School of Public Health

2018-2019

PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY STUDENT GUIDEBOOK

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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Public Health Administration and Policy MPH Degree

1. PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION & POLICY MPH DEGREE

1.1 MISSION AND PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Public Health Administration & Policy (PHAP) program focuses on managing organizations and influencing policy to improve population health. The program is targeted toward students interested in working with government agencies, nonprofits, or private health care organizations that seek to advance public and population health.

This program prepares students to:

- Lead, manage and evaluate population health programs and agencies.
- Design and implement research to guide evidence-based decision-making.
- Evaluate and inform public policy that impacts population health.

The PHAP program's core competencies are as follows:

- Display theoretical and practical knowledge of history and principles of delivery systems relevant to public health policy and administration.
    - Describe the historical development and underlying values of public health
    - Identify the main components and issues of the organization, financing and delivery of health services and public health systems
    - Understand the roles and functions of organizations that work together to achieve public health goals
    - Understand the role of health systems in improving health outcomes
    - Identity major gaps in access to health care and the reasons for these gaps
    - Identify sources of disparities between social and cultural groups in public health outcomes
    - Demonstrate leadership skills for building partnerships
- Manage and lead public health organizations or systems.
    - Apply quality and performance improvement concepts to address organizational performance issues
    - Apply the principles of program planning, development, budgeting, management and evaluation in organizational and community initiatives
    - Apply systems thinking for resolving organizational problem
    - Identify the competencies of effective public health leaders
    - Develop and communicate a statement of missions/vision/values for an organization
    - Demonstrate leadership skills for building partnerships.
    - Identify own leadership strengths and weaknesses
    - Acquire ability to develop business plan and budget for public health programing
    - Communicate to diverse audience issues related to health management and policy
    - Apply principles of strategic planning and marketing to public health
- Conceptualize and design research of high quality and scientific integrity.
    - Develop skills in ethical analysis and understanding of public health research ethics
    - Apply research principles to understanding health policy problems and policy issues
    - Formulate and solve a decision analysis problem
    - Understand the principles of cost-effectiveness analysis
    - Become familiar with the calculation and interpretation of a variety of measures of public health care disparities
    - Understand and plan an evaluation study
    - Apply evidence-based scientific knowledge to decision making in public health

- Understand strengths and weaknesses of existing public data sources for public health research
- Understand the role of communities in research and the production of knowledge
- Evaluate and use quantitative and qualitative data to address public health problems

- Develop and analyze public health policy.
  - Use evidence reasoning and argumentation to respond to moral issues related to public health practice and policy making
  - Understand the policy process involved in public health
  - Perform analyses of public policy debates
  - Effectively advocate for public health issues
  - Understand the context in which health policy is created at the state and federal level
  - Identify, analyze and resolve ethical issues related to allocation of resources and balancing individual and community concerns in public health
  - Identify key stakeholders in US health care policy
  - Understand the constitutional and regulatory powers governing public health
  - Communicate policy issues to diverse audiences

1.2 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Coursework and Credits

Standard Program—44 credits

Public Health Core Area Requirements

In addition to a public health foundations course, students working towards an MPH degree must satisfy competency requirements in the six core areas of public health – administration, behavioral science, biostatistics, environmental health, epidemiology, and ethics – by completing one of the following in each core area:

- Satisfactorily pass (Grade of B- or better) one of the pre-approved courses in the core area (see pre-approved course list below),

OR

- Pass an equivalency exam in the core area. Please contact your major coordinator for an exam schedule

OR

Pass an advanced course in the core area as approved by the respective division head or the Educational Policy Committee,

OR

- Complete a graduate level course, with a grade of B- or better, at an accredited university or college that meets the competencies defined by CEPH. The Educational Policy Committee, upon petition of the student, will determine acceptance of a course for transfer. Courses approved for transfer into the program must be graduate or professional degree level courses taken at an accredited institution within the last five years. Courses older than 5 years may be allowed for individuals with prior earned advanced degrees who have been actively working in their field of study as demonstrated by their current resume.

Public health core courses must be taken for a letter grade (A-F).

Foundations

PubH 6250 Foundations of Public Health (2 cr)

Management

PubH 6751 Principles of Management in Health Services Organizations (2 cr)

Behavioral Science

PubH 6020 Fundamentals of Social and Behavioral Science (2 cr)

Biostatistics

PubH 6414 Biostatistical Literacy I (3 cr + 1 cr of statistical programming)

OR

PubH 6450 Biostatistics I (4 cr)

Environmental Health

PubH 6101 Environmental Health (2 cr)

OR

PubH 6102 Issues in Environmental and Occupational Health (2 cr)

Epidemiology

PubH 6320 Fundamentals of Epidemiology (3 cr)

OR

PubH 6341 Epidemiologic Methods I (3 cr)

Ethics

PubH 6741 Ethics in Public Health: Professional Practice and Policy (1 cr)

Applied Practice Experience (APEx; formerly called Field Experience)

PubH 7796 APEx for PHAP students (2 cr)

Core PHAP Courses

Students must complete the required PHAP core courses (requirements have varied; the requirements in place at the time of enrollment apply). For students entering in 2012-2015, this included the requirement of an area of specialization; for students entering after 2015, the PHAP required core is

PubH 6724 The Health Care System and Public Health (3 cr)

PubH 6727 Leadership and Managing Change (2 cr)

PubH 6735 Introduction to Public Health Policy (3 cr)

PubH 6755 Planning and Budgeting (2 cr)

PubH 6806 Introduction to Public Health Research (2 cr)

PubH 7784 Master's Project Seminar (2 cr, total)

PubH 7794 Master's Project (2 cr)

A student can substitute a required PHAP core course by transferring credits from a graduate level course, with a grade of B- or better, at an accredited university or college that meets the educational objectives of the course for which it is substituted. Students must provide a syllabus of the course at the time they took it and an official transcript to the program coordinator. The program director makes the final determination if the course can be substituted. All student requests that depart from the degree curriculum requirements outlined in this Guidebook must be submitted via the Academic Policy Petition form. The Petition form can be obtained from the Student Services Center or Program Coordinator.

Courses approved for transfer into the program must be graduate or professional degree level courses taken at an accredited institution within the last five years. Courses older than 5 years may be allowed for individuals with prior earned advanced degrees who have been actively working in their field of study as demonstrated by their current resume.

Courses designated as part of the PHAP core must be taken for a letter grade (A-F). Students will be required to achieve no less than a B- grade in required PHAP core courses.

Elective Credit Transfer

A student may seek transfer of up to 40% of the total number of credits required to complete the MPH degree (including MPH and PHAP core courses, as outlined above). Courses approved for elective credit transfer into the program must be graduate or professional degree level courses taken at an accredited institution within the last five years. Courses older than 5 years may be allowed for individuals with prior earned advanced degrees who have been actively working in their field of study as demonstrated by their current resume.

Students must:

1. Meet with the program director to discuss the petitioning process. If the petition is acceptable to the program director, the student must
    a. complete and sign the Petition form (provided by the program coordinator)

b. obtain the program director's signature

c. attach the course syllabus from the semester in which the student took the course.

d. have an official transcript on which the final grade has been posted sent directly from the school to the program coordinator.

2. Submit the *Petition* form to the Program Coordinator for processing. The Petition form can be obtained from the Student Services Center or Program Coordinator.

S-N Grade Option

Public health core and PHAP required core courses must be taken for a grade (A-F) unless otherwise noted. Students may take no more than 20% of their MPH coursework on an S-N grading basis, exclusive of those topics, seminars and field experience courses offered only on an S-N basis.

CoursEval

At the end of each course, students are expected to complete a course evaluation using the School of Public Health's CoursEval system. Student feedback is an integral part of maintaining the PHAP program's quality standards for course content and instruction. The PHAP program monitors all reviews to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

Students who wish to share concerns about a course prior to the end-of-semester CoursEval period should first meet with the instructor. If this does not lead to a satisfactory resolution, the student should schedule an appointment with the program coordinator. Serious concerns regarding course delivery will be kept anonymous as best as possible.

