Bulletin Description
This course provides the opportunity for MPH students to apply the knowledge and skills acquired through their programs of study. A planned, supervised and evaluated practice experience that is relevant to the student’s program is an essential component of a public health professional degree program at GWU. These opportunities can take place in a variety of agencies or organizations. Each program customizes Practicum requirements to meet students’ needs. (Credit/No Credit).

Course Summary
The Applied Practice Experience (Practicum) is a planned, supervised, and evaluated work experience that compliments the student’s classroom education, and allows them the opportunity to apply the lessons learned in their course work. The Practicum is designed to enhance student’s professional experience in the field of public health, and is key to a comprehensive understanding of public health in the real world. Success is defined by the exposure to valuable work experience, improvements in subject matter knowledge, mastery of specific competencies, and the development of relationships between the student, preceptor, and the site.

The Practicum is an opportunity to gain experience in an area of interest to the student and can set the student on a career trajectory, or just expose them to an area of public health practice that they use.
tangentially. Either way, careful thought should be given to the selection of a site and preceptor. The Practicum should fulfill up to three of the core competencies in the MPH@GW program. The student is responsible for connecting with their peers, academic and professional networks to identify and contact a suitable preceptor. The Practicum Directors and Coordinators may provide guidance and make suggestions for identifying a qualified preceptor. The student is responsible for completing 120 hours under the guidance of their preceptor, and is required to document their completed hours on a regular basis. Only hours directly relating to the practicum learning objectives should be logged into GWork (e.g. general training and travel time would not count for practicum hours). The entire practicum effort is managed, tracked, and recorded in the Practicum System housed in GWork for Public Health.

Course Prerequisite(s): Completion of all Core Courses (15 credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PubH 6001</td>
<td>The Biologic Basis of Disease in Public Health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PubH 6002</td>
<td>Biostatistical Applications for Public Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PubH 6003</td>
<td>Principles and Practices of Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PubH 6004</td>
<td>Environmental Health in a Sustainable World</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PubH 6006</td>
<td>Policy and Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PubH 6007</td>
<td>Social and Behavioral Approaches to Health</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
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*Due to course updates, core course requirements may change. Please refer to your DegreeMap and speak with your Academic Advisor for guidance

Preceptor Requirements
Practicum preceptors must be qualified in their field, and will need to be approved by the Practicum Advisors and the Associate Dean for Practice. Preceptors with an MPH or advanced degree in the health sector field should have at least 3 years of professional public health experience; preceptors with a graduate degree outside of public health or the health sector should have at least 5 years of professional public health experience; and preceptors with a bachelor’s degree should have at least 10 years of professional public health experience.

MPH@GW Program Competencies
1. Describe biological mechanisms of major diseases causing death and disability in the US and globally from a public health perspective (e.g., PUBH 6001).
2. Define communities and identify and assess relevant population health needs (e.g., PubH 6007, 6500).
3. Assess the functions, capacities, management and governance of governmental, international and non-state organizations that comprise health systems. Translate scientific and program evidence to inform the development of public health programs and policies within the context of health systems (e.g., PubH 6006, 6442).
4. Apply public health theory and experiential evidence to develop and manage project, program and institutional strategies to reduce community and individual health risks to mitigate the impact of disease (e.g., PubH 6007, 6503).
5. Conduct core program evaluations and complete an assessment of program outcomes, achievements, impacts and shortcomings. Communicate findings to stakeholders (e.g., PubH 6533, 6437).
6. Apply relevant qualitative and quantitative tools and concepts to inform policy analyses for different audiences and topics (e.g., PubH 6002, 6003).
7. Develop concise written and oral policy analyses for different audiences; identify the key strategies required to protect and advance health (e.g., PubH 6006).
8. Describe how health systems performance is affected by various approaches to health care organization, health law, health workforce development and health care financing (e.g., PubH 6202, 6442).

9. Develop knowledge and skills in fundamentals of environmental health including the connection between population health and exposures to chemical, physical, and biological agents in the environment (e.g., PubH 6004).

