



Washington
University in St. Louis

BROWN SCHOOL

Master of Public Health

Field Instructor Handbook

Office of Field Education

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Welcome to Field Education

Dear Colleague,

Welcome from the Brown School Office of Field Education (OFE)! Field instruction at the Brown School is a required didactic component of the Master of Public Health (MPH) program.

The purpose of your **Master of Public Health Field Instructor Handbook** is to provide you with information regarding the public health field education requirements, policies and procedures that have been established for practicum students and field instructors affiliated with the Brown School. Please read and retain your handbook as a valuable reference, and contact the OFE staff if assistance or support is needed.

Thank you for your partnering with the Brown School to provide stellar field experiences to our students.

Office of Field Education Staff

Jennifer Harpring, MSW, MAPS..... (314) 935-2785
Assistant Dean, Office of Field Education
Brown Hall, 312
jharpring@wustl.edu

Ragini Maddipati, MSW, MPH..... (314) 935-4185
OFE MPH Program Manager
Brown Hall, 308
rmaddipati@wustl.edu

Suzanne Maxey.....(314) 935-6602
Database and Administrative Coordinator
Brown Hall, 305E
OFE@wustl.edu

Missions and Policies of Brown School & Washington University

Mission of Washington University in St. Louis

Washington University's mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge, and protect the freedom of inquiry through research, teaching, and learning. Washington University creates an environment to encourage and support an ethos of wide-ranging exploration. Washington University's faculty and staff thrive to enhance the lives and livelihoods of students, the people of the greater St. Louis community, the county, and the world.

Vision & Mission of the Brown School

Our Vision – To create positive social change through our path-breaking research and educational excellence.

Our Mission – To educate and prepare future social work and public health leaders in areas of policy, practice, and research; to pioneer research and apply results to impact policy and practice locally, nationally, and internationally; and to collaborate with organizations to use evidence to improve access to and quality of social services, and to address social and economic justice.

The MPH Program is built around four core values that permeate the Brown School: transdisciplinary problem solving; evidence-based practice; eliminating health disparities, and disseminating and implementing proven solutions into public health practice.

Overview of the MPH Practicum

Purpose of Practicum

The practicum experience is an integral part of professional public health education. It is designed to provide authentic practice situations where learning that occurs in the practicum setting complements academic course work through practical application of theories, concepts, and specific practice behaviors for the field experience – thus, the term “practicum.”

The purpose of the graduate-level public health practicum at the Brown School is threefold: 1) to provide challenging, innovative and substantive learning experiences to students, 2) to prepare students to assume responsibilities as public health professionals exhibiting ethical and professional behavior, and 3) to ensure skilled supervision by experienced field instructors who have been affiliated with the Brown School based on demonstrated knowledge in the field. Students are required to complete a total of three (3) academic credits (equivalent to 360 hours of field work) in a public health practicum to graduate.

Timing of Practicum

When the practicum is scheduled and whether it is to be completed on a part-time or full-time basis (up to 40 hours a week) are contingent upon each student's educational plan. Students must complete seven (7) courses prior to beginning the public health practicum: the five Foundations in Public Health, Cross-Cutting themes, and Research Methods courses. Students who are specializing must fulfill some specialization requirements prior to the start of practicum.

Dual degree MPH/MSW students must also complete the MSW foundation practicum and seminar with a grade of PASS, prior to starting the MPH practicum. Following Brown School's suggested academic sequencing for the MPH program, most students begin the MPH practicum in the third semester (summer) after the completion of first year of courses. Students entering the dual MPH/MSW program must wait until after completion of all foundation MSW and MPH courses and foundation practicum to begin their Dual practicum, which is typically during their second summer. Students entering the dual MPH/MSW program with MSW advanced standing can begin their Dual practicum after completion of the required MPH courses, which are typically completed by their first summer or second fall semester.

Practicum Recruitment and Selection

The OFE does not assign students to practicum organizations. The student is responsible for the selection of practicum. Field advisors support students via mentoring and programming. This model allows each student to consider learning experiences that contribute to professional identity, provide a comprehensive base of theory, knowledge, and skills, and build on their own personal short- and long-term career goals.

Practicum position descriptions may be created by practicum organizations and posted to the Brown School's practicum database, called Symplicity, for students to view. All positions must be approved by OFE once submitted for posting. Once they are approved, positions are available for students to search for and view, and students will contact organizations based on their interest and qualification for posted positions. For more information on how to post practicum positions, please email ofe@wustl.edu.

Field Advisors share the responsibility for assisting students to select field experiences. This model allows each student to consider learning experiences that contribute to professional identity, provide a comprehensive base of theory, knowledge, and skills, and build on their own personal short and long-term career goals.

Required Credits and Practicum Hours

MPH students are required to complete a total of three academic credits, equivalent to 360 hours of field work, with a grade of PASS in a public health practicum to graduate. Students may register for one credit (120 work hours), two credits (240 hours), or three credits (360 work hours) of practicum per semester, totaling 360 hours by the end of their practicum experience. The breakdown of hours worked per week (part-time or full-time) is negotiated between the student and field instructor. However, students may not accumulate more than 40 work hours per week in practicum unless they are in an international setting. Students may continue to volunteer or work at the practicum organization beyond the completion of the contracted practicum hours, as long as the duration and terms of continued service is agreeable to the student, the organization, and approval is granted through the Washington University Office of International Students and Scholars (for international students only). Students may not complete a one credit practicum at an organization or split practicum credits between two agencies.