MPH Study Plan

Students are required to submit a completed MPH Study Plan to the Program Coordinator once they have completed all of their degree coursework and are ready to graduate. Once all final grades are posted, each student should fill in the study plan and return to the Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will review the study plan and notify a student of any missing requirements or outstanding paperwork. In addition to completing a study plan, students will need to apply to graduate (see section below).

Time Frame to Complete Degree

The maximum time allowed by the School of Public Health for completion of an MPH degree is five years. The five year period begins with the first term of enrollment after admission to a degree program within the School. Students can petition the School to have this period extended.

Application for Degree

MPH students are required to complete an *Application for Degree* form online at the MyU website under the "Academics" tab. You must submit the application for degree by the first day of the month in which you intend to graduate (for example, by January 1st for a January graduation).

1.3 APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE (APEX; FORMERLY CALLED FIELD EXPERIENCE)

The Applied Practice Experience (**APEx**; formerly called the Field Experience [FE]) is a cornerstone of the MPH degree. It's an opportunity to see what really happens in public and population health agencies and organizations, a chance to apply knowledge and skills learned in course work, to learn new skills, to network, and to test professional paths.

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), which accredits public health education programs, changed its "field experience" requirements in 2016. These changes are being implemented this (2018-2019) academic year; be aware that there may be some challenges during the transition.

Four Changes in 2018-2019

1. The **FE** is now called the **APEx**. PHAP students will still register for PubH 7796, but the name of that "course" has changed.

2. Students must demonstrate that they've attained five competencies as part of their APEx. At least three must be "foundational" competencies (listed in **Addendum 1**). The others can be PHAP "program" competencies (listed in **Addendum 2**).

3. Students will document this attainment through **two** "products" developed during the APEx. Students will submit these artifacts to the school to document that they have achieved the competencies they've designated. See ***APEx Products*** below.

4. A handful of courses (designated "APEx courses") can be used as APExs. See ***Using a Course as an APEx*** below.

The SPH's main source of information about APExs is found at http://www.sph.umn.edu/current/field-experience/. This guide supplements that information for PHAP students.

Requirements for the APEx

Students must:

- Complete 18 credits prior to starting the APEx.
- Identify a preceptor at the APEx site. Work with that person to identify activities and products.
- Create an "APEx Learning Agreement." (See "**Creating an APEx Learning Agreement"** below.)
- Register for PubH 7796 in the semester in which they will start the APEx.
- Complete at least 90 hours in the APEx.
- Evaluate the experience after it is complete. (See **"Student and preceptor evaluations and final grade"** below.)
- Submit two products to the school.

APEx time requirements

Students must spend a total of 90 hours engaged in the APEx; it's okay to spend more time. APExs can be done on a full-time or part-time basis. For example, a student can work full time for 3 weeks, part-time for 6 to 8 weeks, or a few hours a week for a year. The best time for traditional PHAP students to do their APEx is during the summer between first and second year.

What does not count as an APEx

An APEx is not a research project. Students do not need to collect/analyze data. However, the preceptor may ask the student to collect or analyze data as part of evaluating a program, conducting an internal quality improvement assessment, or analyzing the incidence of disease. This type of collecting data is not considered research: it does not result in generalizable knowledge, and is not published in a form broadly available to the public.

If the APEx contains a human subjects research component, the project must get IRB approval before it starts.

Working with a faculty member on a research project (e.g., data analysis, data entry, manuscript writing) contained within the university is not an APEx. Part of the purpose of the APEx is to get students to leave the academic setting. However, projects in university-affiliated settings are okay if they are primarily focused on community engagement, typically with external partners. University health promotion or wellness centers may also be appropriate sites.

Working on a clinical project or in a clinical setting in a healthcare organization is not considered a public health APEx. However, working in a health care organization on a community health assessment, in a hospital epidemiology program, or in another setting that applies the principles of population health may be an acceptable APEx.

Working as a clinician (doctor, nurse, dentist, veterinarian, physical therapist, pharmacist, etc) *does not* count as an APEx, even if the work is done in a non-traditional or resource-poor (e.g., in a volunteer clinic or on a mission trip) setting.

Finding an APEx

Exploring APEx Opportunities

APExs for PHAP students should have a "PHAP" orientation: policy and management. Students should think about their professional goals, their strengths, and interests in identifying potential sites for APExs (**Addendum 3. Skills and Domains**). The APEx is a chance to try something completely new, to test a professional interest, to learn new skills, and to make new professional contacts. An important consideration of the field experience is the choice of organization; students should work to identify an agency that complements career goals, interests and abilities. The experience can provide a foundation for future employment and resume building.

On the APEx Information Page, http://www.sph.umn.edu/current/field-experience/ read the section on **Finding an APEx**. In the **APEx Module**, select the "Search for past field experiences" link, and search a long list of sites where students have done Field Experiences/APExs in the past. You can search by major, state, and topic area.

Think about guest speakers and topics you have encountered in your courses. What did you want to learn more about? Who were you inspired by?

Other potential opportunities are shown on the **SPH Job Posting System**. In addition, the PHAP coordinators will forward opportunities they become aware of.

APExs at a student's current worksite

APExs can be completed at the student's place of current employment, but the work should be fundamentally separate from his or her regular work. The student should aim to acquire new skills, experience different parts of the organization, and/or contribute in new ways.

Using a course as an APEx

A handful of community-based courses will be designated as APEx courses and can be used in place of a regular APEx. At the time of this writing, designated courses have not yet been determined. Students will register for the course instead of PubH 7796 Applied Practice Experience, and will need to create a Learning Agreement, identify competencies, and submit two "products" (course assignments are acceptable, if they are produced for a community-based course partner) at the completion of the course. Any course credits above the 2 required for the PHAP APEx will be counted as elective credits.

International APExs

There are lots of opportunities for international APExs, but they require a little more planning, and may cost more money. Students should start with this UMN site to get general information: **Interning abroad.**

Students exploring **international field experience opportunities** need to begin the process at least six to eight weeks before departure, and need to be aware of requirements specific to international travel. Unique opportunities, like working at the WHO, require even more planning: students who'd like to try to work at the WHO should start contacting potential site preceptors there in the fall of their first year.

The Learning Agreement online application has a specific section to address questions relevant to international APExs. University policy requires that all students participating in University-related international education provide a 24/7 emergency contact at the university. That person is usually the PHAP director for PHAP students. There are other training and documentation expectations for students doing international APExs. Information is available in the **APEx Module**.

The SPH offers a small amount of funding for international FEs: **http://www.sph.umn.edu/careers/fe/field-experience-scholarships/.** The University also offers the Judd Fellowship to support international APEXs: **http://global.umn.edu/funding/judd** .

Preparing for the APEx

APEx Site Preceptor

The preceptor is a person at the APEx site who supervises the student's work. A current PHAP student can't be the preceptor for another student. **Addendum 4. Letter for Preceptor** includes a letter for a student to give to a potential preceptor if the person has questions about roles and responsibilities.

Identifying the competencies to address during the APEx

Students will identify 3 foundational and 2 program competencies (**Addenda 1 and 2**) to achieve during the APEx. A Competency Assessment Tool (CAT) will be provided to help students assess the competencies that they should fulfill during their APEx.

Creating an APEx learning agreement

All students must complete an APEx learning agreement (LA) in the school's APEx Module prior to beginning the experience. The online LA asks students to identify a site preceptor, goals, learning objectives, and activities. Examples of learning objectives and activities are included in **Addendum 5;** a copy of the form is included in **Addendum 6**.

- What is the goal for the APEx?
    - Include one to two sentences as to what the experience will include (goals of the experience), what the end result is for the experience, who will you be working with and what city/community/population you will be working with.
- Learning and Professional Development Objectives.
    - List at least 3 objectives, written in one sentence statements, as to what you will accomplish [skills, professional network development, knowledge] during the experience.
- Outline activities intended to be used to accomplish the above stated objectives.

- List an activity for each objective.

Important note: Dr. Wurtz—not your Academic Advisor—is the Faculty Advisor for all APExs.

