

Preceptor's Packet



Master of Science in Public Health Program
School of Graduate Studies & Research
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**Meharry Medical College
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Division of Public Health Practice**

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Dear Preceptor:

Thank you for serving as a preceptor for our Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH) students from Meharry Medical College. You are the key to providing a successful learning experience in the public health field. You are the educator, expert, and role model to each of our students that have the privilege of working with you in the public health or a related field. It is through your expertise that our students gain knowledge, confidence, dedication and leadership skills.

The MSPH student will work closely with you and your staff, learning from your advice and example. Through your supervision, the student will progressively develop the skills and judgment necessary to become a public health professional. The field experiences the student will obtain in your organization are of critical importance to a successful learning experience in the program.

We have created this preceptor's packet to help you understand your role and responsibilities as a preceptor, as well as the student's role and responsibilities.

By agreeing to be a preceptor, you will need to complete the following forms:

- I. Appendix A documents should be completed before the externship begins:
 - The **Preparedness of the Organization to Accept an Extern** form establishing your willingness to accept the student and the agreement on the student's responsibilities;
 - The **For the Organization/Agency** form indicating that you understand and accept the responsibilities as a preceptor;
 - And the **Memorandum of Understanding**, a formal contract, which establishes the legal parameters between you (your organization, if necessary) and MSPH Program at Meharry Medical College.

- II. Appendix B documents should be completed at the end of the externship:
 - **Preceptor Evaluation**

We appreciate your contribution to our program and the critical role you play in the education of our students.

Sincerely,

Nikki Ballentine, M.Ed., M.S.
Academic Program Administrator

Meharry Medical College
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Division of Public Health Practice

Introduction to Meharry Medical College

Meharry Medical College is an academic health center that exists to improve the health and health care of minority and underserved communities by offering education and training programs in the health sciences. True to its heritage, Meharry places special emphasis on providing opportunities for people of color, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, and others regardless of race or ethnicity; delivering high quality health services; and conducting research that fosters the elimination of health disparities. The college is particularly well-known for its uniquely nurturing, highly effective educational programs; preeminence in health disparities research; culturally sensitive, evidence-based health services; and significant contribution to the diversity of the nation's health professions workforce.

Master of Science in Public Health's Mission

The mission of the Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH) program at Meharry Medical College is to improve the health of minorities and members of underserved communities and decrease health disparities, through instructional excellence, evidence-based research, and culturally competent service.

Master of Science in Public Health's Vision

To increase the visibility and Impact of the Meharry Medical College MSPH Program as leader in public health and in health disparities research in the United States.

Goal of the Externship

The externships are designed to be the practical experience of the MSPH program in which the student integrates and applies the knowledge learned in public health core courses, professional core courses and elective courses. An externship is a joint responsibility of the student, the preceptor, and the MSPH program. Careful preparation and coordination are required to ensure a successful externship experience.

The goal of the externship is to cover the spectrum of public health opportunities that could include research, health services delivery, policy formulation, and community service. The student should gain knowledge and experience in working with the community in planning, research, development of programs and applying theories and concepts learned in the first year of their course work. If the student elects to do a thesis, it should aid in the data collection phase as well as thesis planning and exposure to the field the student chooses to focus on in their research. The externship should also establish relationships between Meharry students and various organizations in the immediate community in addition to those institutions around the country. This relationship would also prepare the student for future projects and possible employment upon graduation from the program. The placement of the student for their externship should relate the students' field of study to maximize the potential in his/her career goals. Finally, the externship works toward establishing the preceptor as a mentor and source for career advice and constructive feedback while creating networking opportunities for career advancement.

Externship Requirements

Students are required to complete 400 hours during their externships. Workdays and hours are to be agreed upon by the preceptor and student.

Students are also required to complete the following written components of the externship, which include:

I. Preliminary Externship Plan

This plan must be prepared by the student with assistance from the preceptor and handed in to the division within 14 days from start of the externship. The preliminary externship plan must include:

- a) A detailed description of the projects the student intends to complete during the externship (based on a minimum of three selected from the Experience Grid in your specific field) and, if appropriate, how the projects relate to the student's choice of thesis topic. Include basic information such as name and address of organization and preceptor's name and title.
- b) A description of the evaluation schedule and methods to be used by the preceptor to evaluate the student's performance (to be worked out between the student and the preceptor).
- c) The signatures of both the student and the preceptor.