Professional Behavior and Responsibilities of Students in Practicum

Consistent with the knowledge, values, ethics, and skills of the public health profession, students in practica are expected to adhere to the profession's values and ethics in all aspects of the field instruction experience. Responsibilities of students in practicum include:

- Arranging and maintaining a schedule for weekly field supervision
- Planning, attending, and actively participating in weekly supervisory sessions
- Preparing an agenda for supervision
- Keeping a timesheet of completed practicum hours
- Assuming responsibility for demonstrating all competencies and practice behaviors through learning activities
- Communicating with the field instructor regarding the student's learning needs and interests, conflicts regarding field instruction, and challenges to develop as a professional public health practitioner
- Participating in the site visit
- Consulting with the organization about safety and liability
- Fulfilling all the obligations and expectations set forth in the student's Educational Learning Agreement
- Contacting the OFE if problems arise in the field that may need support, clarification, and resolution
- Submitting the Student Self-Evaluation of Competencies and Performance and Student Assessment of Practicum Experience at the end of the field experience
- Submitting a final Practicum Report highlighting a practicum learning experience or project through quantifiable outcomes or qualitative analyses

Additional student responsibilities are discussed in the "Practicum Requirements for Students" section and throughout this handbook.

What Field Instructors Need to Know Before the Start of Practicum

Field Instructor to Student Ratio

Field instructors may supervise no more than three students in practicum per semester. This field instructor-student ratio (3:1) affords the field instructor the opportunity to effectively engage and supervise a manageable number of students at any given time, so as not to infringe upon the time and availability of the field instructor to provide quality supervision to all students, and effectively attend to his or her own job duties. An exception to this policy may be made for professionals whose primary job is to supervise practicum students or volunteers.

Educational Learning Agreement (ELA)

In consultation with the field instructor, students are required to complete and submit to OFE the appropriate Educational Learning Agreement (ELA). All students must submit a specialization-specific ELA. The ELA serves as the learning agreement

and guide to monitor the student's progress toward gaining competency during the field experience. Completion and submission of the ELA to the OFE is the responsibility of the student in consultation with and support of the field instructor.

Orientation for Students in Practicum

A successful practicum partnership between a field instructor and student begins with a well-planned orientation program. An effective orientation process can help a student quickly acclimate to their practicum setting, better understand their role in the organization, and clearly define their tasks, duties, and responsibilities in the practicum. The orientation of a student to their practicum organization and/or site should include:

- Adaptation to the culture and environment of the organization – tour of facility, student's office space, review of dress code, work schedule, holiday/vacation schedules, use of phone, travel reimbursement, resources manuals, and reference materials
- Agreement on the student's role in practicum, including boundaries of student's involvement in projects, meetings, or committees, persons with whom the student may consult, and student's working title (e.g., research associate intern)
- Review of the history, mission, funding sources, services and organizational chart
- Review of organizational policies and procedures, including the organization's stance on confidentiality
- Review of the code of ethics followed by the organization or practicum site
- Review of organizational procedures for documentation, record keeping, and reporting work time
- Introduction to key administrators and staff in the organization
- Introduction to key community resources and persons outside of the practicum organization with whom the student is likely to interact
- Review of personal safety issues and training necessary to protect the well-being of the student.

Students who will be engaged in practicum tasks and duties off-site from the practicum organization (e.g., in community centers or health clinics) should also be oriented in a similar manner as indicated above to the culture, operations, and policies of the work site.

Site Visit

All practicum students are required to receive a site visit approximately midway through the student's entire practicum experience as indicated on the face sheet of the ELA. For practica at out-of-state or international locations, a phone conference or video conference may be arranged. The visit is scheduled by a Brown School professional. The field instructor, student, and site visitor will meet for approximately 30 minutes to discuss the student's progress in practicum; therefore, the field instructor's participation in this meeting is vital (see "Site Visit" in the "Practicum Requirements for Field Instructors" section).

Professional Liability Insurance

Washington University carries a \$2 million policy for its various professional fields. This program covers duly registered Brown School students for events that may occur while performing duties in their field practicum. Field instructors and organizations can obtain proof of coverage by contacting the OFE.

Automobile Insurance

The University does not provide automobile liability coverage to students. Students who will be using their personal vehicle or a company vehicle for organizational business should negotiate automobile coverage with the organization prior to the start of the practicum.

Special Accommodations

Prior to beginning a practicum search, students with disabilities or those requiring special accommodations in practicum should discuss those needs with Cornerstone Disability Resources (at Washington University) so that reasonable accommodations can be identified and recommended. Reasonable accommodations are tools or arrangements that facilitate or enhance the performance of a student with a disability or special need and will be discussed with the student, field instructor, and the Director of Student Affairs.

Criminal Background Checks, Drug Screenings, HIPAA Certification, and Verification of Health Status

Some practicum organizations may require screenings, certification, and verification or vaccinations from students prior to beginning practicum. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to the following: criminal background check, drug screening for illicit drugs, vaccinations, HIPAA training/certification, and/or verification of health status. Washington University

does not require or facilitate such requirements of students. The field instructor should communicate directly with the student about these requirements and compliance with organizational standards and policies. Students are individually responsible for obtaining the required background checks, screenings, required trainings/certifications, and all associated costs and fees.

Students' Activities in Compliance with the Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health

The Brown School supports the policies of affiliated practicum organizations. However, because practicum students are not employees of these organizations, students are encouraged to pay special attention to the requirements or their practicum tasks and duties in order to comply with the Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health.* The code of ethics provides values and beliefs which serve as the foundation for morally responsible, public health practice that should guide students in their professional behavior as agents of the organization while in practicum.

** Note: Dual degree MPH/MSW students must also comply with the National Association of Social Work (NASW) Code of Ethics.*

Organizational Policies

Students are required to comply with the rules and policies of the practicum site, insofar as they pertain to the students' activities during practicum. It is the responsibility of the field instructor to ensure that students are well-apprised of the organization's policies, consequences should violations of such policies occur, and dress and professional comportment aligned with organizational policies. Field instructors should also discuss with the student the potential for conflicts of interest regarding the policies of the organization and principles/ethics of the public health profession, if applicable (see "Students' Activities in Compliance with the Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health" section).

