

Overview / Field Experience Objectives

Community Health Sciences is one of four academic divisions of the School of Public Health (SPH). CHS focuses on health needs and multidisciplinary interventions, preparing students to assume leadership or middle-management positions. The approach within CHS is analytical, critiquing today's programs in the light of their historical development and current realities. The Master of Public Health (MPH) degree is one of four graduate degrees awarded through the School of Public Health. The MPH curriculum provides students with a scientific knowledge base, practical public health experience (the field experience), and scientific research and writing experience. There are CHS and school-wide competencies for MPH students. These competencies reflect the most important mission of the program's faculty--to provide a relevant, substantial and enabling educational experience for students. The MPH competencies are included in this handbook.

CHS offers three fully developed tracks in which students can focus. These tracks are behavioral sciences and health promotion, gerontology, and maternal and child health; or students may enter as a generalist. Students may choose to combine courses in topic areas such as public health practice, developmental disabilities, international health, public health nutrition, and women's health studies. CHS students are also exposed to a wide range of quantitative and qualitative methods for assessing the health of populations as well as for program planning and evaluation.

Field Experience Objectives

The field experience is a component of the capstone experience and is required of all MPH students in Community Health Sciences.

Overall Objective-Students will learn relevant skills in a public health practice setting.

Learning Objectives-Through the field experience, MPH students will be able to:

1. Integrate public health theory, knowledge and skills in a practice setting;
2. Experience the “realities” of public health practice--organizational structure, local and organizational politics, program administration, community relationships, program coordination;
3. Complete defined project(s) in an area of public health practice including core public health functions such as a needs assessment, program planning, program evaluation, policy development, an educational campaign, or an applied research project;
4. Gain/expand/develop skills and knowledge in an area of interest not covered in depth elsewhere in the student's educational plan;
5. Demonstrate competence in public health practice area(s);
6. Demonstrate leadership, teamwork, communication skills and creativity in the development of a public health practice activity.