

**Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences
Department of Preventive Medicine & Biometrics**

**PRACTICUM &
INDEPENDENT PROJECT
HANDBOOK**



Revised October 2006

About this Handbook...

This handbook is a primer on the Master of Public Health (MPH) practicum and independent project (PIP) for students and faculty. It is also a useful reference for off-site preceptors and program support staff. This guide is structured around frequently asked questions and provides complete program information on the independent project for the MPH and MTM&H degrees and the practicum requirements for the MPH degree in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics (PMB) at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS), Bethesda, Maryland. This information will enable faculty advisors to guide students through the process of developing and successfully completing a high quality, professionally relevant independent project and a value-added, competency-building practicum experience. If there are any areas that require clarification, please contact the Director of Graduate Research and Practicum Programs (referred to hereafter as PIP Program Director), Dr. Tomoko (Tonie) Hooper, at 301-295-1975 or e-mail thooper@usuhs.mil.

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What are the Pacticum and Independent Project requirements for the Master of Public Health degree?

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the national accrediting organization for schools and programs of public health, states the following: “The program must provide opportunities for professional degree students to apply the knowledge and skills being acquired through their courses of study. Practical knowledge and skills are essential. A planned, supervised, and evaluated practice experience is considered a very important component of a public health professional degree program. These opportunities should be arranged in cooperation with as wide a range of community agencies as possible, including especially local and state public health agencies in the program’s geographic area.”

CEPH also requires that students seeking the MPH degree and MTM&H degree complete a “culminating experience.” This culminating experience may take a number of forms, for example, a comprehensive examination or a master’s thesis. At USUHS, students are required to conceive, develop, and, in most cases, carry out an independent project that demonstrates their ability to synthesize, integrate, and apply the knowledge and skills acquired through coursework in the core public health disciplines, *i.e.*, biostatistics, environmental health, epidemiology, health services administration, and social and behavioral sciences. Most students will draw on their previous professional training and interests to identify a project with public health relevance that is aligned with their personal and professional goals.

Thus, the successful completion of both the practicum and independent project is a graduation requirement for all students in the MPH program. The purpose of the practicum is to enhance the didactic portion of the MPH program by providing students with opportunities to develop practical skills and competencies in various public health practice settings. The independent project, on the other hand, constitutes a capstone experience for the MPH year and demonstrates the student’s ability to synthesize and integrate the new knowledge gained throughout the program of study. In many cases, this effort results in a scientific manuscript for publication or other substantial product. Students should anticipate completing the planning phase during the Fall Quarter, including a preliminary literature search and formulation of a research question. A project pre-proposal followed by the full proposal and submission of proper forms to the USUHS Office of Research (REA) should be completed during the Winter Quarter. The project is generally executed during the later half of the Winter Quarter and/or the Spring Quarter and completed within the first two weeks of the Summer Session.

The MPH student body at USUHS is largely comprised of individuals with considerable previous military and civilian health-related experiences. Most have a professional degree and come to this program with proven ability to succeed as adult learners. We expect that students will learn a great deal from interactions with each other, as well as with the faculty. Because the MPH program at USUHS is compressed into a twelve-month period for the majority of our students, our goal is to make the process of meeting both the MPH practicum and independent project requirements time-efficient, productive, professionally relevant, and personally rewarding, with uniformly good results!

Therefore, topics related to the MPH practicum and independent project (“PIP”) are incorporated into a weekly seminar series during the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters to provide overall guidance to students— i.e. a roadmap for success throughout your program of study. The course descriptions for the PIP seminar series are provided below.

PMO671 Introduction to the MPH Project and Practicum (1 credit pass/fail)

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This seminar course (first in a series of three) is designed to introduce students to the requirements and to begin the process of designing independent projects and selecting a practicum site. Representatives of various military and civilian organizations offer a variety of potential project and practicum opportunities either as in-class guest speakers and/or at one or more “PIP fairs.” Basic research methods will be an ongoing theme, introduced as short topics, along with specific guidance on human subjects research issues. Students will formulate research questions and discuss appropriate study designs. Goal setting, timelines, and curriculum planning for successful completion of the MPH program will be integrated into this course. By the end of the course, students will be able to describe the basic criteria for the MPH independent project and practicum, demonstrate familiarity with University and federal regulations pertaining to research, articulate two or three possible project and/or practicum ideas aligned with personal and professional goals, and formulate a focused research question.

PMO672 MPH Project/Practicum Design and Development (1 credit pass/fail)

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As a follow-on to the introductory course in this series, students will receive guidance on developing and completing a pre-proposal and final proposal for their independent projects. Project development will provide students with opportunities for peer review and instructor feedback. Discussions will include the criteria and format for different types of projects (i.e., proposal only, policy paper, secondary data analysis to address a public health problem, etc.), the process for institutional assurances and approvals (human participants research, animal care and use issues, etc.), and the application of core public health knowledge and skills. Students are strongly encouraged to combine the project and practicum whenever possible.

At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to: formulate a focused, answerable research question, design and develop a study plan or approach to address the research question, and demonstrate compliance with institutional regulations pertaining to student research by submitting all required forms and documents for review and approval prior to study implementation.

PMO673 MPH Project/Practicum Implementation and Evaluation (1 credit pass/fail)

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In the third and last course in this seminar series, students are assisted with the process of obtaining appropriate institutional approvals. Students are then expected to progress through various stages of project implementation, with advice and guidance from their project mentors. This course will be a forum for discussing issues related to study execution, presentations, manuscript clearance, authorship, etc. Instructors/guest speakers will reinforce effective oral and written communication skills, which are considered to be essential competencies for public health practice. Students will learn how to present data appropriately and receive guidance on preparing scientific abstracts and posters. At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to: discuss solutions to implementing student project and/or practicum proposals, critique oral presentations, draft posters and/or slides, demonstrate compliance with institutional oversight of student research by obtaining the notice of project approval from REA and any assurance committees, such as the IRB.



How do the MPH practicum and independent project requirements relate to each other?

The distinction between the MPH practicum and independent project requirements has sometimes been a point of confusion. They are two **separate** requirements for the MPH degree, even though they are often combined and integrated operationally. The MPH project demonstrates a student's ability to synthesize and integrate the fundamental concepts and principles of the core public health disciplines in order to assess a public health problem, support decision-making, or answer a research question. The project requires substantial effort with the end products being an oral presentation and a written report. The oral presentation consists of a formal, 10-minute podium presentation followed by a 5-minute question and answer period. The final written report is a minimum of 15 pages in length and includes an executive summary or abstract, background and significance, methods, results, discussion, conclusions, and references. A copy of the official notification of project approval from the USUHS Office of Research should be submitted with the written report.

The MPH practicum, on the other hand, is a separate requirement that involves field opportunities to apply newly acquired classroom knowledge and skills at a federal, state, or local agency, or in a community-based practice setting. It is a well-defined, directly supervised, practical experience at an off-site location, pre-arranged according to explicit learning objectives. This learning experience exposes students to various aspects of the day-to-day practice of public health while allowing them to build competencies. A three- to five-page report, activity log, and two evaluation forms are due at the end of the practicum experience. The table below summarizes the difference between the two requirements.

Distinction between the MPH Practicum and Independent Project

Practicum	Project
Apply knowledge or skill acquired in classroom in an operational environment	Synthesize/integrate concepts and principles from core public health disciplines to answer a research question
Required course: PMO670 3 credits, pass/fail	Required course: PMO674 3 credits, graded
Deliverables: 3-5 page report, activity log, 2 completed evaluation forms	Deliverables: project proposal, 15+ page written report, oral presentation

Due to the heavy academic load in the 12-month program at USUHS, students are strongly encouraged, but not required, to combine the practicum and project whenever possible. Some examples of well-integrated project and practicum activities are described on the following page.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICUM AND PROJECT COMBINATIONS FROM 2004-2006

Practicum experience at the Naval Safety Center, Aviation Safety Directorate, to observe day-to-day operations, develop surveys, and perform analysis of safety trends and accidents combined with project entitled “Spinal Pain in Naval Aviators at Training Air Wing ONE and TWO: A Cross-sectional Study.”

Project entitled “Rift Valley Surveillance Plan” combined with practicum experience at U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, to gain experience in compiling hazard categorization reports and developing risk assessments.

Practicum activity carried out at the Air Force Substance Abuse Program within the Community Prevention Division of the Air Force Medical Support Agency, Office of the Surgeon General, to understand the mission of the Community Prevention Division and become familiar with how research projects and prevention programs are used to identify and address health policy issues within the USAF. Project on “Social and Professional Factors Related to Smoking in USAF Technical Training Students” identified and carried out in conjunction with the practicum.

Practicum experience with the Armed Forces Medical Examiner’s Office at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) to learn how to extract mortality and safety data from existing AFIP and Safety databases and to master analytic techniques for these data, led to the project “Drowning Deaths of U.S. Service Personnel Associated with Motor Vehicle Accidents Occurring in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, 2003-2005.”

Practicum at the Army Surveillance Activity, to become familiar with and analyze data from the Defense Medical Epidemiology Database (DMED), was complemented by a project entitled “U.S. Military Prescription Patterns for Primaquine, and Anti-Malarial Medication, and Recent Adverse Events” using DMED data.

Project entitled “Analysis of Pulmonary Function Following a 9-11 Month Exposure to High Airborne Particulate Concentration in Two Groups of US Troops Deployed to Iraq: A Pilot Study” completed in conjunction with a practicum at the Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.

Project entitled “Changes in the Odds of Occurrence of Asbestos-associated Pleural Markers among Members of the 1990-2004 U.S. Navy Asbestos Medical Surveillance Program (AMSP) Cohort” combined with practicum experience at the Navy Environmental Health Center.

Practicum experience with the African American Health Program in the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, to help in the marketing of a community-based intervention to decrease the African American infant mortality rate in Montgomery County, resulted in a project entitled “Impact of Prenatal Visitation on Birth Outcomes in African American Women.”

Overseas practicum experience (MTM&H) at the Australian Institute of Tropical Medicine to assess prevalence of *C. burnetti* infection in animal reservoirs in Queensland, Australia, combined with a study proposal “Q Fever Prevalence in Animal Reservoirs of Queensland, AU.”

Project entitled “A Review of the Gaps within and between States’ Statutes that May Limit Their Ability to Effectively Respond to an Animal Disease Threat” completed in conjunction with a practicum experience at the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services.

Practicum experience at Headquarters, U.S. Air Force Safety Center, to become familiar with the Air Force Safety Center database and gain an understanding of DoD Injury Surveillance methods and how they relate to prevention goals, resulted in project entitled “United States Air Force (USAF) Weapons Handling Mishap Study.”

Project entitled "Flight Conditions Leading to Class A Spatial Disorientation Mishaps in U.S. Air Force Fighter Operations: FY93-02" completed in conjunction with a practicum at the Air Force Research Laboratory, Human Effectiveness Directorate, Wright Patterson AFB.

Practicum experience at the Naval Safety Center review the hazard reports/physiological episode reports and naval aviation mishap reports related to hypoxia incidents, resulted in a project entitled "A Study of Hypoxic Hypoxia Incidence in Naval Aircraft: Do Aircraft Equipped with Onboard Oxygen Generating Systems Have a Higher Hypoxia incidence than Similar Models with Other Installed Oxygen Systems?"

Project entitled "Descriptive Study of Transportation-Related Fatalities within DoD from 1998 through 2003" completed in conjunction with a practicum at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Mortality Surveillance Division.

Project entitled "Evaluation of the Barriers and Enablers to Breastfeeding while on Active Duty" combined with a practicum experience at the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Women's Health Division.

Practicum at the US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, to evaluate the effectiveness of post-deployment assessment forms in gaining insight into the health concerns of returning soldiers, led to a project entitled "Post Deployment Medical Follow Up for Environmental Exposure."

Practicum with the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability Operations/Low Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC), Director of Health Care Policy, combined with a project entitled "Assessing and Improving Measurement and Evaluation in the DoD Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHCACA) Program."

A practicum at the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine using the Total Army Injury and Health Outcomes Database, to learn about tracking and analysis of injuries, combined with a project entitled "Descriptive Statistics on Cervical Disc Degeneration in a Military Cohort."

A practicum experience at the Naval Safety Center, Aeromedical Safety Division, resulted in a project entitled "Ejection Morbidity/Mortality Department of the Navy, 1990-2004."

A practicum at the U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, to help standardize a system of coding for the Preventive Health Assessment Process, resulted in a project entitled "Improving the Preventive Health Assessment Process through Implementing a Value Driven System of Coding."

A practicum at the Air Force Medical Support Agency, to become familiar with the annual evaluation and outcomes of the new Air Force fitness program, combined with a project entitled "Identifying the Fitness Measure that Best Correlates with Health Risk in Active Duty Air Force Personnel: A Preliminary Study."

A project entitled "Native American Consumer Product-Related Injuries" done in conjunction with practicum experience at the Consumer Product Safety Commission.



What would be considered an appropriate MPH independent project?

In previous years, student projects have covered a wide range of topics. Overall, they have been of impressive quality, with the *stand-outs* clearly demonstrating innovation, strong and persistent individual initiative, integration across most, if not all, the core disciplines of public health, and significant potential impact on public health. Your choice of an independent project should be based on a number of factors, including the opportunity to expand upon or reinforce specific competencies in your specialty area. The topic should be of personal interest to you and relevant to your overall professional goals. In general, students select independent projects in their MPH area of concentration.

