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I. Purpose of Field Studies

The field experience gives the student firsthand experience within a health or health-related social service agency or community program in elements of planning, program implementation, evaluation; and/or policy formulation, implementation and analysis. During the Field Placement the student will become familiar with the operation of the agency or program, its goals, policies, administrative structure, types of health professionals employed, and clientele served.

The entire field experience and integrative process takes approximately a year, beginning with the field experience search process, experiencing the field placement, and ending with the associated written product.

Faculty Contact

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Objectives of Field Studies Experience

- Apply the theory, knowledge, skills and techniques obtained in the classroom to a professional setting
- Understand organizational dynamics in a given practice setting
- Polish and enhance program planning, implementation, and evaluation skills under the guidance of an experienced preceptor
- Acquire skills related to policy formulation, implementation, and analysis
- Develop a professional persona by integrating the lessons of a professional environment
- Provide an opportunity to explore a particular health care setting as it might relate to future career decisions

Competencies of Field Studies Experience

Although there is variation in the focus of different field experiences, our field study objectives relate to the MPH Competencies defined by the Association of Schools of Public Health.

1. Describe and apply theories, concepts, and models from the social and behavioral sciences to community health practice.
2. Describe, explain and apply procedures for evidence-based planning and implementation of community health programs, policies and interventions.
3. Recognize when existing approaches may not be culturally appropriate for a particular population and to collaborate with communities and others to design, implement and evaluate more suitable health programs.

4. Identify, explain and apply steps and procedures based on social science approaches for evidence-based evaluation of community health programs, policies and interventions, including community-based participatory research.

5. Effectively communicate orally and in writing with public health professionals, members of the community, and stakeholders about community health issues, interventions, programs, and policies.

**Past Field Studies Placement**

A listing of agencies and the number of students placed since 2007 is available online at: [http://chs.ph.ucla.edu/field-studies-placement-abstracts](http://chs.ph.ucla.edu/field-studies-placement-abstracts)
II. Field Studies Overview

Field experience is required for all MPH students. Students must complete CHS 210 and 211A and 211B before beginning their fieldwork. Students who have had previous professional experience involving program planning and development, program evaluation, or policy formulation and analysis, may qualify for a partial waiver of fieldwork hours. Students with a terminal doctoral degree who have appropriate professional experience may qualify to waive the field studies requirement. Clinical experience does not qualify. These waivers require a petition to be approved by the student's advisor, Department Chair, and the Field Studies Director.

MPH students are required to complete a minimum of 400 hours of field studies which is typically done in the summer between their first and second year. In order to receive the academic credit, students enroll in the course, CHS 400, during the quarter that they will finish the required 400 minimum hours and associated written reports.

Agency Requirements

Overall, the placement should provide the student with a wide variety of agency experiences. Ideally, the tenor of the placement should be one of apprenticeship within the agency, or of collaboration between the student and a "preceptor.” The preceptor, an individual within the agency who is responsible for giving guidance and advice to the student, is an essential prerequisite for a suitable placement. Preceptors must have an MPH or related graduate degree and have at least three years of experience in developing and managing community health programs.

Contract and Scope of Work

All students are required to complete a field studies work plan or scope of work before starting their field work. This scope of work becomes an integral part of the contract signed by both the student and the preceptor. This workplan must be approved by the Field Studies Director. All students must file a contract and work plan with the Field Studies Director within one week of the placement. It is recommended that the scope of work and contract be completed prior to the beginning of the fieldwork.

Report on the Field Experience

The student must complete field logs that account for every 40 hours of field work. These logs should be sent to the Field Studies Director within 5 days after the time period described in the logs. These logs should include hours worked, people seen, functions performed, problems encountered. Also, each student is required to submit a brief written report, "Overview of Field Studies" on the field experience. This report should include an abstract of the project. The report and abstract should be filed with the Field Studies Director within 5 days of completing the field studies.