The LA should be reviewed with and approved by the PHAP coordinator prior to the student submitting it in the APEx Module. The LA will be automatically be sent to the site preceptor for his/her review and approval, and to the PHAP program director (Dr. Wurtz) for her review/approval, and then finally to the PHAP coordinator.

Registering for PubH 7796

Once the LA has been signed, the PHAP Coordinator will send the student an email with a permission number to register. Students register for the APEx in the semester in which they start the work. For most PHAP students, this is summer semester between 1st and 2nd year. Students should register for 2 credits (in the PHAP section) and opt for an S/N grading basis (the APEx is judged on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis). If you don't complete the work in that semester, you will receive a "K" (placeholder) grade until the work is complete.

Getting paid and scholarships

A student may be paid for an APEx but that is the exception rather than the rule.

The SPH and other organizations may provide funding to support an APEx (e.g., for travel to a distant site, or a stipend for living expenses); however, these funds are very limited and mostly focused on international APExs (see above under ***International APExs***).

Background checks

Minnesota law requires certain facilities to submit paperwork for a criminal background check for all personnel with direct unsupervised (outside the hearing or vision of a supervisor at the facility) client contact. If you are placed in such a facility, you may be asked by the institution to submit paperwork, or the institution may require that you have this check facilitated by the School of Public Health. Facilities covered by this law are hospitals, boarding care homes, outpatient surgical centers, nursing homes, home care agencies, residential care homes, and board/lodging establishments providing health supervision services.

If a background check is required, the SPH Student Services Center can arrange to have the background check performed. Call them at 612/626-3500, or come to A395 Mayo for assistance.

Completing Your Field Experience

Behavior at the APEx site

Treat the APEx as a job—show up on time, ready to contribute. Learn from the people and surroundings. Do more than your share. The APEx should benefit both the student *and the site*. Be flexible and respectful. The preceptor works with the student in addition to his/her daily responsibilities. Be respectful of his/her time.

Wear clothes that are appropriate to the worksite. The may mean ties for men, no jeans, no open-toed shoes.

APEx Products

APEx products are created to benefit the practice site. The products are also used document the student's achievement of competencies. Students should work with their preceptor and other personnel at the site to identify two products to complete during their time at the site. Examples of products include

- Policy brief or analysis
- Literature review or white paper
- Creating a database
- Preparing a document: a training manual, a fact sheet, a brochure, educational/health promotion materials, a FAQ sheet
- Organizing and managing events such as a farmer's market, community meetings, or conference ("product" might include flyers announcing event, after-event assessments)
- Site specific reports or evaluations
- Community health needs assessment

- Evaluation plan
- Guidance document
- Data collection form
- Meeting minutes
- PowerPoint presentation
- Poster presentation
- Curriculum
- Developing a website or adding content to one (the “product” might consist of url and screen shots)
- Evaluation templates
- Prioritization or opportunity grid
- Preparing (or working on) a grant proposal or budget or a budget report
- Fundraising strategic plan
- Preparing and/or administering a survey or questionnaire
- Communication campaigns (“product” might consist of campaign plan, newsletters, examples of tweets or blog posts, flyers, etc)
- IRB proposal (for community-based research project)
- If asked to assess a specific product, event, organization, etc, even an email report would count as a “product”
- Participating in gathering information from focus groups, key informant interviews
- Photographic essay
- Developing or administering a survey

Because certain activities (e.g., developing a database, participating in focus groups, facilitating meetings) don’t translate well into “products” and because some agencies/organizations may not want you to share a sensitive document (e.g., surveillance data, a SWOT analysis, etc), you may have to record your work in one or more journal entries or summary documents which become your work “product.”

Journal entries should follow the format shown in **Addendum 7. Journal Format**. The entry should include the site, the date(s) of the activity(ies), a name/title/brief description of the activity(ies) (e.g., “prepared database,” or “facilitated community organizing meeting”), and a brief description of the activity(ies), and the competency(ies) demonstrated by the activity(ies) and how the student met the competency The overall description should be between 200 and 350 words long. If journal entries are being used in lieu of “products,” the student must create two separate journal entries for the two separate products. *Reflection papers are not acceptable products*.

Naturally, since you are only producing two “products” and you are supposed to demonstrate five competencies, each product can demonstrate more than one competency.

When the student has completed the APEx, he/she/they will submit the products via the APEx Module to the school.

Student and preceptor evaluations and final grade

When the APEX is complete, the student will be asked to review the site and preceptor, using an online form (**Addendum 8. Student APEx Evaluation Form**). The student’s completed review of the site and preceptor will be viewable by the student, PHAP faculty advisor, and PHAP coordinator. **The preceptor does not have to grade the products or submit a grade for the student.**

Similarly, the preceptor will be asked to review the student, using an online form (**Addendum 9. Preceptor APEx Evaluation Form**). This review will be viewable by the student, preceptor, PHAP faculty advisor, and PHAP coordinator.

Grading the APEX

Once the preceptor and the student have completed evaluations, the APEx faculty advisor (the PHAP director in most cases), will enter a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory based on the preceptor’s evaluation for the semester in which the student has registered for the APEx.

When you're done with your APEX

Please send a thank you note to your preceptor. We depend on your preceptors and sites for the next group of students.

Timeline for Students who Plan to Complete the APEx in the Summer between 1st and 2nd Year

1. Late January/early February: Attend the PHAP APEx information meeting in late January/early February.
2. February/March: Start thinking about skills you'd like to develop and professional interests you'd like to explore. This may include meeting with the PHAP Coordinator to discuss professional goals and identify potential sites.
3. March/April: Meet with potential site preceptors to discuss objectives and activities.
4. April: Once a student has identified a site and a preceptor, the student drafts the Learning Agreement and the PHAP coordinator reviews and approves.
5. April/May: Submit the Learning Agreement through the APEx Module.
6. May: Register for the APEx Credits.
7. Summer: Complete the APEx.
8. After the last day listed on your APEx Agreement, you and your preceptor will automatically receive an email to remind you to complete an evaluation.
9. Submit your "products" to the APEx Module.
10. Send a thank you note to your preceptor.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who has to do an Applied Practice Experience?

All MPH students must do an applied practice experience.

What do I do if conflicts develop at the APEx site?

If any disagreements occur at the APEx site (for example, the preceptor feels that the student is not participating in expected activities, or the student feels that he/she is not doing meaningful work), the student and the preceptor should try to resolve the disagreement. If you'd like to do more work, or more complex work, talk to your supervisor. If disagreement persists, they should contact the PHAP director.

How do the APEx and the Master's Project relate to one another?

The APEx can serve as inspiration for the Master's Project (MP): the student can return to the APEx site to do the MP, or do a project that would benefit the APEx site, or analyze data developed during the APEx. The student can also do a master's project completely unrelated to the APEx.

Addendum 1. CEPH Foundational Competencies

You must demonstrate competency in three of these during your APEx. Competencies most applicable to PHAP MPH degrees are noted with an asterisk *

Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice.

2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context.*

3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate.

4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice.*

Public Health & Health Care Systems

5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings.*

6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels.*

Planning & Management to Promote Health

7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health.*

8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs.*

9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention.*

10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management.*

11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs.*

Policy in Public Health

12. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence.*

13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes.*

14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations.*

15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity.*

Leadership

16. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision-making.*

CEPH Foundational Competencies (cont'd)

17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges.*

Communication

18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors.*

19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.*

20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content.*

Interprofessional Practice

21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams.*

Systems Thinking

22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue.*

Addendum 2. PHAP Competencies

Students must demonstrate competency in 2 PHAP competencies during your APEx.

1. Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge of the history and principles of delivery systems relevant to public health policy and administration.
2. Manage and lead public and population health care organizations, programs and systems.
3. Apply high quality, scientifically rigorous research to address problems in public health policy and administration.
4. Develop and analyze public health policy.
5. Communicate effectively as a leader, manager, and advocate.

Addendum 3. Skills and Domains

These lists are not exhaustive.

