DrPH Practicum Guidelines

The intent of the DrPH Practicum requirement is to give students broad exposure to high-level public health practice and leadership. Two different 6-credit practicum rotations are required. In certain circumstances, a 6-credit practicum may be replaced by two 3-credit practicums.

Practicum rotations should give students an opportunity to develop skills related to evidence-based public health decision-making and the translation of empirical knowledge into effective public health practice. They should also integrate multiple public health disciplines. Each practicum placement should help students develop multiple specific competencies across 2-3 of the seven DrPH competency domains (advocacy, communication, community/cultural orientation, critical analysis, leadership, management, professionalism and ethics).

The practicum experience should allow students to demonstrate leadership, independence and originality in a project with significant public health impact. Although the student will work under the guidance and supervision of a mentor, the student is expected to independently carry out a meaningful project for their practicum. Examples include designing and implementing an epidemiological study or surveillance system, leading a workgroup to develop a policy or strategic plan, or evaluating the effectiveness of a behavior change intervention, but these are just examples – there are many possible types of projects suitable for a practicum experience.

The student should mutually design the practicum with their faculty advisor and the practicum mentor at the practicum site (see Practicum Proposal and Registration section). This process may take several weeks or months, so students are encouraged to begin the practicum planning process at least 2-3 months before the intended start date. Also, in some instances, the SPH may needs to set up an affiliation agreement with an outside organization before a practicum may take place.

Practicum mentors should have advanced degrees, ideally within the field of public health and should hold a significant leadership and decision-making position within the host organization.

Students must register for practicum credit during the semesters in which the work is completed, either SPH 790 (first practicum) or SPH 791 (second). Students must also complete a professional presentation as part of their practicum, and must register for SPH 780 Doctoral Practicum Presentation (0 credit) during the semesters in which they complete these presentations.

Each credit is equivalent to 80 hours of work, so a 6-credit practicum should represent 480 hours of work. DrPH practicums may be paid or unpaid.

Students who are currently working full-time may be able to develop ‘in-situ’ (on-site, in current or original position) practicum at their current site of employment. These should be arranged only after conversation with both the student’s faculty advisor and Dr. Mary Gallant. An in-situ practicum involves the student participating in an practicum project at their current site of employment. The work completed during the practicum must extend above and beyond the scope of the student’s daily job functions. Practicum credit cannot be given for one’s daily
job activities. Students are also strongly encouraged to work with a mentor other than their direct daily supervisor for the duration of their practicum project.

For students interested in gaining college teaching experience, students may complete one teaching practicum for either 3 or 6 credits. Teaching practicums are described in more detail below.

**Practicum Proposal and Registration**

After identifying a suitable practicum site and mentor, the student should work with the faculty advisor and practicum mentor to develop a 1-2 page *practicum proposal* this proposal should contain:

- Brief description of the organization where the practicum will take place and the qualifications of the mentor
- Description of the proposed project, including project background and goals
- Student’s role in the project
- Expected project outcomes or deliverables
- Identification of the competencies that will be met through the course of the practicum. The practicum should address several specific competencies across multiple DrPH competency domains. Each practicum doesn’t need to cover all 7 competency domains, but each should give you the opportunity to develop multiple different competencies across at least 2-3 different competency domains.

The student should also complete the **DrPH Practicum Registration Form and Learning Contract**. The signed registration form and proposal should be submitted to Dr. Mary Gallant for approval before the practicum begins.

**Evaluation of Practicum**

The practicum will be evaluated and monitored with one-month and final evaluation activities. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that these activities occur.

**One-Month Review**

The one-month review is designed to ensure that the practicum placement is working as planned and is meeting both the student’s and the organization’s needs. Initial assessment of competency attainment also takes place during the one-month review. It should occur about one-quarter to one-third of the way through the practicum project. The student, faculty advisor and practicum mentor should complete this one-month review meeting by phone or in-person, and complete and submit the **One-Month Review of Practicum** form.

**Final Evaluation Activities**

1. For the final assessment of the practicum experience, the student will develop a written Practicum Report (approximately 20 pages) summarizing the project’s
background, methods, results, and implications with suggested recommendations for next steps.

2. The student will also prepare and deliver a 20-minute professional presentation to fulfill the requirement for SPH 780: Doctoral Practicum Presentations. The practicum mentor and/or faculty advisor must verify the presentation. The student will document the presentation and its verification with the DrPH Practicum Presentation form. The presentation can be done at the practicum site or related organization, at a professional conference, at a brown bag seminar at the School of Public Health or in conjunction with SPH 701/702. Students should contact Dr. Mary Gallant if they wish to present at an SPH seminar or in SPH 701/702.

