

Criterion V.B – Professional Degree Programs

Each professional degree program identified in V.A, as a minimum, shall assure that each student: a) develops an understanding of the areas of knowledge that are basic to public health; b) acquires skills and experience in the application of basic public health concepts and of specialty knowledge to the solution of community health problems; and c) demonstrates integration of knowledge through a culminating experience.

Expected Documentation

1. Identification of the means by which the school assures that all professional degree students have a broad understanding of the areas of knowledge basic to public health. If this means is common across the school, it need be described only once. If it varies by degree or program area, sufficient information must be provided to assess compliance by each program.
2. Description of the school's policies and procedures regarding practice placements, including criteria for selection of sites, methods for approving preceptors, approaches for faculty supervision and methods of assessment of students.
3. Identification of agencies and preceptors used for formal practice placement experiences for students, by program area, over the last three years.
4. Identification of the culminating experience required for each degree program. If this is common across the school's professional degree programs, it need be described only once. If it varies by degree or program area, sufficient information must be provided to assess compliance by each program.
5. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

Criterion V.B – Professional Degree Programs

1. Broad Understanding of Public Health

The school provides several means for assuring that the MPH student attains a broad understanding of the areas of knowledge basic to public health. Except where waived on the basis of prior course work (or in the case of EPID400, taking a proficiency exam), all MPH students are required to take five core public health courses in the areas required by CEPH: Biostatistics I (BSTT400), Principles of Epidemiology (EPID400) or Introduction to Epidemiology: Principles and Methods (EPID 403), Principles of Environmental Health Sciences (EOHS400), Principles of Management in Public Health (HPA400), and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health (CHSC 401). Further, as an additional requirement, all MPH students must take, CHSC400, Public Health Concepts and Practice, to address the broad understanding of public health issues. In addition, students admitted into the MPH program are required to complete a capstone project intended to represent a culminating, integrative experience. The school's Committee on Educational Programs (CEP) undertook a two-year effort to revise the MPH competencies to assure that our graduates were attaining the requisite knowledge and skills to engage successfully in public health practice in the 21st century. Learning objectives of the core MPH courses were "mapped" against the revised MPH competencies. A report subsequently was generated describing the extent to which the core MPH courses cover the MPH learning objectives. All but two learning objectives were at least partially met by the MPH core curriculum. The report was submitted to the Executive Committee, which in turn convened a faculty committee to address the gaps. (See response to Criterion V.C.1.) Many of the learning objectives/competencies address the need for our students to attain a broad understanding of the areas of knowledge basic to public health.

School policy permits a student to waive one or more required core courses if justified on the basis of the student's having taken prior course work of equivalent level and course content; or in the case of EPID 400, taking a proficiency exam. In rare situations, experience may substitute for formal course work.

Judgment on equivalency of either course work or relevancy of experience is initially made by the core course instructor and the Director of the division offering the course, who will base a decision either on evidence of equivalency supplied by the student or in the case of EPID 400, on a test. For waiver of School-wide core courses, a waiver petition and the accompanying documentation is then submitted to the School-wide Committee on Academic Progress (CAP) for approval. Where the petition for waiver is based on a prior equivalent course, supporting documentation must include a transcript showing evidence of the student having completed the prior course with a grade of A or B and the course syllabus and/or a description from the college catalogue.

Forms, procedures for waiving a course and appeal rights are described more fully in the Student Handbook at: http://www.uic.edu/sph/shandbook_sphpolicies.htm#wavier.

Waiver of a course does not reduce the total number of credit hours required to earn the degree; rather, the student must take an equivalent number of credit hours, normally in the

same division for which course waiver has been granted.

The new MHA program provides a broad understanding of public health in a different manner than is done in the MPH program. Students pursuing the MHA do take the same core courses in Biostatistics and Epidemiology as the MPH students, however, the remaining public health core content is provided throughout the remaining courses in the program. Appendix V.B.1 is a matrix of the core public health content mapped to the required courses in the MHA program. For example, core environmental health science is provided in eight of the required MHA courses, in addition to the preceptorship and the capstone.

The new professional doctoral leadership program is a schoolwide program with oversight by a faculty committee comprised of representatives from the five disciplinary areas. Students admitted into the program must have an MPH degree or will be required to complete the six core MPH courses in addition to their doctoral program of study; hence, it is expected that all of these doctoral students will have attained a broad understanding of public health. Further, the core course requirements of the DrPH program include three 4 credit hour seminars that are interdisciplinary and designed to assist students with gaining appreciation for theories and practice in leadership and the integration of analytic skills within the broad context of public health. The seminars utilize case studies and learning action projects while providing opportunity for multidisciplinary analysis, discussion and solutions.

