Course Description

MPH epidemiology and biostatistics students are required to demonstrate proficiency in the application of the skills they acquire during their academic programs through the Practicum (PubH 6014) and the Culminating Experience (PubH 6015).

The Practicum is a credit/no credit course which consists of a planned, supervised, and evaluated practice activity in a public health organization. The Practice Activity can consist either of a primary research or surveillance project including data collection and analysis, or a secondary analysis of an existing database. The Practice Activity enables the student to apply new skills in the context of public health, and must not be directly related to the student’s day-to-day work. If the student does conduct the Practice Activity at his/her place of employment, this must be a separate activity for which the student is not remunerated.

The Culminating Experience is a graded course where students apply epidemiologic and/or biostatistical methods and skills acquired in the program to integrate information and analyze, interpret and present data. It consists of four elements that focus on the Practice Activity: (a) Concept Paper, (b) Proposal, (c) Final Report or Manuscript, and (d) Oral Presentation. These elements are described in detail in the Culminating Experience syllabus (PubH 6015).

While it is not a requirement, it is possible for students to link the Practicum and Culminating Experience.

Course Prerequisite(s):
- PubH 6002 Biostatistical Applications for Public Health
- PubH 6003 Principles and Practice of Epidemiology

Co-Requisites
- PubH 6247 Design of Health Studies
- PubH 6249 Use of Stat Packages for Data Management/Data Analysis
- PubH 6261 Epidemiology and Biostatistics Skills Building Seminar
- PubH 6006 Management and Policy Approaches to Public Health

Recommended Courses
- PubH 6004 Environmental and Occupational Health
- PubH 6007 Social and Behavioral Science Methods
- PubH 6252 Advanced Epidemiologic Methods
Other Prerequisites

- Students must take the online CITI training courses relating to research with human subjects and personal health information (HIPPA) (see SPH Student Practicum Guidebook for details).
- Students must have completed the mandatory online SPHHS Practicum Training designed to assist them in preparing for their Practicum and professional endeavors (see Practicum handbook for details).
- Students must have participated in the mandatory Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics Practicum Orientation session.
- If applicable, students must submit IRB paperwork. (See Culminating Experience [PubH 6015] syllabus for details).

Other co-requisites

- If students decide to link their Practicum and Culminating Experience, A Concept Paper and a Proposal (see Culminating Experience syllabus [PubH 6015] details) can be completed for the required deliverables concurrent with the Practicum.

Student responsibilities

1. Students should meet with the Department Practicum Directors mid-way through the MPH program and begin the process of identifying the Practice Activity that will be the focus of their Practicum.
2. Students must complete the Milken SPH Practicum Training online to prepare them for the Practice Activity and should begin to explore the Milken SPH Practicum website and other resources for practicum ideas.
3. After identifying a Practicum site, students develop a Practicum plan, which they will post on the SPH Practicum website.
4. Once a student has identified a site and a Preceptor, has posted a Practicum plan on the SPH Practicum website and had the Preceptor review and PD sign off on the plan, s/he can register for the course.
5. Registration for the Practicum course must be completed using a Registration Transaction Form (RTF) and signed by the PD. MPH Epidemiology students register for PubH 6014.13 and MPH Biostatistics students register for 6014.10.
6. It is possible to sign up for the Practicum and Culminating Experience at the same time if they are linked. If the two are not linked, the Practicum must come first.
7. As part of the Practicum course (PubH 6014), students are required to attend the Epidemiology-Biostatistics Skills Building Seminar (PubH 6261.10).
8. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Review:
   Students must work with their GW Faculty Advisor to decide whether the topic for a proposed Culminating Experience must be submitted for IRB approval.

   **If you are working with data or accessing any health records, you must ensure that you are allowed to access the data. This must be done prior to looking at, downloading, or analyzing any data!** Another example of a situation where IRB review might be required is if the student has been conducting research with the intent to publish.