Lobbying Activities

Students who will be engaged in formal lobbying activities as a part of the practicum experience should discuss with the practicum organization and the OFE the issue of registering as a lobbyist with the appropriate governmental entity. If the field instructor and student determine that registration is appropriate, the student must register as a lobbyist with the practicum organization and not with the University. It is the responsibility of the organization and student to comply with all laws and regulations relevant to lobbying.

Sharing Sensitive Information

The OFE will share all practicum-related information, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), with appropriate persons including the student's academic advisor, the practicum field instructor, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs and the Associate Dean for Public Health. Relevant information is defined as information that may have an impact on the student's learning experience, clients, constituents, the practicum organization, field instructor, or staff. Such information, as appropriate, will be shared to enhance the learning process. Field instructors are also expected to share relevant information with the OFE. The practicum organization may require the student to sign a release of information form for some types of information.

Practicum Deliverables and Work Products

While in practicum, students should operate under the following assumption: a work product produced in the course of a practicum, under the supervision, guidance, and review of a representative(s) of the organization, using the organization's data and/or resources is considered the property of the organization. An exception may exist when the student is provided with written permission from the organization stating otherwise. Compliance with all federal and state regulations governing copyright, HIPAA, etc. is the standard of conduct.

Safety and Security of Students in Practicum

The safety of students in practicum is a priority for the OFE, and if not addressed, concerns about personal safety can significantly impact learning opportunities in the field. While the University does not wish students to be protected from the realities of professional practice, immersing students in the realities of practice can also expose them to safety and security risks.* The University and practicum organizations must partner to reduce risks to students in practicum. Therefore, field instructors and practicum organizations, when applicable should:

- Discuss safety and security matters with the student during the interview and throughout the practicum
- Relay information about the prevalence of or potential for violence while conducting practicum activities to the student
- Explain and enforce organizational safety protocols with the student, including building and office security, emergency procedures, management of violent clients and home visit safety procedures.

- Provide a tour of the surrounding neighborhood/community and address concerns the student may have regarding work in the community or area
- Allow the student to observe staff engaged in the work for which the student is preparing
- Allow the student to be observed while engaged in learning activities
- Provide the student with security resources (i.e., safety training and cellular phones) available from the practicum organization.

Examples of activities that warrant special concern and discussion with the student and the OFE prior to the start of practicum include, but are not limited to:

- Physical restraint of clients
- Transportation of clients in the student's private vehicle or company vehicle
- Transportation of a client with a history of violent behavior
- Practicum work when at times, the student will be alone or in volatile areas where other staff will not be present

In the event that a student is involved in an incident resulting in the risk of or experience of any personal threat or assault to themselves or others during the practicum, they must complete an Incident Reporting Form (see "Incident Reporting" section).

**Note: Students are expected to follow organizational policies, procedures, and protocols regarding the necessity of home visits, if applicable.*

Specializations

Students in the MPH program are able to specialize in one of five tracks. Students entering the Brown School during the fall 2018 semester and after are required to choose a specialization. Each specialization requires a set number of course credits as well as a pre-approved practicum experience.

Epidemiology and Biostatistics Specialization

An Epidemiology/Biostatistics specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
- Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
- Epidemiology Methods and Applied Linear Modeling are required courses before starting practicum
- Practicum project should address a public health issue and involve either data collection and/or data analysis using epidemiology and/or biostatistics methods
- Must use a statistical software package for projects with a data analysis focus (e.g. SPSS, STATA, SAS, R)
- Must be supervised by someone with an MPH or specific epidemiology and/or biostatistics training
- Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to EPI/BIO chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum
- Must meet three (3) specialization-specific competencies during practicum.
- If a new organization, must submit the New Local Practicum Site Affiliation Request by the semester deadline for approval by the field advisor.
- Complete specialization-specific ELA.

Generalist Specialization

Students interested in a specific topic area of public health that is not addressed within one of the other specializations, or in combining competencies and skills from more than one specialization area, may selected the Generalist specialization. The Generalist specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
- Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
- Students must select three (3) specialization competencies from any of the specializations prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
- If a new organization, must submit the New Local Practicum Site Affiliation Request by the semester deadline for approval by the field advisor
- Complete and submit a specialization-specific ELA for approval.

Global Health Specialization

A Global Health specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum.**
- Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
- Global Health is a required course before starting practicum
- Practicum must take place in a low-or middle-income country outside the United States that is pre-approved by the Global Programs Office
- Students must submit a pre-application to Global Programs office two semesters prior to the start of practicum
- Students must attend pre-departure and post-debriefing sessions for information regarding safety, recommended immunizations and health precautions, and other context-specific communications
- Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to the Global Health chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum
- Must meet at least three (3) specialization-specific competencies during practicum
- If a new organization, must submit the New Local Practicum Site Affiliation Request by the semester deadline for approval by the field advisor.
- Complete and submit for approval a specialization-specific ELA.

Health Policy Analysis Specialization

A Health Policy specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
- Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
- Health Administration and Policy and Health Economics are required before enrolling in the program
- Practicum project should address health policy issues
- Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to Health Policy Analysis chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum
- Must meet at least three (3) specialization-specific competencies during practicum
- If a new organization, must submit the New Local Practicum Site Affiliation Request by the semester deadline for approval by the field advisor.
- Complete and submit for approval a specialization-specific ELA

Urban Design Specialization

An Urban Design specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
- Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
- Transdisciplinary Problem-Solving: From the Inside-Out: Public Health & The Built Environment course is required before enrolling in the program
- Practicum project should address a public health issue as related to the design of urban communities
- Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to Urban Design chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum
- Must meet at least three (3) specialization-specific competencies during practicum
- If a new organization, must submit the New Local Practicum Site Affiliation Request by the semester deadline for approval by the field advisor.
- Complete and submit for approval a specialization-specific ELA

Types of Practicum

One-Semester and Two-Semester Practica

In consultation with the field instructor, students may elect to complete practicum over a period of one semester or two semesters. In a one-semester practicum or in the first semester of a two-semester practicum, an approved copy of the Educational Learning Agreement should be provided to the field instructor by the student. Students are required to submit only **one** Educational Learning Agreement during their practicum experience at any one organization.