Skills

- Grant writing
- Community building
- Community engagement
- Negotiation
- GIS skills
- Budgeting
- Planning
  - Operations
  - Program
  - Strategic
- Assessment and evaluation
- Report writing
- Data analysis
  - Excel
  - Access
  - SAS, SPSS, STATA
- Data visualization
- Social media communication skills
- Writing skills
- Public speaking
- Conference planning
- Literature review skills
- Quality improvement tool use
- Managing teams/groups
- Critical thinking skills
- Systems thinking skills
- Preparing training/health education material
- Project management

Domains

- Informatics/e-health
- Legislative processes
- Preparedness/emergency management
- Maternal-child health
- Adolescent health
- Communicable disease
- Chronic disease
- Environmental health
- Health equity
- Health care systems
- Oral health
- Health insurance
- Access to care
- Transportation
- Vaccines
- School-based health
- Reproductive health
- Injury and Violence Prevention
- Tobacco
- Gun violence
- HIV/AIDS
- Cardiovascular disease
- Food safety
- LGBTQ health
- Mental health
- Senior health
- Substance use

Addendum 4. Letter for a Preceptor

Dear Preceptor,

Thank you for considering being a Applied Practice Experience preceptor for a student in the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health PHAP (Public Health Administration and Policy) MPH program.

The Applied Practice Experience (APEx; formerly called a field experience) is a cornerstone of the MPH degree. The APEx is an opportunity for students to see what really happens in public and population health agencies and organizations, and a chance to apply knowledge and skills learned in course work. All students studying for an MPH are required to do an APEx.

The APEX is a chance for a student to try something completely new, to test a professional interest, to learn new skills, to contribute to the work of an organization, and to make new professional contacts.

Starting in 2018-2019, students are required

- To identify 3 "foundational" and 2 program (PHAP) competencies to meet during the APEx. The student will work with you to identify those competencies, and should be evaluated on whether they met them.
- To produce two "products" as part of their APEx. Products can be a document (such as health education materials, a policy brief, or a health needs assessment) or they can be something harder to demonstrate (like a database or organizing a meeting), in which case the student can create a journal that describes the product.

In our experience, APExs work best if students have specific assigned responsibilities based on their skills and interest. These might include

- Helping to manage a project
- Participating in a program evaluation or CQI project
- Analyzing data
- Writing reports
- Attending relevant meetings and conferences
- Grant writing
- Being included in discussions about organization activities and priorities

Ideally, the preceptor and student meet on a regular basis for the preceptor to provide feedback and insight.

If you agree to be the student's preceptor, you and the student will define at least three learning goals and activities to meet those goals. The student creates an online "Learning Agreement." Once the PHAP program has approved the agreement, it is forwarded to you for your electronic approval.

The student performs the APEX under your supervision. At the end of the APEx, you will be asked to fill out a relatively brief electronic evaluation form. You do not need to grade the student or the products.

Students must spend approximately 90 hours engaged in the APEx.

Thank you for being involved in our students' education and professional development. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at rwurtz@umn.edu or 612.625.1387.

Rebecca Wurtz, MD, MPH

Associate Professor, University of Minnesota School of Public Health

Director, PHAP Programs

Addendum 5. Examples of Learning Agreement Objectives and Activities

Learning Objectives	2 or 3 Proposed Activities
Assessment of community needs	● Conduct local needs assessment ● Review existing local data sources ● Attend community meetings and assess use of local resources to determine community objectives
Exposure to political process as it relates to public health	● Research policy initiatives ● Develop background papers/memos ● Attend legislative hearings ● Attend strategy meetings to discuss policy initiatives ● Apply foundations and principles of public health practice obtained from PHAP Foundations class
Understanding of how a county/state/ health department or local non-profit operates	● Attend staff meetings of agency staff and summarize communication and leadership strategies ● Develop background materials to analyze management/budget issue ● Participate in program planning meetings ● Work on program strategic planning document
Development of community partnerships	● Attend community meetings and participate in advocacy and training opportunities in the community ● Conduct site visits to local community agencies and non-profits ● Conduct informational interviews of leaders/providers in community agencies ● Develop cooperative strategic plan for collaborative community activity
Development of programs	● Conduct needs assessment and identify problems/needs for specific program ● Develop program objectives ● Conduct SWOT analysis ● Develop strategic plan laying out program objectives, milestones, budget, etc.
Administration of an existing or developing program	● Develop program budgets and review processes ● Develop evaluation plan ● Identify key program objectives and current strengths and weakness (SWOT) ● Assess current management and leadership structure and areas for improvement

1.4 MASTER'S PROJECT (INTEGRATED LEARNING EXPERIENCE OR ILE)

All PHAP students must complete a master's project.

Purpose of the master's project

According to the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH), UMN SPH's accrediting body, master of public health (MPH) students must complete "an integrative learning experience (ILE) that demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies. **Students in consultation with faculty select foundational and concentration-specific competencies appropriate to the student's educational and professional goals**." (From the **Accreditation Criteria for Schools of Public Health, Amended June 2016**)

According to CEPH, the ILE "may take many forms, such as a practice-based project, essay-based comprehensive exam, capstone course, integrative seminar, etc." The PHAP program requires an integrative learning experience that takes the first of these forms, a **practice-based master's project (MP)**.

The MP should demonstrate evidence of meeting selected competency(ies). Foundational and PHAP program (concentration) competencies are shown in **Addendum 1**. Demonstration of meeting competencies will be part of the MP evaluation criteria. **Addendum 2**. **Master's Project Evaluation Criteria.**

MP expectations

MPs vary in their content and scope. But no matter what you decide to do, the project must meet the following expectations

- A high-quality paper and oral presentation. "Ideally, the written product is developed and delivered in a manner that is useful to external stakeholders, such as non-profit or governmental organizations. " (**CEPH**)
- A minimum of 90 hours of work on the project. (Experience shows that it usually takes many more hours.)
- Work that is original and contributes something new to the field of public health.

Group projects

Two or more students may work together on a larger scale project, but each student must spend 90 hours. These projects usually have the same advisor. Final products can be combined (e.g., separate chapters of a larger analysis) or independent. For combined products, each student should contribute approximately 20 pages to the final written product. However, for example, the introduction and reference list could be shared. Early in the project, students should meet as a group with the advisor to define shared and separate responsibilities. Students should consider a formal agreement on responsibilities, timelines, etc. There are templates for group agreements on the Moodle site for PubH 7784.

Community-based projects

We encourage students to work with local health departments, other local agencies, non-profits, and community-based organizations on a MP. Students working in this setting will likely have a community-based advisor in addition to their faculty advisor. The student, faculty advisor, and community advisor should work together to develop the proposal and the student's work should be overseen by both the faculty and community advisors. (The community advisor would serve as a reader on the student's MP Committee; thus, the committee would consist of the faculty adviser, the community adviser, and one additional reader.)

Advice from your peers

Each May, we ask the PHAP students finishing their MPs what they wish they had known when they started their projects. Throughout this guide, we have highlighted

their advice in textboxes, such as this one:

> "The Masters Project Seminar is a huge opportunity and if you give it a lot of attention, it's probably one of the best learning tools available."

The MP Seminar (PubH 7784)

How does the MP course relate to the actual MP? The MP course serves as scaffolding for the MP project. Dr. Wurtz and the Teaching Fellows will help you meet some deadlines and assist you with certain elements (e.g., research techniques, IRB application, citation management, paper structure, etc).

However, most of the work on your MP will take place outside of the context of the class. You will get a separate grade for the course and for the MP.

You must enroll in PubH 7784 Master's Project Seminar (1 credit each semester) in both fall and spring semester of your second year. If you plan to complete your master's project in spring semester of second year, you should enroll in PubH 7794 ILE-Master's Project (2 credits) for that semester, but you cannot enroll until you have submitted an approved Master's Project Proposal.

If you meet the milestones as outlined in class you will probably finish your MP without any problems. If you do not meet the milestones, you will probably not finish your MP on time. So meeting the course's milestones is a critical step toward graduating with your MPH on time.

