

Preceptor Guidelines

OVERVIEW:

As a preceptor, you will supervise and help train the next generation of public health professionals through their Applied Practice experience. The Applied Practice experience is a hands-on opportunity to implement student's public health knowledge and skills in a real-world setting with the goal of demonstrating attainment of at least five public health competencies, as established by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)--the organization that accredits the School of Public Health.

Three of the competencies must be foundational and two of them may be program-specific or foundational. The student's fulfillment of the competencies will be demonstrated by the documentation of two products that are created during the applied practice experience.

The products should demonstrate that the student has applied specific competencies in a practice setting. Students will work with their faculty advisor, program, and preceptor to make sure that the applied practice activities are mutually beneficial to the site and the student.

APPLIED PRACTICE BASICS:

- One major option for Applied Practice is a practicum or internship, job, or volunteer position.
- It can take the form of part-time or full-time position based locally, nationally or internationally.
- It can be paid or unpaid.
- The applied practice experience can be based on current employment.
- Experiences are typically completed over the summer months; however students may complete them in fall and spring semesters.

HOW TO BECOME A PRECEPTOR:

Identify a project or area of need within your organization. Projects where you could use assistance, program or policy development, data gathering and analysis, or health promotion could be ideal learning opportunities for our students and help your agency with important work. In addition, students may contact you to discuss a possible experience that will mutually benefit the site and the student.

1. You can create a formal paid position description for the experience, if you have not yet identified a student.
2. You can establish the Applied Practice without a formal description with a student you are already working with, a student you know, or with a student who contacts you.

If you create a paid position description:

1. Create a paid position description for the experience: establish the duration, schedule, location, and whether or not it is a paid experience. Indicate how students will apply for the position. Then, the Career & Professional Development Center will post the position on the [SPH Job Board](#). The Center follows industry specific policies such as Equal Employment Opportunity and the National Association of Colleges and Employers principles for Employment professionals.
2. Attach the position description as a Microsoft Word document or PDF to an email and submit to sphjobs@umn.edu. After review, the position will be posted to the [SPH Job Board](#), which is a service available 24/7 to employers to recruit SPH students for employment opportunities.
3. Interview applicants and select an SPH student to temporarily join your team. Students will discuss the five competencies and two products with their supervisor before beginning the experience. The student will be responsible for completing and signing the Learning Agreement, where you will review and sign electronically the student's learning agreement. If the Applied Practice online module is not available at the time you are meeting with a student, the student will use the [paper-based Learning Agreement form](#).
4. The learning agreement will automatically be forwarded to you as the preceptor, student, faculty advisor, and the program coordinator for approval and signatures.

PRECEPTOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Oversee and direct the student's on-site experience
- Approve the student's learning objectives, competencies, and products, review, and sign the Learning Agreement prior to the start of the experience
- The preceptor and student should agree on the time required to complete projects and complete a meaningful Applied Practice
- Contact the academic adviser, program coordinator or Applied Practice Coordinator, if needed, with questions or to provide feedback outside of the final evaluation
- Preceptors will complete an evaluation of student's competency attainment (e.g. met, partially met, and did not meet). **Note: preceptors will not be responsible for grading students.**

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Before beginning the Applied Practice, students need to work with the preceptor to agree on the following:

- An Applied Practice (AP) that benefits the practice site and enables the student to fulfil AP requirements
- The competencies to be practiced through the AP
- The time commitment required (e.g., number of hours/weeks) to complete products, projects and complete a meaningful Applied Practice
- The products that will benefit the practice site and document the practice of specified competencies through the Applied Practice

Important: Students need to explain to preceptors the timeline and steps involved in completing the Learning Agreement.

FAQS:

Tell me more about School of Public Health Students.

Our programs prepare students to become a leader in the public health field. Students hail from a variety of degrees and programs. The University Of Minnesota School Of Public Health is ranked one of the top 10 schools of public health in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*. Our wide-array of [academic programs](#), rich research portfolio and connections to the community give students a strategic advantage in obtaining their public health degree.

How much should I pay a student?

Experiences can be paid or unpaid, however many Applied Practice experiences posted on our [school of public health job posting system](#) are paid. Some unpaid experiences may include other compensation such as a stipend, parking or housing reimbursement. According to results of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) 2017 Guide to Compensation for Interns and Co-ops, the average hourly salary for a master's degree intern (first year) is \$24.58, however this average salary varies depending on the organization, location and type of experience. Please contact the School of Public Health's Career & Professional Development Center to discuss further at: sphcareers@umn.edu.

What are some tips for a successful experience?

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) provides 15 best practices for internship programs. Below are several tips that may benefit students at your organization for internship or other applied practice experience. A full listing of best practices can be found on [NACE's website](#):

- Implement an onboarding process (e.g. discussion of expectations / behaviors, norms, resources, etc.) that will help students be successful at your organization. An orientation or handbook / resources or current student panels are examples.
- Provide students with real work experiences.
- Understand student's career aspirations to help them grow as future public health professionals. Training, attending staff meetings (where applicable) and introduction to your colleagues are examples.
- Consider flex-time work arrangements. Student's schedules vary throughout the day, and offering a flexible work schedule is a desirable feature for students. In addition, students may complete their applied practice experience at a site so having a student work over school breaks or other times that work for you and the student maintains a relationship with them for future work assignments.
- Conduct exit interviews with students to learn more about their experience and how you can make student's future experience more meaningful. A great way to recruit future students is to share past student's experiences.