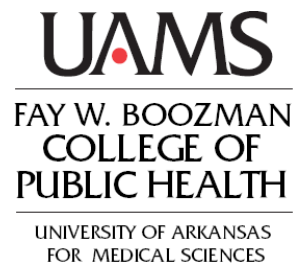


Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health
DrPH Program in Public Health Leadership Policies
and Guidelines for the Leadership Practicum Version

2.2

Winter
2019



I. Definition and Overview of the DrPH Leadership Practicum

The purpose of the Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health (COPH) DrPH Program in Public Health Leadership is to prepare students for careers in senior leadership positions within public health settings by delivering excellent education in public health science, practice, management, and leadership. The DrPH curriculum includes formal coursework along with field-based practical experiences that allow students to synthesize and apply knowledge and skills encountered in the classroom.

The DrPH Leadership Practicum allows students to experience the practice of leadership in real-world public health settings and to apply their knowledge of public health science, practice, and leadership strategies in addressing actual public health problems. Practicum activities take place within one or more organized public health settings such as governmental health agencies (federal, state, or local), community organizations, health care institutions (hospitals, community mental health centers, etc.), foundations, advocacy groups, educational institutions, research organizations, or other organized entities that engage in leadership and practice to address public health problems. They should allow the student to work with stakeholders, including researchers, practitioners, community leaders, community residents, and other partners, to promote health improvement and the elimination of health inequities. Through the practicum, the student will work directly with a site supervisor who has significant leadership and management responsibilities within the public health setting.

The activities performed by the student during the practicum must inform and advance the work of the site supervisor and/or his or her organization while also allowing the student to gain new knowledge and insight into the practice of public health leadership. Shadowing the site supervisor and/or other leaders in the practicum setting is likely to make up part of the practicum experience; however, shadowing alone is not sufficient for successful completion of the practicum. The practicum is a service-learning experience for which students should consider the contribution their activities will make to the practicum setting as well as activities that will be undertaken to help the student achieve mastery of key competencies.

Practicum activities provide the student with opportunities to learn about leadership dynamics and processes within new organizational cultures and institutional environments. To this end, practicum activities must take place outside the student's current and prior place(s) of work, including institutions where the student has spent a significant amount of time as a paid staff member or volunteer. As such, the practicum is intended to be a new learning opportunity that will enhance students' readiness to embark on their public health leadership careers.

Students may integrate and apply leadership skills and strategies into their Practicum through various approaches, including: (1) playing a direct leadership role in designing, implementing, and/or evaluating responses to a public health problem of interest, and then reflecting on the successes and failures of these leadership experiences; and (2) observing, informing, and reflecting on the leadership roles played by the site supervisor and others within the public health setting. Students must be able to articulate and discuss the implications for future efforts to lead change at organizational, community, and/or policy levels arising from the observations and experiences of their practicum activities.

Students are required to complete one practicum project, representing a **minimum** of 3 credit hours of academic work. Each 3 hours of practicum work must represent a minimum of 270 hours, including work in the field with the site supervisor and her/his organization, and time spent by the student performing analyses, synthesizing, reflecting, and writing reports. **The Practicum contact hours represent minimum expectations; it is anticipated that many students will devote substantially more time and effort to their practicum activities in order to accomplish their learning objectives and leadership experiences successfully.**

The practicum project must generate, at a minimum, a Practicum Reflections Report (PRR) that summarizes and critiques the practice experiences and derives implications and/or recommendations for leading change within the relevant public health practice setting(s). The PRR should emphasize the leadership issues, experiences, and implications examined through the project, including any leadership roles played directly by the student during the project activities, and any additional opportunities for the exercise of leadership in future activities related to the project or problem. The practicum project may also generate written products that are of use to the practicum site. It is anticipated that in many cases, students will use their practicum experience and written product as

foundational activities for their dissertation project.

II. Prerequisites

Students are eligible to begin work on their practicum upon completion of the following prerequisites:

- Successful completion of a minimum of 33 credit hours of research, program planning, evaluation, and leadership courses, excluding credits earned for required or recommended seminars.
- Student must be in good academic standing with a grade point average of at least 3.0.
- A passing score on the DrPH Qualifying Examination.
- Completion of the Doctoral Projects Information Meeting

III. Doctoral Project Information Meeting

Each year the DrPH Program co-Directors will hold at least one information meeting to discuss the purpose, processes, and procedures of the DrPH Practicum and Dissertation Projects. The information meeting will be led by the DrPH Program co-Directors and at least one DrPH student who is in the process of completing the dissertation. Students will be able to review policy documents and an informational slide presentation prior to the meeting; the 2-hour meeting will allow time for discussion of processes and questions that the students may have. All DrPH students will be encouraged to attend the meeting each year, so that experiences can be shared among students and emerging questions can be addressed. Each DrPH student will be required attend at least one meeting prior to establishing a Practicum/Dissertation Planning Committee (see below) and completing a practicum project.