Students admitted into the former DrPH program were required to have an MPH degree or another master's degree with a major relevant to public health, hence, it is expected that all DrPH students will have satisfied the basic core requirements (or their equivalent) of the MPH degree. The students were required to take advanced-level courses in the five core public health disciplines. These courses include: Biostatistics II (BSTT401), Quantitative Methods in Epidemiology (EPID401), Proseminar in Community Health Sciences (CHSC500), Community Health and Consumer Protection (EOHS461), Organization Theory Applied to Health Programs (HPA511) **or** Health Evaluation Methods (HPA522), and an Integrative Seminar (IPHS660). The latter course was developed in 1994 to strengthen DrPH students' understanding of the application of two core public health sciences (epidemiology and biostatistics) to environmental and occupational health sciences, community health sciences, and health management and policy. The students must pass a rigorous written and oral preliminary examination given by a faculty committee questioning them in each of the core public health areas. The DrPH preliminary examination committee must be comprised of faculty from across the school's four divisions.

2. Practice Policy and Procedures

A field experience/practicum (IPHS650) is required of all MPH students in the School of Public Health (see discussion on waiver possibilities later in this section). The field practicum provides students with a practical experience in a public health setting requiring them to apply and integrate the skills and knowledge learned during their graduate study.

Overall Objective

Students will acquire experience and develop skills in the application of basic public health concepts and of specialty knowledge to the solution of public health problems.

Specific Learning Objectives

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

- Apply public health theory, knowledge and skills in a practice setting.
- Complete a defined project(s) in an area of public health practice, including core public health functions such as needs assessment, program planning, program evaluation, policy development, educational campaign or applied research.
- Relate the “realities” of public health practice – organizational structure, local and organizational politics, program administration, community relationships, program coordination – to their defined project(s).
- Demonstrate skills and knowledge in an area of interest not covered in depth elsewhere in their educational plan.
- Demonstrate competence in a public health practice area(s).
- Demonstrate leadership, teamwork, communication skills and creativity in the development of a public health practice activity.

Field Experience Process

Students may begin the field experience following completion of all MPH course requirements or with consent of the advisor and the division director. Students must have permission of his/her faculty advisor prior to registration for IPHS650. The field experience may be taken in a single semester or over several semesters for a total of 3-5 sh. The number of hours will be decided by the student and his/her advisor. One semester hour of credit is awarded for every 64 contact hours. The field experience may be waived at the time of admission (decided by the division admissions committee) or by petition at the time the student’s program proposal is presented for approval.

Planning begins with the student developing his/her own educational objectives with the approval of the faculty advisor. Placement recommendations are discussed with advisors. The student and faculty advisor are responsible for selecting field practica sites. In addition to the student’s own contacts and efforts, and those of his/her advisor, lists of potential practica sites are available in each division.

Once the field practice location has been selected, a field preceptor is identified. The Field Learning Agreement (Appendix V.B.2) is developed mutually by the student, preceptor and advisor. This plan identifies the specific objectives and activities of the field practicum. It also outlines the interactions the student will have with other members of the organization and provides deadlines for completion of projects.

The School does not have a formal process for selecting and approving preceptors. The student’s academic advisor makes an assessment of the appropriateness of the preceptor and the site for the field experience. Several of the divisions have extensive listings of past practicum placements and in Community Health Sciences and Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences the faculty carefully evaluate each placement and the preceptor. Across the School, the students provide written evaluations of the field

experience and the preceptor. Should problems with a particular preceptor be evident, this preceptor might not be used again. If a new preceptor is identified, the faculty advisor is the one to approve the placement and monitor the experience.

Field practice sites are approved at the same time as the proposed Field Learning Agreement. Any field practice site may be approved if the Field Learning Agreement is acceptable and the organization completes the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (see Appendix V.B.2). The MOU is required for all field placement locations that are not part of the UIC.

