

Department of Public Health Sciences Field Experience Manual



**New Mexico State University
College of Health and Social Services
Department of Public Health Sciences**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Field Experience Coordinator Contact Information	4
Understanding the Field Experience	
Introduction.....	6
Overall Focus.....	7
Calendar and Deadlines.....	8
Ethics	8
Field Experience Process	
Create or Update a Resume.....	10
Identify a Site.....	10
Pre-approvals.....	10
Affiliation Agreements	10
Goals & Objectives.....	11
Confidentially Policy.....	11
Site Visit.....	11
Voice Over Presentations.....	12
Other Items of Importance.....	12
Preceptor Criteria	
Criteria for a Preceptor.....	14
Qualities of an Effective Preceptor.....	14
Time Requirements.....	14
Managing the Field Experience.....	14
Roles and Responsibilities	
Student.....	17
Preceptor.....	18
Field Experience Coordinator	18
Field Experience Paperwork	
Completion of Goals and Objectives.....	20
Field Experience Agreement.....	20
Confidentiality policy.....	20
Student's Daily Log.....	20
Field Experience Midterm Report.....	21
Evaluations.....	22
Format for Notebook.....	22
Frequently Asked Questions.....	24
Field Experience Resources.....	27
Appendices	
A The Field Experience Step-by-Step Checklist	30
B Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession.....	31
C Confidentiality Policy	32
D Resume Writing Tips	33

E	Interviewing Tips	34
F	Sample Letter of Introduction	35
G	Sample of field experience goals and objectives	36
H	Field Experience Agreement (HLS 496 / MPH 596)	38
I	Daily Logs	40
J	Field Experience Midterm Report	41
K	Preceptor Evaluation Forms	42
L	Student Evaluation Forms	45
M	Notebook Guidelines	48
O	Field Experience Grading Criteria	49
Bibliography.....		50

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Understanding the Field Experience



College of Health and Social Services building, main campus

Understanding the Field Experience

Introduction:

The field experience is a required and integral part of the Bachelor of Community Health (BCH) and Master of Public Health (MPH) degree programs in the NMSU Department of Public Health Sciences. A field experience allows you, the student, the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world problems and solutions. Placements are made according to your career goals and location preferences. The field experience should occur in your senior year as a BCH student and after the second semester as a MPH student.

The Department of Public Health Sciences is the only institution in the country that has an undergraduate community/public health education program approved by SABPAC and an MPH program accredited by the Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH). SABPAC is a Joint Committee of the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) and the American Association for Health Education (AAHE). Both of these bodies require a field experience component as part of the degree plan.

SABPAC



It is your responsibility to understand the roles, responsibilities, and the established calendar/time line for the field experience.

The field experience is a planned and supervised experience that:

- Is developed by you, the preceptor, and the field experience coordinator;
- Has been **pre-approved** by the field experience coordinator;
- Incorporates measurable objectives that you have developed which apply to real-world public health/community health education situations;
- Involves an expected minimum number of contact hours; and
- Is outlined in a field experience agreement, signed by you, your advisor, the preceptor, and the field experience coordinator, prior to registration for field experience.

Students who must participate

If you are working towards your BCH or MPH you must complete a Field Experience. For MPH students, this includes students completing the degree face-to-face or on-line as well as those seeking the dual degrees of Master of Public Health and Master of Social Work.

If you are an undergraduate student pursuing the BCH degree you must register for HLS 496 (six credit hours). **The BCH student is to complete 320 hours for this 6 credit course.**

If you are a graduate student pursuing the MPH in Community Health Education, you must register for MPH 596 (three credit hours). **The MPH student is to complete 160 hours for this 3 credit course.**

Note that the summer semester is 11 versus 16 weeks in length. Other time configurations can be negotiated between student, preceptor, and field experience coordinator.

Overall focus: innovative/creative contributions to the field

A field experience allows you the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world problems and solutions. You are encouraged to seek creative field experience placements that allow you to apply skills you have acquired in the classroom setting, assist a group or community with a public health/education issue, and promote personal and professional growth. Sites may be at local, regional, national, or international organizations or facilities.