3. Students should also submit information about the practicum to be added to the DrPH practicum database using the DrPH Practicum Database Info form.

4. The student and mentor should complete and review the DrPH Practicum Final Competency Assessment.

5. The practicum mentor is also required to complete the DrPH Practicum Mentor Evaluation form and review it with the student.

Teaching Practicums

A student who would like to gain experience in college-level teaching in order to meet professional goals may meet up to 6 credits of practicum requirements by completing a teaching practicum.

During a teaching practicum, the student may be a teaching assistant or course assistant, a co-instructor or the primary instructor of a course; the appropriate role is determined depending on the student’s previous teaching experience and goals for the practicum. In any case, however, to count as a teaching practicum, the student must have a substantial role in designing and/or delivering the course, and the student must be mentored by an experienced faculty member.

Ordinarily, teaching practicums are 3 credits, unless a student has a substantial role in designing and then primarily teaching a course. Students may complete 2 3-credit teaching practicums.
REGISTRATION FORM & LEARNING CONTRACT
DrPH Practicum

STEPS TO COMPLETE:
In order to start at your practicum placement, you must:

1. Complete all information contained in this form. Consult with your Practicum Mentor and Faculty Advisor to complete. Note: It is suggested to draft a copy of the form electronically before providing it to your mentor and advisor for review.

2. Obtain all three signatures (student/mentor/faculty advisor) and agree to this Learning Contract prior to registering for the practicum and starting at the practicum site.

3. Submit the original document (to be kept on file) to Mary Gallant, Dean's Office Room 107, mgallant@albany.edu
   a. Provide a copy to your advisor and your academic department.
   b. Keep a copy for your own files.

4. Register for the practicum course (SPH 790 or 791) during the semester in which you are completing the internship. Also register for the 0-credit SPH 780 for which you will do a presentation based on your practicum.
   a. Obtain a permission number for the courses from your department secretary.
   b. Enroll in the course via your MyAlbany account

Name: ___________________________ Student ID#: ____________ Albany Email: ___________________________

Degree Area of Concentration: EPI ☐ EHS ☐ HPM ☐ SBCH ☐

PRACTICUM PROJECT INFORMATION

Semester of Placement: ☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Summer Year: _____ Number of credits: ☐ 3 ☐ 6

Title of Project: ___________________________________________________________

Registered for practicum course: ☐ SPH 790 ☐ SPH 791

PRACTICUM PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In a separate document, attach a detailed 1-2 page proposal of your practicum and include the following information:

• Brief description of the organization where the practicum will take place and the qualifications of the mentor
• Description of the proposed project, including project background and goals
• Student's role in the project
• Expected project outcomes or deliverables
• Outline how you will develop skills reflected under the DrPH Core Competencies identified by the ASPPH.
  o Identify the competencies that will be met through the course of the practicum. Your practicum should address several specific competencies across multiple DrPH competency domains. Each practicum doesn’t need to cover all 7 competency domains, but each should give you the opportunity to develop multiple different competencies across at least 2-3 different competency domains.

• If completing a teaching practicum, provide a description of your specific roles and responsibilities. Please also provide a syllabus and reading list for the course you develop and/or teach/co-teach. At the end of the semester in which the course is being taught, the student will submit the final syllabus, grade sheets, and student evaluations (when available) before final credit will be awarded. Also
PRACTICUM SITE INFORMATION

Organization Name: (If NYSDOH, please include Bureau & Program)

Address: ____________________________  City: ______________  State: _____  Zip: _____

PRACTICUM SCHEDULE

Start Date (month/day/year): ______________  End Date (month/day/year): ______________

Schedule of practicum (indicate # hours each day):
Monday: _____  Tuesday: _____  Wednesday: _____  Thursday: _____  Friday: _____

NACE Definition of an "Internship"

"An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent."

According to NACE (National Association of Colleges & Employers), to ensure that an experience is educational, and eligible to be considered a legitimate internship by the above definition, all of the following criteria must be met:

A. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
B. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
C. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
D. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
E. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
F. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
G. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

REQUIRED INITIALS: I have read and understood the NACE INTERNSHIP DEFINITION.