The faculty advisor has responsibility for assessing the student's performance with input from the preceptor. The assessment includes reviewing the Student's Evaluation of Field Experience, the Preceptor's Evaluation of Student's Performance, and the student's Summary Report. The Summary Report is required of all students and should include:

- Description of activities performed during placement, noting any deviations from the Field Learning Agreement.
- Extent to which the field experience met the objectives for the practice experience (e.g., application of public health theory, knowledge and skills in a practice setting; completion of a defined project(s) in an area of public health practice, including core public health functions; relation of the "realities" of public health practice to the defined project(s); demonstration of skills and knowledge in an area of interest not covered in depth elsewhere in the student's educational plan; demonstration of competence in a public health practice area(s); and demonstration of leadership, teamwork, communication skills and creativity in the development of a public health practice activity).
- Extent to which the student's individual educational objectives, identified in the Field Learning Agreement, were met.
- What the student gained from the experience and identification of any problems if they occurred.

For those students using the field practicum as their culminating experience, the school and division requirements for the culminating experience also must be met.

Student's Responsibilities

- Formulate educational goals for the field experience.
- Contact sites, visit selected sites if possible, and make final choice, with assistance from the faculty advisor.
- Develop the Field Learning Agreement with assistance and input from the preceptor and advisor.
- Return completed Field Learning Agreement to the divisional academic coordinator or faculty advisor and the assistant director of student affairs within the Dean's Office.

- Perform assignments and activities identified in the agreement, seeking assistance from the preceptor and faculty advisor when needed.
- Assess the extent to which the field experience met his/her needs by preparing a written Summary Report and completing other assignments required by the field experience. The MPH capstone may be built around the field experience. For those students using the field practicum as their culminating experience, the Summary Report must meet the requirements of the culminating experience.
- Complete the Student Evaluation of Field Experience form and returns the completed form to the advisor.

Faculty Advisor's Responsibilities

- Assist the student in clarifying his/her educational goals for the field experience.
- Interpret the purpose and requirements of the field experience; approve requests for its registration or waiver.
- Assist the student in selecting potential practicum sites.
- Approve the field preceptor.
- Approve the Field Learning Agreement, which describes the mutual expectations of the student and preceptor.
- Ensure the Memorandum of Understanding is completed and a copy forwarded to the assistant director of student affairs.
- Respond to the student's needs during placement and provide consultation periodically.
- Review the student's Summary Report.
- Determine the final grade (Pass/Fail) for the student's performance with input from the preceptor.

Preceptor's Responsibilities

- Assist the student in developing the Field Learning Agreement.
- Provide the student with general guidance and training during the field experience as identified in the agreement.
- Evaluate the student's performance during the field experience by completing the Preceptor's Evaluation of Student Performance, which is returned to the faculty advisor.

Conditions for Waiver of the Field Experience/Practicum

The field experience requirement may be waived for students who have had three or more years of relevant professional experience in a similar field of public health for which they

currently are pursuing a career. The field experience may be waived at the time of admission (decided by the division admissions committee) or as part of the program approval process. In the latter situation, the decision is reflected on the program proposal form which is approved by the student's advisor and division director. (See MPH Program Proposal form at: [http://www.uic.edu/sph/downloads/mph pp.doc](http://www.uic.edu/sph/downloads/mph_pp.doc)).

Within **Community Health Sciences**, only about 10 percent of our MPH students waive out of the MPH practicum requirement. We have had 8 such waivers in the past two years; during that period there were 83 MPH graduates. They use the program approval process for waivers of the field experience. Students seeking a shorter placement (3 semester hours rather than 5) or seeking to waive the practicum placement, must justify their request and provide supporting documentation. This is reviewed for approval by th' student's academic advisor, our CHS Graduate Studies Committee, and then by the Division Director. We have not been using the official petition to waive a required course as approval for practicum waivers have been handled at the division level for many years.

Because the **Biostatistics MPH** program is relatively new, we have not had a student ask to waive the requirement. All students who have finished the program have had a field experience that involved working on a study which collected data, then their capstone was a paper summarizing an analysis of that data. If a waiver request does come up, the biostatistics section leader would discuss it in the biostatistics faculty section meeting and we would come up with some criteria.

Within the **Epidemiology** section, there are no data available on students requesting the waiver because such a request is very unusual for Epidemiology. When non-PEP students request to waive the field experience, the course waiver form would be necessary, with a letter from th' student's advisor justifying the waiver of the experience. This circumstance is very unusual.

Within **Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences**, there has been only one student who has waived the practicum. The division does not have a more formal approach and has no special forms.

