initiate and complete a placement which contributes to your professional development

What is a Practice-based Experience?

- * “Field placement” with an agency or organization whose mission/services are public health-related
- * Students work with an approved preceptor
- * Placement should allow students to:
 - apply their academic knowledge
 - acquire or expand skills related to their discipline
 - be evaluated relative to selected competencies

What is a Practice-based Experience?

It's an opportunity...

- * To explore public health careers
- * To clarify your professional goals
- * To develop contacts for employment (networking)

Minimum Requirements

- * All MPH students must complete a minimum of 180 hours of practice-based field work with an approved agency or organization * *OEHS= 360 hrs
- * Select 3-5 competencies (core and discipline-specific) to attain during your placement
- * Complete and submit a signed workplan agreement
- * Register for 3 credit hours of PUBH 622
- * Complete monthly field reports, assigned projects, a final field report, and final evaluations

Minimum Requirements

All MPH students must complete a minimum of 180 hours* of practice-based field work with an approved agency or organization

- * 180 hours
 - 9 weeks at 20 hrs/wk
 - 6 weeks at 30 hrs/week

* OEHS requires 360 hours

- * *Special conditions* (ie, stipend or agency/organization specifies hours associated with opportunity):

Student agrees to complete hours specified, which may be greater than 180 minimum

Minimum Requirements

All MPH students must complete a minimum of 180 hours of practice-based field work with an approved agency or organization*

* Practice-based means NOT research

- Any placement with WVU faculty member as preceptor requires approval from Senior Associate Dean
- Many faculty are active in community settings and organizations

* Approved agency or organization

- Mission/services consistent with public health
- Qualified preceptor
- Some departments want to approve site
- At School level, must put Affiliation Agreement in place
- List of sites + new opportunities will be on web page

Students may still suggest a site—remember, requires extra time

Where should I apply?

In order to select a site that's a good fit, be able to state:

- * **What are my professional goals?**

Be able to articulate this; even if you're not sure what your long-term goal is, give some thought about where you could visualize yourself working.

- * What populations do I want to work with? (Or NOT work with?)
- * What are my constraints (family, \$, time, travel restrictions)
- * What do I want to try...
 - but have never had the time?
 - but don't know very much about?
 - but am afraid to?

Where should I apply?

Local, state or federal government agency

Healthcare facility

Coalitions

WVU Extension

Non-profit organization

Private company

- * Check out the [site listings](#) and descriptions on our secure site.
- * Check back often.
- * *Special opportunities* may be posted as they arise.

Talk to your advisor and faculty, other students, community mentors, and professional contacts for ideas.

- * PBL Director can make suggestions, but only based on information you've provided.

What could I do?

Must be relevant to your discipline!

- Obtain evidence-based information to support a grant or initiative
- Work with a needs assessment (background, surveys, focus groups, data)
- Develop or implement part of a program or conduct a program evaluation
- Collect and/or analyze data
- Conduct disease surveillance
- Complete a policy analysis
- Design materials for an intervention or education campaign

When should I do my Field Placement?

- * In general, you should be halfway through your coursework before beginning a practice-based experience. For FT students, the earliest would be the summer after your first year.
- * Semester **prior to** when you plan to begin your placement, apply to at least one site.

| Placement Start Date | Recruiting Time Period (Applications) | Interviews | Decision Date (Preferred) |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Summer: May/June | January 2 - February 28 | February - Mid April | April 15 |
| Fall: Late August/September | May 15 - June 30 | May/June - Mid July | July 15 |
| Spring: January | September 15 - October 30 | September - Mid November | November 15 |

Process Overview

Have 1 page professional resume and cover letter of interest
Meet application deadlines
Interview with site (s)



Site notifies you of selection —→ You notify Director PBL
Review [Workplan Agreement](#) **you** develop with preceptor
All sign; you return signed copy



PBL Director places permission
Register for PUBH 622 (Change credits from “1” to number
you will complete in that semester)

Student Responsibilities

- * In consultation with the PBL Director, identifies a potential site :
 - Appropriate for major department and concentration(s) (AOE) and competencies
 - Aligned with professional goals
- * Interviews with host site; discusses site's current projects/needs
- * Completes MPH Workplan Agreement with preceptor; PBL Director reviews; you review revisions with preceptor
- * Provides signed Workplan Agreement to PBL Director

The Workplan Agreement

An agreement between the student and site preceptor, approved by PBL Director, that identifies the student's competency goals and outlines the student's assignments, activities and final products for the field placement.

* **It should be considered a formal contract.**

The Workplan Agreement clarifies:

- Goals and objectives
- Methods
- Timelines
- A final product (may be a report, grant, data analysis)

A signed Workplan Agreement **MUST BE** completed, submitted, and approved before you start your experience.

Student Responsibilities

Registers for PUBH 622 (can only do after signed workplan received). Reviews syllabus and assignment due dates in SOLE

Completes all assignments related to the placement and the final product(s) as specified

Maintains communication with PBL Director as needed; report problems and/or concerns *promptly*

Completes an evaluation of the site, preceptor and process toward end of semester

Site Preceptor Responsibilities

The site preceptor provides you with an orientation to the organization, assists you in matching to projects and activities as specified in your workplan, and provides project supervision and mentoring.

- * Assists in developing a placement that meets the student's interests and the needs of the host site
- * Assists the student in completing the Workplan Agreement
- * Maintains contact with student and PBL Director and participates in meetings, as requested
- * Completes monthly evaluations and a final competency evaluation of the student and their experience at the end of the field rotation hours

Responsibilities of the PBL Director

The PBL Director assists you in defining your learning objectives based on selected competencies, helps to identify and select a site, meets with you as needed during the experience.

- * Reviews Workplan Agreement
- * Monitors progress of the field work; provides support to student if problems
- * Maintains contact with student and site preceptor
- * Acknowledges completion of placement hours and assignments with a grade (P/F) – based on student attendance, field reports, final products/deliverables and Site Preceptor evaluation

Questions?

- * <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/ophpwd/practice-based-experience>
- * Mph-practice@hsc.wvu.edu
- * Individual meetings will be available in January
- * You will receive emails from MPH Practice-based Experience
 - You should respond to these!