   There are several steps to go through:
   - Ensure you are listed on the study/program in the agency where you are working and are covered by the agency’s rules regarding working with their data. Provide a copy of IRB (or other) approvals to PD.
   - Work with your preceptor, PD, and/or GWFA to complete the research determination form (http://publichealth.gwu.edu/research/policy-procedure-guidance) if you are not sure whether you require IRB approval from GW.
   - If your study will require exempt, expedited, or fully IRB approval, complete the appropriate forms.
   - Once you have completed the appropriate forms, have the GWFA sign it.
   - Log completed forms into the log in sheet at Ms. Kayla Morrison’s desk. Do not send to the SPH prior to doing this. Do not begin work until you receive word that you are approved. All research must also have the Department’s signature (Chair or delegate). Forms may not be submitted to the IRB without this.
9. 10. Ideally, students should complete the Epidemiology-Biostatistics Skills Building Seminar concurrent with starting the Practice Activity. The Seminar is generally offered in the fall (first half of the
semester) and spring (second half of the semester) semesters to accommodate the timing of students’ academic programs.

11. Students may decide to link the Practicum and Culminating Experience. If they are linked, the Practicum Director will assist the student in identifying their GW Faculty Advisor before they begin the Practicum. If not, the Practicum Director will assist the student in identifying their GW Faculty Advisor before beginning the Culminating Experience. Either way, students should plan to meet with the PD and GW Faculty Advisor to discuss their plans regarding the Culminating Experience once the Practicum is completed.

Program Competencies (list)

1. Identify and define a public health issue
2. Develop a plan or proposal to apply the epidemiological principles needed to carry out the chosen public health Practice Activity
3. Identify the appropriate data analysis methods
4. Demonstrate competency in data collection
5. Demonstrate proficiency in constructing and managing databases for epidemiological studies using statistical software

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Learning Objectives – Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:</th>
<th>Meets Competency Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Organize and conduct literature reviews using a matrix.</td>
<td># 1, 2</td>
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<td>• Describe the elements needed to develop a scientific abstract and manuscript.</td>
<td># 1, 2</td>
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<td>• Communicate effectively through the use of oral presentations, posters and in the public health workplace.</td>
<td># 1, 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Determine when a study involves human subject research and the steps for securing IRB approval.</td>
<td># 1, 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Prepare a project proposal, analysis and deliverables</td>
<td># 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
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Required Texts

There is no required textbook for this course

Recommended/Supplemental Texts

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Edition</th>
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Methods of Instruction (check all that apply)

- [ ] Lectures
- [ ] Case Studies
- [ ] Required Readings/Textbook
- [ ] Recommended/Supplemental Readings
- [ ] Class and Small Group Discussions
- [ ] Student Presentations
- [X] Other: On site planned, supervised and evaluated practice activity.
- [ ] Other [Specify]
Methods of Evaluation

- Students will be evaluated on how well they have accomplished the objectives for their Practice Activity based upon the Department competencies outlined in the Practicum course syllabus by the on-site preceptor and the Practicum Director.
- Evaluations for the Practice Activity will take place at both the midpoint and the end of the Practicum. The student’s on-site Preceptor will be responsible for evaluating the student’s performance, and the student will also evaluate his/her own experience (For more information, please see the SPHHS practicum handbook).

Class Policy: Attendance and Discussion

Students are required to complete the required 120 hours on-site at an approved intuition, agency or organization.

Grading Scale and Standards

The Practicum is graded as Credit or a No Credit course.

Products:

- CE Prep: Concept Paper
- Proposal
- IRB submission (if applicable)
- Final Report/Manuscript
- Oral Presentation
- Final Evaluation

Rating Scale: A score of 3 or more in at least 3 of the categories will be sufficient for credit. GW Faculty advisors (GWFA) and Site Preceptors (SP) will rate students on the following products using the scale below. If the GWFA is serving as the SP, then she/he enters the same scores.

1= Unacceptable  2= Poor  3= Acceptable  4= Good  5= Excellent

Workload:

This is an individualized course where students are learning through public health practice or research. Students are expected to put in a minimum of 120 hours over the course of a semester, which works out to a minimum of 9 hours a week.

University Policy on Religious Holidays

- Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.
- Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.
- Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities.

Blackboard
Blackboard will be used for posting course files and assignments and for communicating with the class. You are already enrolled for this course on Blackboard if you have completed registration for the course. It is your responsibility to periodically check the course site (log in at http://blackboard.gwu.edu/ Using your gwu.edu address) for updates to the syllabus/readings.