By definition, **HPA** students entering the Professional Enhancement Program have the requisite professional experience to waive the field practicum. The decision is made at the time of admissions. Comprehensive MPH students are not eligible to waive the field practicum experience. On rare occasion a comprehensive student may gain the requisite professional experience during his or her studies. The student may then file for a waiver which will be approved by the faculty advisor and the division director. The student would file a new program proposal requesting the waiver

3. Formal Practice Placements

A copy of the formal agreement relating to field practica is included in Appendix V.B.2. As can be seen, this describes the expectations for the field experience and must be signed by both the agency and officials from the university. Appendix IV.8 provides the list of agencies and preceptors used for the field practica for the MPH over the last three years. Appendix IV.9B provides the list of preceptors for the MHA.

4. Culminating Experience

Capstone/Culminating Experience for the MPH Degree at UIC SPH

Through the capstone/culminating experience, MPH students will demonstrate mastery of the following competencies:

- The ability to apply key public health concepts (e.g., prevention, risk assessment) to a specific public health area (e.g., infectious disease epidemiology, gerontology).
- The ability to apply knowledge of the core areas of public health to a specific health problem.
- The ability to integrate skills and knowledge gained through both core courses and division requirements toward the resolution of a public health problem either through practice in a public health setting or through investigation and analysis.

Capstone Requirements

- The capstone can be based on a variety of activities (e.g., field practicum, independent study, research project) as deemed appropriate by the divisions.
- Whatever the activity, the capstone product can be satisfied by a paper (approximately 15 pages in length), oral presentation or poster presentation, which would, in essence, be a report of the capstone experience/activity.
- More than one faculty member will be required to evaluate a capstone product; this evaluation should be based on whether the student has met the objectives above.

Culminating Experience in Community Health Sciences

Completion of both the field experience (IPHS650) and a Master's Paper (IPHS698) are required to meet the capstone requirements in CHS. For some students, the paper will be directly related to the practicum. CHS requirements for the MPH field experience and the Master's Paper are detailed in the CHS Student Handbook (available in the Resource file and online at www.uic.edu/sph).

Each student's capstone experience will be evaluated by their successful completion of the practicum (including the practicum Summary Report and an evaluation by both the student and practicum preceptor) and the Master's Paper (including an evaluation of the paper by the advisor and a second faculty member and an evaluation of the oral presentation by CHS faculty in attendance).

Culminating Experience in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

The EOHS MPH degree includes a capstone completion requirement. A capstone is a research-quality poster presentation of the student's own work that demonstrates the ability to identify a public health problem concerning exposure assessment, outcomes measurement or intervention development. The capstone will address some aspect of occupational and environmental health through the collection and/or systematic evaluation of data and

synthesis of the results in standard scientific format. Students in the comprehensive MPH track may choose to report on their fieldwork experience, if appropriate, or on another experience, such as a research assistantship, volunteer activity or public-health-related employment. Students in the PEP track may choose to report on a research project or evaluate some aspect of public health-related work. The capstone project should include problem evaluation, and straightforward literature reviews or workplace reports generally are not acceptable.

Students should meet with faculty advisors to identify appropriate topics for the capstone at least one semester before registering. Students should address issues concerning human subjects research protections at this meeting. While the capstone is not primarily research-based and may not require formal IRB approval, all MPH students should have completed human subjects and HIPAA training prior to developing the project. Students and faculty advisors should plan to meet frequently during the semester in which the capstone is to be presented, but not less than monthly. Faculty advisors should review the content of the presentation at least two weeks prior to the final presentation.

The capstone project should be built around a specific question or hypothesis, should require background reading, problem and hypothesis statement, and some form of data collection, management and presentation. Quantitative projects should include descriptive statistics and some basic analytic statistics, whenever possible. Qualitative projects are appropriate only if the student has completed at least one qualitative research methods course.

Standard research poster presentation format is available in the division's Office of the Academic Coordinator and includes instruction on poster size, layout and font size. Poster presentations should include title, author(s), background, problem statement/hypothesis, methods, results, discussion and conclusion sections, an acknowledgement including others engaged in the project that were not already listed as co-authors, organization at which the project took place, and all sources of funding. The SPH Office of Research Services has a poster production service (available to all students and faculty) and student capstone posters can be printed there (see http://www.uic.edu/sph/research_guides.htm).