Student Initials: __________  Mentor Initials: __________  Faculty Advisor Initials: __________
# APPROVALS & REQUIRED SIGNATURES

## MENTOR INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Name:</th>
<th>Title:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>Phone #:</td>
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*If Applicable, Co-Mentor Information:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-Mentor Name:</th>
<th>Title:</th>
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<tr>
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## FACULTY ADVISOR INFORMATION:

<table>
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<th>Name:</th>
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## ONE-MONTH REVIEW SCHEDULED MEETING TIME:

*It is the student's responsibility to schedule a one-month review meeting to occur about one-quarter to one-third of the way into the practicum with all three parties involved and indicate the anticipated date below. In addition, a One Month Review form will need to be completed and submitted to Dr. Mary Gallant once the review has taken place.*

_I agree to attend the one-month review meeting on_ ________________ (anticipated date)_

**REQUIRED INITIALS:**

| Student Initials | Mentor Initials | Faculty Advisor Initials |

## COMMITMENT OF THREE PARTIES & REQUIRED SIGNATURES:

*By signing below, the student, institution, and internship site agree to abide by the information stated in this document. All parties also agree with the description of the internship/field placement and understand that this document serves as a Learning Contract for this experience.*

*The student is responsible for informing the Internship Director of any changes to this information.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
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REGISTRATION

DrPH TEACHING Practicum

This form must be completed by the student in consultation with the DrPH Practicum Mentor/Faculty Course Director and the student’s faculty advisor. Completed forms must be submitted to the Program Director’s Office one week following the start of the practicum.

TODAY’S DATE: ____________________________

Student Information

Name: ____________________________ Phone: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________________

Phone: ____________________________

Area of Concentration: EPI/Biostat___ HPM/SBCH___

Faculty Advisor: ________________________________________________________________________

Semester/Year of Dr.PH TEACHING Practicum______________________________

Your Year of Study________________

For Credit: Y___ N____ Number or Credits _6__

Mentor/Faculty Course Director for the DrPH Teaching Practicum

Name__________________________ Position__________________________________________________

Phone Number________________________ Email: _____________________________________________

Address________________________________________________________________________________

City________________________ State__________ Zip Code______________________________
DrPH TEACHING Practicum Description: (Please attach)

Please provide a syllabus and reading list for the course you develop and/or to teach.

At the end of the semester in which the course is being taught, the student will submit the final syllabus, grade sheets and student evaluations (when available) before final credit will be awarded.

We agree with the description of the Dr.PH TEACHING Practicum:

Student________________________________________Date________________________

Faculty Advisor________________________________Date_____________________

Mentor________________________________________Date_______________________

DrPH Program Director________________________Date_______________________
One Month Review of DrPH Practicum

This form must be completed on the basis of a formal One-Month Review meeting or conference call of the student and mentor. This process is critical to ensuring that the student is successfully progressing toward achieving the goals of the placement. Please detach the last page and give to your mentor to complete. Completed forms must be submitted to Mary Gallant.

Name: 

Degree Area of Concentration:  □  EPI  □  EHS  □  HPM  □  SBCH

Registered for practicum course:  □  SPH 790  
□  SPH 791

Title of Practicum: 

Semester of Placement: □  Year: □  Number of Credits: □

Mentor’s Name: 

Faculty Advisor: 

Date of One-Month Review Meeting: 

Content of Practicum Placement:

1. Describe progress towards meeting the overall practicum goals in relation to the specific activities completed to date:
2. Describe how the practicum has progressed to date, including successes as well as any challenges encountered:

3. Complete the attached Competency Evaluation Matrix to provide a description of progress related to development of specific DrPH competencies.

Signatures:

We have reviewed and discussed items 1-3 above:

Student: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Preceptor: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Faculty Advisor: ___________________________ Date: ________________
One-Month Review  
DrPH Practicum Competency Assessment

INSTRUCTIONS: Identify specific competencies within relevant competency domains and describe specific activities you have engaged in that relate to the development of these competencies. Expand table as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCY DOMAIN</th>
<th>SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ADVOCACY: The ability to influence decision-making regarding policies and practices that advance public health using scientific knowledge, analysis, communication, and consensus-building.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. COMMUNICATION: The ability to assess and use communication strategies across diverse audiences that inform and influence individual, organization, community, and policy actions.</td>
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<td>3. COMMUNITY/CULTURAL ORIENTATION: The ability to communicate and interact with people across diverse communities and cultures for development of research, programs, and policies.</td>
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<td>4. CRITICAL ANALYSIS: The ability to synthesize and apply evidence-based research and theory from a broad range of disciplines and health-related data sources to advance programs, policies, and systems promoting population health.</td>
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5. LEADERSHIP: The ability to create and communicate a shared vision for a positive future; inspire trust and motivate others; and use evidence-based strategies to enhance essential public health services.