Independent projects are not limited to *research* in general, or to data collection and analysis in particular. Your project may involve policy formulation, survey instrument development, program evaluation, community needs assessment, or development of a grant proposal, among others. The end product of this requirement should reflect the investment of considerable time and effort. For example, if the MPH project is the development of a research proposal, demonstrable progress must have been made towards the eventual implementation of the study protocol, with the ultimate goal of collecting and analyzing data and producing a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed, scientific journal.

The overall objective of the MPH project requirement is to build public health competencies as demonstrated by a substantial product of independent study that reflects the following:

- In-depth knowledge of a problem or issue from a public health perspective
- Analysis and/or interpretation of data in support of a public health-related decision or policy
- Independent effort under supervision/mentoring by faculty
- Well-defined, focused activity completed according to a timeline
- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Appropriate responses to questions or critique by peer-reviewers

On the next page, you will find a list of all previous independent project titles from 2004 to 2006. This will give you an idea of the variety of possible topics and should not be interpreted as being all-inclusive. Some generic examples of the types of activities representing appropriate MPH independent project are:

- Primary collection and analysis of data
- Analysis of an existing data set from an ongoing or completed research project
- Development and/or evaluation of a public health activity, program, or policy

Additionally, the PIP Program Director maintains an historical file of project and practicum proposals, as well as copies of final project reports. Bound copies may not be removed from the immediate area outside A1040G.

MPH INDEPENDENT PROJECTS
Class Of 2004

The Effects of Ionizing Radiation: A Mortality Study
Microalbumin Use in Screening Hypertensive Patients for Chronic Kidney Disease: A Cost-Effectiveness Analysis
A Report on Activities Conducted at USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services-Emergency Programs Between 22 March and 24 May 2004
A Structural Interview to Assess Qualitative Factors Associated with Attrition for Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Medical School
Comparison of Methods for Normalizing Patient Dose Data for Interventional Radiology Procedures
Drug Utilization in the Medicare Eligible DoD TRICARE Beneficiary Population: A Descriptive Analysis
Evaluation of Surveillance Practices for Ocular Laser Injuries
Humanitarian Assistance After Action Reports: Process, Standardization, and Dissemination
WebCident: Analysis of Safety and Infection Control Incidents in the Indian Health Service
Communication of Evidence-Based Education
Descriptive Study of Common Areas Encompassing Hospital Bioterrorism Preparedness
Descriptive Analysis of Injuries and Illnesses in U.S. Military Members Who Were Aeromedically Evacuated from the Theater of Operations During Operation Iraqi Freedom
Communication of Evidence-Based Medicine
Analysis of Results of Whole Blood PCR for Vaccinia Virus and Common Serologic Tests Following Vaccination with Dryvax Smallpox Vaccine
Aseptic Raising of <i>Anopheles stephensi</i> mosquitoes
Use of Animal Syndromic Surveillance as a Tool for Detecting Human Disease Outbreaks
Descriptive Study of Transportation-Related Fatalities within DoD from 1998 through 2003
A Descriptive Study of HIV/AIDS Clinical Training Programs Using the Content Analysis Model through a Pilot Study Comparison of Curricula Aimed at the Military Healthcare Personnel of Underserved Nations
A Study of Hypoxic Hypoxia Incidence in Naval Aircraft: Do aircraft equipped with Onboard Oxygen Generating Systems (OBOGS) have a higher hypoxia incidence than similar models with other oxygen systems?
Attrition Rates of Military Recruits for Myopia
Assessing Mental Health Needs and Resources in Iraq: Development of a Survey Tool
Differential Mortality by Educational Attainment in 25-64 Year Olds in the US during 2000, Stratified by Sex and Race
The Frequency and Distribution of Sarcomas in the Military Healthcare System
Correlation between measured ambient airborne particulate matter (PM10) concentrations and Ophthalmologic Disease, Non-Battle Injuries (DNBI) rates in active duty personnel deployed to two U.S. military bases in Central Command (CENTCOM) between October 1999 and February 2002.
Indian Health Service Compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Guidelines for Controlling Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Drugs: A Pilot Study
Flight Conditions Leading to Class A Spatial Disorientation Mishaps in the U.S. Air Force Fighter Operations: FY93-02

Content Analysis of Air Show Medical Disaster Plans
Using Cognitive Interviews to Improve and After Action Report Used with Humanitarian Assistance

MPH INDEPENDENT PROJECTS Class Of 2005
Patterns of Anti-retroviral Use in a Military HIV Cohort
Improving the Preventive Health Assessment Process through Implementing a Standardized and Rewarding System of Coding
Effect of a Homeopathic-Type Treatment on The Incidence, Survivability, and Growth Rate of Prostate Cancer in a Rat Model
Path Analysis of the Causes of Albumin Excretion
Post Deployment Medical Follow Up for Environmental Exposure
Evaluation of the Association between Demographics, Antropometrics, Nutrition, Health Indicators and Anemia in Children 6-60 months in Rural Honduras
Evaluation of the Barriers and Enablers to Breastfeeding on Active Duty
Assessing and Improving the User Interface of the EPA's Public Health Data Project, Preliminary Results
A Public Health Perspective on the History of Recruit Medicine in the United States Air Force
Effect of Duration of Exclusive Breastfeeding and Area of Residence on Growth Indicators in Rural Honduras
Effects of Changing the Maximum Altitude from 43,000 feet to 35,000 feet in USAF Altitude Chamber Training
Prevalence of Vitamin A in Homes in Honduras
Ejection Morbidity/Mortality, Department of the Navy, 1990-2004
Meta Analysis: Relationship between Nipple Stimulation and Post-partum Hemorrhage
Descriptive Statistics on Cervical Disc Degeneration in a Military Cohort
Humanitarian Assistance and Military Planning for a Cuban Exodus: An Analysis of Operation Able Vigil
Assessing and Improving Measurement and Evaluation in the DoD Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHCACA) Program
Assessment of Tick-Borne Pathogens in Military Personnel at the U.S. Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia
Effect of Family Planning Education on the Incidence of Unplanned Pregnancies Aboard Navy Ships
Tricyclic Antidepressants in the Prevention of Migraine Headaches: A Meta-analysis
Identifying the Fitness Measure that Best Correlates with Health Risk in Active Duty Air Force Personnel: A Preliminary Study
Native American Consumer Product-Related Injuries
Curriculum Development and Instruction in Emerging Health System Issues
Effect of Overweight on Early Army Attrition – Is Fat but Fit Okay?
Medical Disability Claims in the Peace Corps: Can We Predict It?

MPH INDEPENDENT PROJECTS
Class Of 2006

The Relationship Between Food Aid, Growth and Anemia in Honduran Children Between Six and Twenty-Four Months of Age
Scrub Typhus Infections in US Army Personnel During Operation Cobra Gold 2003
Spinal Pain in Naval Aviators at Training Air Wing ONE and TWO: A Cross-sectional Study
Adherence and Adverse Events Among U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers Taking Anti-malarial Chemoprophylaxis
Rift Valley Fever Surveillance Plan
An Analysis of the DoD Humanitarian Assistance Program – Internet (HAP-I) Database
Q Fever Prevalence in Animal Reservoirs of Queensland, Australia
Risk Assessment of Upper Respiratory Infection in US Special Forces: A Critical Review of Exercise Based Immune Suppression
Social and Professional Factors Related to Smoking in USAF Technical Training Students
Drowning Deaths of US Service Personnel Associated with Motor Vehicle Accidents Occurring in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, 2003-2005
Descriptive Analysis of Leishmaniasis in US Military Personnel Stationed in the Middle East
Disability Discharge Referrals for Mental Health Disorders in a Cohort of U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Personnel Receiving Medical Waivers
U.S. Military Prescription Patterns for Primaquine, and Anti-Malarial Medication, and Recent Adverse Events
Analysis of Pulmonary Function Following a 9-11 Month Exposure to High Airborne Particulate Concentration in Two Groups of US Troops Deployed to Iraq: A Pilot Study
Occupational Health Program Management and Other Factors Influencing Injured Civilian Employees' Medical Care and Costs at US Army Installations
A Review of the Gaps Within and Between States' Statutes That May Limit Their Ability to Effectively Respond to an Animal Disease Threat
Fatigue in Aviation: Evaluation of FAST Tool
Linking Maternal Literacy Rate and Chronic Malnutrition in Honduran Children
Supplemental Use and Other Health Behaviors in Deployed U.S. Soldiers
Self-reported Acute Febrile Respiratory Illness Among US Personnel Deployed to Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom
Malaria Resistance in West Africa
Change in Odds of Occurrence of Asbestos-Associated Pleural Markers Among Members of the 1989-2004 United States Navy Asbestos Medical Surveillance Program (AMSP) Cohort
Impact of Prenatal Visitation on Birth Outcomes in African American Women
Obesity and Cervical Cancer Screening in Caucasian and African American Women
Correlates of Successful Smoking Cessation Using Pharmaceutical Aids in California Active Duty Military



How and when do I get started on my independent project?

To optimize this experience and to ensure a smooth project/practicum execution phase, you will need to do some preliminary information gathering and planning as early as the Pre-Fall Session, and certainly, no later than early in the Fall Quarter. Previous students have almost uniformly felt a time crunch at the end of the academic year. **The key to success is to start early and stick to a timeline!** To find a topic, start with your academic advisor; then go to other PMB faculty members to discuss areas of research interest, to seek information on potential project opportunities, and to identify and eventually select an appropriate project mentor with subject matter expertise. The PIP Program Director and the Director of Graduate Programs are additional resources. Ideally, you should select a team of key faculty members for advice and consultation on a regular basis. During the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters, you will take the required seminar series, PMO671, PMO672, and PMO673, each one-credit, pass/fail, which are designed to “*meter in*” the action items to help keep you on target. Consider this project to be a tremendous opportunity for personal and professional growth and **aim high!**

Since the independent project is a culminating or capstone experience, it generally should be undertaken after the core MPH courses have been completed. However, it is never too early for preliminary fact-finding. Even though there is some time to complete projects during the Summer Session just prior to graduation, this is not enough time if the planning and development phases are delayed until then. Your final written report will be due several weeks before graduation, and you will be scheduled to present your project findings to an audience of your peers and USUHS faculty closely following submission of your written report. Anticipate spending approximately 300 hours on your project, including the time spent on the PMB seminar courses in the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters.

PMB faculty members at USUHS are actively involved in a variety of formal research activities and may welcome graduate student involvement. These faculty members may serve as project mentors. Additionally, in order to meet the needs of a diverse group of students, project mentors are recruited from among researchers and public health practitioners affiliated with other government agencies or civilian institutions in the greater Washington metropolitan area and beyond.

During the process of designing and developing your project, you will interact with at least four individuals:

- Course Director(s) for the seminar series on the MPH practicum and independent project
- Your academic advisor and your project mentor (may be the same individual)
- The practicum site preceptor, if the project and practicum are integrated, and the site preceptor serves as the primary project advisor. In this case, you must also recruit a billeted USUHS faculty member (may be your academic advisor) to serve as a co-project mentor to ensure that USUHS/PMB program requirements are met. Both the site preceptor and your USUHS faculty advisor provide feedback on your project proposal, as well as your project final report/manuscript.

TIMELINE

Complete and submit your pre-proposal using the “MPH/MTM&H Independent Project Pre-Proposal Form” (see Appendix A) around the middle of the Winter Quarter (see timeline in syllabus). The pre-proposal is a brief, one- to two-page description of your independent project, including its public health significance, a draft research question, and an estimated timeline for project milestones. It requires the signature of both your academic advisor and your project mentor (unless one and the same). The Fall Quarter seminar course, PMO671, *Introduction to the MPH Project and Practicum*, will include a timeline for intermediate deliverables and a series of PIP Project/Practicum Fairs offering a slate of potential practicum and project opportunities. It will also provide a forum for discussion of options, such as primary data collection versus secondary analysis of an existing data set or the use of a pre-existing validated survey instrument versus the development of a new instrument. By the time you turn in your pre-proposal in PMO672, *MPH Project/Practicum Design and Development*, you will have established an ongoing dialogue with your academic advisor and other USUHS faculty members, completed a preliminary literature search, and considered the feasibility of combining the practicum and project. This is also the time to contact individuals from outside organizations who may be willing to serve as project mentors and/or practicum site preceptors. The completed project pre-proposal form is required to pass PMO672.

Complete and submit your independent project proposal by the end of the Winter Quarter. The project proposal is expected to be four to five pages in length and reflect the additional time spent in preparation for the implementation phase of the project. Pay particular attention to issues such as study design, sampling methods, and sample size calculation; select an analytic approach appropriate to the research question; and anticipate the time required to obtain institutional assurances and approvals prior to conducting the study. Again, the PIP seminar series will provide guidance on proposal development as well as the process of institutional assurances and approvals. In fact, representatives from the Office of Research provide in-class briefings in both PMO671 and PMO672.

The independent project proposal is the foundation for your final report, so expect to invest some time in its preparation. You will benefit from the collective expertise of the PMB faculty by using a team of advisors to strengthen different aspects of your project proposal. Consider the services of the Biostatistical Consulting Center as a resource, and take full advantage of the workshops and other in-class exercises designed to help you make progress towards meeting project deliverables. The completed proposal should be submitted to the PIP Program Director and include the following elements: background/public health significance, research question, objectives/specific aims, methods (including analytic approach, if appropriate), timeline for project milestones (such as obtaining IRB approval), and references. See the *Format and Checklist for Independent Project Proposal* on the following page.