Grade for the Field Experience

The grade will be based primarily on the student's report and discussions between the student and the Field Studies Director. In addition, the agency preceptor will complete an evaluation of the student's work which will be considered in the final grade. Remember that the field studies is a professional experience; all paper work should be executed in a timely professional manner.
Required Deliverables

- Workplan and contract - due one week within start of fieldwork
- Logs for a minimum of 400 hours, submitted in 40 hour increments - due within 5 days of log period
- Final report and abstract - due within 5 days of fieldwork completion
- Preceptor's evaluation - due within 5 days of fieldwork completion
- Intern's evaluation - due within 5 days of fieldwork completion

III. Placement and Search Selection

Identifying Potential Placements

1. Department solicitation of community resources. In January, the Department sends letters to our network of organizations throughout Southern California informing them of our new cadre of students. Many of these organizations respond to this solicitation by developing projects and requesting students.

2. Student Development. Students may develop a field experience on their own using their own professional networks and contacts. Students who choose to develop their own field experience must submit information about the site, a description of the anticipated project, and a resume or other documentation of the preceptor's qualifications. All student-initiated field experiences are subject to approval by the Field Studies Director.

3. Professional Community Request. Organizations often seek student assistance to complete special projects. These opportunities are evaluated for their appropriateness as a field experience. Many organizations are simply looking for part-time student employees. This type of work experience is not appropriate for Field Studies assignments, which must meet certain criteria designed to maximize the professional development of our students.

What Is An Appropriate Placement?

Each student and assignment is individual. Each relationship between the student and preceptor is unique. Students and projects vary. One student may have a major project within one department of the organization while another student may have several smaller projects from a variety of organizational sub-units. Some placements are predetermined and require the student to fit into the specified conditions. Other placements are flexible and built around the students' specific skills and interests.

Regardless of the nature of the placement, the student's work should be valued by the organization and make a contribution towards the organization's goals and mission. Finally, the work should be flexible enough that the student can be exposed to a variety of meetings and decision-making processes at all levels of the organization.

Examples of Recent Projects
Preceptor and Site Selection

Preceptor Competence and Experience. The demonstrated or potential excellence of the preceptor is a significant variable in the success of a student's field experience. Preceptors, as teachers, are an extension of the MPH program faculty. They are carefully evaluated before being accepted as appropriate to teach our students. The Department seeks preceptors who are open, interested, and available, and who possess an educational philosophy and experience that are compatible with the Program. Successful preceptors will have an inclination and ability to direct an individualized learning experience.

Student Interest and Career Objectives. The Department seeks sites that are consonant with the interests and career objectives of students in terms of type and scope of services provided, location, area of focus in community health sciences and level of task challenge.

Institutional Support. Factors include: ability and willingness to pay the customary stipend; a supportive organizational structure, particularly the management team; opportunities for students to be exposed to a variety of organizational departments, individuals, task and functions. Students shall have access to any data required to conduct their projects.

Field Studies Site Search and Selection Procedure

Finding an appropriate field site will require some expenditure of effort on the student's part. Every student brings a different set of interests and experience to the table. Likewise, every field opportunity offers a different set of tasks, skills and knowledge. A successful field experience is usually the result from an optimum fit between a student's interests and skills and the requirements of the site. While the final selection of the field site is a matter of agreement between the student and the site, the Department will help facilitate the process of finding a field site. To assist us in this facilitating role, you are required to complete several documents that will help you to focus your interests and identify the most appropriate field experience. These forms are available on the web.

Field Studies Planning Form. The planning form is designed to assist students in identifying their strengths as well as those areas they would like to develop further. The form focuses on those areas of community health sciences that have historically been of interest to our students. This form will give students an opportunity to define their interests, talents and skills so
that a better fit can be made between you and a site. No student will be referred to a site for placement or informational interview without a Field Studies Planning Form on file. The form can be downloaded here: http://chs.ph.ucla.edu/academics/field-studies/current-students/forms

**Resume.** All students must update their resumes in preparation for field placement interviews. No student will be referred to a site for a placement or informational interview without a current resume on file.

**Field Studies Orientation.** Early each Winter quarter, the Field Studies Director will hold two orientation sessions. Attendance at one of these sessions is mandatory for all first year MPH CHS students. The session will provide an overview of the process for identifying and selecting a field site as well as review field studies requirements in detail and answer your general questions.