IV. Selection of Practicum Setting and Practicum Advisors

For each practicum project, the DrPH student is responsible for identifying an appropriate setting for their practicum activities and for selecting and securing a commitment from the appropriate practicum advisors. To assist in this process, each student will convene a Practicum/Dissertation Planning (PDP) Committee during the Fall semester prior to the summer in which the student expects to take the comprehensive examination. This committee will include 3 faculty, 2 of whom must be primary COPH faculty. The DrPH program co-Directors will serve as ad hoc members of the committee. Committee membership must be approved by the DrPH program co-Directors. The PDP Committee is responsible for: (1) assisting the student in brainstorming possibilities for practicum activities; (2) identifying opportunities based on each student's interests and career goals; (3) identifying an appropriate practicum setting; and (4) identifying an appropriate practicum academic advisor. In particular, students are encouraged to work with the PDP Committee to consider how the practicum may contribute to overall competency development, career aspirations, and the potential dissertation project. Nevertheless, the student must assume responsibility for identifying viable practicum settings and advisors and for obtaining approval of these settings and individuals from the DrPH program.

To be viable, a practicum setting must be an **organized public health setting** defined as an institution or organization that engages in activities to address public health issues. Such settings may include federal, state, local or international health agencies, community-based organizations, health care institutions, foundations, advocacy groups, educational institutions, research organizations, or multi-organizational coalitions and networks that work to address health issues. The organizational setting identified by the student should have a substantive connection to one or more public health problem(s) or issue(s) of interest to the student—that is, the ability to influence the problem or issue through advocacy, education, research, policy development, program implementation, or service delivery.

After identifying a viable practicum setting, the student must identify individuals who are willing and able to serve as the student's practicum advisors. Two practicum advisors are required for each practicum project:

(1) a **practicum academic advisor** who is a member of the COPH faculty and is familiar with the public health setting and public health issues of interest to the student; and

② a **practicum site supervisor** who has significant leadership and manage responsibilities within the public health setting of interest to the student.

Students should identify their practicum academic advisor first. The practicum academic advisor must hold a faculty appointment at the rank of assistant professor or higher within the CPH; however, this individual need not be the same faculty member who serves as the student's mentor in the DrPH program and need not be a member of the PDP Committee at its inception. The practicum academic advisor is responsible for: (1) assisting the student in refining their ideas for practicum settings and site supervisors, (2) shaping the development of the student's practicum plan; (3) overseeing the student's progress toward completion of the practicum; and (4) evaluating the student's practicum written product and overall academic performance in the practicum.

Once the practicum academic advisor has been identified, the student should work with that advisor and the PDP Committee to identify an appropriate practicum site supervisor. The practicum site supervisor should occupy a position of leadership within the public health setting of interest to the student. The site supervisor must agree to assume the following responsibilities with respect to a student's practicum project: (1) provide input into the development of the student's practicum plan and proposed activities, with a specific focus on activities that will contribute to the mission of the public health setting; (2) oversee the student's progress on practicum activities performed within the public health setting, and provide the student with feedback on this progress; and (3) evaluate the student's contribution to the public health setting through the practicum activities.

Both the practicum site supervisor and academic advisor identified by the DrPH student must be approved by the DrPH program director or co-directors before the student is allowed to register for practicum hours. The approval process is outlined in Section VIII below. **Students are urged to work with the PDP Committee to identify practicum settings and advisors well in advance of the proposed semester(s) of practicum activity.**

V. Practicum Plan

For each practicum project, students must prepare and submit a detailed practicum plan specifying the activities to be accomplished and how those activities will benefit the site and the student's competency development. The practicum plan must contain the following elements:

- A descriptive and succinct title;
- A statement of the public health problem(s) or issue(s) of interest that will be addressed through the practicum experience;
- A description of the proposed practice setting and site supervisor(s), along with a statement of rationale that explains how the setting and site supervisor relates to the public health problem(s) of interest, and how the setting represents a new institutional environment that is distinct from the student's current and prior work settings;
Identification of six or more DrPH program competencies that will be addressed by the completion of the practicum activities;
- An outline of major activities that will be performed and any products that will be generated by the student during the practicum;
- A matrix indicating how each activity will contribute to the development of one or more of the identified competencies;
- An anticipated timeline of major activities to be performed and products to be produced by student;
- Description of the nature, frequency, and mechanisms of interaction between the student, the site supervisor, and the practicum academic advisor;
 - A statement of the number of credit hours required to complete practicum activities;
 - A statement of how the proposed work will benefit the practice setting(s) of interest; and
 - A description of any written products that will be prepared and submitted to the practicum site supervisor as part of the practicum activities.