Students will present the posters at the EOHS capstone date for the fall or the spring semester. Students unable to participate in a given semester should plan on presenting at the subsequent semester. No grades will be assigned in the absence of formal poster presentation. Grading is satisfactory/unsatisfactory based on input from faculty reviewers at the time of presentation.

Culminating Experience in Epidemiology and Biostatistics

The culminating experience for students in the MPH in epidemiology program consists of the following:

- Students must enroll in IPHS698 (MPH Essay Research), for which they will receive one credit hour.
- Students are required to give a formal oral presentation to division students and faculty on a subject or issue requiring integration of public health theory and practice. The presentation will conform to the format and time length of a paper delivered at the annual

meetings of the APHA. The topic is to be approved by the student's advisor, and an abstract of the presentation is to be submitted at least one week prior to the presentation. The topic should not be the same as one already addressed in a paper submitted for a previous course. Where appropriate, students are encouraged to present a report of their field experience. If the report is not based upon the field practicum, it may take an alternative form, such as a comprehensive review of the literature on a public health issue from an epidemiologic perspective, a report on another research project in which the student has taken part, a proposal for a study to address an important public health issue, or another format acceptable to the student and his/her academic advisor or faculty mentor.

- The quality of the presentation will be evaluated by a committee of three faculty members. Each faculty member will assess the experience based on three criteria: content (60%), organization (20%) and oral presentation (20%). A presentation should consist of an introduction to the problem or issue, an explanation of the methods used to research the topic, a summary of the results or findings, conclusions as to the public health implications of the results and recommendations for practical applications or further research.
- If the presentation is evaluated as unsatisfactory by two of the three committee members, the student will be required to submit a written paper, including citations, covering the same material as the oral presentation. The written paper will be evaluated on the content and organization of the material by the student's advisor in conjunction with one of the three committee members.

The capstone experience will provide epidemiology students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to apply core disciplines of public health to a problem or program by integrating skills and knowledge gained through both core courses and division requirements.

All MPH Quantitative Methods students are required to complete a capstone project in their area of concentration, typically a data management and analysis project for a study in that area. Each student will identify a key faculty member in his or her area of concentration as well as a faculty member in Biostatistics. The student will work with these two faculty members to design a plan for an appropriate capstone project, which should include substantive interpretation of results and discussion of consequences in addition to actually carrying out the analysis. The student will write a report which will be evaluated by the two faculty members. The data set may arise from the student's field practicum experience.

Culminating Experience in Health Policy and Administration

Every MPH student within Health Policy and Administration must complete a Capstone. Each student will be asked to make a 15-minute public presentation on a topic of his or her choosing. How this work is to be accomplished, the timing of the work and how the work will be evaluated is detailed below.

Learning objectives

The student will make a presentation that demonstrates his/her ability to:

- Identify the relevant knowledge from across the MPH program needed to analyze the actual public health problem selected.

- Demonstrate his/her ability to integrate concepts, analytical methods and research techniques in conducting analysis of the problem.
- Formulate a thorough and coherent presentation.
- Present an analysis in a manner that would be capable of convincing a professional audience to endorse the proposed course of action contained within the presentation.

Process

- In most cases, the capstone will be presented in the last semester that the student is enrolled. The work of the capstone should begin from the first meeting between the advisor and the student, where the capstone requirement should be explained and the timing should be discussed. Most of the work by the student will be done in the last two semesters they are enrolled.

Timeline

<u>First semester enrolled</u>	Brief discussion between advisor and student about the capstone, with advice for researching topics.
<u>Penultimate semester</u>	
2 nd week	Meeting with advisor to discuss capstone.
6 th week	Agreement between student and advisor on topic.
8 th week	Selection of second reader; second reader approves topic.
<u>Last semester</u>	
3 rd week	First draft to advisor and second reader.
5 th week	Comments and suggestions from advisor and second reader to student.
8 th week	Second draft to advisor and second reader.
10 th week	Comments and suggestions from advisor and second reader to student.
12 th week	Presentation and evaluation.
(approximate)	
13 th week	Meeting between student and reviewers if evaluation was “unsatisfactory.”
15 th week	Second presentation (optional).

(All of the above deadlines are halved during the summer session.)

- By the second week of the penultimate semester, the advisors will meet with the student to review: the purpose of the capstone, the learning objectives and possible topics.
- The student should pick a topic for his/her capstone before the sixth week of the penultimate semester. This topic may be one that the student explored in papers for classes¹, in the work experience, in the practicum, or the topic may be something that the student hasn’t worked on before. The topic should be approved by the advisor.