Format and Checklist for Independent Project Proposal

✓	Elements of the proposal	Approximate page length*
	Background/significance: Provide a concise summary of relevant background information. What has other work shown? Why is your particular project important? This should demonstrate your familiarity with the existing scientific body of knowledge. Use appropriate citations. What is the public health significance of your study?	1-2
	Objectives/specific aims: State your research question. What is the broad goal/objective(s) of your project? List your specific aims to accomplish your goal. You may wish to state a null hypothesis if appropriate.	½
	Methods: Briefly describe the methods you will use to conduct your project. For example, a description of your study population; study design; methods for obtaining data, defining variables, analyzing data; approach to program development and/or evaluation; etc. This section will vary depending on the type of project and format selected.	1-2
	Timeline: Description of important milestones of your project and when you intend to accomplish them. List project deliverables or study end-points and due dates, including literature search, institutional approval process, first draft report, final report, and oral presentation.	½
	References: List of all references cited in your proposal. A minimum of 10-12 references is expected.	1

*Suggested number of pages, not absolute limits



What institutional assurances and/or approvals do I need for student research projects?

All PMB graduate students are required to complete the University of Miami's on-line course, *The CITI Program in the Protection of Human Research Subjects*. A copy of the Completion Certificate should be submitted to the PIP Program Director during the Fall Quarter. The online course may be accessed at the following website:

<http://www.miami.edu/CITIREG/>

When you register for the CITI course you will be asked to select either the Biomedical Investigator Course or the Social and Behavioral Investigator Course. Select the Biomedical Course unless your project involves a survey or otherwise involves qualitative research.

In order to meet the requirements for the MPH degree, all graduate students must complete USUHS Form 3202, *Student and Resident Physician Research Protocols*, and submit to the PIP Program Director for review, processing, and forwarding to REA. A copy of the MPH project protocol must be attached. Also, a current copy of the CITI certificate is required for any research involving human participants.

Any graduate student project meeting the definition of “research” and involving human participants must be reviewed by the USUHS Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to initiation of the study (See REA forms in Appendix C). While many of the projects conducted by MPH students may ultimately be determined to be “exempt” studies, that determination is made by the IRB, not the investigator. Please do not assume that a study which only involves data for secondary analysis does not need IRB approval. In addition to Form 3202 mentioned above, Form 3204, *Research Involving Human Subjects*, must be submitted to REA. The turn around time is around four to six weeks on average, and you will need to take this into account in your planning. You are responsible for submitting the appropriate forms for institutional assurances and approvals, and you should receive an official notice of project approval prior to conducting your study. Electronically modifiable REA forms can be downloaded from the USUHS website:

<http://www.usuhs.mil/research/ElectronicForms.htm>

Again, the determination of *exempt* or *expedited* review status is made by the IRB (Director of Human Research Protections Program) not the investigator. It is important to note that in some instances, more than one institutional assurance/approval for a research study may be necessary and, thus, require additional lead-time to complete the process. Other projects may require institutional review and approval for laboratory animal care and use or the supervised use of biohazards, controlled or dangerous materials, and/or radiation or radioactive materials. Even if a pre-existing approved protocol, with the faculty advisor as the principal investigator, specifically covers the proposed student project, USUHS Form 3202 and 3204, if involving human subjects, must be submitted to the USUHS Office of Research. Documentation of mandatory safety training may also be required.



How do I receive academic credit for extra work on my MPH project?

You may register for one of the courses listed below (tutorial, independent study, or directed reading/research courses) in the Fall, Winter and/or Spring Quarters to receive the appropriate number of supplementary credits for MPH project development or execution.

PASS/FAIL CREDIT FOR INTERIM WORK ON THE MPH PROJECT

For extra independent project credits, register for one of these courses:

PM0701	Advance Biometrics Tutorial
PM0760	Tropical Medicine Research Tutorial
PM0811	Independent Study in Epidemiology
PM0830	Independent Study in Social and Behavioral Sciences
PM0911	Research in Epidemiology
PM0926	Health Care Administration Directed Research
PM0940	Environmental/Occupational Health Directed Studies
PM0970	Directed Studies in Preventive Medicine

The project mentor, with the concurrence of the academic advisor, will determine the appropriate number of academic credits for the elective course, depending on the amount of time to be spent on the project during the Winter or Spring Quarters. A general guideline is that an average of three hours a week over a twelve-week period equals one credit hour. This option is meant for students who intend to spend a significant amount of time on project development and/or execution over and above that required to meet the deliverables for the Project/Practicum seminar series. The *Independent Study/Directed Research* courses and Project/Practicum courses may be taken concurrently. Each of the Project/Practicum courses is one-credit, pass/fail, for a total of three credits. Students may register for a directed research course for up to three additional credits, pass/fail or graded, generally over more than one quarter, for extra hours spent on a specific aspect of the MPH project, (for example, survey instrument development, data coding and entry, and/or the use of specific statistical software packages).

During the Summer Session (last five weeks of the academic year) all MPH/MTM&H students are required to enroll in PMO674, *MPH Independent Project*, to receive three credits and an overall grade for the project based on scores for the proposal, the oral presentation, and the final written report. Students receive a total of six credits for the independent project, including the

three credits for the PIP seminar series. The Summer Session has been set aside specifically for the completion of the practicum and independent project requirements. However, please be advised that this time interval is inadequate to complete all but the final phases of the project, especially if a full-time practicum activity is to be carried out during the Summer Session. PMO674 and PMO670 do not have class meetings. All correspondence is handled through Blackboard, including scheduling dates and times for oral presentations. If you have any questions, consult the PIP Program Director.



What are the final products of the independent project?

ORAL PRESENTATION

The results of all your hard work and efforts will be showcased during two or three days of oral presentations in front of an audience of your peers, PMB Department and other USUHS faculty, and invited guests near the end of the academic year (about mid-June). Each student will be scheduled for a ten-minute time slot to give an oral presentation of his or her MPH project, followed by five minutes for questions and answers. The presentations will be grouped by category, as much as possible (e.g., all GPM residents). All students are expected to be present on both days (and possibly an additional day, depending on the number of presenters) to support and learn from their classmates. Treat this event as if it were a scientific meeting at which you are presenting your research results. Accordingly, presenters should be in Class A uniforms (or the equivalent) or appropriate civilian attire.

Past MPH project presentations have generally been of very high quality and covered a broad range of public health topics. Students should invite their faculty advisors, project mentors, and practicum site preceptors, as well as other interested faculty members and guests to attend these presentations. Project mentors may be asked to introduce students (brief, one-minute introductions), depending on time availability. Members of the PMB faculty always look forward to and enjoy this end-of-year event.

The oral presentation is graded by a panel of PMB faculty members (generally five) and constitutes 35% of a student's overall project grade. Questions from the faculty panel or audience may pertain to core MPH concepts as they relate to the student's project. Individual score sheets will be made available to presenters upon request. Consult your team of faculty advisors during early phases of planning your presentation. You will need to apply effective communication skills and the judicious use of appropriate visual aids to get your major points across to the audience within the allotted time interval. Several practice sessions with faculty and classmates is strongly recommended.

The faculty panel also evaluates and scores the final oral presentations in order to rank order finalists to be considered for the Captain Richard R. Hooper Memorial Award, a Departmental award presented annually to a graduate student for "outstanding research in public health," as well as for showing exceptional promise in putting prevention into practice. The CAPT Hooper Award is also presented each year to a graduating medical student for exhibiting "exceptional promise in preventive medicine." The recipient of the CAPT Hooper Award is selected from among the top MPH/MTM&H project presentations by the faculty panel, with input from the Director of Graduate Programs and PIP Program Director. The general scoring criteria for the oral presentations are listed on the following page, and a copy of the score sheet is included in Appendix A.

SCORING CRITERIA FOR CAPT HOOPER MEMORIAL AWARD

What was the quality of the following elements of the project?

Background/Public Health Significance
Research Question/Specific Aims/Objectives
Methods
Results (or interim findings or other study products)
Discussion
Conclusions/Recommendations

How effective was the presentation in terms of the following?

Organization
Clarity
Appropriate Use of Audio-visual Material
Delivery/Presentation Skills
Response to Questions
Conciseness (staying within time limit)

Does this independent project have the potential to significantly impact public health? Does it have military relevance? Does it pass the “so what” test?

To what degree was it apparent from the presentation that this particular independent project required substantially more time and effort for design, development, and execution than would be expected on average?

Does the project represent synthesis and integration of knowledge across the core disciplines of public health?

While the oral presentation score is the primary means by which the MPH/MTM&H students will be ranked for the CAPT Richard R. Hooper Memorial Award, the following factors may also be considered in the final selection process:

- Military relevance of independent project
- Demonstration of professionalism and research ethics
- Commitment to and potential for contributing significantly to public health/preventive medicine field
- Academic excellence (cumulative grade point average)

The recipient of the CAPT Hooper Award will be recognized at the PMB graduation ceremony. The names of previous award winners are displayed on the perpetual plaque located outside the Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, A1039.

FINAL WRITTEN REPORT

Students will independently produce a paper/manuscript to present the results of their work. Peer review is encouraged during all phases of the project, but preparation of the final report should be largely the result of independent effort. This does not mean that students should not consult their project mentors or other advisors during the iterative process of preparing the final report. If there are shared topics among students, each independent project should reflect a unique focus. The paper/manuscript must have been prepared since matriculating at USUHS as a graduate student, although it may represent a more in-depth study of a topic previously submitted for course credit at USUHS.

The final written report should conform to scientific standards for the type of project or approach selected (e.g., a scientific proposal, an epidemiologic study using an existing data set, a policy paper). Guidelines for the project report format and contents are provided in Appendix A. The final report should include the following sections:

- *Cover Page* (standard template)
- *Executive Summary* or *Abstract*
- *Table of Contents*
- *Introduction/ Background* (including statement of your research question and its public health significance)
- *Methods*
- *Results*
- *Discussion* (including study strengths and limitations)
- *Conclusions* (including recommendations for future studies, as appropriate)
- *Acknowledgments*
- *References*
- *Appendices* (copy of official notice of project approval from REA must be included)

In the executive summary or abstract, you should summarize the key points from each of the sections. State specific methods, results, and conclusions. Say something like “x was found to be correlated with y” rather than “this paper will discuss the results of the statistical analysis”.

The *Introduction/Background* and *Methods* sections of your project proposal should be a good starting point for your final report. If you have created an *EndNote*® bibliographic database, this will facilitate adding references to your paper.

Plan on submitting a draft report to your project mentor (and/or site preceptor, if practicum and project are combined) several weeks before your paper is due for grading. This will allow adequate time for the iterative process of review and revision and ultimately result in a better product. Schedule regular meetings with your project mentor and consult other faculty members as the need arises. Finally, anticipate the fact that there will be less time available (both your time and that of faculty members) for in-depth review of draft reports as deadlines get closer.

A copy of your official notice of project approval from REA must be included in as part of your final report. If your independent project was considered to be “human participants research,”

you must also include a copy of the official notice from the USUHS IRB, even if your study was ultimately determined to be an “exempt” protocol.

Plan on completing your final written report about two to three weeks prior to the PMB graduation date. This will allow you to focus on preparing your oral presentation, which is generally scheduled a few days following submission of papers for grading. The written report should be submitted, electronically on Blackboard. You should email or provide a hardcopy of your report to your primary project mentor. The secondary reviewer will be recruited from among the PMB faculty members who will be asked to sign up for project reviews from a list of titles. USUHS PMB adjunct faculty members may also serve as secondary reviewers. Once your paper has been approved and graded by your project mentor and secondary reviewer, make any appropriate revisions and submit your final electronic copy on Blackboard. The final paper must be submitted and graded in order for this requirement to be met.

While it is not required, all graduate students should consider preparing a manuscript to submit to a peer-reviewed journal for publication. In addition to your project mentor(s) there may be opportunities to collaborate with other experienced faculty members and/or public health professionals on a manuscript (See Appendix D for authorship guidelines). Some students from previous years have taken this step soon after graduating from the MPH program. In other cases, publication takes place a number of months or years post-graduation. Remember that the final step in the process of doing public health research is to disseminate the results of your study, and this is an excellent opportunity to become familiar with the publication process, including professional peer review. In addition, explore the possibility of submitting an abstract for a podium or poster presentation at a professional meeting or conference, including USUHS Research Day (usually in May). Effective oral, as well as written, communication is an essential public health competency, and this is another great opportunity to enhance your skills as a communicator.

Appendix D contains the PMB Department’s guidelines for authorship, as well as the Department’s manuscript clearance form. All manuscripts, including abstracts for presentation/posters at professional meetings, need to be submitted to the PMB Department Chair or designated alternate (currently the Vice Chair for Research and Faculty Development) for clearance/approval. In some cases, University level or higher clearance(s) may be necessary.

GRADING

The overall grade for your independent project will be comprised of the following: proposal score, oral presentation score, and final written report score (see table below). All students must register for PMO674, *MPH Independent Project*, in the Summer Session to receive 3 graded credits for their project.

