

Practicum Steps for PCH Students

Welcome to practicum planning. You will conduct your practicums mid-way through your academic program, usually during the late spring or summer. This guide presents the steps needed to prepare and conduct a practicum.

Visit the Practicum Web Site at: <http://publichealth.gwu.edu/academics/practicum>

I. Practicum Preparation Stage

1. Attend School & community events to network and learn more about local organizations. You can also use listserv announcements, the Idealist site at www.idealists.org and the School's jobs and internship database to identify organizations.
2. Complete the CITI research ethics online course for Social and Behavioral Researchers at www.citiprogram.org . Submit the certificate of completion to Student Records (2nd floor or email a copy to gwsphrecords@email.gwu.edu).
3. Read the student practicum guidebook and take the online practicum training and quiz the semester before you conduct your practicum and before you meet with your practicum director.
<http://publichealth.gwu.edu/academics/practicum#Students>
4. Complete the School's required courses (PUBH 6007) and any program pre-requisites (see your practicum syllabus on the practicum website).
5. Complete the Student Application for the practicum at:
<https://publichealth.gwu.edu/practicum/practicumApp/applicationStu.cfm> You can then view the practicum projects.
6. Schedule a meeting with your practicum director during the semester before your practicum and after you complete the previous steps.

II. Choosing a Practicum Site

1. Review projects on the website or explore other possibilities. Students share joint responsibility to identify sites of interest – this can take many weeks. You can schedule interviews with sites to learn more about them. If the organization is already on the practicum website, the School has approved it as a practicum site. If the organization is not listed, it can apply for approval; your practicum director can help it apply.

Preceptors must have 3-5 years of experience with an advanced Masters or Doctoral degree, or 10 years experience with a Bachelors degree. The School will review their applications.

III. Creating Your Practicum Plan

1. Practicum preceptors post a project description. You can link to the project with your plan.
2. After meeting with your practicum director and selecting a site, you can post your practicum plan on the website. (Preceptors must have a project posted before you do this).

The plan includes the following parts:

Competencies - the skills you will develop. You can choose 1 or 2 competencies from your program.

Learning objectives - what you will do during the practicum. They are related to the competencies. You can include more than 1 learning objective for each competency, but be realistic! You only have 120 hours. For example, a learning objective can state:

“By the end of the practicum, I will plan a curriculum on xxx.”

Learning objectives must be expressed in action terms that can be measured: plan, describe, evaluate, assess, create, write, teach, analyze. DO NOT write: learn, know, or understand.

Activities - the actual, specific tasks you will conduct for each learning objective. They can include researching best practices, writing reports, teaching classes, analyzing data, evaluating programs.

3. Your practicum director will review your plan and may ask for revisions. Once you revise it, if necessary, she will approve it and ask you to register.
4. Registration: You can register any time during the semester you begin the practicum. There are no late penalties. You must complete the Registration Transaction Form (RTF) on the Practicum website. Drop it off at the PCH front desk or scan and email it to your practicum director who will sign it and give it to Student Records. *There is no online registration.* **You need an approved plan to register.**
5. International Practicums: If you travel overseas, you have additional requirements to fulfill, including seeking University permission. See the Practicum website.

III. Conducting Your Practicum

1. Ask your preceptor to sign your plan when you begin your practicum. Once you begin your practicum and your preceptor signs your plan, post your hours on the online Time Log.
2. Once you complete 60 hours, the system prompts you to complete the midpoint evaluation. Your preceptor and practicum director will read and sign this so you can post additional hours.

IV. Completing Your Practicum

1. When you finish, complete your final evaluation; your preceptor does not see this. Your preceptor will evaluate you as well. Your practicum director will review them and post your grade.

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