10. Develop communication campaigns and strategies to disseminate health promotion information through media channels (e.g., PubH 6570, 6503).

**Course Learning Objectives**

Students choose one to three of the most applicable MPH@GW Program Competencies listed above to develop their learning objectives for the Applied Practice Experience (Practicum) Plan. The learning objectives should be measurable tasks and action-oriented. Measurable action verbs appropriate for the learning objectives include analyze, measure, conduct, and evaluate. Verbs that are not measurable such as learn, comprehend, and understand are NOT appropriate for the learning objectives. See the Practicum Guidebook for more details.

**Required Texts**

None

**Methods of Instruction**

| Lectures | Case Studies | Required Readings/Textbook | Recommended/Supplemental Readings | Class and Small Group Discussions | Student Presentations | Other [On-site planned, supervised, and evaluated practice activity] |

**Methods of Evaluation**

- Students will be evaluated on how well they accomplished the learning objectives for their practicum by the Preceptor and Practicum Director.
- Evaluations will occur at the midpoint and the end of the Practicum. The student’s preceptor will be responsible for evaluating the student’s performance.
- Student will also evaluate their experience (For more information, please see the Practicum Guidebook).

**Grading Scale and Standards**

The Practicum is Credit/No credit. A Credit grade will be applied only if the student meets the expectations of the learning objectives that were established in the Practicum Plan and receives a satisfactory review from their Preceptor. A No credit grade will be applied if the student fails to meet the learning objectives and expectations established in the Practicum Plan or receives an unsatisfactory review from their Preceptor. The student will have an opportunity to change their learning objectives at the midpoint evaluation with approval by the Practicum Director and the Preceptor (but depending on the changes requested, further GW IRB scrutiny will result). The grade is partially determined by the Preceptor’s final evaluation. The student will also submit a final evaluation, which will be reviewed by the Practicum Director. The Preceptor is unable to review the final evaluation written by the student. However, the student can and should review the Preceptor’s final evaluation.

**Practicum Expectation**

Since the practicum is in a professional working environment and the student represents GWU and their own potential job prospects, the highest integrity and professional behavior is expected at all times.

**Workload**

The Practicum requires the student complete 120 hours on the Practicum site under the supervision of their Preceptor. The Practicum hours may be completed over the course of three weeks full-time (logging 40 hours per week) or at most over three (3) online terms (logging 4-5 hours a week at a minimum). If the student exceeds the three (3) online terms time frame to complete the Practicum, a No credit grade may be applied. The three (3) terms are inclusive of the one in which the student registers for practicum.
Class Policy: Students are expected to actively engage in completing their practicum objectives in collaboration with their preceptor. Students will be required to log hours in GWork on a weekly basis and include achieved tasks with the hours log.

Class Policy: Participation and Discussion
Since this is a mentorship experience, the student is expected to be working on site under the guidance of the Preceptor. Only time spent on site working on program specific core competencies can be counted towards the 120-hour Practicum experience. Students are expected to review or watch the mandatory Practicum webinar before they may be registered for the Practicum course. Logging hours that do not meet these requirements may lead to a charge of Academic Dishonesty.

Class Policy: Late Work
As noted above, students are expected to complete all the practicum requirements within three online terms. If not, a student will receive a No Credit grade. Exceptions will only be made in extenuating circumstances with approval in advance and in writing from the Faculty Practicum Director.

Policy on Religious Holidays (adapted for on-site Practicum use)
- Students should notify their Preceptor during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from the Practicum on the day(s) of religious observance.
- Preceptors should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions.

Academic Integrity
All Milken Institute School of Public Health Students are required to complete the GW Academic Integrity Activity. This 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.

Please also review and learn the University’s policy on academic integrity, located at https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-student-conduct and complete the online training for all GWSPH students. All work must be completed in accordance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity.

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. Please note that intention is not a part of some of these examples—for some, it only takes an action. If you have any questions about how your work in this Practicum may relate to GW’s Code of Academic Integrity, please contact Professor Beckerman, one of the two-Practicum Directors.

