

# PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE FACT SHEET

## What is a practicum experience?

A practicum experience is similar to an internship. The purpose of the practicum experience is to provide students with an opportunity to apply the concepts, strategies, and tools acquired through the course of their graduate studies. It allows students to participate and observe public health and health service professionals in the field. Practicum experience opportunities can be project specific or a more general learning experience. Students in both the Master of Public Health and Master of Health Administration degree programs are required to complete a practicum as part of their curriculum, for which they may receive either 3 or 6 hours of practicum credit. A practicum can be a part-time or full-time position.

Graduate students at the Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Public Health are engaged in the following academic concentrations: Health Promotion & Community Health Sciences, Environmental & Occupational Health, Epidemiology & Biostatistics, and Health Policy & Management. Additional information for each department can be found at: [TAMHSC School of Public Health Academic Departments](#)

Practicum experiences may include: developing survey instruments; conducting hospital, clinic, and community-based assessments and surveys; collecting and analyzing data; conducting literature reviews for grant writing, evidence-based program and policy development; developing and implementing public health interventions; evaluating public health programs; conducting health education and community outreach; assisting in grant writing; assisting in analysis of health and healthcare policies; conducting environmental sampling; conducting workplace health and safety assessments; developing workplace health and safety programs; conducting economic effectiveness and cost benefit analysis; conducting electronic health record data mining; and developing best practices and protocols for health care.

While this is not an exhaustive list, these are a few examples of activities that could benefit you, your organization, and the student.

## What would be required of me?

As the host site Preceptor, you are the point of contact for the student within their practicum location. You will function as the immediate supervisor of the student and will guide the student's experience in a supportive and professionally stimulating environment. The Preceptor should have the professional skills and knowledge to direct the on-site experience of the student. The Preceptor (or another host site representative) will work with the student and his/her Department Practicum Coordinator to develop a work plan. The Preceptor, along with the Department Practicum Coordinator, will evaluate the student's performance at the conclusion of the practicum experience.

Through the practicum program, you will be provided with the opportunity to guide and mentor the preparation and education of a future public health professional.

## Do I need to pay the student?

The host institution *may* pay students salary or wages for their practicum experience, but it is not required.