Project Deliverables	Total Possible Points
Proposal	15
Oral Presentation	35
Final Report*	50

*Weighted average of grades submitted by the project mentor and the secondary reviewer

The proposal grade (numeric score out of a possible 15 points) is carried forward from the PIP course. The grade for the final written report (numeric score out of a possible 50 points) is determined by calculating a weighted average of the score submitted by the primary project mentor (weighted x 2) and the secondary reviewer. Graders will be provided with evaluation criteria for each of the project deliverables. These evaluation criteria are also available in Appendix A. The criteria for grading project deliverables may be subject to change, but students will be notified of any changes well in advance of due dates, along with the faculty. The panel of PMB faculty asked to rate the oral presentations will use the *Scoring Criteria for MPH Independent Project Oral Presentations* form (see Appendix A) as a basis for assigning scores to individual students. Scores are calculated out of a total possible 35 points and averaged over the five faculty panelists.



What constitutes an appropriate MPH practicum experience, and why is it important?

The objective of this requirement is to provide an opportunity for students to directly apply knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom. The practicum is a chance to stretch your capabilities, to see things from a different perspective (think *outside the box*), to add to your public health practitioner *tool box* in your area of expertise, and to widen your professional network. In the process, students learn first-hand about the organizational framework, day-to-day operations, and special activities of selected agencies, institutions, and industries with a public health mission. You may gain insight into program management, resource allocation, regulatory compliance, public relations, legislative agendas, and/or special investigations. Participation in public health-related activities in an operational environment adds a critical dimension to the curriculum.

It is well established that a graduate level instructional program is enhanced by the addition of interactive, participatory, or experiential learning activities to the more traditional, didactic lecture format in the classroom. The MPH practicum experience serves that purpose by providing experiential learning activities. The practicum is more than shadowing practitioners as they go about their daily activities and, in fact, may encompass a broader range of experiences than those traditionally associated with clinical training programs. Functioning at the population level, a graduate student may have the opportunity to participate in multi-disciplinary, interagency collaboration for research or policy purposes; briefings to military commanders or their civilian counterparts on the findings of special investigations; Presidential Commissions or Congressional hearings on issues related to public health; evidence-based practice guideline development; planning for medical support of operational missions; or disaster preparedness and response planning or drills, among others.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- All MPH students must complete a practicum or field experience, defined as a planned, supervised, and evaluated activity at an organization, generally outside USUHS, with a public health or preventive medicine-related focus.
- Students are required to spend a minimum of 108 hours on the MPH practicum or field experience, either on a full-time or part-time basis. This includes time spent on planning, execution, and reporting phases.
- Students must enroll in PMO670, *Public Health Practicum*, to receive three credit hours for the satisfactory completion of the practicum requirement, with the deliverables consisting of a written report, activity log, and two evaluation forms. Grading is on a pass/fail basis.
- No waivers will be granted solely on the basis of prior professional experience.

Funding is generally not available for students wishing to travel to distant sites for their practicum experience. However, students may identify and obtain funding on their own initiative. In some cases, funding may be available through the sponsoring Uniformed Service. On the other hand, the use of local area practicum sites has some distinct advantages: one is the relative ease of integrating the practicum requirement into an already demanding academic schedule, the other is the wealth of local, regional, and national organizations, military and civilian, in the National Capitol region.

Some practicum activities are easily combined with independent projects. These activities usually involve working with public health professionals at outside organizations who have ongoing projects. Some examples are developing and pilot testing a survey instrument to collect data for program evaluation, exploring the feasibility of using an existing database for surveillance purposes, or participating in a working group to develop and implement a practice guideline. See examples of previous MPH practicum and project combinations on page 4.

The advantages of combining the two requirements include both time efficiency and the likelihood of success in arranging a practicum when a student commits to a project of importance to the organization. The site preceptor may then serve as the student's primary project mentor and is responsible for reviewing and grading the project proposal and final report/manuscript. In these cases, it is highly recommend that the student identify a practicum site preceptor with an MPH degree or equivalent public health experience. When the practicum site preceptor also serves as the primary project mentor, the student must recruit a co-project mentor from among billeted USUHS faculty (may be the student's academic advisor or another faculty member with appropriate subject matter expertise). When the practicum and project are combined, it is important to develop a well-defined scope of work for the practicum, approved by both the practicum site preceptor and USUHS co-project mentor. The student may agree to produce additional material(s) related to the project for the sponsoring organization (for example, briefing slides) as time permits.

Alternatively, students may elect to keep the practicum and project completely separate. This may be a reasonable alternative, particularly for two-year students. Opportunities are limited only by the degree of individual initiative, imagination, creativity, and perseverance. Remember that this is an educational activity, and as such, the practicum experience must be designed to meet explicit learning objectives.

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF AN MPH PRACTICUM

- ✓ **Planned, supervised, and evaluated activity**
- ✓ **Field public health practice setting**
- ✓ **Minimum of 108 hours**



How do I select an appropriate practicum site and preceptor?

The MPH practicum is not a pre-established rotation. Student background and interests vary widely within the MPH class, and the time slots available for the practicum depend on individual course schedules. Therefore, each student must develop and arrange a practicum activity that will meet his or her individual needs and interests. **It is the student's responsibility to identify and select a practicum activity and a site preceptor** in consultation with his/her academic advisor and/or the PIP Program Director. To facilitate this process, various organizational representatives will be invited to the PIP Fairs during the Fall Quarter to present currently available project and/or practicum opportunities at their organizations. These individuals come to USUHS because they are interested in working with USUHS graduate students, but it is up to you and the potential preceptor to decide whether it is a good match in terms of schedules, types of project or practicum activities, mutually agreed-upon time commitments, and expectations for respective roles and responsibilities. Keep in mind that the practicum may be a stand-alone activity, unrelated to the independent project, and outside the student's area of concentration if you discover an opportunity not to be missed!

After you and your site preceptor decide to proceed with planning a practicum experience, discuss preliminary arrangements with the PIP Program Director and provide contact information for the preceptor (e-mail, phone number, and mailing address). General program information and a practicum agreement form will be sent to the preceptor, along with a request for a current *curriculum vitae* for our files. The information package also includes both the practicum proposal and two evaluation forms. Practicum site preceptors must agree to directly supervise students' activities and evaluate their performance. Students and their site preceptors jointly develop learning objectives for the practicum experience. Some examples of previous practicum sites and the corresponding learning objectives for the defined activities at these sites are listed on the following pages. These examples are meant to illustrate the range of previous practicum experiences and not necessarily among the best or all-inclusive.

Any PMB faculty member is a potential source of information for a practicum site. They may be able to provide ideas and/or a point of contact for a practicum experience related to their area of research or past operational experience. The PIP Program Director approves newly identified practicum sites and preceptors to ensure that program criteria are met. The need for establishing a formal inter-institutional relationship through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between USUHS and a practicum site will be assessed for all practicum proposals. MOUs are required in the following circumstances: all civilian students; uniformed students going to a state, local or private organization; and when requested by the outside organization. In some instances, an MOU may already be in place. Finally, information on current practicum opportunities, as well as previous practicum reports, are available in the office of the PIP Program Director, A1040G.

SOME EXAMPLES OF 2004-2006 PRACTICUM ACTIVITIES

Practicum Site	Learning Objectives
National Cancer Institute	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the structure, function and contents of Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) database. 2. Learn how to use the SEER*Stat statistical software to analyze data. 3. Use SEER*Stat statistical software to do an epidemiological study on stomach cancer.
Dewitt Army Community Hospital	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist in expediting the Bridge Contract by ensuring the addition of services at Fairfax Family Health Center balance the services that are offered by the DeWitt Healthcare Network. 2. Research, evaluate primary care needed by the beneficiaries of the Fairfax Family Health Centers. 3. Research and evaluate specialty care needed by the beneficiaries of the Fairfax Family Health Centers. 4. Understand the differences, problems and benefits, between performance based contracts compared to service based contracts.
Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability Operations/Low Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Become familiar with how the SO/LIC health care policy process is designed, staffed, approved and implemented at the DOD level. 2. Identify metrics applicable to measuring the effectiveness of DOD HA health policies and approved projects. 3. Understand the US Government interagency and international sector reconstruction in a post-conflict setting.
Naval Safety Center	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn to apply biostatistical and epidemiologic analysis to raw data and determine possible etiologies and explore trends. 2. Learn to examine an activity and determine compliance with written instructions. 3. Learn to function effectively as a member of an executive panel in exploring problems or forming policy.

US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM)

1. Understand the Army Occupational Medicine Department structure, roles, responsibilities and interactions with the Army and DoD.

2. Understand and improve research skills in Occupational Medicine/Preventive Medicine issues.
3. Understand the procedures in policy analysis, consultation, information research and writing for Army and DoD policy makers.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

1. Understand the current state of scientific knowledge of the oceans' impact on human health and the areas of research underway.
2. Develop an understanding of the role of governmental agencies involved in research being done in this field.
3. Develop an understanding of marine toxins as a threat to public health.
4. Develop a prioritized research strategy aimed at protecting public health from adverse effect of marine toxins.

Pan American Health Organization

1. Understand structure and goals of PAHO.
2. Develop familiarization with the work of emergency/humanitarian programs at the international, national, regional, and local levels.
3. Gain knowledge on the coordination of a diverse variety of issues relevant to disaster preparedness and response, including water and sanitation, epidemiological surveillance, mental health, emergency supplies, donations, etc.
4. Gain knowledge of mitigation measure and mechanisms to reduce the impact of disasters on health facilities.

US Department of State, Office of International Health Affairs

1. Understand why health is a US foreign policy issue.
2. Understand the relationship between DoS and other US government entities involved with international health.
3. Understand the work of the Office of International Health Affairs.

US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in project to determine how the Indian Health Service could improve communication of health issues. 2. Learn how to explain scientific concepts such as cancer initiation/promotion and risk probability. 3. Learn about the major risk communication issues confronting the US Army and the process the US Army undertakes to overcome communication barriers.
Environmental Protection Agency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review EPA web-based resources. 2. Assist with development of a standardized vocabulary for database queries of the Environmental Information Management System. 3. Explore how health information is managed by EPA.
Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR), Division of Preventive Medicine	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist a multi-agency group in developing a public health surveillance systems for the country of Georgia by reviewing the proposed veterinary component of the system. 2. Define attributes used to evaluate a public health surveillance system. 3. Understand the information flow of data through the system. 4. Describe the disease process of the select agents in target animal populations and evaluate the proposed case definition for the select agents.
Office of the Surgeon General (OSG)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand OSG responsibilities for promoting and providing National public health policy. 2. Explore OSG mechanisms for communicating health information to health community and general public. 3. Evaluate marketing strategy for Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.
Office of Army Surgeon General	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe process and procedures for development and staffing of medical policy within Army and DoD. 2. Describe risk factors for heat injury and exertional rhabdomyolysis and how to distinguish. 3. Describe clinical management of patient with exertional rhabdomyolysis.
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn the biology of botulinum neurotoxins and

(NIAID)

- their importance as potential biological weapons.
2. Understand the issues involved in the development of effective countermeasures for botulism.
3. Become familiar with the National Biodefense effort and NIAID's unique role in the research and development of new medical countermeasures.
4. Learn the process of federal contracting by following contract review, source selection, contract award, contract oversight and performance evaluation.

The CEPH requirement for a practicum experience applies only to MPH students. Other Masters degree programs (MTM&H, MSPH) have alternative practicum requirements. MTM&H students participate in an overseas field experience to gain experience in the diagnosis and clinical management of diseases endemic to tropical regions. The MSPH program is completed over two years and includes opportunities for field training available at various DoD and other federal facilities through enrolling in PMO942, *Environmental/Occupational Health Directed Rotations*. Students in Masters' programs other than the MPH may still have access to established or potential MPH practicum sites or identify additional sites on their own.



What is the process involved in completing the MPH practicum requirement?

The fact-finding and selection process for the practicum experience should generally be done in tandem with planning the independent project. As with the MPH project, exploratory information gathering should be coordinated with your academic advisor. One option to consider is for students to share a practicum experience. For example, it may be feasible for more than one student to conduct focus groups and/or cognitive interviews or participate in a policy development process. For the 12-month MPH program, the practicum proposal should be submitted about the same time as the pre-proposal for the independent project, *i.e.*, about the middle of the Winter Quarter, especially if they are to be integrated. If the practicum is kept completely separate from the independent project, the last opportunity to submit a practicum proposal is the end of the Spring Quarter, with all work on the practicum commencing and ending during the Summer Session in order to graduate in June. For two-year students, the timeline is more flexible and adjusted according to individual needs.

Submit a proposal for the practicum before you start off-site activities, using the form entitled *Record of MPH Practicum Experience* (see Appendix B). In order to meet the definition of a planned activity, you must submit a proposal and the *MPH Practicum Agreement* with the site preceptor's signature to the PIP Program Director, prior to starting the practicum. The MPH practicum proposal includes the following information: name of the practicum site and site preceptor; a brief description of the practicum activity, including a timeline for completion; at least three measurable learning objectives; signature of the practicum site preceptor (e-mail confirmation is acceptable); and site preceptor's C.V. You must provide enough information in your proposal for the Program Director to determine its appropriateness.