¹ The topic of the capstone may be the same as a paper or papers from other classes, but the work for the capstone must go beyond previous work. It may not be merely an oral presentation of work already submitted for credit.

- The advisor and the student should identify possible second readers, and the student should secure a second reader. The second reader also should approve the topic. This should be done before the eighth week of the penultimate semester.
- At the eighth week of the penultimate semester, the student should inform the Academic Coordinator of the topic and ask to be assigned a date for the presentation.
- The student should give a first draft of the presentation to his/her advisor and second reader by the third week of the semester in which the student will present. The advisor and reader should make comments and suggestions for changes within two weeks.
- The student should give a second draft of the presentation to his/her advisor and second reader by the eighth week of the semester. The advisor and reader should make comments and suggestions for changes within two weeks.
- The presentation will occur around the 12th week of the semester. The advisor and the second reader shall attend the presentation, which shall be open to the school community. If, for any reason, the advisor or the second reader cannot attend, they will find a replacement.
- The advisor and the second reader will fill out an evaluation form for the presentation.
 - a. If both consider the presentation to be “satisfactory” or better, the student will have been deemed to have passed this requirement.
 - b. If the advisor and the second reader disagree, they will meet to discuss and attempt to arrive at a consensus. If they then both consider the presentation to be “satisfactory,” the student will have been deemed to have passed this requirement.
 - c. If either or both of the reviewers evaluates the presentation as “unsatisfactory,” then the advisor and the second reader will meet with the student to discuss the reasons for this evaluation.
 - d. At the student’s request, a second presentation may be scheduled by the end of the semester. If one or both of the reviewers evaluate the second presentation as “unsatisfactory,” then the student will have failed this requirement, and will be required to repeat the project in a subsequent semester. It will be up to the student, the advisor and the second reader as to whether or not the student will select a new topic for this repeat attempt, or whether he/she will continue with the same topic.

Evaluation

Student capstones will be varied in subject and scope. However, the HPA faculty has agreed that we are looking for a presentation of sufficient professionalism, in substance and in style, that it would likely convince a peer group to adopt the position contained within the presentation’s thesis. An evaluation form is used by both reviewers.

Culminating Experience for DrPH Degree

All DrPH Leadership students are required to complete a thesis project. The topic should

be in an applied area, directed to problem solving in a specific public health activity or interdisciplinary program. A critical point is that the product demonstrates the student's mastery in areas of professional leadership and management, and the application of state-of-the-art knowledge and approaches to addressing public health problems. The DrPH thesis project may take a variety of forms, including a program evaluation, policy analysis, development of a new practice intervention, design and implementation of a public health program, development of a legislative proposal, or a traditional research thesis.

DrPH students with less than three years of full-time, paid, professional experience in public health in a leadership position, or in mid- to senior-level management positions that demonstrate progressive responsibility and evidence of leadership potential either prior to matriculation or during their academic career, must complete a 5-sh field practicum experience in addition to the thesis project. The experience must be a structured, supervised activity that provides in-depth mid- to upper-level public health experience. The experience is significantly more than what is expected of the "MPH field practicum," as described in the MPH curriculum. Rather, it is a specific undertaking such as would be assigned to a practicing public health professional, differing only in that it is designed to provide broad, practical and new experiences in an area relevant to the student's future career. As a general example, the field experience would address needs assessment, program planning, policy analysis, program management, evaluation and/or surveillance activities within a public health setting.

Students who are completing requirements under the old DrPH program are required to complete a research thesis. The student is required to demonstrate competence in conducting original research and in evaluating the investigations of others. The topic should be in an applied area, directed to problem solving in a specific public health activity or interdisciplinary program.

For those DrPH students in this program with less than three years of relevant and significant public health experience, either prior to matriculation or during their academic career, an internship is required in addition to the thesis (dissertation). For the internship the student is assigned six to 10 semester hours per week of structured, supervised activity to provide in-depth middle- to upper-level public health experience. The internship is a specific undertaking such as would be assigned to a practicing public health professional, differing only in that it is designed to provide broad, practical and new experiences in an area relevant to the student's future career.

5. Assessment

Students in professional degree programs in the school develop an understanding of the areas of knowledge basic to public health through formal course work, the field experience and the culminating experience. This criterion is met.