II. Weekly Log or Journal

These are short weekly narratives of activities, meetings, tasks, responsibilities, or problems each student encountered at the externship site. **Copies of the weekly logs are due on each Monday following the immediate previous week completed. The weekly log should be submitted in a Microsoft Word document. The final copy is due at the end of the externship and should be turned in with the Final Report.**

The logs or journals should contain some the following:

- Description of the initial orientation the student received regarding the extern experience.
- Brief explanation of rotation schedules through various departments of the organization, duties assigned, services provided, or networking conducted.
- Attendance at relevant meetings of the organization including names and titles of facilitators.
- The project(s) assigned to the student by the preceptor such as a research project, a Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Organization (JCAHO) or other accrediting organization interim survey, procedural guide revisions, a budget development plan, a Certificate of Need application, a marketing plan, a disaster plan design, or patient, employee survey, etc.
- Specific duties in an ongoing research project

- Work done towards the students thesis
- Brief description of the student's involvement in medical and other clinical activities such as participation in hospital rounds.
- Hours worked for the week.

III. The Final Report

This report essentially is a detailed, comprehensive student assessment of the externship experience. The document should contain narrative information concerning each of the outlined tasks from the Experience Grid that were to be accomplished. The student must describe what was done differently from the Preliminary Plan, explaining outcomes and evaluating results. The report should also include one or more positive comments, if possible, about the experience and recommendation for future students at the site.

RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN EXTERNSHIP

The Role of the Preceptor

During the course of the student's externship, the preceptor is the key figure in the experience. It is the preceptor's commitment, interest, and efforts that will tremendously influence the quality of the student's experience and the outcome of the process. The preceptor is responsible for overseeing the continuing educational development of the student.

In carrying out this responsibility, the preceptor is expected to advise, counsel, guide, instruct and evaluate the student, and establish and maintain a learning environment that challenges the student's intellectual and problem-solving abilities. To effectively perform this role, the preceptor must plan and implement meaningful learning experiences for the student with the sincere commitment and enthusiasm of a good teacher. The preceptor must be the official of the organization, responsible for assuring that the student is made aware of the rules of the organization and abides by them.

Preceptor's Responsibilities:

- I. Provide an overview of the public health program/setting of the externship to include when appropriate but not limited to the following:
 1. Organization Chart
 2. Program Goals, Objectives, and Activities
 3. Methods of Surveillance
 4. Target Population(s)
 5. Copies of Routine Reports
 6. Copies of Ongoing Research Studies
- II. Provide a list of pertinent readings/articles.
- III. Explain work rules and procedures. Make available resources needed to complete daily tasks. Provide the student with a workspace including a computer, desk, phone, and access to the various data systems to be used by the student.
- IV. Meet with the student, at least twice, during the externship to discuss learning objectives, evaluate progress and resolve any problems. At the first meeting, to be held at the two weeks mark of the externship, the "Preliminary Externship Plan" should be completed and signed. At the second meeting, to be held one month into the internship, the "One Month Review of Externship" should be completed and signed.
- V. Establish a funding mechanism for travel and other expenses if required for the student's project.
- VI. Introduce student to colleagues and agency executives when possible.
- VII. Arrange for attendance at a formal orientation if available.

- VIII. Include student in both agency and outside meetings.
- IX. Allow student to shadow preceptor whenever possible.
- X. Review the student's final externship report, including student's self-evaluation of achievement of learning objectives.
- XI. At the end of the externship, complete the "Student Evaluation of Externship Experience" to evaluate the student's performance. Copies of the report are to be given to the student or forwarded to the Academic Program Administrator.

The Role of the Student

Students express their preferences for the types of health care organizations they are most interested in learning about, to include specific public health agencies or private organizations. The division offers suggestions about possible externship sites. The students work individually to coordinate interviews, and negotiate specific arrangements of the externship such as start dates, work schedules, and salary. However, several sites that have taken externs year after year have a set salary schedule that must be followed, so salaries will not be negotiated. Student are expected to dress and behave in a professional manner by arriving to work and meeting on schedule, demonstrating personal motivation and integrity, meeting work assignment deadlines, and demonstrating a positive attitude toward the externship organization and staff. Students will be evaluating on these and other components of professionalism by the preceptor and the division.

