Title: Public Health Internship

Instructor: Each student’s advisor or designee serves as instructor for the internship. Advisors are involved in selection and approval of internship sites and special projects; development of documents for IRB approval, if necessary; supervision of the internship; and assignment of a final grade.

Credit Hours: 3

Meeting Time/Day: Class takes place in a field based setting for 240 hours over the course a semester.

Purpose: To enable MPH students to apply entry-level competencies acquired in the classroom setting to public health practice through experiential activities.

Description: The internship provides an opportunity for each student to work in a public health setting in a position that carries responsibility and is of particular interest. Each placement is different, but all depend upon completion of most coursework, the ability to work with minimal supervision, and acquiring permission of the student’s SOPH advisor and on-site preceptor/supervisor. The MPH is a professional degree that prepares individuals to develop basic public health skills. The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), our accrediting agency, requires that each MPH student be able to demonstrate the application of these concepts through an internship experience that is relevant to his or her area of specialization. This experience must be appropriately planned, supervised, and evaluated. Students should have completed the core classes before registering for an internship, so that usually means internships are performed in the summer of the first year at the earliest. Some programs vary from this general policy. To be sure about when you are eligible to register for your internship, check with your department’s program coordinator.

Objectives: At the completion of the Public Health Internship, the student will be able to:
1. Describe newly acquired knowledge in one or more specific public health area(s)
2. Apply one or more MPH competency(ies) with the skill expected from a practical experience
3. Apply one or more concentration competency(ies) with the skill expected from a practical experience
4. Demonstrate professional work habits

Competencies: The student and the internship advisor will identify an appropriate set of MPH and discipline-specific competencies to be accomplished through the field-based internship and the required activities and final product.

Grading: This course is graded as Pass/Fail (S/U) based on completion of all internship requirements, including the final project and poster presentation.
Disability Services: Any student with a disability that may need accommodations to successfully complete all requirements of this course should visit the Office of Disability Support Services, located in Room 513 of the Hill University Center, extension 4-4205. This office is responsible for registering students and ensuring the University’s compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disability Act. Once registered, this office will then inform faculty members of all courses in which the student is enrolled, of the student’s status and the specific nature of any accommodations required. Any student requiring such accommodation should discuss this with the course master and assure that the appropriate correspondence is sent from the Office of Disability Support Services.

Requirements

1) Attend the Internship Introduction and Orientation

2) Update your MPH competency self-assessment to determine particular competencies to be enhanced in the internship.

3) Complete all internship requirements as outlined in the Internship Agreement (including all required forms) (https://www.soph.uab.edu/internships)

Mid-Point Meeting: The mid-point meeting is an opportunity for you to reflect on where you are in your internship and evaluate what needs to be done for you to gain the most out of your experience. Approximately halfway through the internship, you will complete the mid-point meeting worksheet (located under forms online at https://www.soph.uab.edu/internships) and set up times to meet with your internship site supervisor and faculty advisor to review this information. The worksheet should act as a guide to your conversation. You must obtain the signatures of your internship supervisor and faculty advisor confirming the meeting took place.

Final Project: The final project will consist of a paper that addresses the objectives, activities and competencies and is at least 5 pages in length. It is due during the last week of the semester (your program coordinator will give you the actual date).

Poster Session: All students must prepare a poster presentation to be displayed and presented in the School on the last Friday of the semester (actual date to be determined each semester). Detailed instructions will be available from your program coordinator and are posted to the Internship website. Exceptions to attending the poster session will be considered on a case by case basis through your program coordinator or internship advisor (for example, students who are in another state or country); however, the poster should still be created and presented even if unattended.

Checklist

- Check with your department’s program coordinator for any special department/program requirements
- Identify, choose, and consult with a faculty internship advisor
• Identify an approved internship site listed on the SOPH website
• Apply for the internship opportunity in Dragon Trail, UAB’s Career Management Site
• Complete and submit “UAB School of Public Health Internship Agreement”
• If necessary, complete and submit IRB Approval Form
• If international student, complete and submit appropriate form to the International Scholar and Student Services Office
• Register for the appropriate course and number of hours
• Check in with faculty internship advisor at least one per month during internship
• Formally check in with your site supervisor and faculty advisor during a mid-point meeting approximately halfway through the internship
• Submit evaluation forms and final product(s) last week of semester to your program coordinator
• Submit and attend poster session