Academic Integrity
(Put first paragraph in ALL core syllabi):

All Milken Institute School of Public Health Students are required to complete two (separate) online activities regarding academic integrity -- the GW Academic Integrity Activity and the Identifying and Avoiding Plagiarism Activity. Both activities must be completed within 2 weeks of starting your coursework at Milken Institute School of Public Health. - See more at: https://publichealth.gwu.edu/integrity#sthash.FlIRdO5H.dpuf

Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. Common examples of academically dishonest behavior include, but are not limited to, the following: cheating; fabrication; plagiarism; falsification and forgery of University academic documents; facilitating academic dishonesty. For the remainder of the code, see https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity.

Support for Students Outside the Classroom

Disabilities Support Services (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability, should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202.994.8250 in the Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/

Mental Health Services- 202-994-5300
The University’s Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students’ personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations, confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. https://counselingcenter.gwu.edu/

Adverse Weather/Class Cancellation
In the advent of inclement weather or any other emergency, the Milken Institute School of Public Health will follow the decision of the University. Call the University hotline at 202.994.5050 or check the Human Resources status button at http://hr.gwu.edu/adverse-weather-conditions-and-emergency-situations. In the event of class cancellation, we will email you about rescheduling, assignments due, etc.

Emergency Preparedness and Response Procedures
The University has asked all faculty to inform students of these procedures, prepared by the GW Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management in collaboration with the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

To Report an Emergency or Suspicious Activity
Call the University Police Department at 202-994-6111 (Foggy Bottom) or 202-242-6111 (Mount Vernon).

Shelter in Place – General Guidance
Although it is unlikely that we will ever need to shelter in place, it is helpful to know what to do just in case. No matter where you are, the basic steps of shelter in place will generally remain the same.

- If you are inside, stay where you are unless the building you are in is affected. If it is affected, you should evacuate. If you are outdoors, proceed into the closest building or follow instructions from emergency personnel on the scene.
- Locate an interior room to shelter inside. If possible, it should be above ground level and have the fewest number of windows. If sheltering in a room with windows, move away from the windows. If there is a large group of people inside a particular building, several rooms maybe necessary.
- Shut and lock all windows (for a tighter seal) and close exterior doors.
- Turn off air conditioners, heaters, and fans. Close vents to ventilation systems as you are able. (University staff will turn off ventilation systems as quickly as possible).
- Make a list of the people with you and ask someone to call the list in to UPD so they know where you are sheltering and who is with you. If only students are present, one of the students should call in the list.
- Await further instructions. If possible, visit GW Campus Advisories for incident updates (http://CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu) or call the GW Information Line 202-994-5050.
- Make yourself comfortable and look after one other. You will get word as soon as it is safe to come out.

Evacuation

An evacuation will be considered if the building we are in is affected or we must move to a location of greater safety. We will always evacuate if the fire alarm sounds. In the event of an evacuation, please gather your personal belongings quickly (purse, keys, GWorld card, etc.) and proceed to the nearest exit. Every classroom has a map at the door designating both the shortest egress and an alternate egress. Anyone who is physically unable to walk down the stairs should wait in the stairwell, behind the closed doors. Firemen will check the stairwells upon entering the building.

- Once you have evacuated the building, proceed to our primary rendezvous location: the courtyard area between the GW Hospital and Ross Hall. In the event that this location is unavailable, we will meet on the ground level of the Visitors Parking Garage (I Street entrance, at 22nd Street). From our rendezvous location, we will await instructions to re-enter the School.

Alert DC

Alert DC provides free notification by e-mail or text message during an emergency. Visit GW Campus Advisories for a link and instructions on how to sign up for alerts pertaining to GW. If you receive an Alert DC notification during class, you are encouraged to share the information immediately.

GW Alert

GW Alert provides popup notification to desktop and laptop computers during an emergency. In the event that we receive an alert to the computer in our classroom, we will follow the instructions given. You are also encouraged to download this application to your personal computer. Visit GW Campus Advisories to learn how.

Additional Information

Additional information about emergency preparedness and response at GW or the University's operating status can be found on GW Campus Advisories (http://CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu) or by calling the GW Information Line at 202-994-5050.