The Role of the Teaching Fellows

Teaching Fellows are PhD candidates in the Division of HPM who have good writing, editing, and research design skills. They serve as TAs for the PubH 7784 MP Seminar, leading small group discussions and grading homework assignments. In addition they serve as resources for project design, for identifying MP committee members, and for feedback on writing.

Steps to a Successful MP

Although this manual gives a lot of direction and advice, the MP can be summarized in these 16 simple steps.

1. Identify a topic. *Steps 1 and 2 are interchangeable.*
2. Identify an advisor and readers (your MP committee). *Steps 1 and 2 are interchangeable.*
3. Write a MP proposal that includes introduction (also called background), public health importance, proposed methods, and timeline.
4. Have your proposal approved by your advisor and readers and submit it to the TFs along with the **MP Proposal Form: Addendum 3** – also available as a free-standing document on the PubH 7784 Moodle site. The deadline is December 14; **any time before that is okay**.
5. (If necessary, obtain IRB approval before you begin work.)
6. Do "data collection" (the exact nature of step 6 will depend on the nature of your MP).
7. Do "data analysis" (the exact nature of step 7 will depend on the nature of your MP).
8. Write up results. Write discussion and conclusion.
9. Assemble pieces (abstract, introduction, public health importance, methods, results, discussion and conclusion) into a draft of your master's project paper. (Note that the introduction and public health importance will evolve as you work toward the finish.)
10. Provide a first draft to your Teaching Fellow and Advisor.
11. After your Teaching Fellow and Advisor have provided feedback and approval to circulate, give draft to readers for review.
12. Modify paper based on committee feedback (repeat step 11-12 until entire MP Committee approves paper).
13. Submit final, committee-approved electronic .pdf version of paper to the PHAP program coordinator along with **MP Completion Form: Addendum 4** (also available as a freestanding form on the PubH 7784 course Moodle site).
14. Give oral presentation.
15. Graduate!
16. Celebrate. (Step 16 can be repeated.)

"Pick your project ASAP!"

Types of MPs

While there are many types of projects that meet the expectations for a MP, they usually fall into one of several categories. In addition to describing the types of projects, examples of courses that teach the skills needed and HPM faculty members who have expertise in that area are listed.

Primary collection of data

Students can design a data collection research project from beginning to end, writing a protocol, collecting and analyzing data, and writing a conclusion. Either quantitative or qualitative data collection is appropriate. This option allows students to learn the research process and be involved in primary research.

However,

- This always takes substantially longer than you expect.
- If data collection involves human subjects and is not an internal QI project, the student MUST receive Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before starting the project. See **Human Subjects Research and IRB Approval**. This requires additional time and paperwork, and the student should plan for this additional effort. In addition, if the project is done in the context of another organization or institution with an IRB (such as a healthcare organization or health department), the student will need to obtain that institution/organization's IRB approval also. Finally, data collection almost always takes longer than anticipated due to circumstances often outside the student's control. Have early discussions with instructor, TFs and advisors to assess the MP time line.

Don't get in over your head!

Good courses

- PubH 6600 Qualitative Methods in Public Health Practice
- PubH 6780 Qualitative Research Methods for Health Services Research
- PubH 6470 SAS Procedures and Data Analysis
- PubH 6810 Survey Research Methods
- PubH 6806 Principles of Public Health Research

Workshops

- Designing and conducting focus groups **http://www.sph.umn.edu/academics/ce/courses/focusgroup/**
- SAS Institute courses **http://it.umn.edu/list-courses#SAS**

Potential advisors

All of the HPM faculty have expertise in this area.

Secondary analysis of data collected as part of another research project

Students may do a secondary analysis of human subject data that has already been collected; this is far easier, but still gives students the experience of formulating a hypothesis, and organizing, analyzing, and interpreting data. Usually the student finds a research project that has been partially completed, or identifies a new research question to apply to the existing data. Secondary analysis of data collected for another purpose may require an expedited review or waiver by the UMN IRB and the project's home institution or organization's IRB (if the project is being done for a health department or a hospital, for example). See **Human Subjects Research and IRB Approval.**

I wish I had known to talk to professors to find out more about their research interests. They may know about databases or may have contacts you can work with.

Good courses

- PubH 6470 SAS Procedures and Data Analysis
- PubH 6617 Practical Methods for Secondary Data Analysis
- PubH 6806 Principles of Public Health Research
- PubH 6845 Using Demographic Data for Policy Analysis

Potential advisors

All of the HPM faculty have expertise in this area.

Analysis of publicly available population data

Students may analyze publicly available population data (e.g., from IPUMS, NCHS, the census, or other public source); this type of project does not require IRB review but allows the student to formulate a hypothesis and organize, analyze, and interpret data.

Good courses

- PubH 6470 SAS Procedures and Data Analysis
- PubH 6806 Principles of Public Health Research
- PubH 6845 Using Demographic Data for Policy Analysis

Potential advisors

All of the HPM faculty have expertise in this area.

Community health needs assessment or health impact assessment

A community health needs assessment "identifies the gaps between what is and what should be." It is usually done by an agency or organization planning to address those gaps. There are many "how-to" resources, including the Community Tool Box:

https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/conducting-needs-assessment-surveys/main

Good courses

- PubH 6703 Health Impact Assessment

Potential advisors

Kathleen Call, PhD

Rachel Hardeman, PhD, MPH

Program evaluation

Program evaluation systematically collects and analyzes data (about processes and outcome) of health programs and policies to answer questions about their effectiveness. Again, this is usually done in the context of an agency or organization that wants to assess its effectiveness. This type of project has the added value of being relevant and of value to the agency or organization.

Working with a community organization on a project can be very difficult at times. Sometimes, their expectations and mine were different. It's best to have clarity upfront.

Good courses

- PubH 6034 Program Evaluation for Public Health Practice
- PubH 6852 Program Evaluation in Health and Mental Health Settings

Potential advisors

All of the HPM faculty have expertise in this area.

Critical literature review

Students may do a systematic, comprehensive, integrative review of the published literature in a specific area that is relevant to public health administration and policy. A systematic review is not simply a book report of published literature. Systematic reviews require an explicit and rigorous methodology to identify relevant studies and to summarize and evaluate their data. Students doing a systematic review as a master's project should have a person with systematic review expertise as their project advisor.

Good courses

- PubH 6803 Conducting a Systematic Literature Review

Potential advisors

Mary Butler PhD

Policy analysis

Policy analysis systematically examines policy alternatives to a public health issue or problem. Students evaluate the potential for various policies to achieve stated goals and objectives. This option may take several forms, including a case study, policy analysis,

historical or ethical inquiry, or others. Students may include qualitative data collection (e.g. focus groups or key informant interviews) or secondary analysis of data as part of their policy analysis.

Good courses

- PubH 6735 Intro to PH Policy

Potential advisors

All of the HPM faculty have expertise in this area.

Cost effectiveness analysis

Cost-effectiveness analysis evaluates the costs and benefits of specific interventions—usually a new intervention versus existing practice, although several existing practices can also be evaluated.

Good courses

- PubH 6862 Cost-Effectiveness Analysis in Health Care

Potential advisors

Eva Enns, PhD

Karen Kuntz, PhD

Peter Huckfeldt, PhD

Hannah Neprash, PhD

"Set deadlines and milestones and then meet the deadlines for the milestones!"

Continuous quality improvement project

Students may conduct a quality improvement project in a public health agency, health care setting, or community organization using the methods and techniques of quality improvement. Such projects include but are not limited to process mapping, statistical process control, lean and six sigma analysis, and rapid cycle improvement projects

If the student(s) intends to publish or present the research outside of the context of the agency/organization they must obtain IRB approval for the project. (See below: **Human Subjects Research and IRB Approval**).

Good courses

- PubH 6765 Continuous Quality Improvement: Methods and Techniques

Potential advisors

Jim Begun, PhD

Katie White, EdD

Bjorn Berg, PhD

Business plan

A student may create a structured and analytic business plan for a business that they wish to start. The plan should include a description of the business, its products and services, a market analysis and marketing strategy, and a financial plan.