Register for PMO670, *Public Health Practicum*, to receive academic credit for your practicum experience. This is a program requirement for the MPH degree. Students usually register for PMO670 in the Summer Session. However, students who are other than full-time may wish to enroll in PMO670 during the Fall, Winter, or Spring Quarter of their second year of study. Those individuals will need to contact the Course Director at the time of registration. PMO670 does not have regularly scheduled class meetings. All course information and correspondence are handled through Blackboard. Students should check email regularly during the summer session to ensure that all requirements for graduation are met. The PIP Program Director is available for individual consultation by appointment. Students may use the last five weeks of the year to schedule all 108 hours of the practicum or spread the experience out over two or more quarters. Keep a log of your practicum activities and corresponding hours to turn in with your final report. Students who wish to receive partial credit for the practicum prior to the summer term may do so for up to two credits. To complete the practicum requirement and receive a total of three credits, pass/fail, for PMO670, students must complete all work on the practicum and submit the required documentation (practicum report and two evaluation forms) by the end of the Summer Session.



How does the MPH practicum differ from the residency rotations?

Residency programs in preventive medicine specialties (*e.g.*, General Preventive Medicine/Public Health, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Aerospace Medicine, and Veterinary Preventive Medicine) include an academic year leading to an MPH degree followed by a year (or more) of practicum rotations. These residency rotations are established under Memoranda of Agreement with various organizations, and they are designed to give residents training and experience in their area of specialization. The MPH practicum, which is a part of the academic year at USUHS, is intended to allow students to directly apply concepts and principles that they have learned in the classroom, to hone particular skills, and/or to gain a broader public health or population-based perspective in an already familiar practice area. The MPH practicum is jointly planned by the student and preceptor and is, therefore, an individually tailored experience. It may be quite different from a residency rotation. For example, if it is spread over two quarters on a part-time basis, the student may be presented with more opportunities to participate in working groups, special projects or investigations, or meetings that generally do not occur on a regular basis. Students also have a greater range of activities from which to choose during the MPH year and may find opportunities outside their immediate area of specialization to be particularly enriching.

In general, residents will complete all the requirements for the MPH degree during the first year. This includes core and elective courses, the MPH practicum, and the independent project. However, in rare circumstances, a resident may need to defer completion of the MPH practicum requirement until the second year of the residency program. This should occur very infrequently. **The MPH degree will not be conferred until all the requirements including the practicum have been met.**

For residents in the MTM&H degree program, the overseas (PMO563) clinical rotation is substituted for the MPH practicum experience (PMO670). This overseas rotation should take place immediately following the summer session. The MTM&H degree will not be conferred until this requirement has been met.

For those students in a USUHS-based residency program who require deferral of the MPH practicum requirement until the second year, the request for deferral should be coordinated with the Residency Program Director and the Director of Graduate Research and Practicum Programs. Except in unusual circumstances, a deferral request should be submitted in writing by the middle of the Spring Quarter and must include a statement of intent to complete the residency at USUHS. To meet the MPH practicum requirement, substitute a residency rotation, or a portion of one, that is equivalent to 3 credit hours (minimum of 108 hours). Submit a practicum proposal form with appropriate signatures and at least three learning objectives *prior* to starting the rotation and enroll in PMO670 for the academic quarter in which you intend to complete the MPH practicum requirement. To receive credit, you will need to turn in the three- to five-page written report and either provide copies of equivalent residency practicum evaluation forms, or the MPH program forms (student performance evaluation and practicum site evaluation). In general, this process should be completed early in the second year

of the residency in order to reduce the administrative burden at the level of the Department and the Graduate Education Office. This deferral policy is only available for residents in USUHS-based programs. For students in all other residency or fellowship programs, the MPH requirements must be met during the prescribed period of time for coursework (one or two years, depending on the program), and practicum proposals will be reviewed for appropriate content and public health relevance in the usual manner.



Under what circumstances is a waiver granted for the practicum?

Waivers are extremely uncommon and will be granted only **rarely**. We feel that the MPH practicum experience is an essential component of the Graduate Programs at USUHS. There are many practicum opportunities unique to this program of study and to this geographic area. The potential return for your efforts, particularly considering the resources available in the greater Washington metropolitan area, is enormous.

According to the Council on Education in Public Health, “individual waivers should be based on well-defined criteria; the possession of a prior professional degree in another field or prior work experience that is not closely related to the academic objectives of the student’s degree program would not be sufficient reason for waiving the practice requirement.” Previous operational or clinical experience is not an automatic basis for a waiver, even if related to public health. Since the CEPH requirement states that students must be provided with opportunities to apply the knowledge and skills being acquired in MPH courses, the waiver request must be based on specific evidence of having met the intent of the MPH practicum requirement.

Under the rare circumstances in which a student in the MPH program may be eligible for a waiver of the practicum requirement, documentation should clearly indicate that the student’s previous practice experience was closely aligned with the instructional objectives of the MPH core curriculum. It is the responsibility of the student to submit the waiver request, along with proper documentation, to the PIP Program Director, by the end of the Fall Quarter. An *ad hoc* Advisory Committee will review each waiver request and make a recommendation to the PIP Program Director. The student will then receive written notification of the action taken. If the petitioner wishes to appeal the decision, the appeal goes to the Director, Graduate Programs, for resolution and final disposition.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR WAIVER REQUEST

A written request for a waiver must include a statement of the basis for the waiver request and the following documentation:

- Description of previous experience (including your specific role), inclusive dates, proportion of your time spent on practicum activities (to meet the requirement for 108 hours), location, organizational mission, public health relevance, name and title of immediate supervisor
- Statement of how the above activity used knowledge or skills taught in the core public health disciplines; the degree to which the activity was planned, supervised, and evaluated
- Performance evaluation, certificates, and/or other supporting documents, as appropriate



What is the sequence for completion of the MPH practicum and project deliverables?

- ✓ **Project Pre-proposal and Practicum Proposal**—Submit by the middle of Winter Quarter
- ✓ **Project Proposal**—Due at the end of Winter Quarter
- ✓ Register for **PMO674, MPH Independent Project**—Summer Session
- ✓ Register for **PMO670, Public Health Practicum**—Summer Session or quarter in which the practicum is to be completed
- ✓ **Project Final Report**—Due in early June (Summer Session)
- ✓ **Project Oral Presentation**—Scheduled closely following submission of final report in June (Summer Session)
- ✓ **Practicum Report**—Due about a week prior to graduation
- ✓ **Practicum Evaluation**—Two forms (student performance evaluation and practicum site evaluation) due prior to graduation
- ✓ **PMB Graduation**—Scheduled towards the end of June

APPENDIX A

INDEPENDENT PROJECT FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

- A1** MPH/MTM&H Independent Project Pre-Proposal Form
- A2** Criteria for Grading MPH/MTM&H Project Proposals
- A3** Guidelines for Independent Project Final Report
 - Format for the MPH/MTM&H Independent Project Final Report
 - How to insert page numbers in your final report using Microsoft Word
 - Cover Page Format to Use for Final Project
 - Heading and Contents for Independent Project Final Report
- A4** Scoring Criteria for MPH Independent Project Oral Presentations

MPH/MTM&H Independent Project Pre-Proposal Form

Date _____

Name of graduate student _____
(indicate graduate degrees and, for military members, rank, corps, branch of service)

Name of academic advisor _____

Name of project mentor _____

MPH area(s) of concentration _____

If in a residency program, specify which one _____

Anticipated year of graduation _____

The research question (draft): _____

Your project's public health significance: _____

Brief description of your approach to answering your research question: _____

CRITERIA FOR GRADING MPH/MTM&H PROJECT PROPOSALS

Please provide a numeric score out of a total possible score of 15 by e-mail to thooper@usuhs.mil. As the project mentor, you have taken an active role in the iterative process of developing the proposal. You are, therefore, grading the student's effort in the process, as well as the product. If you have any questions, please call 301-295-1975 or email me.

General guidelines for grading the project proposal:

- Proposal is expected to be approximately 4-5 pages in length
- Should include the following elements:
 - ✓ Background/public health significance—establish why study is being done
 - ✓ Research question or study objectives/specific aims—clearly stated
 - ✓ Methods—study design; study population; sampling method and sample size estimate or power calculation, as appropriate; data collection and management methods or sources for existing data, as appropriate; analytic approach
 - ✓ Human subjects protection issues, if applicable—part of methods
 - ✓ Timeline—study milestones and estimated timeline for completion
 - ✓ References—in general, expect 10-12 references, but may be less depending on area of study
 - ✓ Appendices, if appropriate (draft survey instrument, consent form, letter of support, data use agreement, etc.)
- Quality of the proposal
 - ✓ Scientific quality of the research plan
 - Is there a concise research question or statement of public health problem to be studied?
 - Are study design & methods appropriate to address the stated research question or public health problem
 - ✓ Technical quality of the proposal
 - Is the proposal well organized, well written, clearly presented, and free of errors in general?

Reference:

Hulley SB, Cummings SR, Browner WS, *et al.* Designing Clinical Research, 2nd edition. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2001 (ESBN 0-7817-2218-7)

Guidelines for Independent Project Final Report

- Format for the MPH/MTM&H Independent Project Final Report
- How to insert page numbers in your final report using Microsoft Word
- Cover Page Format to Use for Final Project
- Heading and Contents for Independent Project Final Report

Format for the MPH/MTM&H Independent Project Final Report

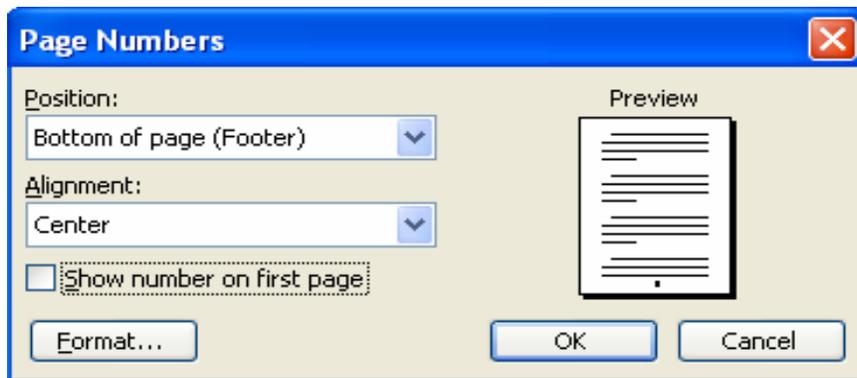
1. Turn in your project report on Blackboard as a single MicroSoft Word Document. Tables, figures, title page and body of text should all be embedded in the document.
2. The paper should be double-spaced, size 12 font. A minimum of 15 pages is expected.
3. Figures can be inserted within the body of the text or at the end of the paper. A figure number and a caption should be below each figure. The figure numbers should all be referenced within the text.
4. Cover Page: Use the Cover Page Format shown on the page following the instructions on how to insert page numbers.
5. Executive Summary or Abstract: Insert as a separate unnumbered page right after cover page.
6. Table of contents: Insert the table of contents behind the Executive Summary or Abstract and before the body of the text. Do not number the table of contents.
7. Body of Report: See "Headings for Independent Project Final Report." Begin page numbering within this section.
8. Page numbering: No page number on the title page. Abstract and table of contents should be numbered with lower case Roman numerals. To achieve this in Microsoft Word, see the following pages for instructions:

How to insert page numbers in your final report using Microsoft Word

1. Insert a section break after the last line of the Title Page by clicking on **Insert > Break > Next Page** .
2. Insert another section break after the last line of the Table of Contents.

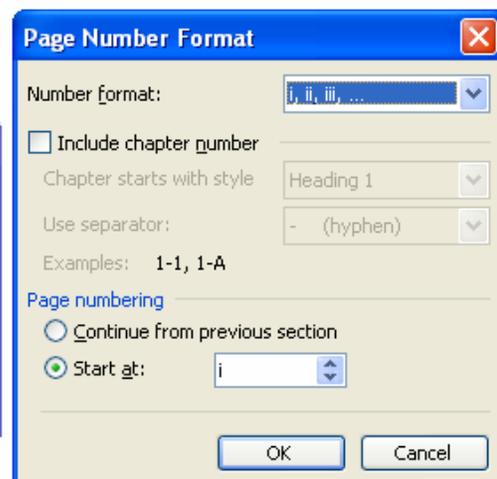
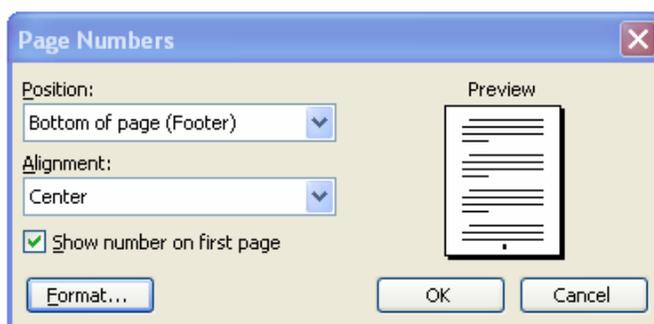
This gives you 3 “sections” in your paper: the title page, the Abstract/Table of Contents and the body of the paper. In the next steps, you will click on each section and insert page numbers.

3. Click on the **cover page** (the first section). On the **Insert** menu, click **Page Numbers**. Change alignment to **Center** and uncheck the “Show Page Number on First Page”. Click **OK**.