Each student will develop a draft of his/her practicum plan under the guidance of the practicum academic advisor and site supervisor. Members of the PDP Committee may assist as needed. The plan must include all of the elements outlined above and be agreed upon by all parties. The student will then complete the DrPH Practicum Form and append the final practicum plan along with other required elements indicated on the form. The student must obtain the signatures of the proposed practicum site supervisor and the practicum academic advisor on this form, and then forward to the DrPH Program director(s) for review and approval. The DrPH Program director(s) will take one of the following actions on the plan: (1) approve the practicum plan as proposed; (2) approve the practicum plan with comments that indicate required modifications that must be made to the plan prior to implementation; or (3) reject the practicum plan with comments that indicate reasons for rejection and issues that must be addressed in a resubmission. The director(s) may consult with other members of the DrPH Faculty Leadership Committee if needed, but will notify the student and the practicum academic advisor immediately if there are concerns about the plan.

Before registering for practicum hours, each student must have a completed and approved practicum plan along with a signed and approved DrPH Practicum Registration Form. Students are required to produce a separate practicum plan for each of their practicum projects. Each practicum plan must include all of the elements outlined above. The student must receive approval for each plan prior to beginning work on each project.

VI. Practicum Implementation

Students may initiate practicum activities in accordance with their plan once they have received program director approval of their practicum plan, registered for the appropriate number of practicum hours, and completed all requirements necessary for IRB approval of practicum activities (if any activities involve research on human subjects). At the discretion of the DrPH Program Co-Directors, a student may be allowed to initiate practicum activities before registering for practicum hours, as long as the practicum plan has been approved. While implementing practicum activities, students must stay in close communication with the practicum site supervisor and practicum academic advisor, and adhere to the agreed-upon schedule of meetings with these individuals.

VII. Practicum Reflection Report

At the conclusion of each practicum project, students must generate a reflection report that critically reviews and reflects upon their practice experiences and derives implications and/or recommendations for leading change within the relevant public health practice setting(s). The reflection report should accomplish the following aims: (1) briefly identify the public health issue of interest and outline practicum goals and activities; (2) summarize the activities undertaken during the practicum; and (3) identify and describe important leadership issues encountered during the practice experience. The types of leadership issues examined in the written product are expected to vary widely across practice settings and projects, and may include issues related to communication, negotiation, cooperation and collective action, conflict resolution, organizational change, policy change, community development, education and human capital development, and group deliberation and decision-making.

The reflection report should be completed during the final phase of the practicum project, while the student is completing the last remaining activities scheduled as part of the practicum plan. Students may include major products produced during the practicum as an appendix to the practicum reflection report if such products are deemed relevant by the practicum site supervisor and/or practicum academic advisor. These products may include strategic planning documents, issue briefs, or policy memoranda.

Students cannot achieve a passing grade on their practicum project until the reflection report is completed successfully. Students who are unable complete their practicum activities and reflection report by the end of the semester will be assigned a placeholder grade, and must register for additional practicum credit hours in the subsequent semester in order to complete activities. Students must consult with their practicum academic advisor

to determine the appropriate number of additional practicum credit hours needed to complete the practicum project in the subsequent semester.

VIII. Practicum Evaluation

Each practicum project will be evaluated from a full range of stakeholder perspectives, including those of the student, site supervisor(s) and practicum academic advisor. The student will complete an evaluation of their practicum experience—including an analysis of the setting, the site supervisor, the set of activities undertaken, and a self-assessment of student performance—and submit it to the academic advisor prior to the completion of the final allotment of practicum hours. The student evaluation will focus on (1) the extent to which competencies were addressed and competency development was supported during the course of the practicum, and (2) the actions of the student, site supervisor(s), and practicum academic advisor that facilitated and/or inhibited achievement of competency development. Practicum site supervisor(s) will complete an evaluation of the student, focusing on progress made toward mastering competencies, achievement of practicum goals, and contributions made by the student to the setting and its mission. The practicum academic advisor's evaluation of the student's performance in the practicum experience will focus on achievement of learning objectives and the student's demonstrated ability to apply public health science, practice, and leadership competencies to the relevant public health setting(s).

The practicum experience will be graded on a pass/fail basis. The practicum academic advisor will have the responsibility for assigning the final practicum grade based on evaluation findings provided by the student, the practicum site supervisor(s), and the practicum academic advisor.