Good courses

- PubH 6755 Planning and Budgeting for Public Health

Potential advisors

Jim Begun, PhD

Katie White, EdD

Anne Barry, JD, MPH

Other types of projects

Other types of projects will be considered on a project-by-project basis. Other projects include a documentary film or podcast series, a grant application, or organizing a conference and writing up the proceedings.

Master's Project Committee

The MP Committee consists of an advisor and two readers. Below we detail the roles and responsibilities for student, advisor, and reader.

Students should choose their advisors and readers thoughtfully. Faculty members and outside readers will get to know you and your skills, and may serve as professional references in the future.

Advisor

Establish a timeline with your advisor from the beginning, based on the course timeline. This ensures that you have a similar expectation of where you should be with things at various times of the year. I found that I was expected to be much further along for class then where my advisor thought I should be.

Each student identifies a MP advisor, who must be a regular member of the School of Public Health (SPH) Division of Health Policy and Management faculty (faculty profiles available at **https://directory.sph.umn.edu/division/health-policy-management**). (Adjunct HPM faculty may be advisors if approved by Dr. Wurtz.)

The student should have some ideas about what they'd like to do for a project before meeting with the advisor for the first time. The advisor provides guidance on the choice of topic, points the student to resources that might be helpful, critically reviews the research topic, methods, and conclusions. **In many ways, the advisor's role is to push you to do even better than you thought possible**.

The advisor is responsible for making sure the MP meets the PHAP program's expectations for quality, rigor, and deadlines. Ideally, the person is a subject matter expert in the student's master's project discipline.

The student should send an email to their advisor when he/she/they agree to be the advisor which outlines the advisor's role and responsibility. The text for a possible email is available in **Addendum 5. Letter to Master's Project Advisors** and as an editable document on the PubH 7784 Moodle course site.

Students working on community-based projects will likely have a community advisor in addition to the faculty advisor. The student, faculty advisor, and community advisor should work together to develop the proposal and the student's work should be overseen by both the faculty and community advisors. (The community advisor would serve as a reader on the student's MP Committee; thus, the committee would consist of the faculty adviser, the community adviser, and one additional reader.)

The specific responsibilities of the advisor include

- Helping the student frame the project topic and methods.
- Advising the student on the project proposal.
- Approving the MP proposal before the student submits it to the PHAP program.
- Supervising the student's work on the project, reviewing all work prior to sending to readers.
- With other members of the MP Committee, reading and commenting on drafts of the final project write-up.
- Approving the final version of the write-up before the student presents it and submits it to the PHAP program.
- Attending, if possible, the student's oral presentation in May 2019.
- Grading the student's project.

Readers

In addition to the advisor, each student must find two readers who will read and approve the student's proposal and read and approve the student's MP paper. At least one of the readers must be on the faculty at the SPH, but doesn't have to be from the Division of HPM. The other reader may be a faculty member from the SPH, from elsewhere in the University, or a community member who is some knowledge in the area of the student's MP topic. Sometimes, there is a "natural" choice for a reader. For example, if you are working with a community organization, invite someone from that organization to be a reader. Current SPH students, even if they are in a position to supervise a student's work at a community organization or program, cannot be readers.

Try to choose readers whose background and skills complement (rather than duplicate) that of your advisor. For example, if your advisor is not a content expert in your topic, choose at least one reader who is a content expert. If your project requires a particular methodological technique and your advisor does not have this skill, find a methodologist in this area to be a reader.

The specific responsibilities of the reader include

- Helping the student frame the project topic and methods.
- Advising the student on the project proposal.
- Approving the MP proposal before the student submits it to the PHAP program.
- With other members of the MP Committee, reading and commenting on drafts of the final project write-up.
- Approving the final version of the write-up before the student presents it and submits it to the PHAP program.
- Attending, if possible, the student's oral presentation in May 2019.

The student should send an email to their reader when he/she/they agree to be the reader which outlines the reader's role and responsibility. The text for a possible email is available in **Addendum 6. Letter to Master's Project Readers** and as an editable document on the PubH 7784 Moodle course site.

Students' obligations to their MP Committee

The MP is the student's project, not the advisor's or the readers' project. The student must own the project and be responsible for acting in professional manner in the proposal, research, paper preparation, and presentation phases of the project.

Take ownership of and responsibility for your project.

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- Discuss expectations for interaction at one of your initial meetings.
- Show up for appointments.
- Be prepared for appointments. It is always helpful to have an agenda and even better to put it in writing. Be clear about what you want to accomplish and be specific about your needs, e.g. "Today I would like to review my research question and draft outline for my project."
- Communicate clearly. Good and consistent communication leads to a good working relationship and a better MP.
- **Consider setting up regular meetings with your advisor using the Google calendar app**, with the option to cancel if progress has not been made or the feedback is not necessary at that time.
- Expect multiple drafts. You should make sure to work at least two reviews and revisions into your timeline. Ask committee members how long they need to review drafts and the final paper, and plan your timeline accordingly.
- Ask for help. Don't wait until the last minute.

Ultimately, the successful negotiation of the relationships with your advisor and committee members depends upon you. While you have one MP to complete, often your advisor and committee members are involved in their own projects as well as the projects and dissertations of multiple students from various programs. They have competing priorities so use their time judiciously.

Talk about your problems with the Teaching Fellows, your MP Seminar Instructor, or the PHAP coordinator (depending on the problem) rather than procrastinating.

Commonly asked questions about advisors

What criteria should I use to pick an advisor?

The most important criteria are that they can offer conceptual and/or methodological expertise in the area of your MP. But also think about working styles. We all have different styles, and you want to find someone whose working style is compatible with your working style. As you meet with faculty, talk openly about working styles.

Good criteria include

- The faculty member is a subject matter or methods expert for the topic.
- The faculty member will be a good professional reference in the future.

Bad criteria include

- The faculty member is nice.

- The faculty member has a reputation for being an easy grader.
- The faculty member has a reputation for not getting too involved.

Does my academic/field experience/internship advisor have to be my project advisor?

No. We leave it to the student to choose the best faculty member for this role.

What if I don't feel I know any faculty members or who would be the best fit?

You should start by talking with the MP Seminar instructor and Teaching Fellows to find out who would be a good fit for your interests. The instructor and Teaching Fellows can make introductions and help with the matching process. You may also talk to faculty members (including your academic advisor) you know well about their recommendations for an advisor. HPM faculty are generally interested and willing to work with students who show initiative, come prepared to meetings, and have some generally-defined topic of interest.

How should I go about asking a faculty member to be my advisor?

Start by setting up a meeting to just talk about your interests and possible topic. Go to the meeting prepared. If possible, send the faculty member something about your topic (what are your objectives, what type of methods are you considering and so on). Go to the meeting with specific questions in mind. If you feel that the person is a good match as advisor, ask them if they are willing to take that role and follow-up by setting up another meeting to further discuss expectations.

I met with a faculty member as you suggested, and all they did was to refer me to someone else.

Sometimes the faculty member thinks that his/her knowledge, skills, or working style may not be a good match for you, and their referral is to someone they think would be more appropriate for you. That's OK -- follow-up with the referral. Let the original faculty member know if the referral worked or did not work.

What if I ask a faculty member to be my advisor and they say no?

Don't take it personally. Often it just means that they already have many advisees and do not think they can take on any more. Your next step is to ask the MP Seminar instructor or Teaching Fellows to identify other potential advisors.

I emailed/phoned my advisor for an appointment and they did not respond - what should I do?

Don't take it personally. It does not mean they are not interested in meeting with you. Sometimes it means they are out of the office, at a conference, or has other competing responsibilities with other students, teaching, grant deadlines and research. Sometimes your email simply got buried.

Give the advisor a week. Then email/phone them again asking for a meeting. Email usually works best as a means of communication.

Okay, I followed the advice you gave above, and STILL my advisor is not responding. What do you suggest NOW?

That must be frustrating! Give it one more try, and then go to your MP Seminar instructor. They know both students and faculty needs and are often the best at connecting students with faculty.

How long should I expect my advisor to take when I ask them to read a draft of my work?