Practicum at Place of Employment

The OFE does not recommend that students complete practicum at their place of employment. An exemption from this policy may be requested by students through submission of the Petition to Complete Practicum at Place of Employment Form. Students approved to complete practicum at their place of employment must ensure that the following conditions are met:

- The organization and field instructor must be affiliated with the Brown School
- The field instructor cannot also be the student's day-to-day work supervisor
- The practicum must be in an entirely different program/department than the one in which the student is employed
- Practicum hours cannot be counted as work time, nor can work time be counted as practicum hours
- The student must be evaluated as a learner rather than as an employee
- The Educational Learning Agreement must attend to all competencies and practice behaviors as related to the practicum experience and not to the student's regular work tasks and duties

Out-of-State Practica

Upon approval from the OFE, MPH students may complete their practicum locally (St. Louis metropolitan area and in any U.S. city or state). Out-of-state organizations and professionals must meet the same criteria to affiliate as practicum organizations and field instructors that apply to local organizations and professionals. Students requesting to complete their practicum at an out-of-state location must submit the required documents, be approved for the experience, and follow the OFE's policies and requirements for out-of-state practica.

Paid Practicum

A paid practicum may be offered at the discretion of the practicum organization. While it is appreciated when practicum organizations provide compensation to students in practicum, it is not a requirement for an organization to serve as a practicum site.* There is no minimum or maximum amount of compensation a student may receive. However, under no circumstances may the field instructor or practicum organization alter the agreed upon Educational Learning Agreement, contracted practicum hours, or practicum requirements as a condition of a compensated practicum without the approval of the Director of Field Education. In addition to the Practicum Timesheet required by the OFE, field instructors may require students to complete the organization's timesheet to track and verify practicum hours in compliance with the organization's protocols.

**Note: For the consideration of offering students compensation for practicum, please note that students do incur a financial expenditure for registering for practicum, as it is a class for which students must pay. Students completing out-of-state and international practica do incur additional travel and lodging expenses for which they are financially responsible, as Brown School does not provide stipends or financial support to students for practicum.*

Dual Degree MPH/MSW Practicum

Dual degree MPH/MSW students are required to complete three practica experiences: MSW foundation practicum (360 hours in the field for three credits), MPH practicum (360 hours in the field for three credits), and MSW concentration practicum (240 hours in the field for two credits), for a total of eight (8) practicum credits to graduate. The MSW foundation practicum must be completed prior to starting the MPH or MSW concentration practicum. The MPH and MSW concentration practica can be completed in succession or concurrently. Dual degree MPH/MSW students receive equivalent credit for three MSW concentration practicum credits when completing the MPH practicum. Thus the MPH practicum serves as a dual MPH/MSW practicum, which requires that the practicum organization and field instructor are affiliated for both MPH and MSW. Subsequently, dual degree MPH/MSW students must also develop and complete **two** Educational Learning Agreements (one for each program) when completing the MPH practicum requirement. Students must address both MSW and MPH competencies during the MPH practicum.

Practicum Requirements for Students

Practicum Registration

MPH Specialization Practicum Proposal Form

Students are required to submit a practicum proposal form to be approved by the specialization chair. Students should complete the form specific to their specialization. Forms should include:

- Information regarding the practicum site including how the organization and practicum is community engaged

- Information regarding the field instructor including any relevant background experience specific to the specialization
- Tasks, long term goals and description of portfolio products
- Specialization competencies to be fulfilled during practicum

This must be completed and approved prior to Symplicity Registration and the start of practicum hours. Approval or denial of the form will be sent to students via e-mail. If denied, students will need to provide further information or choose an alternative practicum site. A student may not accumulate practicum hours if the specialization form is not approved.

Course Requirement – Practicum is a course requirement, and students must register for the MPH practicum course **S55 MPH 5701** to receive credit for field work. Practicum may be completed in the fall, spring, and summer semesters each academic year.

Symplicity Registration – In addition to registering for practicum as a course, students are required to complete and submit a Practicum Registration via Symplicity by the specified semester due date. Notification will be sent via email to the student and field instructor regarding non-acceptance of the registration with an explanation for the rejection of the practicum. A student may not accumulate practicum hours with a non-affiliated organization or under the supervision of a non-affiliated field instructor.

Educational Learning Agreement (ELA)

The student must meet with the field instructor to develop an ELA. The ELA serves as a contract to guide and monitor the student's progress toward gaining competency during the field experience. To receive credit for practicum hours, the student must submit a signed electronic copy of the ELA to the OFE via Canvas for review and approval by the specified due date or before completing 40 hours in practicum, whichever occurs first. Accumulation of practicum hours may continue while the ELA is being reviewed. Students and field instructors will be notified if revisions are required and/or when the ELA is approved. No credit for hours completed during practicum is given if an ELA is not submitted and approved according to practicum guidelines. Specifics of the ELA are described in "Instructions and Overview of the ELA" in the "Practicum Requirements for Field Instructors" section.

The Final Practicum Report Format

The Practicum Report is the final deliverable of the student's practicum experience **for students who enrolled at the Brown School prior to fall 2018**, and due on the last day of their practicum. The Practicum Report should be typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, 10 double-spaced, numbered pages with 1 inch margins, using the APA format for references. Students should include references at the end of the paper; reference pages do not count towards the 10-page suggested limit. It is recommended that students refer back to your ELA as they develop this report. Students should email final reports to ofe@wustl.edu. For your reference, the instructions for the report are listed below.