Learning objectives:

Through the field experience, students will be able to:

- Integrate public health theory, knowledge, and skills in a community or public health practice setting;
- Experience the “realities” of public health practice – organizational structure, local and organizational politics, program administration, community relationships, and program coordination;
- Complete one large or a few smaller defined projects in an area of public health practice including core public health functions such as needs assessment, program planning, program evaluation, policy development, educational campaign, or applied research project;
- Gain/expand/develop skills and knowledge in an area of interest not covered in depth elsewhere in the student’s educational plan; and
- Demonstrate leadership, teamwork, communication skills, and creativity in the development of public health practice activity.

Linking your field experience to CHES competencies and responsibilities

As the two NMSU Department of Public Health Sciences degrees, the BCH and MPH, are linked to community health education, it is very important that students actively plan to practice as many of the core competencies and responsibilities as possible during their field experience. There are 7 responsibilities and numerous competencies for a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES). While it is not possible to address each of these during field experience, it is important that students strive to practice as many as possible.

This link provides a brief clip about what a Certified Health Education Specialist can accomplish:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErBECLCWNOk>

The seven areas of responsibility include:

Area I: Assess Needs, Assets, and Capacity for Health Education

- Area II: Plan Health Education
- Area III: Implement Health Education
- Area IV: Conduct Evaluation and Research Related to Health Education
- Area V: Administer and Manage Health Education
- Area VI: Serve as a Health Education Resource Person
- Area VII: Communicate and Advocate for Health and Health Education

The full listing of responsibilities and competencies are found at this site:
<http://www.nchec.org/files/items/nch-mr-tab3-110/docs/areas%20of%20responsibilities%20competencies%20and%20sub-competencies%20for%20the%20health%20education%20specialist%202010.pdf>

For BCH and MPH students, you are to be addressing only CHES competencies and responsibilities, **not** those pertaining to MCHES (Master CHES). A sample of one student’s goals and objectives, linking them to the CHES responsibilities is found in Appendix G.

Field experience calendar

The calendar which you are to work with in planning your field experience is noted below. Planning should actively begin the semester *prior* to your taking the FE course.

The calendar applies to both BCH and MPH students.

Semester the class is to be taken	Spring	Summer	Fall
Identify a site and have it approved by Field Experience Coordinator	November 1	April 1	April 1
Develop Field Experience Plan (goals and objectives)	November 30	April 30	April 30
Agreement signed by site preceptor, student, and FE Coordinator prior to registration	December 10	May 10	May 10
Begin work at site	First day of Spring semester	First day of Summer semester	First day of Fall semester

Ethics involved with the Field Experience

You are expected to follow and adhere to the Code of Ethics for the Health Education profession. The Code for the profession appears in Appendix B.

Field Experience Process



Field Experience Process

Create or update your résumé:

The field experience is designed to prepare and provide you with practical experience in the field.

- As part of the field experience requirement, you are required to have a résumé ready to present when you interview or when you first initiate contact with your preceptor/site supervisor.
- You may include an updated résumé in your field experience notebook that incorporates the newly acquired skills and completed tasks that were part of your field experience.

Please see Appendix D for additional information and tips for writing an effective résumé. Appendix E has interviewing tips to help prepare for the meeting with your potential preceptor.

Identifying a site:

It is the student's responsibility to seek out and find a field experience site which aligns with your interests and preferences. A listing of past field experience sites is found on the Department Home Page, under the Field Experience link <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/field-experience/>.

Students are able to seek out sites that are not on the list. It is strongly recommended that students meet in person, by phone, or skype with the field experience coordinator, before seeking out a site, to be sure they are aware of all possible opportunities available to them. When seeking a potential site, develop a list of 3-4 sites to contact. A sample letter to assist in communicating with potential preceptors, by email, phone, or in person is found in Appendix F.

See the Frequency Asked Questions section, later in this handbook, for more information about finding a site.

Pre-approvals:

The field experience must be *pre-approved* and paper work must be signed off by the field experience coordinator, student, and preceptor before registering and starting to collect hours for the field experience.

Affiliation Agreements:

Many organizations require that there be an affiliation agreement in place between the organization and NMSU, College of Health and Social Services and Department of Public Health Sciences. This can be a time consuming process, depending on the administrative requirements of the organization. If the affiliation agreement is required,

notify the field experience coordinator immediately. She will work with the College and Department to start the process with the organization. Until the affiliation agreement is finalized between NMSU and the organization, a student will not be able to start his/her field experience.