It depends of course on the length of the draft and what other competing responsibilities your advisor may have. Usually, an advisor will review a short to mid-length document within ten days.

Be direct with your advisor when you send him/her the draft. Ask them how long they need to review it and/or specify a deadline: "please return your feedback to me by next Friday." If you have not heard back from them after the agreed upon time, contact them again with a (friendly!) reminder. Also, make sure to leave enough time for comments on the draft documents and outlines. Don't wait until the last minute. Generally, faculty members are working with multiple students who are trying to meet other deadlines.

Am I allowed to change advisors?

Yes, but be thoughtful with this decision. Ask yourself why you want to change. Again, while you may "like" a faculty member, it might be better for you to stick with someone who has the substantive or methods expertise you need to complete a good Master's Project. The relationships you have with faculty are likely to reflect relationships you will have throughout your career in public health. It is important to learn how to develop working relationships that you can learn and benefit from.

If you want to change early in the process (before your proposal is submitted), the process is pretty easy. Professionally, the best thing to do is to consult with the faculty member you wish to be your new advisor. Tell them why you think they would be an appropriate advisor, tell them that you want to switch, and ask them if they will take on the role. Talk with your original advisor and explain why you want to switch. If you want to switch advisors after you have submitted your proposal, it may be more complicated

(but not impossible). You should be aware that switching at a late stage may delay the completion of your project. You will need to re-submit your MP proposal approved by the new advisor.

Can I have more than two readers (in addition to my advisor)?

Yes and no. Often the more people we have reviewing our work, the better it becomes. You might benefit from the relationship with additional experts and professionals. If you feel that more than two committee members are necessary, let your advisor know your reasons. However, each reader adds an additional communication burden and it becomes hard to obtain everyone's approval in a timely way. It's okay to have informal readers who aren't part of the approval process.

Human Subjects Research and IRB Approval

Any research you conduct as student at the University of Minnesota is subject to review and approval by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research subjects. This applies to projects conducted inside or outside the University. For research conducted outside of the University, students still need IRB approval from the University even if approval has been obtained from an external agency or hospital.

The IRB process takes much more time than you would believe.

Is my project research?

Research is defined as "a systematic investigation designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge." The CDC, in its policy on "Distinguishing Public Health Research from Public Health Non-Research" says

The major difference between research and non-research lies in the *purpose* of the activity. The purpose of research is to generate or contribute to generalizable knowledge. The purpose of non-research in public health is to prevent or control disease or injury and improve health, or to improve a public health program or service. (From **http://www.cdc.gov/od/science/integrity/docs/cdc-policy-distinguishing-public-health-research-nonresearch.pdf)**

Thus, a continuous quality improvement (CQI) project, even if it collects data—for example, a health department sends out an anonymous survey to determine if citizens are aware of the work that the department does—is not considered "research" because it is not designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge. This kind of project is a fine master's project. However, if the person who conducted the CQI project wants to publish the survey findings in the scientific literature in order to show that many citizens are not aware of the work done by health departments, then the project would be considered research.

Studies that rely on existing publicly available data, such as US Census data, are not required to have IRB approval. Such work is research but does not use individually identifiable data.

The UMN IRB investigators Manual is available here.

Two important forms at the UMN's ETHOS IRB site are

- **Form 310 Human Research Determination** (although almost all of our projects concern humans).
- **Form 312 Exemption Determination** Sometimes it's hard to know if a project should be submitted to the IRB. If you're not sure, fill out this form.

A formal IRB submission, even when seeking exemption, is required. (Exempt doesn't mean exempt from all review, it means exempt from formal IRB review and oversight.)

Other worksheets are available at **https://www.research.umn.edu/units/irb/toolkit-library/worksheets .**

If you submit an IRB review, **you should use the Form 580 Social Template**, available at **https://www.research.umn.edu/units/irb/toolkit-library/templates**. PHAP research is almost always social/behavioral, not clinical/medical. If information requested on the form doesn't apply to your project, simply write in "not applicable."

IRB consultants will come to the MP Seminar in October to answer questions. Please take advantage of this opportunity to seek clarification from an expert.

How do I apply for IRB approval?

If your project needs to be reviewed, the next step is to browse and study the IRB website. **http://www.research.umn.edu/irb**. Your faculty advisor will be the IRB researcher of record, and you should work closely with him/her/them to draft and submit the IRB application.

For research that is subject to IRB review, you *must* obtain IRB approval before research begins. Approval may take 2 months or longer. International research, research with children, research about illegal or stigmatizing behavior, research with vulnerable populations, or research that incorporates deception often require more review time, so it is important to plan ahead.

CITI training

Students who apply for IRB review must have completed online CITI training on the protection of human research subjects. To do this, follow the **Education and Training** tab on the IRB website to CITI training. The course takes about 4 hours to complete. For most public health students, the CITI social science module is suggested. There is no charge, but you will need your UMN X.500 username and password.

Funds for MPs

The PHAP program has a small amount of money for items such as food for focus groups, incentives for subjects (only if really necessary), translation of consent forms, etc. The limit per student is $200.The form "**PHAP Request for Research Funding for Master's Projects**" is on the PubH 7784 Moodle site.

Please fill out the form and submit it to your Teaching Fellow. The deadline for the request for 2018-2019 is 12/14/2018. If the TF approves your funding, you will need to present receipts to the HPM business office in Mayo D305 to be reimbursed. The program is not allowed to hand out funds prior to their being spent.

Master's Project Proposal

Before starting on the master's project, the student must write a master's project proposal and submit it to the student's MP Committee for review. The format of the proposal will depend on the type of project, but in general will include

1. A statement of the problem. (Assignment 2 in the MP Seminar)
2. The public health significance of the problem and project. (Assignment 2 in the MP Seminar)
3. The foundational and PHAP competencies that the student expects to demonstrate through this project. (Assignment 3 in the MP Seminar)
4. The methods the student will use to assess the problem. (Assignment 3 in the MP seminar). The "methods" will depend on the type of project.
5. A timeline for completing the project. (Assignment 4 in the MP seminar)

The project proposal should be 3-7 pages long, and will form the basis for the introduction and "methods" sections of the final MP paper.

Once the MP Proposal is approved by the members of the Master's Committee (advisor, community advisor [if any], and readers), it is submitted along with the MP Proposal Form (Appendix 2; also available on PubH 7784 moodle site), to the student's Teaching Fellow with an email, subject line **StudentLastName MP Proposal**, copied to advisor(s) and readers, with the text

My advisor, *Name*, community advisor (if any), *Name*, and readers, *Name 1* and *Name 2*, have reviewed and approve this proposal.

The TF will provide a copy to the PHAP program coordinator. The Proposal and MP Proposal Form must be submitted to the TF by **December 14**. **Once the student has submitted an approved proposal, they will be given a permission number for PubH 7794 ILE-Master's Project for spring semester.**

Registering to Receive Credit for the Master's Project

Students must register for "PubH 7784 Master's Project Seminar (PHAP)" each semester of second year (Fall and Spring; for 1 credit each semester) and register for **"PubH 7794 ILE-Master's Project (PHAP)" once (for two credits) in Spring Semester of second year.** You can't register for PubH 7794 **until you have submitted an approved Master's Project Proposal.**

Help with Statistics

PHAP students are expected to do simple statistical analyses of their MP data. However, we anticipate that they may need some assistance in formatting these analyses and for more complex analysis. If a MP requires sophisticated statistical analysis, the student should seek a MP Advisor or reader with statistical expertise.

The University provides access to online SAS training modules: **http://it.umn.edu/list-courses#SAS .**

Here are some additional statistical resources:

- Your Teaching Fellow in PubH 7784 can provide some statistical guidance.
- The UMN School of Statistics provides tutors who can give a limited amount of statistical assistance for free. **http://stat.umn.edu/people/tutors.html**

- PubH 7465 Biostatistics Consulting (a course which meets in Spring Semester) offers statistical consulting for AHC projects. Contact one of the instructors (Kyle Rudser or Ann Brearley) to discuss a consult.
- The School of Statistics runs a Statistical Consulting Clinic, but it costs $90/hour. If your project has external funding, you should discuss this option with your advisor.
- The UMN Clinical and Translational Science Institute also provides statistical support. The cost depends on the level of service, but is approximately $103/hr.