Title Page

- Provide an informative, succinct title for your practicum report
- On the title page, include your name, the setting where the practicum took place, your field instructor, MPH Specialization (if applicable), and the date of the report

Abstract

- Write a one-paragraph abstract that summarizes your experience. Include the following points:
 - What were you seeking to accomplish (your goals and objectives for your practicum)?
 - How did you conduct the practicum (your learning activities)?
 - Where did your practicum take place?
 - Who were your collaborators at practicum?
 - What are the results of your work and what did the practicum accomplish?

Update of Goals and Learning Activities

- Describe the public health problem/issue you chose to address and whether your goal changed over the course of the practicum.
- Do you now see the problem in a different way? If not, how so? If not, how did the practicum experience add to your understanding of the nuances of this problem?
- How do your future plans include further work in this area? If they do not, explain your new aims.

Update of Approach, Methods and Findings

- Explain the approach and methods you used to meet the goals of your practicum.
- With the knowledge you have acquired doing the practicum, how would you do things differently if you were to undertake it now?
- Describe the results; if results have not been analyzed, please describe your hypothesis about the results.

Reflection on the Practicum

In this section of your paper, please reflect on the experience.

- Describe memorable moments of your experience (positive or negative).
- What did others think of your role in the organization?
- Describe the challenges that you faced in conducting the practicum. How did you handle them? What effects did that/those event(s) have on the results of the practicum or your experience? What did you learn by overcoming these challenges?
- How did you accomplish/integrate the public health and specialization (if applicable) competencies in practicum?
- How has this experience changed the way you think about public health practice or what you have learned in classes? Please share any insights you gained that might be useful or helpful in your career.
- What recommendations do you have about the MPH practicum selection process, the site, the field instructor, and the experience itself?

Conclusion

- Write a concluding paragraph summarizing your accomplishments and the lessons learned through this practicum experience.

Portfolio Products

Students enrolled in the Brown School MPH Program in Fall 2018 or after must complete two (2) portfolio products as part of their practicum experience. These products are required by the MPH Program's accrediting body, the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH) to demonstrate attainment of the five (5) public health competencies that students select to address in practicum. Each student must select three (3) foundational MPH competencies and three (3) specialization competencies that will be addressed in their practicum as well as their portfolio products.

Students will work in conjunction with their field instructor to determine what types of portfolio products will be mutually beneficial to both the student and the practicum organization. Examples of portfolio products include the following: Written assignments, projects, videos, multi-media presentations, spreadsheets, websites, posters, policy briefs, publications, photos or other digital artifacts of learning.

Documentation of Portfolio Products

Students will complete a brief questionnaire prior to the mid-point site visit to explain their plan for completing the portfolio products. This questionnaire will include the following information:

- Type of products that will be submitted
- Public health issue or problem that each product will be addressing
- Which competencies are addressed in each product
- How the product will be used by the organization
- E-signature from the field instructor, verifying that they approve of the plan for creation of those portfolio products

These questionnaires will be distributed to the field instructor and student at the beginning of practicum with a detailed description of the requirements for the portfolio products. A reminder will be sent to the field instructor and student prior to the site visit to prepare the questionnaire in advance of the visit. **Students will submit their questionnaire via Canvas prior to the time of the mid-point site visit.**

Students will submit their final portfolio products via Canvas by the last day of practicum. Field instructors will verify that they reviewed and approved of the final portfolio products by answering a question on the student's final evaluation.

It is recommended that field instructors discuss with students ahead of time what types of products and information are considered acceptable for sharing outside of the practicum organization. Students may wish to use their portfolio products as examples of their work when applying for jobs, fellowships, and other academic programs, so please

discuss with them ahead of time any concerns regarding confidentiality and what is considered property of the organization.

Students' products will be evaluated by their field advisor for demonstrating attainment of the stated competencies, and students will not receive a final grade for practicum until their assignments have been approved by the field advisor.

Student Self-Evaluation of Competencies and Performance

No later than two weeks prior to the anticipated ending date of the practicum, students should complete the Student Self-Evaluation of Competencies and Performance (available online). The self-evaluation is completed at the end of an entire practicum experience at any one agency. In the self-evaluation, students are asked to evaluate each competency and practice behavior from the ELA based on the following five-point scale:

5 = Advanced (Consistently exceeds expectations)

4 = Proficient (Consistently demonstrates ability)

3 = Developing

2 = Beginner

1 = Does not demonstrate

Students must also provide specific examples of their practicum performance in various professional areas as indicated in the evaluation.

Practicum Timesheet

Throughout the practicum, students are expected to document all hours accumulated throughout the practicum. Completion of the Practicum Timesheet is governed by Brown School's policies regarding Academic and Professional Integrity. The timesheet must be monitored by the field instructor, signed by the student and field instructor (after completion and review of the student's self-evaluation and the field instructor's evaluation) and submitted to the Office of Field Education at the completion of the entire practicum. Students may not accumulate more than 40 hours per week in practicum.

Student Assessment of Practicum Experience

Students are required to thoughtfully and critically assess their practicum experiences by completing the Student Assessment of Practicum Experience survey at the end of their practicum. Field instructors have requested this candid feedback to improve their effectiveness as mentors and to enhance the organization's practicum experience for future students. Survey results are anonymously made available to Brown School students engaged in the practicum search process. Field instructors are also provided the results of the survey (a semester after students' grades have been assigned) to use as feedback to evaluate, for example, their personal effectiveness as a supervisor/mentor, the organization as a learning environment, or enhancement of the practicum experience for future students.

