Undergraduate Community and Public Health Program Practicum
and
Master of Health Education (MHE) Internship Handbook

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## Table of Contents

- **Introduction** .................................................................................................................................... 3
- **Eligibility Requirements** .................................................................................................................. 4
- **Required Hours of Completion for 4 Credits** .................................................................................. 4
- **Academic Requirements for Completion** ....................................................................................... 4
- **Evaluation and Grading** ................................................................................................................... 4
- **Procedures for Establishing Practicum/Internship** ......................................................................... 5
  - Prior to Registration ............................................................................................................ 5
  - After Registration .................................................................................................................. 5
- **Appendix A: Practicum/Internship Approval Form** ........................................................................ 7
- **Appendix B: Practicum/Internship Student Information** .............................................................. 8
- **Appendix C: Practicum/Internship Student Objectives** ................................................................. 9
- **Appendix D: Electronic Portfolio and Student Presentation Criteria** ........................................... 12
- **Appendix E: Practicum/Internship Work Log** .............................................................................. 14
- **Appendix F: Practicum/Internship Site Supervisor Evaluation** .................................................... 16
- **Appendix G: Practicum/Internship Student Experience Evaluation** .......................................... 19
- **Appendix H: Approved Practicum/Internship Site Directory** ...................................................... 22
Introduction

The mission of the Community and Public Health Program is to improve the health and wellness of human populations through excellence in dynamic, competency-based instruction, exemplary service, innovative and applied research, evidence-based practical application in health careers, and leadership to the professional health community.

In keeping with that mission, undergraduate Community and Public Health program students and graduate level Health Education students are required to participate in a supervised field experience. The purpose of the field experience is to provide students the opportunity to apply health education academic theory, knowledge and acquired skills to community health problems by working with practicing professionals in local agencies, organizations, and businesses. For undergraduate students, this supervised field experience is called a “practicum”, and for graduate (MHE) students, the field experience is an “internship”.

The Community and Public Health Program is designed to enable undergraduate and graduate level students to fulfill the “List of Areas of Responsibility and Competencies for Health Educators” developed by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC). Please visit http://www.nchec.org/credentialing/responsibilities/ to view the detailed list of professional competencies.

The academic courses build a foundation for students to function effectively as health educators in a variety of settings while the practicum/internship serves to provide students the opportunity to build upon academic knowledge and implement skills in real-world settings.

A high quality practicum/internship experience will:

- offer the student opportunities to gain further insight into health education content, theory, and application;
- build upon and enhance the student’s existing health education skills and insight;
- provide a diversity of experience within the realm of health education practice;
- facilitate growth in the major areas of responsibilities and expected competencies of health educators;
- provide opportunities to network with area health professionals;
- offer practical job experience useful for resume’ building and job acquisition;
- positively represent Idaho State University, the Department of Community and Public Health and the health education profession, and the student; and
- be a mutually rewarding experience for the student and the supervising organization.
Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to begin a practicum/internship, students must meet the following criteria:

1. For undergraduate students: completion of at least 92 credit hours or senior standing; for graduate students: completion of at least 8 graduate credit hours.

2. Completion of most core classes in the program or program of study, and advisor approval for both undergraduate and graduate students.

3. Selection of a site from the approved list of practicum/internship sites at the back of this handbook (Appendix H). Alternate sites may be selected, but must be approved by the academic advisor and the ISU Practicum/MHE Internship Coordinator. Alternate sites must support enhancement of the student’s health education competencies.

Required Hours of Completion for 4 Credits

Undergraduate requirements:
HE 4490-03 Practicum 4 credits 10 hrs per wk/16 wks = 160 hours

Graduate (MHE) requirements:
HE 655-01 Internship 1-3 credits 50 hours per credit

Academic Requirements for Completion

1. Mandatory attendance at practicum/internship orientation meeting to be held the second week of the semester.*

2. Mandatory attendance at monthly practicum meetings which will be scheduled to best fit student needs. It is probable that the meetings will be held in the evening. *

3. Completion of electronic portfolio. See portfolio criteria in Appendix D.

4. Practicum Experience Presentation. See presentation criteria in Appendix D.

*Time spent in required meetings is counted toward hours of completion.

Evaluation and Grading

Evaluation of the practicum/internship student will be based on input from the site supervisor and the ISU practicum/internship coordinator. Grading will be on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis.
**Procedures for Establishing Practicum/Internship**

Prior to choosing a practicum/internship site, students are urged to think about their own future career goals and skill development needs. While it may be tempting to choose an established site that fits *immediate* needs (schedule/availability/flexibility), students are encouraged to consider how the practicum/internship will help them excel in areas of health education practice in which they ultimately wish to work. The thoughtful matching of individual career goals to site selection offers the best chance for a satisfying and rewarding field experience.

All students who wish to establish a practicum/internship must follow the procedures listed below.

**Prior to Registration the student needs to:**
1. Contact major advisor to confirm eligibility.
2. Print the “Practicum / MHE Internship Handbook” which can be found on Idaho State University’s Community and Public Health Program webpage.
3. Read through the “Practicum/MHE Internship Handbook” to gain insight into the purposes, procedures, and completion requirements.
4. Carefully select site and meet with site contact person to discuss potential objectives and planned activities. (Remember to get practicum/internship coordinator’s approval for sites not currently listed in Appendix H.)
5. Fill out Appendix A–Approval Form, and obtain signatures of advisor and site supervisor; the student needs to sign the form as well.
6. Provide Practicum/MHE Internship Coordinator with signed Approval Form.
7. Practicum/MHE Internship Coordinator will provide a registration override to enable you to register for the course.
8. Purchase ISU Student Malpractice Insurance (currently $5), and provide proof-of-purchase to Practicum/MHE Internship Coordinator at orientation. On-campus sites may not require ISU Malpractice Insurance. See practicum/internship coordinator to determine need for malpractice insurance.

**After Registration the student needs to:**
1. Attend Practicum/MHE Internship Orientation during the second week of the semester (time and place will be announced via ISU e-mail).
2. Provide Practicum/MHE Internship Coordinator with the following documents to be placed on file.
   a. Appendix B (Appendix A should already be on file).
   b. Students will be required to write stated objectives (Appendix C) so they are written in proper objective writing format.
   c. Student transcripts; unofficial transcript is acceptable.
   d. Current class schedule.
   e. Signed copy of the “Health Education Code of Ethics”. A “printer-friendly” version is available at the National Commission of Health Education Credentialing website at...
http://www.nchec.org/credentialing/ethics/. The student signature signifies that the student has read, understands, and agrees to adhere to the standards set forth in the document.

f. Copy of ISU Student Malpractice Insurance purchase receipt.

3. Provide Practicum/MHE Internship Coordinator with time sheets on a bi-weekly basis. Fill out time sheets completely including: date, time in, time out, number of hours worked, and description of tasks. Time sheets must be signed by the site supervisor to be valid. Make a copy for yourself for documentation purposes.

4. Attend monthly practicum/internship meetings.

5. Work toward completion of electronic portfolio requirements.

6. Site supervisors will evaluate the students twice (mid-term and final evaluations) utilizing Appendix F.

7. When you have met the requirements necessary to complete the practicum/internship, set up a one-on-one exit interview with the Practicum/MHE Internship Coordinator. At the time of the exit interview, you will need to turn in your last time sheet and the completed evaluation of your practicum/internship experience (Appendix G).