Student Responsibilities

- I. Provide preceptor with the preceptor's handbook and all externship documents that require the preceptor's signature.
- II. Meet with preceptor no later than one week after the start of the externship to agree on project goals and learning objectives.
- III. The Preliminary Externship Report should be submitted and signed by all parties and submitted to the Academic Program Administrator within two weeks of the start date of the externship.
- IV. One month into the externship, meet with the Preceptor and Academic Program Administrator to review learning objectives, discuss progress and resolve problems. At this meeting, the "One Month Review of Externship/Field Placement" should be completed, signed by all parties, and submitted to the Program Administrator.
- V. At the end of the externship, the student should complete the "Students Evaluation of Externship Experience" and submit it to Academic Program Administrator.

The

APPENDIX A

Memorandum of Understanding for Student Externship

The _____ agrees to
(Name of Organization or Agency)

accept _____ as an
(Name of MSPH Student)

extern for the period beginning _____ and ending
(Day/Month/Year)

on _____.
(Day/Month/Year)

The organization agrees to abide by the policies and procedures established by the Division of Public Health Practice. The _____
(Name of Organization or Agency)

and the Division of Public Health Practice acknowledge and agree to the terms of this memorandum as evidenced by the signatures below as the authorized representative of each organization.

Student Signature Date

Preceptor Signature Date

Academic Program Administrator Signature Date

PREPAREDNESS OF ORGANIZATION TO ACCEPT AN EXTERN

Student's Name: _____

Please describe the externship job description:

Please describe how your organization will accommodate an extern in regard to the following factors:

Supervisory staff:

Computer and other research/office equipment (telephone, copier, etc.):

Office/Work Space:

Resources necessary for student's project:

FOR THE ORGANIZATION / AGENCY

Name of Preceptor: _____

Title: _____

Organization/Agency: _____

Address: _____

(Street Address)

(City)

(State)

(Zip)

Telephone: () Fax: ()

Email: _____

I have read the guidelines for the externship program and understand and accept my responsibilities as preceptor.

Signature Date

FOR THE DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE:

Signature Name (print)

Title Date

APPENDIX B

PRECEPTOR'S EVALUATION OF EXTERNSHIP/FIELD PLACEMENT

****To be completed by the student's preceptor at the end of the externship/field placement, signed by the preceptor, student and Academic Program Administrator, and submitted to the Director of the MSPH program.**

Student's Name: _____

Academic Program Administrator: _____

Preceptor for Externship/Field Placement: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _ (_____) _____ **Email:** _____

Project Description:

Please summarize. (Attach additional pages if needed.)

Please rate the student's performance on the following aspects of job performance

Key:

5 – Excellent

4 – Good

3 – Fair

2 – Marginally Passing

1 – Unsatisfactory/Failing

N/A – Not Applicable

Note: If you rate the student Unsatisfactory/Failing (1), please provide comments.

PERFORMANCE RATING COMMENTS

1. Accomplishment of Assignments

- a. Has acquired appropriate knowledge. _____
- b. Has acquired appropriate skills. _____
- c. Quality and accuracy of work. _____
- d. Work proceeds in orderly, organized fashion. _____

2. Reliability and Initiative

- a. Works effectively with minimal supervision. _____
- b. Initiates appropriate actions and follows through to completion. _____
- c. Uses time efficiently. _____

3. Communication Skills

- a. Comprehension of oral and written instructions. _____
- b. Communicates information orally with clarity and tact. _____
- c. Written communication is complete, concise and accurate. _____

4. Interpersonal Relations

- a. Accepts direction from supervisor. _____
- b. Accepts constructive criticism of performance. _____
- c. Ability to work well with others. _____

5. Public Health Knowledge and Commitment

- a. Overall quality of internship project. _____
- b. Understanding of project's relevance to public health. _____
- c. Understanding of organization's role in the larger public health community. _____
- d. Commitment to field of public health. _____

6. Achievement of Learning _____

After reviewing the student's assessment of his/her attainment of the learning objectives established for this externship (found in the student's final written report), please comment on the accuracy of the student's assessment. Did the student achieve his/her learning objectives?

7. Overall Final Grade for this internship/field placement:

Grade (Pass/Fail): _____

Comments: _____

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For Student

a. Professional Strengths:

b. Recommendations for Continued Professional Growth

2. For Externship/Field Placement Experience

a. Do you have recommendations for improving the externship/field placement program?