Goals and Objectives:

Once the agency and the preceptor have been identified, you can begin collaborating with the preceptor and the field experience coordinator to develop objectives, responsibilities, and activities for the field experience.

- Goals and objectives are designed as targets enabling you, the preceptor, and the field experience coordinator to evaluate and measure new skills, and the knowledge your field experience will provide.
- Objectives must be measurable and include a specific time frame, the criterion, conditions, and what will be learned and achieved.
- You will electronically submit a draft of objectives and goals for review by the field experience coordinator. This process will involve numerous edits, between the student and field experience coordinator, primarily via email, until the goals and objectives are measurable and realistic.
- Objectives and goals must be written and approved before the start of the semester that you are registered for field experience. Please refer to the semester field experience calendar on Page 8 for specific dates.
- A final copy of the goals and objectives will be included in the field experience notebook and attached to the field experience agreement.

Please refer to Appendix G for sample goals and objectives.

Confidentiality Policy:

Students will sign a confidentiality policy upon starting their field experience. It will be co-signed by their preceptor and the field experience coordinator. The agency/program where the student is completing their field experience may require the student to sign additional policies and statements, in accordance with their intern or volunteer policies. See Appendix C, Confidentiality Policy.

Site Visit:

The student is responsible for setting a time for the site visit. The purpose is for the field experience coordinator to visit and observe the field experience site and meet key individuals involved with the field experience. This is to occur mid-way through the experience. The field experience coordinator will meet with the student and preceptor to assess the experience and your contributions to the project/program to date. If the site is out of state, or out of country, it is the student's responsibility to set up a time for a conference call or skype session between the preceptor, student, and field experience coordinator.

Voice over presentation:

Upon completion of the field experience hours, you will develop a voice over power point (or similar technology) presentation. Instructions are provided on the course website in Canvas.

- Presentations are designed to be professional, including highlights of the field experience, and should describe activities that were undertaken, the results, findings, personal insights, and recommendations.
- Presentation length:
 - a. BCH students: 6-8 minutes (6-8 slides).
 - b. MPH students: 10-12 minutes (10-12 slides)

The voice over presentation are then uploaded into a Dropbox. Instructions for joining the Dropbox group are provided during the semester.

Other items of importance:

Please be familiar with the procedures for the agency that you have selected. Some may require background checks, immunizations, additional paperwork, or applications from the sponsoring agency. Plan ahead.

- a. *Background checks:* Some agencies may require a full background check. The NM State Police Department and Campus Police offer these services if the agency does not have an individual contract.
- b. *Immunizations:* The Student Health Center provides TB skin tests and Hepatitis B vaccinations and boosters. Contact the Student Health Center at 575-646-1512 for information, appointments, and additional locations for obtaining all other vaccinations.
- c. *Safety at the field experience site:* It is your responsibility to adhere to any and all safety requirements identified by your field experience site and preceptor(s). This includes, but is not limited to, participating in required safety classes and workshops.

If you observe an unsafe situation, you are to report it to your preceptor(s). If the situation continues, please advise the field experience coordinator. Use common sense when engaging in field experience activities and situations, with vigilance towards your safety and that of the clients, staff, and others.

Preceptor Criteria



Preceptor Criteria

Criteria for a Preceptor

MPH or other advanced degree in the public health field or five year demonstrated experience in public health research, planning, or administration. CHES or MCHES certification is preferred.

Qualities of an Effective Preceptor

The preceptor plays a key role in determining what the student learns. The preceptor serves as a mentor for the student.

Learning for the student is enhanced when the preceptor possesses these characteristics:

- Professional competence: The effective preceptor demonstrates proficiency in the professional competencies relevant to his/her realm of practice.
- Positive professional identity and ethics: Enthusiasm about the public health profession, the work setting, and his/her own achievements and ethics help the preceptor serve as a positive role model.
- Desire to work with students: Enthusiasm and a positive attitude toward the preceptor role contribute to a quality experience for both preceptor and student.
- Time to work with a student: Effective guidance requires a commitment of time for regular and impromptu planning, consultation, and feedback sessions with a student.
- Experience: The preceptor should have at least five years of public health experience; enough to be familiar with his/her work environment and issues of professional practice.
- Networking: Knowledge of and access to network of public health professionals working throughout the state and region.