Practicum Requirements for Field Instructors

The field instructor/student relationship is critical to the development of competent public health professionals.

Weekly Supervision

Field instructors are required to provide one hour of face-to-face weekly, individualized supervision to each student in practicum. The weekly meeting should include an agenda of topics prepared by the student to discuss. Topics may include:

- Updates on the student's progress with tasks and projects
- Challenges/problems faced by the student
- Accomplishments/goals the student has achieved
- Issues of cultural competency and diversity (within the organization and with clients/constituents)
- Processing of the organizational culture
- Identification of training opportunities for the student
- Discussion and mentoring regarding the student's professional development and career goals
- Discussion of news and trends of public health information relevant to the organization's field of service, the student's tasks/projects, etc.

Group Supervision – Organizations hosting more than one practicum student or other interns may choose to offer group supervision to students as a **supplement** to (but not in lieu of) individual supervision. Group supervision may be used to orient a group of students to the organization, allow students the opportunity to meet other interns and coordinate student

projects, or provide a forum for guest speakers and professional development for students that enhance their practicum experience.

Task Supervisor – The Brown School differentiates between an affiliated field instructor and an organizational task supervisor. A task supervisor is often a staff member who assumes specific responsibilities for the student's practicum learning as delegated and monitored by the field instructor. A task supervisor does not replace the field instructor nor can the task supervisor substitute for the field instructor in weekly supervision* Therefore, the task supervisor is not expected to meet Brown School's criteria for supervision and evaluation, but should be informed of the Brown School's practicum requirements and procedures. It is the responsibility of the field instructor to help the student integrate the task supervisor's contribution into the overall learning experience.

**Note: OFE recognizes that on occasion, a field instructor may be unavailable to meet with the student for weekly supervision (e.g., field instructor is on vacation or at an out-of-town conference/meeting). In these instances, a task supervisor may meet with the student to monitor their progress and address any concerns or issues. However, this substitution is only acceptable for short-term situations. Field instructors who will be absent for supervision over an extended period of time must notify the OFE to discuss a plan for continuing supervision.*

Training for Field Instructors of Dual Degree MPH/MSW Students – Local field instructors who want to supervise dual degree MPH/MSW students are required to attend the Social Work Field Education Collaborative trainings. Please contact the Office of Field Education staff for more details, ofe@wustl.edu.

Instructions and Overview of the ELA

The ELA (Educational Learning Agreement) is the learning contract developed by the student in consultation with the field instructor. Essentially, the ELA serves as the student's "job description" for practicum and should be used as a guide for developing and monitoring learning activities, goals, and objectives. A revised copy of the ELA or a written addendum specifying new tasks and duties for the student must be submitted to the Office of Field Education if substantive changes are made in the student's primary assignments. Details and instructions on completing the ELA are following.

ELA Face Sheet

The ELA Face Sheet serves as the cover page for the ELA and provides the student, field instructor, and OFE with specific information related to the practicum, contact information for the student and field instructor, the number of credits (corresponding to contracted work hours) to be completed, the number of semesters the student intends to be in practicum at the organization, and additional information helpful to the OFE. The bottom half of the Face Sheet provides a place for signatures, which are required. Once the ELA is completed and signed, the student is responsible for emailing it to their field advisor for final approval. Students and field instructors are notified via e-mail when the ELA is approved or if revisions are required.

ELA Part I: Field Experience Overview

The Field Experience Overview is to be completed by the student in consultation with their field instructor. First, students are asked to provide a general, but thorough, description of the organization, including the structure and mission of the organization, as well as the population(s) being served. Next, students are asked to identify goals and objectives for the practicum, as well as projects or deliverables that will be created in practicum. Students are then asked to check off specific items covered during orientation to the organization.

ELA Part II: Competencies

The Competencies section allows the student and field instructor to identify 1-5 specific learning activities related to each of five (5) selected public health competencies. Each student must select three (3) foundational competencies and two (2) specialization competencies to address in practicum. Lists of these competencies can be found in the ELA. Students and field instructors should generate the list of activities together. Field instructors will then identify methods of evaluating the student on each of the competencies.

ELAs for Dual Degree MPH/MSW Students – Dual degree MPH/MSW students are required to submit two ELAs: one for the MPH program and one for the MSW program. Field instructors should consult with dual degree MPH/MSW students to assist with construction of tasks, assignments, and duties relevant to each ELA.

Field Instructor Evaluation of Practicum

After reviewing the student's self-evaluation, the field instructor completes the Field Instructor Evaluation of Practicum, available online through a link and password that will be emailed to the field instructor, along with instructions on how to complete the evaluation. The field instructor will receive notification to complete their evaluation of the student after the student's self-evaluation has been submitted. In the evaluation, the field instructor evaluates the student's performance of each competency area using the five-point scale below. The field instructor also evaluates the student's overall performance of the practicum experience, rates aspects of the student's professionalism, and suggests a grade for the student. Field instructors should print their final evaluations for review

5 = Advanced (Consistently exceeds expectations)

4 = Proficient (Consistently demonstrates ability)

3 = Developing

2 = Beginner

1 = Does not demonstrate

Monitoring, Evaluations, and Practicum Grades

Site Visit

An OFE staff member will monitor the student's progress in the field and conduct one site visit approximately midway through the student's entire practicum experience indicated on the face sheet of the ELA. The site visit is to occur on-site at the practicum organization or field site (unless the practicum location is out-of-state or international). The field advisor will contact the field instructor and student to arrange a date and time for site visit. The objectives of the site visit include:

- Ensuring weekly, well-organized individual supervision sessions are occurring
- Facilitating productive educational relationships between student and field instructor
- Monitoring competencies through student activities, learning objectives, and behaviors
- Monitoring and facilitating integration of course and field learning
- Identifying and monitoring social work skills being enhanced in the field
- Identifying needs and curriculum development trends from a field perspective
- Strengthening Brown School and community relationships

Evaluation

Evaluation is viewed as a continuous process occurring throughout the course of the practicum experience, a necessary aspect of public accountability and, hence, a necessary part of public health practice. The Student Self-Evaluation of Competencies and Performance is completed by the student two weeks prior to the completion of practicum hours, and a copy of the evaluation is emailed to the field instructor with a link to the Field Instructor Evaluation of Practicum. Following the review of the student's self-evaluation during supervision, the field instructor must complete and submit their evaluation of the students' performance online. Both of these evaluations provide important feedback regarding the student's progress and professional aptitude in the practicum.