IX. Recommended Sequence of Events for the Successful Practicum

A successful practicum will most likely follow the sequence of events outlined below. Students who proceed to activities that are described later in the sequence prior to completing earlier activities may be at risk for delays in the approval or implementation of their practicum. Students who encounter difficulties in completing this sequence of events are strongly encouraged to consult with their practicum academic advisor, faculty mentor and/or program co-directors as early as possible, to seek guidance and support.

X. Optional Management Practicum

For those students who have limited experience working in public health settings prior to enrollment in the DrPH program, it is strongly recommended that the student complete an additional management practicum at the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH). This practicum will involve a minimum of 270 contact hours and the completion of special projects identified by the ADH practicum site supervisor. By agreement with the ADH, the practicum site supervisor will be an experienced public health professional at the level of branch chief or higher within the organization. The management practicum can be counted as elective hours for the completion of the DrPH degree or as additional practicum hours, at the discretion of the student and the DrPH Program Director(s). The management practicum can be requested by the student or recommended by the DrPH Program Director(s) after a review of the student's career goals and previous experience. Scheduling of the management practicum will be completed by the DrPH Program Director(s) in consultation with ADH representatives to the Joint Oversight Committee; the practicum plan for the optional management practicum will be developed by the student, the practicum site supervisor, and the DrPH Program Director(s).

College of Public Health Registration Form

COPH 6989: Doctoral Practicum

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USE THIS FORM ONLY.

DrPH students are required to complete one or more practicum projects that total a minimum of 3 credit hours of Doctoral Practicum.

Student Name: _____ ID Number: _____ Date: _____

Number of practicum credit hours for this registration term: _____ Semester: _____ Year: _____

Practicum Academic Advisor (& Department): _____

Name of Practicum Site/Organization: _____ Site Supervisor(s): _____

Title of Practicum: _____

Total number of hours successfully completed in the COPH DrPH program, to date: _____

Have you passed DrPH Qualifying Examination? _____

Proposed enrollment hours for this registration term (excluding the Doctoral Practicum): _____

A PRACTICUM PLAN THAT INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING MUST BE ATTACHED TO THIS FORM:

- Title** of practicum project
- Statement of the public health **problem(s) or issue(s) to be addressed** by project
- Description of the proposed **practice setting and supervisor(s)**
- Specification of DrPH program competencies to be addressed
- Description of **major activities to be performed** and products to be generated during project
- Matrix specifying which activities contribute to each identified competency to be addressed
- Timeline** of activities and products, including the practicum reflection report for this project
- Frequency of Meetings** with Practicum Academic Advisor and Practicum Site Supervisor
- Description of any **written products** to be submitted to practicum site
- Statement of the **number of credit hours** required to complete this practicum project's activity
- Description of how practicum activities will be of **service to the setting**
- Unofficial **COPH Transcript for Practicum Academic Advisor to see prior to registration**
- Statement of Understanding and Applicability of COPH **Honor Code**
- Statement of the **status of IRB** reviews required for this practicum project
 - HIPAA human subjects research training certificate
 - CITI training certificate
- If needed, description of why early registration for this practicum project is requested
- If needed, description of why early accumulation of hours is requested (if beginning to accumulate practicum hours prior to semester of registration)

COPH 6989: Doctoral Practicum Registration Form

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Doctoral Practicum Signatures

BY SIGNING BELOW, I (DrPH STUDENT) INDICATE THAT INFORMATION INCLUDED ON THE REGISTRATION FORM AND THE ATTACHED PRACTICUM PLAN IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE

Student Signature/Date (**REQUIRED**)

BY SIGNING BELOW, ADVISORS INDICATE APPROVAL OF THE ATTACHED PRACTICUM PLAN:

Practicum Site Supervisor/Date (**REQUIRED**)

Practicum Site Supervisor/Date (**REQUIRED**)

Practicum Academic Advisor/Date (**REQUIRED**)

DrPH Program Director or Co-Directors/Date (**REQUIRED**)

CC: Office of Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
DrPH Program Director(s) (separate copies)
COPH Office of Student Affairs

It is the responsibility of the student to assure that copies are distributed to the above-named parties. The student should also keep a copy of this form and all attached materials.

Recommended Outline for Practicum Plan

- I. Statement of Public Health Problem
- II. Competencies To Be Addressed
- III. Practice Setting
- IV. Public Health Content Areas To Be Addressed
- V. Practicum Activities (Methods)
- VI. Matrix of Activities and Competencies
- VII. Timeline of Activities
- VIII. Service to Practice Setting
- IX. Description of Written Product(s)
- X. Academic Integrity
- XI. Plans for Securing Institutional Review Board Approval