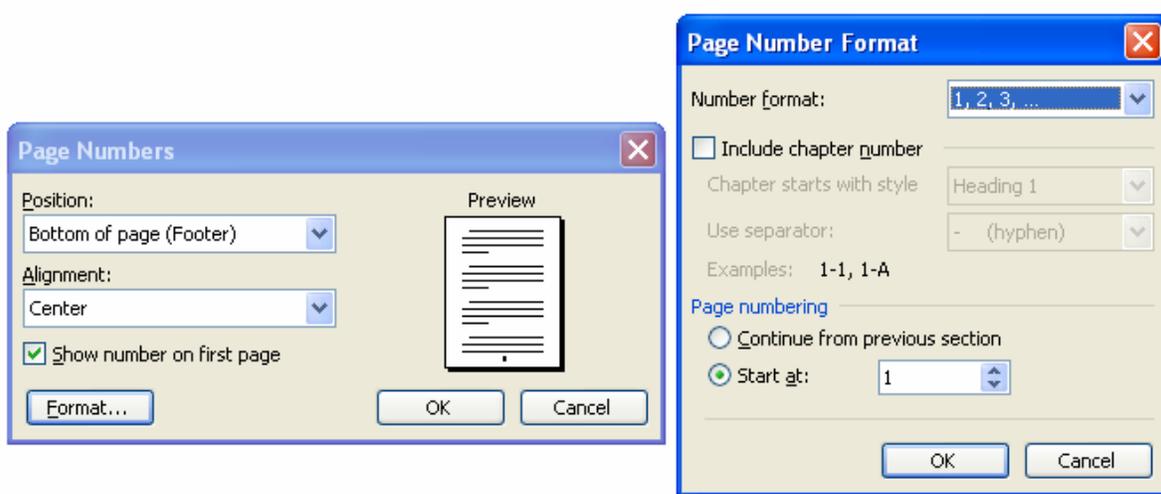


This will give you an unnumbered 1st section (cover page), which is what you want.

4. Next, click in the second section (Abstract/Table of Contents). Click on **Insert > Page Numbers**. This time check **Show number on first page**. Then click **Format...** and fill in the Page Number Format box as shown below. For this section, select a number format of “**i, ii, iii**” and **Start at**: “**i**”.



5. Next, click on the third section, the body of the text. And fill out the boxes as shown:



Another option is to use the template that will be posted on Blackboard with page numbers.

Cover Page Format to Use for Final Project:

[TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT]

**A PROJECT REPORT
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE AND BIOMETRICS OF THE
UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES
BY**

**[YOUR NAME, DEGREE(S)]
[RANK, CORPS, SERVICE – IF MILITARY]**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
[MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH/ETC.]**

**PROJECT MENTOR:
[name, degree(s), and for military, rank, corps, service]**

DATE [MONTH AND YEAR]

Headings and Contents for Independent Project Final Report

Cover Page

Executive Summary or Abstract

An executive summary is similar to an abstract, but it is used when the MPH/MTM&H independent project is part of a larger study or project or when reporting on activities. If you did a research study, use the heading “abstract.” The abstract should summarize your study objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

Table of Contents

Introduction/Background

Review of the relevant scientific literature and the potential contribution of your study to particular field of research
Public health significance
Research question or purpose of study and specific aims of your study

Methods

Description of study population
Study design
Data sources, sampling techniques, if applicable
Measures, statistical analyses, etc., as appropriate

Results

Description of study findings
Appropriate tables and graphs

Discussion

Interpretation of key findings
Comparison of your study results to other work on the research topic
Strengths and limitations of your study
Potential application of study results; recommendations

Conclusions

Concise summary of important findings, impact of study results
Recommendations for future research (policy implications, generalizability)

Acknowledgments

Contributions of study co-investigators, if applicable
Administrative support

References (those cited)

Appendices

A copy of your project approval and any other assurance documents (e.g. IRB approval) must be scanned and included as an inserted image in your final report (first page of Appendix). If applicable, include other detailed project documentation (e.g., questionnaire, abstracting form, coding manual, mathematical formulas, etc.)

SCORING CRITERIA FOR 2006 PROJECT ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Please rate the following components of the presentation: Circle from 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent)

	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
Background/public health significance	1	2	3	4
Research question/specific aims/objectives	1	2	3	4
Methods	1	2	3	4
Results*	1	2	3	4
Discussion*	1	2	3	4
Conclusions/recommendations*	1	2	3	4
	Subtotal = _____(24)		Divide by 2 = _____(12)	

*If project is a research proposal, the above components still apply, using a slightly different perspective. For example, results can include preliminary data and/or expected findings; the discussion section can focus on strengths and limitations; and conclusions can highlight potential contribution(s) to the current state of knowledge.

Please rate the quality of the presentation: Circle a number from 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent)

	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
Organization	1	2	3	4
Clarity	1	2	3	4
Appropriate use of audio-visual material	1	2	3	4
Delivery/oral presentation skills	1	2	3	4
Response to questions from the audience	1	2	3	4
Conciseness (staying within time limit)	1	2	3	4
	Subtotal = _____ (24)		Divide by 2 = _____ (12)	

How would you rate the potential impact of this project on *public health* or the *practice of military public health*? Does it pass the “so what” test? Circle a number from 1 to 5

WEAK 1 2 3 4 5 STRONG
Subtotal = _____ (5)

COMMENTS:

Does the project represent synthesis and integration of knowledge across the core disciplines of public health? Check all those that apply

___ Epi ___ Biostats ___ Behavioral Sci ___ HSA ___ EOH

Worth one point each Subtotal = _____ (5)

To what degree was it apparent from the presentation that this particular independent project required substantially more time and effort for design, development, and execution than would be expected on average?

Possibly, but not clear 0.5 Clearly evident 1

Subtotal = _____ (1)

Student Name:

Rater Number: _____ Total

Score: _____(out of 35)

APPENDIX B

MPH PRACTICUM FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

- B1** “Record of MPH Practicum Experience” and “MPH Practicum Agreement” Forms
- B2** “Practicum Site Evaluation” Form (to be completed by student)
- B3** “Student Performance Evaluation” Form (to be completed by preceptor)
- B4** Information Packet for Practicum Site Preceptors
- B5** Guidelines for Practicum Final Report
 - Format for the Final Report on the Practicum Experience
 - Cover Page Format to Use for the Practicum Final Report
 - Headings and Contents for MPH Practicum Final Report

Record of MPH Practicum Experience

Name of Graduate Student _____ Date _____

Practicum Site

Name of Agency/Organization _____

Address _____

Specific Department, Division, Unit or Program with which the student will be associated

Site Preceptor (immediate supervisor for graduate student)

Name _____

Title _____

Phone # _____ Fax # _____ E-mail _____

Period of practicum experience (dates agreed upon by organization and student)

From _____ to _____

Indicate day of each week and hours scheduled for this practicum

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICUM ACTIVITIES WITH ESTIMATED HOURS AND TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION

Description of Activities/Timeline:

Learning Objectives (minimum of 3):

Is the practicum part of your independent project? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, provide the title of your project or briefly describe:

Remember to register for PMO670, “Public Health Practicum” (3 credits), for the quarter in which you plan to complete your practicum.

The undersigned agree with the proposal for a USUHS graduate student practicum experience as outlined in this document:

Graduate Student Signature

Date

Practicum Site Preceptor Signature

Date

Director, Graduate & Practicum Programs Signature

Date

Certification of Completion of the Practicum Experience

Grade (Pass/Fail) _____

Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs, Signature

Date

MPH Practicum Agreement

Name of Graduate Student _____ Date _____

This agreement specifies the roles and responsibilities for faculty in the Department Preventive Medicine and Biometrics (PMB), Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS), and for practicum site preceptors who agree to participate in this program.

The USUHS PMB faculty advisor (Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs, or other designated faculty member) will:

1. Serve as a facilitator and provide resources for student learning
2. Approve the student's learning objectives and plans for self-evaluation
3. In some cases, initiate discussion with individuals in the community on potential practicum opportunities
4. Take primary responsibility for the evaluation process

The practicum site preceptor will:

1. Guide the development of and approve the student's learning objectives
2. Provide student with learning experiences appropriate to student's learning objectives
3. Complete and submit a student performance evaluation at the conclusion of the practicum
4. If necessary, contact the student's faculty advisor or the Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs, to resolve issues or problems as they arise
5. Make recommendations to the Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs, for improvement in the MPH practicum program

Graduate Student Signature	Print Name	Date
----------------------------	------------	------

Practicum Site Preceptor Signature	Print Name	Date
------------------------------------	------------	------

Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs, Signature	Date
---	------

USUHS MPH PRACTICUM PROGRAM

PRACTICUM SITE EVALUATION

Graduate Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Project Mentor (if project and practicum are integrated): _____

Practicum Site Coordinator (primary point of contact): _____

Practicum Site Preceptor (primary supervisor): _____

To the Student:

Please use this form to evaluate your practicum experience. Your response will help both the Practicum Site Preceptor and the Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs, to monitor the quality of the practicum experience at this particular site and to assess and improve the program content in accordance with the goals of the program. Your honest evaluation is much appreciated.

On the back of this form, please add comments to clarify or support your responses.

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS: Using the following scale, circle the response that best represents your assessment of this practicum experience:

1 = Disagree Strongly 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Agree Strongly N/A = Not Applicable

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. Orientation to the agency or site was adequate. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 2. The agency provided the agreed upon resources for meeting the learning objectives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 3. The preceptor and staff were knowledgeable and experienced. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 4. The staff were helpful and supportive. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 5. Opportunities for discussion with the preceptor and staff were adequate. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 6. Appropriate supervision was provided during the practicum activity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 7. The practicum experience met my overall expectations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 8. The practicum experience met my learning objectives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 9. The tasks I was assigned were commensurate with my capabilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 10. Opportunities were provided to apply knowledge and skills acquired from the MPH core courses. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 11. The practicum was well organized, with efficient use of scheduled time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 12. I recommend that this site be considered for future practicum placements. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |

Use this section for additional comments on items 1-12.

What was the most important thing that you learned from this practicum experience?

What did you like best about this practicum experience?

What did you like least about this practicum experience?

Describe any barriers you experienced in completing your MPH practicum.

Please provide suggestions for changes/improvements to your specific practicum activity or to the practicum program in general.

Please give the following program components an overall rating according to the following:

1=poor, 2=fair, 3=neutral, 4=good, 5=excellent

Practicum Site	1	2	3	4	5
Site Preceptor	1	2	3	4	5
USUHS Program Support	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your assistance in optimizing the quality of this program.

**USUHS MPH PRACTICUM PROGRAM
STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Name of Graduate Student: _____ Date: _____

Name of Practicum Site (organization, agency, or installation):

Practicum Site Preceptor (primary supervisor): _____

Other Point(s) of Contact: _____

To the Practicum Site Supervisor:

Please use this form to evaluate the performance of the above named graduate student. Your response will help the Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs, to assess the overall performance of USUHS graduate students placed at various practicum sites, as well as to assign pass/fail credit to individuals for the required course, "Public Health Practicum." Our goal is to optimize the learning experience for USUHS graduate students, as well as to contribute to the overall mission of host organizations by placing consummate public health professionals into those operational environments.

On the back of this form, please add comments to clarify or support your responses.

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS: Using the following scale, circle the response that best represents your perception of the abilities or behaviors demonstrated by the student:

1 = Disagree Strongly 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Agree Strongly N/A = Not Applicable

The graduate student in the practicum program:

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. Demonstrated the ability to articulate his/her goal(s)for the practicum experience in order to develop learning objectives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 2. Was knowledgeable and well-prepared. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 3. Demonstrated the ability to implement a planned course of action to meet the agreed upon learning objectives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 4. Demonstrated the ability to adapt to the organization’s procedures and culture. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 5. Was respectful and courteous in his/her interactions with colleagues, support staff, or the general public. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 6. Worked effectively within groups. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 7. Demonstrated effective time management skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 8. Demonstrated effective oral communication skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 9. Demonstrated effective written communication skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 10. Demonstrated the ability to contribute to the assessment or understanding of a public health problem or issue. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |
| 11. Met the agreed upon learning objectives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | N/A |

Please use this section for additional comments on items 1-11.

Please provide any suggestions for changes/improvements to this program.

Would you be willing to be a practicum site preceptor for other MPH students from USUHS in the future?

Yes _____ No _____

Signature of Site Preceptor

Date

Thank you for your assistance in optimizing the quality of this program.

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine

Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics

Graduate Programs in Public Health

MPH Practicum Program

INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL PRACTICUM SITE PRECEPTORS

This document is prepared to provide program information to individuals who wish to serve as a practicum site preceptor for graduate students in the Master of Public Health (MPH) Program at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) in Bethesda, Maryland. The completion of a practicum experience is a graduation requirement for all students in the MPH program. Students and practicum site preceptors jointly develop learning objectives and a scope of work for activities/tasks designed to meet those objectives. In the past, students have benefited greatly from the opportunity to apply what they have learned in the classroom to address public health issues in an operational environment, and preceptors have welcomed the opportunity to have graduate-level assistance with their projects.

Contact information:

Tomoko I. Hooper, MD, MPH

Associate Professor and Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs

Phone: 301-295-1975

Fax: 301-295-6282

E-mail: thooper@usuhs.mil

What is a practicum?

- An opportunity for graduate students to gain practical, “in the trenches,” public health experience and to apply what they have learned in the classroom
- An opportunity for organizations with a public health mission to involve graduate students in some of their ongoing tasks/projects in partnership with the Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics at USUHS
- A stand-alone activity or integrated with a more substantial independent project requirement for the MPH degree
- A planned, supervised, and evaluated activity related to public health or preventive medicine

The student is expected to spend a minimum of 108 hours on the MPH practicum requirement; more is encouraged. This includes time spent on planning, development, execution, and reporting phases. Generally, students in the USUHS MPH program complete all coursework and their practicum and independent project requirements within a 12-month period. Core MPH courses are taught during the “Pre-Fall” (six weeks in July and August) and the Fall Quarter (late August to mid-November). Typically, students start planning their practicum activities after completing the core courses. However, some students are enrolled at USUHS as other than full-time students and take courses over a two-year period. These students may choose to begin their practicum at any point during their second year. Some time is available during the Summer Session (approximately 5 weeks in May and June) for completion of the MPH practicum and project requirements. During the rest of the academic year, the time frame for practicum activities and weekly schedules will vary for each student.