6. MANAGEMENT: The ability to provide fiscally responsible strategic and operational guidance within both public and private health organizations for achieving individual and community health and wellness.

7. PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS: The ability to identify and analyze an ethical issue; balance the claims of personal liberty with concerns about population health; and act on the ethical concepts of social justice and human rights in public health research and practice.
**INSTRUCTIONS:** Identify specific competencies within relevant competency domains and describe specific activities you have engaged in that relate to the development of these competencies. Expand table as necessary. The student and mentor should each rate the student’s proficiency for each competency and discuss their respective ratings. Submit completed form to Dr. Mary Gallant.

**Rating:** Rate current skill level for each competency from 1 (no skill) to 5 (very skilled). A rating of 5 should only be used for someone who has demonstrated expert skill level in this area and could teach this skill to others.

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Signatures:

DrPH student: ____________________________________________________________

Mentor for Practicum: _____________________________________________________

Faculty Advisor: __________________________________________________________

Date: __________________________

Date: __________________________

Date: __________________________
Mentor’s Evaluation of DrPH Practicum

This form must be completed by the Practicum Mentor in consultation with the DrPH student and his/her Faculty Advisor. Completed forms must be submitted to DrPH Program Director’s Office within two weeks of the completion of the practicum.

Student’s Name ________________________________________________________

Area of Concentration:  □ EPI  □ EHS  □ HPM  □ SBCH

Semester of Practicum: __________________________ Year: ______________________

Registered for practicum course:  □ SPH 790
                  □ SPH 791

Title of Practicum Project: ________________________________________________

Practicum Mentor Name, Title, and Contact Info: ________________________________
                          ____________________________________________________________
                          ____________________________________________________________

Please rate performance in the following areas:

Key:
5 - Excellent
4 - Good
3 - Fair
2 - Marginally Passing
1 - Unsatisfactory/Failing
N/A - Not Applicable

Note: If you rate Unsatisfactory/Failing (1), please provide comments.
PERFORMANCE

1. Accomplishment of Assignments
   a. Has acquired appropriate knowledge. 
   b. Has acquired appropriate skills. 
   c. Quality and accuracy of work. 
   d. Work proceeds in orderly, organized fashion.

   Comments:

2. Reliability and Initiative
   a. Works effectively with minimal supervision. 
   b. Initiates appropriate actions and follows through to completion. 
   c. Uses time efficiently.

   Comments:

3. Communication Skills
   a. Comprehension of oral and written instructions. 
   b. Communicates information orally with clarity and tact. 
   c. Written communication is complete, concise and accurate.

   Comments:

4. Interpersonal Relations
   a. Accepts direction from supervisor. 
   b. Accepts constructive criticism of performance. 
   c. Ability to work well with others.

   Comments:

5. Public Health Knowledge and Commitment
   a. Overall quality of practicum project. 
   b. Understanding of project’s relevance to public health. 
   c. Understanding of organization’s role in the larger public health community.
   d. Commitment to field of public health

   Comments:
6. **Achievement of DrPH Competency-Based Learning Objectives** (attached matrix)

After reviewing the student's own assessment of his/her attainment of competency-based learning objectives established for this practicum, please comment. Did the student achieve his/her intended objectives associated with particular competencies, in your opinion? Please explain.

7. **Overall Final Evaluation for Practicum Experience**

Grade (Pass/Fail): ____________

Comments:
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. For Student:
   a. Professional strengths:

   b. Recommendations for continued professional growth:

2. For Practicum Experience
   a. Recommendations for improving the practicum:

   b. Are you willing to continue sponsoring future residents?  □ Yes  □ No

   Comment:

   c. Do you have other possible practicum opportunities/assignments in your organization?  □ Yes  □ No

   Describe:
Please describe any changes in student's responsibilities or overall project goals, if different from the original project description. Use this space to provide any feedback you like regarding this practicum, especially regarding suggested improvements.

Thank you for your participation as a teacher in the DrPH Program.

SIGNATURES:

Mentor for Practicum: ________________________________________ Date: ______

DrPH Student: ________________________________________________ Date: ______

Faculty Advisor: ______________________________________________ Date: ______

Reviewed by DrPH Program Director ____________________________ Date ______