**Individual Student Meetings with the Field Studies Director.** All students will meet with the Field Studies Director during February or March to review their strategy for securing a field placement. At this meeting, the Field Studies Director will have the opportunity to meet each student and learn about their individual background and skills. With this information, the director can provide more effective assistance. During these meetings, the director can also discuss resume preparation and answer questions unique to each student. For students who are not sure what type of field experience they are looking for, these individual meetings can provide information about different areas of community health sciences and help to narrow the focus of the search. Some students may be directed to contact practitioners in the community for informational interviews. The Department maintains a cadre of very supportive practitioners who take the time to talk with our students. Many students have found these informational interviews very helpful in focusing their search.

**Informational Interviews.** During the Winter and Spring quarters, many students go on informational interviews. Students can make appointments with alumni as well as current and previous preceptors who enjoy meeting with students and helping them as they begin their careers. For many students, this is the first time they will begin negotiating the professional field of community health sciences. From this point, it is important that students think and behave as a professional. This will also be the beginning of professional networking for many students. "Networking" is a fundamental skill in the professional toolkit. The world of community health sciences is small indeed. Students will most likely meet many of their new contacts many times throughout their career.

**Final Selection.** Students generally interview with several potential sites, and sites often interview several candidates. This provides both the student and the preceptor with an opportunity to assess the appropriateness of the fit and the learning opportunities. The eventual match of the student and the site represents a joint decision between both parties and must be approved by the Field Studies Director.
## IV. Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
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| Think about the basics of your field studies. Questions to ask yourself, where do you want to do your field studies, are there specific populations you want to work with, specific skills and knowledge you want to gain, is money an absolute necessity, when do you want to complete your studies. | Late Fall Quarter  
Early Winter Quarter |
| Prepare Resume. There are resume workshops available, sponsored by the UCLA Career Center. | Copy due to Field Studies Director the middle of February |
| Complete Field Studies Planning Form. | Prior to Field Studies Orientation |
| Attend field studies orientation session conducted by the Field Studies Director. This will be an overview of the requirements and assistance in designing the ideal plan for each student. Sign-up will occur during early Winter quarter. | Winter Quarter |
| Meet individually with the Field Studies Director to discuss specific plans, guidance, brainstorming, etc. | After attending orientation sessions - March |
| Contact potential field sites to learn more about type of setting, opportunities. | February - May |
| Select approximately 3-4 sites to interview with regarding placement. | April - June |
| Meet again with the Field Studies Director to discuss plans | Before Placement |
| Finalize field site | By June 1 |
| Attend mandatory Send-Off Meeting | Early June |
| Initiate Affiliation Agreement between University and Field Site if nonexistent, see the Field Studies Director for details | As soon as field site is selected |
| Negotiate scope of work and sign contract with preceptor and submit to the Field Studies Director for approval. It is suggested that draft is submitted before finalizing. | Preferably before placement begins, but **no later than one week after the start of field studies.** |
| Submit hours and writing logs for every 40 hours of fieldwork. | **Within 5 days of time period of log** |
| Arrange at least one site visit with you, preceptor and the Field Studies Director. | During placement |
| Have preceptor complete the Student Performance Evaluation and exit interview. | **Due within 5 days of completing field studies** |
| Complete Field Studies Evaluation | **Due within 5 days of completing field studies** |
| Complete Field Studies Report | **Due within 5 days of completing field studies** |
| Enroll CHS 400 Contact the Field Studies Director to receive a PTE number. | Quarter you complete field studies or later. |
V. Guidelines

A. Criteria for Supervised Field Studies

Timing
The field experience follows the first year of academic study in public health, which ensures that you have the knowledge of core public health concepts and basic skills. It is required that students have completed CHS 210, 211A and 211B prior to conducting their field studies. It is recommended that students have completed Biostatistics 100A, Epidemiology 100, Health Services 100, and 3-4 additional courses in the Department of Community Health Sciences.