The MPH practicum may form the basis for, or constitute a part of, a student's MPH independent project. The practicum and the project are two separate requirements for the MPH degree. However, they are often combined and integrated for practical reasons. When this is the case, the preceptor may serve as the student's primary project mentor. This would require a larger time commitment on the part of the site preceptor. Students are expected to spend approximately 300 hours on their MPH independent projects. The primary project mentor guides protocol development, supervises work on the project, reviews draft and final versions of the project report, and evaluates student performance (includes grading the proposal and final version of the written report). A billeted USUHS faculty member typically serves as a co-project mentor.

Who can be a practicum site preceptor?

A preceptor must have several years of experience working in a public health-related field. A graduate degree in public health is preferred but not required. The preceptor should have the requisite knowledge and skills to be able to guide and critically evaluate the student's work. If the student is an employee of the host organization, the preceptor should be other than the employee's immediate supervisor and preferably from another department within that organization.

Steps involved in serving as a practicum site preceptor:

- Formulate a preliminary scope of work for a student project.
Meet with a specific student to discuss a possible scope of work that is mutually acceptable
or
Discuss a potential project with the Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs, at USUHS before identifying a specific student. In this case, a brief written description may be sent by e-mail to the program director to be included in a reference file for our students. Another option is to participate in the "PIP" fair, a venue that brings students and preceptors together to establish partnerships in research, program evaluation, public health problem solving, or policy development. Representatives from various organizations are invited to set up informational displays at USUHS during the Fall Quarter, usually in September. Contact the Director, Graduate Research and Practicum Programs for further information.
- Once the graduate student and the site preceptor have agreed to proceed with the development of a practicum activity, the next step is to discuss the learning objectives, scope of work, and a timeframe. Obtaining preliminary approval from the PIP Program Director will streamline the process. This is also the time to initiate the process of establishing an inter-institutional agreement, if required by the University and/or the practicum site.
- Prior to beginning the practicum, the student must submit a written proposal using the "Record of MPH Practicum Experience" form. The proposal includes the name of the practicum site and site preceptor, contact information, a description of planned activities, a minimum of three learning objectives, and a timeline for completion of the practicum. The preceptor must sign both the "Record of MPH Practicum Experience" and the "MPH Practicum Agreement" forms. These forms are available electronically. Preceptors may either indicate concurrence by e-mail or send the signed documents by fax to the PIP Program Director at (301) 295-6282.
- After the necessary paperwork has been submitted, work may begin on the practicum/project. Please direct the student to appropriate references and background materials early in the

process. Meet regularly to assess progress, discuss any issues or concerns, reassess the timeline, and critique the student's performance. Please clarify both your schedule and that of your student with regard to travel, vacation, course exam dates, etc. Try to anticipate and plan for final deliverables near the end of the practicum/project period of performance.

- Please note that students are expected to include copies of reports or other materials that they produce as a part of their practicum experience in their final report. These student reports are kept on file in the PMB Department at USUHS and are available for review by other students and faculty. Therefore, you will need to inform your student of anything that you feel should not be included in the report.
- If you serve as the student's primary project mentor, you will be expected to evaluate and assign a grade for the project proposal and the project final report. Grading guidelines will be provided.
- Complete and submit the student evaluation form (attached) by fax or e-mail to the PIP Program Director at the end of the practicum.

Attachments:

Record of the MPH Practicum Experience
MPH Practicum Agreement
Student Performance Evaluation Form
Practicum Site Evaluation Form

Format for the Final Report on the Practicum Experience

The paper should be typed, double-spaced, 12-font, single sided, with one inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides of the page. The report is expected to be three to five pages in length, as a minimum. The report should be one Microsoft Word file that will be submitted on Blackboard.

Cover page: Use standard format on following page.

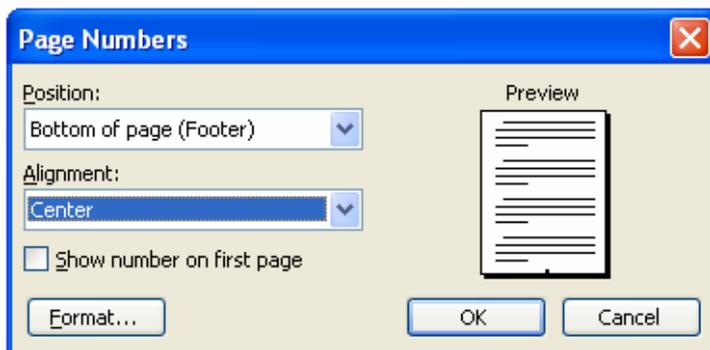
Executive Summary: Insert as separate unnumbered page right after the cover page.

Body of Report: See “Headings for MPH Practicum Final Report.”

Page numbering: Begin sequential numbering on the first page of the body of the report.

How to Number the Pages in the Practicum Final Report

1. In Microsoft Word, select **Insert > Page Numbers...**
2. Uncheck the box labeled “**Show number on the first page**”.



A template for the Practicum report will be available on Blackboard.

Cover Page Format to Use for the Practicum Final Report:

PRACTICUM FINAL REPORT

**A REPORT ON ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED AT _____ [name of organization]
BETWEEN _____ AND _____ [dates]
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE AND BIOMETRICS OF
THE UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES
BY**

**[YOUR NAME]
[RANK, CORPS, SERVICE – IF MILITARY]**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**SITE PRECEPTOR:
[name, degrees, official title, division, department, etc., and address]**

DATE [MONTH AND YEAR]

Headings and Contents for MPH Practicum Final Report

Executive Summary

An executive summary is similar to an abstract, but used to report activities or to summarize a project that is only a portion of a larger study. Indicate whether or not your MPH practicum was part of your independent project. Length is between one-half to one page.

Objectives

Taken from your proposal and revised to reflect any changes in the scope of work

Background

Significance of this activity to public health (brief)

Literature review specific to the practicum, as appropriate

Background information on the organization (mission, funding, organizational structure)

Discussion of how your practicum fit into other activities and/or projects of the organization

Description of Practicum Activities

Discuss what was done and why. Organize around key tasks of your practicum experience. Make your points in the body of the report and refer readers to the appendices for details, if appropriate.

Discussion and Conclusions

Discuss whether or not your learning objectives were met, and if so, how. Address how knowledge/skills acquired in the classroom were applied in an operational environment. What is the significance or potential impact of your work/findings on the site where work was performed? What recommendations do you have for any related work in the future? Would you recommend this practicum site to other students? Why or why not?

References (cited in your report)

Appendices

Activity log

Include any products prepared for the site preceptor and the abstract/executive summary of your MPH project, if combined with your practicum.

APPENDIX C

USUHS **OFFICE OF RESEARCH (REA)** **FORMS**

C1: USUHS Form 3202

C2: USUHS Form 3204

Download current forms from the REA website:

<http://www.usuhs.mil/research/ElectronicForms.htm>

Project Number:
(REA will assign)
Project Title:

Form 3202

SECTION A: STUDENT/RESIDENT INVESTIGATOR INFORMATION

1. Name (Last, First, MI):			
2. Percent Effort:		% (Effort on awarded projects and other activities may not exceed 100%)	
3. USUHS Department:			
4. Telephone:	Office:	Fax:	E-mail:
5. USUHS Building/ Room No.		Lab Room Number(s):	
6. Off-Site Address:			
7. Type of Student/Resident:	Student Type (select one)		Year of the project (select one)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student (Ph.D) or (Dr.P.H)		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or <input type="checkbox"/> 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student (Masters)		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or <input type="checkbox"/> 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Student		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or <input type="checkbox"/> 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nursing Master		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or <input type="checkbox"/> 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Physician Assigned for Graduate Medical		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or <input type="checkbox"/> 2
	USUHS Billet Number		

SECTION B: SIGNATURES

The following signatures attest to the validity of the above information:

<p>_____ Student/Resident Investigator (Signature and Date)</p>	<p>_____ Research Advisor (Signature and Date)</p>
<p>_____ Department Chair/Program Director (Type or Print)</p>	<p>_____ Department Chair/Program Director (Signature and Date)</p>
<p>If Graduate Student</p> <p>_____ (Associate Dean for Graduate Education) (Signature and Date)</p> <p>_____ (Associate Dean for Graduate Education) (Type or Print)</p>	<p>If Nursing Student</p> <p>_____ (Dean, Graduate School of Nursing) (Signature and Date)</p> <p>_____ (Dean, Graduate School of Nursing) (Type or Print)</p>
<p>If Medical Student (both signatures are required)</p> <p>_____ (Dean, School of Medicine) (Signature and Date)</p> <p>_____ (Dean, School of Medicine) (Type or Print)</p>	
<p>If Physician Assigned for Graduate Medical Education</p> <p>_____ (Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education) (Type or Print)</p> <p>_____ (Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education) (Signature and Date)</p>	
<p>In light of the above signatures, the project is approved.</p> <p>_____ USUHS Vice President for Research Date</p>	

SECTION C: RESEARCH ADVISOR INFORMATION

8. Name (Last, First, MI): (same as signature in Section B)			
9. USUHS Department:			
10. Telephone:	Office:	Fax:	E-mail:
11. USUHS Building/ Room No.		Lab Room Number(s):	

SECTION D: PROJECT INFORMATION

12.	Is a summary of your research plan attached? (The research summary should include the background, hypothesis, methodology and data analysis to be used, limited to two pages with a 12-point font size)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No										
13.	Is this research project related to an active research project of the advisor identified in Section B? If yes, complete this Part 13; if no, proceed to Part 14.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No										
	Project Number: _____ Project Title: _____ Project Start Date: _____ Project End Date: _____											
14.	Anticipated Period of Performance: _____ Project Start Date: _____ Project End Date: _____											
15.	List all performance sites and indicate percentage of the work being performed at each site: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">Performance Site (Should not exceed 100%)</th> <th style="width: 20%;">% of Work</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>USUHS (on-campus space and/or rented off-campus space)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other off-site location(s): _____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Performance Site (Should not exceed 100%)	% of Work	USUHS (on-campus space and/or rented off-campus space)	_____	Other off-site location(s): _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Performance Site (Should not exceed 100%)	% of Work											
USUHS (on-campus space and/or rented off-campus space)	_____											
Other off-site location(s): _____	_____											
_____	_____											
_____	_____											
16.	If this is year two of the project, is a USUHS Form 3210, Progress Report, attached?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No										
17.	Does this project involve any classified information? (Contact the USUHS Security Office for guidance)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No										
18.	Does this project involve research with foreign work? (Contact the Clinical Affairs Office for guidance)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No										
19.	What is the funding source? <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Education Office</td> <td style="width: 30%;"><input type="checkbox"/> USUHS Department/Program (Specify) _____</td> <td style="width: 40%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Graduate School of Nursing</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Federal (specify): _____</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> USUHS Intramural</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other External Agency (Specify) _____</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Education Office	<input type="checkbox"/> USUHS Department/Program (Specify) _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate School of Nursing	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal (specify): _____		<input type="checkbox"/> USUHS Intramural	<input type="checkbox"/> Other External Agency (Specify) _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Education Office	<input type="checkbox"/> USUHS Department/Program (Specify) _____											
<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate School of Nursing	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal (specify): _____											
<input type="checkbox"/> USUHS Intramural	<input type="checkbox"/> Other External Agency (Specify) _____											
20.	If "Federal" or "Other External Agency" is marked, does the Sponsor allow indirect cost?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No										
21.	If yes what is the allowable rate?	%										
22.	List budget breakdown below: (May not include non-mission essential travel, secretarial/administrative support, or scientific conferences)											
	<u>Item Description</u>	<u>Dollar Amount</u>										
a.	_____	\$										
b.	_____	\$										
c.	_____	\$										
d.	_____	\$										
e.	_____	\$										
f.	_____	\$										

Grand total (if more space is needed, attach an additional sheet on plain paper; include here with grand total)

\$

SECTION E: ASSURANCE COMPLIANCE

GENERAL

23. If this is an annual assurance supplement (year two of the project), mark the "Change" box in each assurance section if work will deviate from work previously approved. Attach the appropriate assurance form(s), approval notification or forward the appropriate form directly to the proper committee as directed. If no change has occurred, mark the "No Change" box.

IRB

24. Does this project involve human research? (including human cells, tissues or fluids, surveys or database use or development) (Submit the USUHS Form 3204: Research Involving Human Subjects (new or modification/addendum) with the application to REA, Room A1032). Yes No Change No Change N/A

25. Is this project specifically covered in all relevant details by the preexisting IRB approval of your advisor's protocol identified in Section C. Yes No Change No Change N/A

a. If yes, attach a completed USUHS Form 3204, Research Involving Human Subjects, a copy of the USUHS approval letter and, if applicable, a copy of the approved informed consent.

b. If no, attach a completed USUHS Form 3204, Research Involving Human Subjects.

c. If Change, contact the IRB Office for guidance.