Mental Health

Spring semester of second year—when your master's project is due, you are trying to complete other courses, and you are looking for a job—can be an unusually stressful time. Monitor your mood, and if you are having serious anxiety or depression, please use the University resources that are there to support you. Please be kind to yourself and be kind to your classmates.

Deliverables

There are two products of the MP: a written paper and an oral presentation.

Written paper

Writing well is one of the most important things to learn in graduate school. Your MP is your opportunity to show what you have learned. Teaching Fellows, advisors, and readers are responsible for giving you feedback on writing. The Center for Writing also provides very valuable feedback, and should be consulted early in the writing process if you need writing assistance: http://writing.umn.edu/

Paragraphs should be well-constructed: a topic sentence, content which addresses the topic sentence, and a "hand off" to the next paragraph.

The paper should be free of spelling and grammatical errors.

The paper must use an established citation style. Unless otherwise suggested by your advisor, you should use APA style. Citation managers are useful in formatting references appropriately.

"Just one rule: Use a citation manager.

The exact length will vary depending on the topic and methodology. Generally, the paper should be about 25 pages, excluding references and tables. Longer is not necessarily better.

Layout specifications

The format should follow approximately this format for research papers.

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
3. Background
4. Public health relevance
5. Methods
6. Results
7. Discussion
8. Conclusion and recommendations
9. References
10. Figures
11. Appendices

Other types of projects (policy analysis, business plan, community health assessment) should follow formats standard to those approaches.

- Font: Standard Font (Times New Roman, Arial etc.) at least 11 point. Times New Roman, 12 pt. recommended.
- Margins: 1 inch

- Spacing: Double spaced
- Include page numbers
- Submission: An electronic version of the approved final paper in .pdf format must be submitted to the PHAP program coordinator before the oral presentation (see below under **Submitting the Final Paper to the PHAP Program**) in order for the student to graduate. By submitting a paper to the program, the student agrees to allow it to be shared with subsequent students. If the author does not want it to be shared, he/she/they should notify the program coordinator in writing.

Oral presentation

Each presentation is 20 minutes long, followed by 10 minutes of questions. If more than one student has collaborated on a project, the presentation time will be lengthened accordingly.

You cannot give your oral presentation until your MP Committee has approved your written paper. Please figure review and approval time into your timeline so that you are ready to present on the scheduled presentation days in May.

Presentations should be formatted in PowerPoint. Good oral and PowerPoint presentation guidelines should be followed, and you should practice your presentation with your peers and/or Teaching Fellow and/or advisor.

The final presentations for students graduating in May 2019 will take place on May 8, 9, and 10, 2019.

Submitting the Final Paper to the PHAP program

When the advisor(s) and readers have reviewed and approved a final draft of the MP paper, the student emails an electronic .pdf copy of the paper to the PHAP program and the members of the Master's Committee, with the text

My advisor, *Name*, community advisor (if any), *Name*, and readers, *Name 1* and *Name 2*, have reviewed and approve this final draft of my master's project paper.

The final paper must be accompanied by the **MP Completion Form: Addendum 4** (also available as a freestanding form on the PubH 7784 Moodle site). The student is responsible for making sure that this email is sent to the program coordinator. The student **cannot be cleared for presentation** until the program receives this email.

When you submit your master's project paper, you give permission to the program to share it with future students as an example of a master's project. Your paper will not be shared outside of that context without your permission. If you don't want it shared, please notify Dr. Wurtz.

How Will Your Project be Evaluated?

Please see the evaluation criteria in **Addendum 2. Master's Project Evaluation Criteria**.

Other Opportunities to Present Your Work

We encourage you to present your work beyond your written product and your oral presentation. Ask your advisor about opportunities to present or publish your work.

- Present your findings to the community/agency/organization in which you conducted your research or project. This is probably your most important presentation. It is disrespectful to obtain data from community members or organizations without returning your analysis and interpretation to them. In fact, community members likely hold knowledge that is important to your interpretation of the study results; schedule this presentation early to benefit from their feedback.
- SPH Research Day: Each year the SPH holds a student research day. Students from all programs present their research in posters. PHAP students are strongly encouraged to present at Research Day. Details will be discussed in the MP seminar.
- Present your work as an abstract or poster at a conference.
- Publish your work. Although publication is not necessary for graduation, it is an important professional stepping-stone. A publishable manuscript is different than the MP paper that was submitted to the program; your advisor can give you guidance about how to modify it.

Awards Associated with Master's Projects

Awards have been established to recognize the importance of the Master's Project to the MPH degree and the mission of the Division of Health Policy and Management.

- Master's Project Presentation Award

This award recognizes excellence in the oral presentation of student's final presentation of the Master's Project. It is awarded based on feedback from audience members at the presentations. Only students who present in the Spring Semester are eligible for this award.

- Best Master's Project Award

This award recognizes excellence in the written presentation of the final Master's Project. Advisors are asked to nominate candidates for this award. A review panel made up of faculty members who are not advisors to nominated students and the prior year's winner evaluate nominated projects based on their originality, contribution to public health/health services, writing and organization and the strength of the methodology. Evaluations are blinded to both the author's and the advisor's name. Students who submit MP papers in any semester are eligible for this award.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

The PHAP Program, the SPH, and the University of Minnesota take academic dishonesty extremely seriously.

The University's Student Conduct Code defines academic dishonesty as "plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis."

Plagiarism is an important element of this policy. It is defined as the presentation of another's writing or ideas as your own. Serious, intentional plagiarism will result in a grade of "F" or "N" for the entire course, and may result in expulsion from the program.

Selective use of quotations may help to bolster an argument but excessive quoting suggests a failure to master the material. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty, you should talk with your faculty advisor. You also might find the '"avoiding plagiarism" tutorial available from Indiana University helpful:
https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/index.html

For more information on academic honesty and for a helpful discussion of preventing plagiarism, please consult University policies and procedures regarding academic integrity:

The Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

http://www.oscai.umn.edu/resources/policies.html

http://www.oscai.umn.edu/integrity/student/index.html

Students are urged to be careful that they properly attribute and cite others' work in **their own writing. For guidelines for correctly citing sources, go to https://www.lib.umn.edu/howto/citationguides** .

University of Minnesota Center for Writing is an excellent resource for all types of writing support, including definitions and examples of plagiarism. See: **http://writing.umn.edu/sws/quickhelp/sources.html** under "Avoiding Plagiarism."

1.5 PHAP AWARDS AND HONORS

The **Lee D. and Donna Stauffer Scholarship** is awarded annually by the PHAP faculty to one or more incoming PHAP students who show(s) high promise of early achievement as a leader in the practice of public health administration. The scholarship is administered as a graduate assistantship.

The **Community Service Award in Public Health Administration** is awarded to a graduating PHAP student who has demonstrated leadership and innovative public health service to the community.

The **Barbara Ann Walton Spradley Leadership Award** is given to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in leadership as a student in the PHAP Major.

Delta Omega Nomination is the national honorary society for graduate studies in public health. Membership in Delta Omega reflects the dedication of an individual to quality in the field of public health and to protection and advancement of the health of all people. The top 10% of the class, based on GPA, is nominated in the spring of their final year in the program.

The **PHAP Outstanding Master's Project Award** is given to a graduating PHAP student who demonstrates exceptional scholarship on the master's project.

The **PHAP Outstanding Master's Project Presentation Award** is given to a graduating PHAP student who is voted to have given the best final project presentation in the PHAP Master's Project Seminar.

1.6 PHAP COMMUNITY/ALUMNI LEADERS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Community Advisory Board helps to ensure that our students are fully prepared with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the current demands of the public health workforce. The Board is comprised of public health professionals, many of whom are alumni, and its mission is to advise both our traditional and executive programs on matters related to public health priorities, trends in public health practice, curriculum needs, and professional development and networking opportunities. Students are welcome to attend the semi-annual meetings.