Length
The field experience consists of a minimum of 400 hours of supervised field work. Most students choose to complete this as a full-time experience over the summer between the two years of study. It may be completed as a part-time or full-time experience any time after the above requirements have been fulfilled.

Registration and Units
Students receive 4 units of academic credit for their field experience. To receive credit, students enroll in CHS 400 after they have successfully completed their field work or during the quarter in which they will finish the 400 hours and written reports.

Site
Sites include a wide range of public health and social service organizations and research institutions in Southern California, the state, the nation, and internationally. The organization should have core public health concepts in its mission, expose students to a variety of public health disciplines, and provide opportunities to develop a professional network. A listing of past placement sites is available online.

Preceptor
The preceptor is an experienced public health professional with recognized expertise in the student's area of interest. Preceptors must have an MPH or another related advanced degree and at least three years of experience in developing and managing community health programs. The preceptor must demonstrate an interest in mentoring students and an understanding of the guidance a student will need. For more detailed guidelines and forms for preceptors, please refer to Preceptors page, http://chs.ph.ucla.edu/academics/field-studies/preceptors

Approval
Final approval of a field studies experience will be given by the Community Health Sciences Field Studies Director.

B. Completing the Contract

Initial Contract and Scope of Work
It is the responsibility of each student to submit a signed contract between the student and the field study preceptor. The signed contract includes the contract itself and the associated
Scope of Work. The signed contract and Scope of Work indicates that the student and the preceptor have agreed to the scope of work. The contract must be downloaded online at http://chs.ph.ucla.edu/academics/field-studies/current-students/forms.

The signed contract and associated Scope of Work must be submitted to the Field Studies Director within one week of starting the field studies.

C. Completing the Scope of Work

Each student is required to complete and submit a final Scope of Work within 5 days of starting field work, as part of the signed contract between the student and the preceptor. The Scope of Work provides the framework for the field experience, by ensuring that:

- the student and preceptor have a clear understanding of this planned experience
- the experience is appropriate to earn 4 units of academic credit toward the MPH degree in Community Health Sciences.

The Scope of Work form must be downloaded online at http://chs.ph.ucla.edu/academics/field-studies/current-students/forms. Samples are available to view online at http://chs.ph.ucla.edu/guidelines/completing-scope-work.

Recommended Timeline and Steps for Creating Scope of Work

1. Meet with preceptor to discuss experience
2. Student writes draft of Scope of Work based on above discussion
3. Submit draft Scope of Work to the Field Studies Director prior to the beginning of field experience
4. Revise Scope of Work
5. Submit final Scope of Work as part of signed contract within 5 days of starting field experience

Suggestions for Creating Scope of Work:

- Be clear in the proposed general work
- Create objectives that are specific but not cluttered with language
- Scope of Work should be as long as needed to adequately describe planned experience
- Be sure the objectives are aligned with the required CHS competencies, linked in the final column of the SOW template. For example, after you write an objective, put in parentheses which competency it fulfills and list the competencies in the final column.
- Estimate time for each activity. Remember that measuring the amount of time needed is always an estimate
- Determine how the student will evaluate themselves:
  - How will the student and their preceptor know that the student completed an activity or objective
  - How will the student and their preceptor know how well the student completed the activity or objective

Changes to Scope of Work
Remember that it is possible and sometimes expected to change the scope of work during the 400 hours. If it becomes necessary to change the original Scope of Work, such as deleting objectives, modifying existing objectives, or adding objectives, the student should submit a memo to the Field Studies Director with the following information:

- Changes to the Scope of Work
- Reasons for change (keep it brief)
- Signatures of student and preceptor

D. Writing Logs

The purpose of the weekly logs is to help students develop the discipline of keeping track of significant activities and progress toward reaching the objectives that they have set out to achieve in their field studies. Additionally, the logs serve to:

- Provide a chronology of important events related to your professional development;
- Provide feedback to the Field Studies Director. Indicate if there is any need for consultation or assistance by the Field Studies Director with the Preceptor of the Student;
- Provide the basis for analysis of the process of reaching a student's objectives, writing reports, and evaluating achieved results.

