

Health Policy Practicum Overview

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Practicum Directors for Health Policy:

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Health Policy Practicum Information: Go to Blackboard (blackboard.gwu.edu), click on “Health Policy Zone” under “Organizations” (below “Courses”), click on “MPH Program Information” folder, click on “Practicum Information” folder.

Main SPH Practicum Webpage, Office of Applied Public Health (OAPH):

<https://publichealth.gwu.edu/academics/practicum>

OAPH Student Resources (<https://publichealth.gwu.edu/content/student-resources>)

Handshake: <https://gwu.joinhandshake.com/edu>

Practicum Process:

1. Review materials on HP Zone (Blackboard), Practicum Information folder
 - a. SPH Practicum Guidebook
(<https://gwu.box.com/s/301usd8uasf7e2yorwg6iqb5mwvxbu4k>)
 - b. Handshake manual for Health Policy
(<https://gwu.box.com/s/wgzl8lz651fw5rs2kq6x5vqiy9rlmp62>)
 - c. Health Policy Competencies
(<https://gwu.box.com/s/28oul46vjh9ft7z34nyni9e3hhvawu65>)
 - d. ORE Blanket Determination for Health Policy and Memo on Publicly Available Datasets
(<https://gwu.box.com/s/571rn0fz5myhezuzvxxp8xyo90zwmffz>)
2. Identify a site and preceptor
 - a. May be your regular job
 - b. May be paid or unpaid
 - c. Preceptor should be an experienced professional who will supervise your work (not an intern coordinator or administrative person). We look for approximately three years of relevant experience after a relevant graduate degree or approximately ten years of relevant experience after a bachelor’s degree, but these are not absolute rules and each preceptor is assessed individually.
 - i. If you are submitting a link to LinkedIn or a professional profile page, please make sure the years of experience and number of years after a relevant degree are clear. We may need to ask you for more information about your preceptor, such as a CV/resume, if the person’s years of experience or dates of degrees are

not clear from what you submitted. Please check the online profile to see if it missing details and, if needed, ask your preceptor for their CV/resume before you submit their information in Handshake.

3. Submit the HP Practicum Registration Form: <https://forms.gle/DfSuxXoXwBHAzRq2A>, attaching your completed Registration Transaction Form for PUBH 6000.16. See the instructions on the Google form for additional information about how to complete the RTF. Electronic signatures on the fillable pdf are preferred.
4. Develop plan (“scope of work”) with preceptor. Your plan should represent at least 120 hours of substantive health policy work and consists of
 - a. At least two activities, that generate
 - b. at least two work products and satisfy
 - c. at least five competences (3 MPH-wide, at least 2 department-specific).
 - d. Note that the scope of work in your activities should reflect 120 hours or more of work. The work products illustrate how you will achieve the competencies but you do not need to submit all work products completed during the practicum. Each activity must be related to at least one health policy competency (and at least two across the whole practicum), because the practicum must consist of substantive health policy work. Across the practicum, the activities must also be related to at least three MPH-wide competencies. You may not have an activity that only relates to one of the MPH-wide competencies but not health policy.
5. Discuss with your preceptor whether your planned activities will meet the conditions of the ORE Blanket Determination for Health Policy. If so, you do not need to submit the SPH Student Project Oversight Endorsement Form (pre-IRB review). If they do not (e.g., using identifiable data, collecting data in a survey or interview), you must submit the Oversight Endorsement Form (<https://cri-datacap.org/surveys/index.php?s=T3783HC8Y4>) prior to submitting your plan in Handshake.
6. Enter your practicum information (including information about the site, preceptor, activities, work products, competencies) in Handshake (<https://gwu.joinhandshake.com/stu>). See the Handshake Manual for HP for step-by-step instructions including screenshots.
 - a. Department reviews site and preceptor. If approved, Department begins approval routing.
 - b. Preceptor will receive an email with a link to the Handshake plan. Preceptor reviews and approves.
 - c. Department reviews and approves.
7. Begin work. You do not need to log hours on Handshake unless your preceptor or site asks you to.
8. After your plan is approved, you should receive an email with a link to a midpoint evaluation. Save this email and use it to access the midpoint attestation after you have worked at least 60 hours. If necessary, you may work with your preceptor to make changes to your plan at the midpoint, or anytime that changes become needed, but your preceptor and practicum director

must approve the revisions before you work on any activities that were not previously approved.

9. After submitting the midpoint attestation, you will receive an email with a link to submit a final evaluation. Save the email. Work the remaining hours and after at least 120 total hours, when you have completed your practicum project, use the link in the email to submit your final evaluation.
 - a. Your Preceptor will also receive an email with a link for a final evaluation. The preceptor reviews your evaluation and adds on their final evaluation.
10. Department reviews and approves evaluations and work products.
11. Department enters credit for 6000 in GWeb. Note grades in GWeb are not able to be entered until the end of the semester in which you are registered, so if you complete the practicum earlier in the semester, your credit will not appear until the end of the semester.

Expedited Portfolio Review (EPR):

EPR is an alternative process that will satisfy the practicum requirement by submitting evidence of prior work that satisfies the practicum competencies. It is an option only for students that have worked full-time in a health policy (or other relevant job) that demonstrates the application of at least five MPH competencies, including two health policy-specific ones. Students with an undergraduate degree must have 5 years of relevant experience prior to the date of matriculation in the MPH program, and students with graduate degrees must have 3 years of relevant experience prior to the date of matriculation in the MPH. In addition to describing the relevant work and explaining how it satisfies the competencies, you must provide at least two work products produced in the 24 months prior to starting the MPH program that demonstrate your achievement of the competencies.

For students that are currently working in health policy, it is preferable to do the normal practicum process at your current place of employment, even if you also have prior experience.