Practicum Grades

Practicum grades are based on the demonstration of professional competencies, and through the application of knowledge, skills, and abilities in the field.

The Office of Field Education uses the following assessment tools to assign your final grade.

Tool	Due Dates Non-graduating Students	Due Dates Graduating Students
Student Self-Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On InsideBrown or Canvas	Two weeks before the last day of your practicum	Fall 2019: November 15 Spring 2020: April 14 Summer 2020: August 17
Field Instructor Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will be mailed to field instructor when student completes self-evaluation	On student's last day of practicum	Fall 2019: December 2 Spring 2020: May 1 Summer 2020: September 1

Time Sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be completed throughout practicum and reviewed at site visit 	On student's last day of practicum	Fall 2019: December 2 Spring 2020: May 1 Summer 2020: September 1
Final Practicum Report (students enrolled prior to fall 2018 only)	On student's last day of practicum	Fall 2019: December 2 Spring 2020: May 1 Summer 2020: September 1
Two Portfolio Products (students enrolled Fall 2018 and after)	On student's last day of practicum	Fall 2019: December 2 Spring 2020: May 1 Summer 2020: September 1

The Grading Scale is:

- Pass with distinction (High Pass)
- Pass
- Fail

Final grades are determined by the field advisor. The following will be taken into account:

- 1) Educational Learning Agreement (ELA)
 - a. Timely submission of the ELA
 - b. Quality of the ELA
 - i. ELA is thorough and reflects a substantive practicum experience
 - ii. ELA describes student's work as they relate to Public Health competencies
- 2) Student Self Evaluation
 - a. Timely submission of the Student Self Evaluation
 - b. Quality of reflection in Student Self Evaluation
 - i. Student describes their work in their practicum and how it ties to the competencies
 - ii. Student ties their practicum work to the mission of the organization
 - iii. Depth of student reflection on communication, leadership, and professional growth
- 3) Final Practicum report or Two Portfolio Products
- 4) Field Instructor Evaluation: Grade suggested by Field Instructor
- 5) Timesheet: Timely submission of complete timesheet

Problems in the Field

There are occasions when problems arise during the practicum involving the student or that affect their practicum experience. It is crucial that any problems or concerns associated with a student's performance in the field, with a field instructor, or with the practicum organization are brought to the attention of the Office of Field Education as soon as they become apparent. Only in this way will the student and field instructor have full opportunity to initiate timely, corrective steps to remedy a resolution, as described below.

Student Behavior

All Brown School students are expected to practice professionally, ethically, and morally during practicum. This expectation is expounded throughout the academic year in various trainings and coursework, and is mandated within the practice behaviors and professional competencies and the Education Learning Agreement. Yet, there may be times when a student's behavior (intentional or unintentional) impedes successful performance in the practicum or is detrimental to the mission and/or operations of the practicum organization. The following are examples of student behavioral issues in practicum:

- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness – excused or unexcused
- Failure to provide reasonable notice of an unscheduled absence from the practicum
- A single gross violation or repeated violations of the Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health
- Gross or repeated violations of the organization's policies and/or procedures
- A sustained low level of performance that is unresponsive to corrective action
- Reporting to the practicum site under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Evidence of severe, personal behavior problems that impeded completion of work tasks or projects
- Maintaining, after it has been addressed, a hostile, negative attitude incompatible with the values of the profession of public health, manifested in behaviors towards clients, constituents, instructors, peers, organization staff, and/or University staff

- Failure to maintain professional boundaries and behaviors in respect to the organization’s clients, constituents, and staff
- Any sexual or inappropriate relationship with a client, constituent, or staff member

When such behaviors occur, field instructors have several courses of action to remedy a solution to the situation:

Practicum Support Plan (PSP) – If alerted to problems related to student behavior early in the semester, the MPH OFE Program Manager may develop a “Practicum Support Plan” to assist the student with improving behavior. The support plan is completed by the field instructor and academic advisor, signed by the student, field instructor, or Brown School professional, and must contain the following information:

- Narrative of identified concern/behavior
- Description of previous attempts to address the concern, including educational feedback, increased supervision, changes in the Educational Learning Agreement, or other interventions
- Plan for resolution, including specified deadlines, clearly stated objectives for all involved parties (i.e., student, field instructor, task supervisor, etc.) and their subsequent responsibilities, and what measures of success will be utilized to determine if the support plan is successful

A copy of the plan must be provided to the student, the field instructor, and the Office of Field Education. The MPH OFE Program Manager must be kept informed of all problematic field-related instances involving the student and field instructor, and may become directly involved at any point in the process. If the student’s performance remains unsatisfactory following the implementation of the PSP and it appears that a failing grade will be the resulting occurrence, communication and/or a meeting between the student, field instructor, advisor, and the MPH OFE Program Manager will be scheduled.