Logs should be brief and concise (1-2 pages), covering the basis of **WHO, WHAT, WHERE, HOW**, in the process of attempting to achieve the objectives. Observations and feelings about the experience should include the following:

- Significant activities or progress in reaching objectives
- Highlights of what occurred in a 40 or 20 hour increment and reactions and perceptions to events that transpired
- Management/Leadership styles observing in the Preceptor and others in management positions
- Work styles of co-workers and the work style that the student prefers/exhibits
- Obstacles and problems encountered and what was done to overcome them
- How everything is fitting into the student's professional growth

Logs should be submitted to the Field Studies Director within 5 days of the covered period. Logs are considered correspondence between the student and the Field Studies Director, and are therefore confidential.

By the end of a student's field work, they should have submitted logs corresponding to at least 400 hours of field work.

Format of the logs should follow this model:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preceptor Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log for Week Ending (Date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hours this Period:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cumulative Hours:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write narrative of progress that occurred toward achievement of the objectives in the week being
If nothing of note occurred during that week, indicate that. Note observations, reactions, and feelings about events described using the above guidelines.

In addition to the general information provided in each log, students should address the following weekly questions which should provide an opportunity for discussion with the Preceptor and other staff at the field agency.

- **Week 2**: What are the major sources of funding? How is this funding secured?
- **Week 3**: What role does the governing board (Board of Directors, Elected Officials, etc.) play in day-to-day operations and decision-making?
- **Week 4**: How are intra and inter agency/developmental conflicts handled?
- **Week 5**: What were you hoping to experience in your field studies that is not happening?
- **Week 6**: What public health/community health issues should be addressed by the agency but are not, and why are they not being addressed?
- **Week 7**: What experience in this public health practice experience is related to what you have learned in the classroom at UCLA?
- **Week 8**: What experience in this public health practice experience is different to what you have learned in the classroom at UCLA?
- **Week 9**: If you had to do it over again, would you have approached your Preceptor differently in the negotiation process? If so, how?

**E. Final Report**

The final report is a written paper which serves as an overview of their field experience. The paper is recommended to be 6-10 pages, double spaced, not including bibliography or appendices. Samples of products completed during the field studies should be included as appendices (policy briefs, brochures, curriculum, reports, etc.).

**Content**

- **Title Page.** Includes name of project, preceptor agency, advisor, your name, and date.
- **Executive Summary/Abstract.** One page, single spaced. Include the who, what, when, where, why and how of the project; project title, preceptor agency, and supervisor. On the lower right hand corner indicate your name, advisor name and date. The abstract will be posted on the department's field studies website.
- **Statement of Problem.** Briefly summarize objective(s) and relate this to the problem or issue addressed by the project.
- **Context/Organization Setting.** A description of the agency where you completed your field studies. This should include type of agency, source of funding, mission statement and type of staffing.
- **Place of Project Within Organization.** Where did you and your project fit in the agency? Include discussion of how this affected the project, if applicable.
- **Results Achieved.** Describe results achieved during the course of the field studies. Explain any difference between proposed Scope of Work and results achieved, if any.
• **Theoretical Comparisons With Field Studies.** What theories and/or concepts did you use in carrying out the scope of work for your project. Relate specific academic experience with field studies.

• **Recommendation for Similar Projects.** What did you learn in carrying out your work plan that would be helpful in attempting a similar project? What specific skills did you develop and what specific knowledge did you gain? Knowing what you know now, what would you have done differently?

• **Recommendations for Yourself.** What areas have you been able to identify for your own professional or personal development as a result of your field experience?

**Due Date**

Hardcopies of the following are due within one week of completing field work:

- Final report with the abstract and any appendices
- Student evaluation
- Preceptor evaluation
- Signed Hours Log

An electronic copy of the final report (no appendices), and the abstract must be sent as separate documents to the Field Studies Director via email within one week of completing field work.
VI. Forms

All forms are available for download on the CHS Field Studies page: http://chs.ph.ucla.edu/academics/field-studies/current-students/forms

If any changes or revisions are made to any form, you will be notified by the CHS Student Affairs Officer via email. Should this occur, please use the updated form.