26. Does this project involve the study of existing data? Yes No Change No Change N/A
If yes, list the data source(s) below:
Location: _____
Location: _____

27. Does this project involve human research at a non-USUHS location(s)? If yes, list the location(s) below and attach a copy of the approval letter from each off-site location: Yes No Change No Change
Location: _____
Location: _____

IACUC

28. Does this project involve animal research at USUHS? Yes No Change No Change

29. Is this project specifically covered by the preexisting IACUC approval of the advisor's protocol identified in Section C? Yes No Change No Change N/A

a. If yes, complete Number 30 of this section.

b. If no, forward a completed USUHS Form 3206, Animal Study Proposal to DLAM.

c. If Change, contact DLAM for guidance.

30. Have you submitted USUHS Form 3206C, Conveyance with Standard Animal Use Procedures, to DLAM to obtain a conveyance approval? List the advisor's Animal Protocol Number (APN) and Title below: Yes No Change No Change N/A
Animal Protocol Number: _____
Animal Protocol Title: _____

31. If you have submitted your USUHS Form 3206, Animal Study Proposal, to DLAM and have been issued an APN or if this is the second year of the project, list your APN and Animal Protocol Title below:
Animal Protocol Number: _____
Animal Protocol Title: _____

32. Does this project involve animal research at a Non-USUHS location, including AFFRI? If yes, list the location(s) below and attach a copy of the approval letter from each off-site location: Yes No Change No Change
Location: _____
Location: _____

BIOSAFETY

Environmental Safety Certificate

33. **Does this project involve any of the following safety hazards?** (Mark all that apply) Yes No Change No Change

Dangerous Materials **Controlled Substances** **Extremely Hazardous Chemicals**
 Class 3 or 4 Lasers **High Intensity (>85 decibels) Sound** (If you checked this box please attach a list.)
 Human Blood, Tissue, or Body Fluids **Other:**

34. Have you discussed this requirement with the Pharmacy? Yes No N/A

35. Is this project specifically covered by the preexisting Biosafety approval of your advisor's protocol identified in Section C? Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

36. Is Appendix 4, Biosafety Committee Information, attached? Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

37. Does this project involve biosafety research at AFFRI? **If yes, attach a copy of the approval notification.** Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

Recombinant DNA or DNA

38. **Does this project involve the use of recombinant preparations?** Yes No Change No Change

39. Is this project specifically covered by the preexisting rDNA/DNA approval of your advisor's protocol identified in Section C? Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

40. Is Appendix 4, Biosafety Committee Information, attached? Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

41. Does this project involve rDNA or DNA research at AFFRI? **If yes, attach a copy of the approval notification.** Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

CDC Select Agents

42. **Does this project involve the use of CDC select agents?** Yes No Change No Change

43. Is this project specifically covered by the preexisting CDC approval of your advisor's protocol identified in Section C? Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

44. Is Appendix 4, Biosafety Committee Information, attached? Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

45. Does this project involve CDC research at AFFRI? **If yes, attach a copy of the approval notification.** Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

Radioactive Materials

46. Does this project involve the use of radioactive materials? Yes No Change No Change

47. Is this project specifically covered by the preexisting radioactive materials approval of your advisor's protocol identified in Section C? Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

48. Is Appendix 5, Radiation Safety Committee Information, attached? Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

49. Does this project involve radioactive materials research at AFFRI? **If yes, attach a copy of the approval notification.** Yes No Change
 No Change N/A

ANATOMIC MATERIAL USE COMMITTEE

50. Does your research involve the use of human cadaver material? Yes No Change No Change

SECTION F: PROJECT CLOSEOUT PROCEDURES

Upon completion of this project, a Final Progress Report must be submitted to the Office of Research.

Submit the USUHS Form 3210 with appropriate signatures (unless other arrangements have been made with the Office of Research). **Attach a copy of your abstract. The University assurance offices may require additional closeout documents** (contact the administrative office of each committee to determine). **All USUHS forms can be downloaded from the Office of Research website at www.usuhs.mil/research/index2.html.**



USUHS FORM 3204
RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS
(new or modification/addendum)

REA Date Stamp

Protocol No.: _____

Principal Investigator: _____

Department: _____ Phone _____

E-Mail: _____ Pager or Other Phone Number _____

Project Title: _____

PLEASE PROVIDE RESPONSES TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. _____ New protocol or _____ Modification/Addendum
2. Indicate the pages of proposal specifically applicable to the involvement or enrollment of volunteers, private information, or human-derived products.
Pages: _____
3. Check procedure(s) to be used:
 - _____ Use of genetic testing or DNA analysis.
 - _____ Use of blood or blood products: () Blood Draw () Blood Bank () Other
 - _____ Use of human tissue and/or bodily fluids including excreta and external secretions (sweat, saliva, amniotic fluid at the time of rupture of membrane).
 - _____ Hair and/or nail clippings.
 - _____ Teeth and/or dental material including plaque and calculus.
 - _____ Prospective collection and use of donated, pathological and/or diagnostic specimens. **(Refer to question 15)**
 - _____ Use of existing pathological and/or diagnostic specimens.
 - From where are these specimens being obtained?
 - Can the subjects from whom these specimens were obtained be identified directly or by the use of encoded identifiers?
() Yes () No **(Refer to question 15)**
 - _____ Use of human cell lines: () Primary () Immortalized
 - _____ Moderate exercise by healthy volunteers.
 - _____ Recording of data using noninvasive procedures used in clinical practice.
 - Identify _____.
 - _____ Study of existing data, documents, and/or records.
 - From where are these data being obtained?
 - Can the subjects from whom these data were obtained be identified directly or by the use of encoded identifiers?
() Yes () No

_____ Survey, interview, or educational (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement) test or procedures or observation of public behavior.

- Can the subjects be identified directly or by identifiers?
() Yes () No

- Do the data collected involve sensitive information (e.g., drug and alcohol use, sexual practices, child or spousal abuse, or other information that could be criminal or damaging to one's financial or social standing, employability, insurability, or psychological well-being)?
() Yes () No

_____ Use of normal educational practices in accepted educational settings such as instructional strategies, effectiveness of or comparison among instructional techniques, curricula or classroom management methods.

_____ Use of taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies?

4. Indicate the age and sex as well as the physical and psychiatric condition of the volunteers to be enrolled.

Age _____

Gender: _____

Physical & psychiatric condition:

5. Indicate the total number and rate of enrollment of volunteers.

Total number: _____ (entire project)

Rate: _____ (#/ time period)

6. If applicable, explain with a compelling rationale the exclusion or under representation of one gender and/or minorities from the subject population.

7. Explain the inclusion of any vulnerable population (e.g., children, pregnant women, prisoners, cognitively impaired persons) and why that population is being studied.

8. State how physical and psychiatric condition will be determined and by whom.

9. If normal volunteers are to be enrolled, state how this will be determined.

10. Describe the status of the volunteers relative to the principal investigator and/or USUHS (e.g., patient at Walter Reed, active duty, students, civilian employees, etc.)

11. Describe the status of the volunteer's Attending Physician to the project including his or her role in safeguarding the rights of the volunteer.

12. Identify the specific procedures, issues, and/or experimental drug administration involving the volunteers that are important for the IRB to consider. Describe

possible risks, ethical issues, and/or side effects for each. Factors to consider including, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. What is the volunteer being asked to do which they would not be doing unless part of this research project?
 - B. Does the research collect personally sensitive information (e.g., drug and alcohol use, sexual practices, child abuse)? If so, how is confidentially protected?
 - C. Does the research involve deception of the subject? If so, how is the subject debriefed after completion of the project?
13. If this study involves the administration of drugs not approved by the FDA, state how approval will be obtained.
 14. Do any of the investigators have an equity or consultative relationship with a non-USUHS source related to this protocol which might be considered to be a conflict of interest? (If yes, please include a statement of disclosure.)
 15. Unless otherwise contained in your protocol, if using prospectively collected tissue, or any tissue linked to subject/patient identifiers, indicate:
 - A. How, where, and for how long will tissue/samples be stored?
 - B. Will patient data that can or will be linked to the tissue/samples be collected?
 - C. Will linkage to subjects be maintained or will samples be delinked?
 - D. Will any tissue/samples be left over at the end of the study and if so, what will be done with the tissue/samples?
 16. Describe fully the modification(s) to your existing protocol to include rationale, procedures, numbers of subjects, etc. (Use blank pages if additional space is required.)

I have read and will comply with USUHS Instruction 3201, "The Use of Human Volunteers in Research at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences," March 1999.

I have read, understood, and will comply with the tenets contained in the Belmont Report (“Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research,” The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, April 18, 1979. URL: <http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.htm/>).

Principal Investigator (signature)

Date

APPENDIX D

AUTHORSHIP GUIDELINES **AND** **MANUSCRIPT CLEARANCE FORM**

D1: Authorship Guidelines

D2: Manuscript Clearance Form

Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics Authorship Guidelines

These guidelines have been adapted from a memorandum to the faculty, Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics, dated 30 July 2001, and approved for implementation by the Chair of the Department.

For a manuscript that is substantially based on a graduate student's dissertation/thesis or independent research project that is conceived, designed, and conducted by the student, he or she will be listed as the primary or first author. Typically, a member of the USUHS faculty will serve as a project mentor or advisor. As a mentor, the faculty member works closely with the student on all phases of the research project, including directing, analyzing, writing, and drawing conclusions. Therefore, the mentor is usually considered the principal "scientific leader" and is listed as the last author.

To qualify as an author on a manuscript, an individual must have contributed to the following aspects of the project, specifically combining task (1) and (4) or task (3) and (4). Every "author" must have participated in writing and editing the paper.

1. Concept and design
2. Research and resources
3. Analysis and interpretation
4. Writing and editing

Individuals who make a contribution to only one of the above four aspects of manuscript preparation should be acknowledged in the paper. Similarly, individuals who participate in more than one aspect, but not in writing and editing, should be placed in the "acknowledgement" category. Avoid awarding "honorary authorship." It is unfair and dilutes credit from those who deserve authorship.

In some instances, an individual may have contributed much more than technical support to the project and participated in some planning, data interpretation, and writing pertaining to their section of the paper. Biostatisticians or health care providers may fall into this category.

Author sequence or "author string" guidelines:

- Authorship issues should be addressed in the early phases of project design and development
- The first author has the key role in conducting the study, including data analysis and first draft of the manuscript
- The last author is almost always the "scientific leader" of the project (e.g., principal investigator of the grant under which the first author does the investigation or the project mentor)
- Other authors are listed by degree of participation in decreasing order
- When two or more individuals have made equal contributions to the paper, additional weight may be given to other considerations, such as whether or not faculty are in a tenure track position, etc.

Submission of manuscript for Departmental clearance/approval:

- Manuscripts to be submitted for publication require Departmental and possibly University, DoD, or higher-level clearance or approval (depending on content)
- Enumeration of author contributions should be attached to the clearance package

Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences
Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics
USUHS Dept PMB Rm A1044
4301 Jones Bridge Road
Bethesda, MD 20814-4799

DATE

**Manuscript Approval or Clearance
INITIATOR**

1. USU Principal Author:
2. Faculty/Mentor Advisor:
3. Faculty Academic Title:
4. Institution: School of Medicine, Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics
5. Faculty Phone:
6. Type of Publication (Manuscript, Abstract, Poster, etc):
7. Publication Title and Author(s):
8. Enumeration of Author Contributions: Attach as separate document to this package (see memorandum for PMB faculty on authorship guidelines, dated 30 July 2001)
9. Intended Journal, Meeting, Forum, etc. and Date:
10. Approval required by:
11. Date submitted for Department approval:

CHAIR OR DEPARTMENT HEAD APPROVAL

1. Name: Gerald V. Quinnan, Jr., M.D., CAPT, USPHS
2. **School of Medicine, Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics**
3. Date Submitted for USU approval:
4. Higher approval/clearance required (for University, DoD, or US Governmental-level policy, communication systems or weapons issues review*)

Note: *It is DoD policy that clearance of information or material shall be granted if classified areas are not jeopardized, and the author accurately portrays official policy, even if the author takes issue with that policy. Material officially representing the view or position of the University, DoD, or the Government is subject to editing or modification by the approving authority.*

Chair or Department Head Approval

Gerald V. Quinnan, Jr., M.D.
CAPT, USPHS
Professor and Chair

Date

(if approval or clearance is required, see other side of form)

DEAN APPROVAL

1. Name: Larry W. Laughlin, M.D., Ph.D.
2. Dean, F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine
3. Date : _____

4. Higher approval/clearance required (for university- DoD or US Governmental-level policy, communication systems or weapons issues review*)

Note: *It is DoD policy that clearance of information or material shall be granted if classified areas are not jeopardized, and the authors accurately portrays official policy, even if the author takes issue with that policy. Material officially representing the view or position of the University, DoD, or the Government is subject to editing or modification by the approving authority.*

- Dean Approval

Larry W. Laughlin, M.D., Ph.D.
Dean, SOM

DIRECTORY, UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS (OUA) ACTION

1. Name : _____
2. Date : _____

3. USU approved or

DoD approval/clearance required

4. Submitted to DoD (Health Affairs) on: _____

Or

Submitted to DoD (Public Affairs) on: _____

5. DoD approved/cleared (as written) or DoD approved/cleared (with changes)

6. DoD clearance/date: _____

7. DoD disapproval/date: _____

Director, OUA Signature/Date