Student Termination from Practicum – If the objectives of a Practicum Support Plan (as summarized above) cannot be achieved and the student’s behavior does not improve, after consultation between the student, field instructor, and field advisor, a student may be terminated from practicum. The field advisor will consult with the student and the field instructor regarding the specifics and requirements of the termination, and initiate the process. A student may also be removed or terminated from practicum for the following reasons:

- Failure to meet academic and behavioral standards of the policies and procedures of practicum (as outlined in the Office of Field Education “MPH Field Education Student Handbook”)
- Failure to disclose critical background information on application forms or in pre-practicum and practicum interviews

Unanticipated Circumstances

Some problems that occur during practicum are due to changes beyond the student’s or field instructor’s control such as changes with the field instructor (e.g., field instructor leaves or is terminated), changes within the organization (e.g., internal restructuring or loss of funding), or changes with the student other than behavioral problems (student illness or death in the family). The field instructor or organizational representative is required to notify the Office of Field Education as soon as possible when circumstances necessitate change in supervision or if a practicum must be terminated. A student may also be removed from field due to:

- Decision of the Office of Field Education and/or recommendation of the site visitor that the organization is not meeting the outlined learning objectives of the Educational Learning Agreement
- The practicum organization or field instructor fails to demonstrate commitment to the Brown School field program requirements
- Failure of the field instructor in providing consistent supervision over the student’s learning experiences and activities
- Student’s personal safety is jeopardized by continuing in practicum

Change in Field Instructor – Whenever possible, the field instructor or organizational representative (in the event that the field instructor is no longer employed by the organization or otherwise incapacitated) is encouraged to explore all options that might allow the student to remain at the practicum site under different, pre-approved, supervision. If another professional from the organization is available to serve as a field instructor, students may complete a Petition to Change Field Instructor Form with the assistance of the current field instructor. The Office of Field Education will only approve a change in field instructor if the proposed field instructor is able to meet the requirements for affiliation. On a case-by-case basis, the Office of Field Education may work with the practicum organization to determine an alternative plan for supervision.

Student Requested Termination from Practicum – Students may request to terminate a practicum by completing the “Petition to Terminate Practicum Form” which must be signed by the student, field instructor, and OFE. A review of the practicum situation is completed by the Field Advisor. A review does not end a practicum experience until approval is granted. If the approval for termination is granted, the student may receive a grade for hours completed, if they are equal to at least one credit (120 field hours). If the student has accumulated less than 120 practicum hours, they will be expected to complete all required hours in his or her next practicum.

Incident Reporting

Washington University is not in a position to take action against incidents involving students that occur off site, but the School will assist students in documenting any incidences in which a student is involved (see “Safety and Security of Students in Practicum” section). Students, field instructors, and/or advisors can use the Practicum Incident Reporting Form to document the details of the incident and to assist in determining the action needed to be taken. The form is available for students through Brown School and available to field instructors upon request from OFE. This form should be completed in addition to reporting documents required by the practicum organization, field site, Washington University, Brown School, or other investigating officials, and in no way substitutes for the forms, policies, or procedures that are required by any parties affected by or responding to the incident. Completed forms should be returned to the OFE.

Criteria for Continuation of Affiliation Partnerships

Affiliation partnerships between the Brown School, field instructors and organizations are the hallmark of successful practicum experiences for our students. To ensure the synergism of the partnership is supported, the Office of Field Education requires field instructors and practicum organizations to continue to meet the criteria of the affiliation as outlined in the affiliation application process and below. Partnerships of affiliation are granted for a period of three years and must be renewed every three years. However, the Office of Field Education, the field instructor, or the organization may request to terminate or suspend an affiliation partnership at any time. Such requests should be made in writing.

Criteria for Continuation as an Affiliated Practicum Organization

- Currently employ an affiliated field instructor
- Commitment in philosophy, policies, values, ethics, and practice of the public health profession and services (and the social work profession and services for dual MPH/MSW sites)
- Ability to provide graduate-level learning opportunities that are consistent with the student's educational development and the organization's public health mission and services
- Competent staff (including at least one affiliated field instructor) sufficient to maintain program services without relying on students
- The ability to provide the resources necessary for students to carry out assignments, (e.g. telephone, desk, computer, administrative support, etc.)
- Willingness to invest necessary resources in student learning, including adequate release time for field instructors to attend School-sponsored meetings and to supervise students (defined as sufficient time for adequate review of the student assignments and learning goals; the requirement is at least one hour of individual supervision per student per week).
- Commitment to public health and/or social work education, ability to provide quality learning opportunities for students as measured by quality and scope of assignments, diversity of clients/partners, service to underserved populations, and other appropriate criteria
- Clear differentiation between the student's role as employee and the student's role as a graduate-level learner if student is employed at the site
- Organization must have existed for a minimum of one year and have received an affiliation site visit by an Office of Field Education staff member, when feasible

Criteria for Continuation as an Affiliated Field Instructor

- Demonstrated competence in supervision
- Provision of one hour per week (per student) regularly scheduled supervision meetings
- Provision of graduate-level practice experiences in keeping with individual student needs/abilities
- Demonstrated commitment to the construction of the Educational Learning Agreement
- Willingness to share expertise, time, and professional experiences with student(s)
- Willingness to meet with student(s) informally via unscheduled conferences and meetings (as needed)
- Participation in site visit during student's practicum experience

- A pattern of positive interactions with students, advisors, and Office of Field Education staff
- Timely and appropriate communications with the Office of Field Education as needed
- Timely submission of evaluations and other practicum documents
- Continued employment in “good standing” with the practicum organization
- Demonstrated professionalism in conduct and character

Field Instructor Benefits

Brown School field instructors are provided the following benefits:

- Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
 - Three CEUs are granted each academic year to active field instructors
- Continuing Education and Professional Development events (at a reduced cost)
 - Access to the Professional Development Series
- Opportunity to audit Brown School courses
 - Ability to audit courses, with instructor approval, at the Brown School
- Evidence-Based Resources
 - Access to online Evidence- Based Practice (EBP) Resource Area