SafeAssign and TurnItIn
All GWSPH faculty have access to the SafeAssign and TurnItIn plagiarism detection services. Please be aware that any work products you submit for this course may be scanned by these tools for originality. Students found plagiarizing will be subject to penalties outlined in the GWSPH Student Handbook and GW Code of 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: 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. For additional information please refer to: https://counselingcenter.gwu.edu/ and contact number is 202-994-5300

Adverse Weather/Class Cancellation
Because this is an online class on-site at a Practicum placement, it is rare for either Preceptor or student to miss a planned meeting. Under severe weather conditions, students or Preceptors may lose electricity, and potentially the internet, but not likely the phone connection.
Practicum Timeline

Students should begin planning for practicum at least two full terms ahead of when they plan to start. Students must register for, if not complete, the Practicum prior to enrolling in the Culminating Experience (CE) course. The CE course is completed in a student’s final 2 terms of the MPH@GW program.

Other important timeline considerations:
• The Practicum Course has rolling enrollment, so students can enroll at any time.
• Students register for the Practicum in the term they begin the Practicum.
• The timeline below is a suggested timeline. Your Practicum Coordinator will be able to provide clearer guidance based on your goals and expectations for the Practicum.
• Students may take a maximum of 6 months to complete the Practicum (logging a minimum of 4-5 hours per week).

Please use the links and follow the Practicum timeline below to ensure a timely and successful practicum process.

QUICK LINKS TO PRACTICUM RESOURCES:
• Student practicum tutorial videos can be found in The Source; Log in HERE and search “Practicum Video Tutorials”
• Student Guidebook can be found HERE
• Preceptor tutorial videos can be found HERE
• Preceptor Guidebook can be found HERE
• The Practicum Archive in the Source
• The GWU jobs database: Handshake
• Link to GWSPH Career Center

PRACTICUM TIMELINE
1. Term AFTER completing Core Classes (if not before)
   a. Student completes the CITI training and submits it to gwsphrecords@gwu.edu. See Unit 2 of the Program Guide Course in 2GW for more information
   b. Student reviews the informational Practicum Course in 2GW.
   c. Student begins networking for their Practicum (i.e. update LinkedIn, update resume, attend conferences and networking events, develop professional relationships, etc.). GWSPH Career Center can help with resume reviews and preparing for interviews, etc.
   d. Student submits their Practicum application in GWork for Public Health; Department = Online MPH@GW. The application will need to be approved by the Practicum Coordinator

2. At least two terms PRIOR to enrolling into the Practicum Experience Course
   a. Student attends the Practicum webinar held on the third Monday of every term
   b. Student contacts their Practicum Coordinator to discuss their Practicum Site, Preceptor, and Practicum Plan
   c. Student submits a completed Practicum Plan Worksheet to their Practicum Coordinator for feedback and approval
      i. Student will receive further information on next steps for the Project Oversight Form from their Practicum Advisor.
   d. Preceptor must register in GWork and post a project proposal
      i. Select Department / Track = Online MPH@GW
      ii. Preceptor will be notified via email when their registration is approved.
      iii. The timeline from submission to approval = 3-5 business days.

3. One term prior to enrolling in Practicum
   a. Once the student receives approval from their Practicum Coordinator on their Practicum Plan Worksheet, Student should submit their approved Practicum Plan in GWork.
      i. To submit a plan: Log into GWork > Click My Account > Click Practicum > Submit New Project Plan
ii. Student to upload a completed Registration Transaction Form (RTF) with their Practicum Plan in GWork. Course information (CRN, section, etc.) can be found in GWeb.

b. Practicum Coordinator and Preceptor must review and approve the plan in Gwork.

c. Practicum Coordinator will submit a signed RTF to the Registrar’s Office once the student’s plan is approved in GWork. The RTF takes about 5-7 days to be processed by the Registrar’s Office

Students may begin logging practicum hours after all the aforementioned steps are complete.

4. Once student is enrolled in the Practicum
   a. Student must submit their midpoint evaluation in GWork after logging 60 hours or more
   b. Student and Preceptor must submit their final evaluations in GWork
   c. Practicum Director enters a grade in Banner for the Practicum