Yes _____ No _____

Describe:

b. Are you willing to continue sponsoring future students?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment:

c. Do you have other possible student assignments in your organization?

Yes _____ No _____

Describe:

SIGNATURES

Student: _____ Date _____

Academic Program Administrator: _____ Date _____

Director of MSPH Program: _____ Date: _____

STUDENT'S EVALUATION OF EXTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

****To be completed by the student with the original submitted to the Academic Program Administrator and copies submitted to preceptor within two weeks of the completion of the placement.****

Student's Name: _____

Externship preceptor: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Area of Concentration of Externship/Field Placement: _____

A. Orientation and planning of externship/field placement

1. Did the faculty advisor provide adequate guidance to select an externship/field placement that was appropriate for your past experience and future career expectations? Yes _____ No _____

Explain: _____

2. Did the preceptor provide a good overview of the objectives, services, and activities of the public health program in which the externship/field placement was located?

Yes _____ No _____

Explain: _____

3. Did the preceptor assist you in establishing feasible goals that were realistic for the time allotted to the externship/field placement?

Yes _____ No _____

Explain: _____

4. Did the preceptor provide the resources necessary for completion of the work (i.e. desk space, access to lab equipment, access to confidential information, funds for travel etc.)?

Yes _____ No _____

Explain: _____

B. Guidance by the Preceptor

1. Did the preceptor meet with you at intervals that were frequent enough to provide adequate teaching?

Almost always _____ Sometimes _____ Too infrequently _____

Explain: _____

2. Did the preceptor meet with you at intervals that were frequent enough to provide constructive feedback on work in progress?

Almost always _____ Sometimes _____ Too infrequently _____

Explain: _____

3. If un-for-seen problems arose, did the preceptor help you revise your goals and objectives, as appropriate?

Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable _____

Explain: _____

4. Did the preceptor communicate new knowledge areas and new skills in ways you understood?

Almost always _____ Sometimes _____ Almost never _____

Explain: _____

5. Did the preceptor stimulate your interest in overall field of public health?

Yes _____ No _____

Explain: _____

6. Did the preceptor stimulate your interest in the knowledge area of your major project?

Yes _____ No _____

Explain: _____

7. Was the preceptor receptive to your ideas and viewpoints?

Almost always _____ Sometimes _____ Almost never _____

Explain: _____

8. Name of Daily Supervisor (if different from preceptor): _____
Title: _____
Phone:(_____) _____ Email: _____
Location (if different from preceptor) _____
Work relationship to student: _____

C. Major Project

1. Check the one that is most applicable and explain.

- ___ a. Original goals and objectives were satisfied.
- ___ b. Original goals and objectives were revised due to unforeseeable circumstances.
- ___ c. Original goals and objectives were not feasible because of barriers to completion.
(i.e. financial, political, lack of acceptance by target population, etc.)

Explain: _____

2. How clear was the relevance or significance of the major project to the overall field of public health?

Explain: _____

3. List the reasons that writing the final report were or were not useful in terms of the overall externship/field placement experience.

List: _____

4. List the reasons that the oral presentation were or were not useful, in terms of the overall externship/field placement experience.

List: _____

D. Overall Externship/Field placement Experience

1. Was the overall externship/field placement experience useful to you in terms of your future career goals?

Very helpful _____ Somewhat helpful _____ Not helpful _____

Explain: _____

2. Check the one that is most applicable and explain.

- ___ a. I would recommend this externship/field placement to other students without reservations.
- ___ b. I would recommend this externship/field placement to other students with the following revisions.
- ___ c. I would not recommend this externship/field placement for the following reasons.

Explain: _____

3. I found that the following courses provided me with useful background techniques and/or skills while performing externship duties and/or research

- 5 –Extremely useful**
- 4 – Very useful**
- 3 – Moderately useful**
- 2 – Minimally useful**
- 1 – Never used**
- N/A - Not Applicable**

Biostatistics I	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Research Design:	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Health Care Seminar	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Epidemiology	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Health Administration	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Biostatistics II	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Health Behavior	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Environmental Health	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Data Management	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Elective _____ Please fill in.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

Signature of Student _____ Date _____

Program Contact Information:

We encourage preceptors to contact us with any questions you might have about our programs or about individual students.

**Director and Professor
Of MSPH Program**

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