Time Requirements

1. Preceptor meets with student at least two (2) times (within 160 or 320 hour time frame) to determine progress and assess support needed.
2. The projects or student work undertaken with the agency should be able to be completed within 160 hours for a MPH student and 320 hours for a BCH student within 16 week semester. Note that the summer semester is 11 versus 16 weeks in length. Other time configurations can be negotiated between student, preceptor and field experience coordinator.

Managing the field experience

Practitioners accept students for many reasons. Some of the reasons may include their desire to: participate in the professional preparation of those who one day will be colleagues; provide quality opportunities for application of theory into practice; and/or involve students in time specific projects that provide an excellent learning opportunity for students while assisting the agency to accomplish specific goals. While students can and usually do provide good work, they are not staff and require periodic assessment of their performance.

1. Before placement begins, or soon thereafter, orient the student to the organization's goal and staff. It is crucial to set workplace expectations, hours, etc.

2. Consider the student to be a special projects person who will enrich the programs in the organization. Plan to look for the special skill(s) each one possesses and negotiate projects that match his/her abilities and the organization's needs.
3. Require the student to manage his/her time well. Review the student's goals and objectives to assess if he/she is working within their established time frames.
4. Schedule time to confer with the student. Expect the student's presence to add to the preceptor's workload.
5. Expect the student's capabilities to become clearer over the course of the placement. Build in flexibility to limit or expand responsibilities over time and to allow the student to maximize learning.
6. Provide a supportive environment in which the student can make mistakes and learn from them.
7. Serve as the mentor, role model, and coach for the student.
8. Contact the Field Experience Coordinator, as necessary, to support you in the precepting role.
9. In all instances, expect the student to justify his/her approach with evidence-based considerations. Offer alternative points of view if, as a preceptor, you believe other approaches would be helpful.

Roles and Responsibilities



Roles and Responsibilities

Student's roles and responsibilities:

In collaboration with the field experience coordinator, you are responsible for the following:

- i. Identify the site and potential topic/project/activities based on an area of interest, previous experience, or career interests and goals. The field experience coordinator and the MPH faculty advisor (for MPH students) will help identify opportunities and potential locations.
- ii. Identify the potential preceptor within the agency that meets the department qualifications. For BCH and MPH majors, it is preferable that the preceptor hold an advanced degree (ideally an MPH with their CHES or MCHES) and be active within the organization in order to qualify as a preceptor. If the potential preceptor does not hold an MPH, alternate advanced degrees may be acceptable. If the person does not hold an advanced degree, they should have a minimum of 5 years of experience in the position.
- iii. Establish a time to interview with the preceptor and agree upon activities. You must be prepared to interview with the agency and should consider the following questions before meeting with the preceptor:
 - Have you ever had a field experience student here before? What was the experience and what projects did they do?
 - What project(s) did you have in mind for me to work on?
 - What resources will I have to help me achieve the objectives we agree on?
 - I am particularly interested in learning more about _____. Could that occur here? How?

The interview should assist in determining the plan of action, the tasks and activities that you could potentially be involved with, and assist with the development of learning objectives.

Note: Please see Appendix E for additional interviewing tips.

- iv. Develop goals and measurable objectives. These must be drafted, revised, and approved before the field experience begins. Please refer to Appendix G for more detailed information and examples.
- v. Mid-term report: A brief written evaluation of current activities related to the learning objectives is required to be submitted to the field experience coordinator. Please refer to Appendix J.
- vi. Field Experience Notebook: For details please see the notebook information in the Field Experience Paperwork section of this manual and Appendix M.
- vii. Developing and submitting a voice over presentation.

Preceptor's roles and responsibilities

The preceptors facilitate and provide a practical real-world working environment that allows you to gain exposure to the field of community health and health education. The preceptor offers guidance, leadership, and assists you with your learning objectives, career-related, and education goals by managing the following activities:

- Provides technical and administrative oversight;
- Offers general feedback and guidance related to your learning objectives and goals;
- Encourages professionalism by assisting you with decision-making abilities and managing office politics;
- Provides opportunities for increasing responsibility by helping you keep and stay directed towards learning objectives and goals;
- Maintains an open channel of communication;
- Reviews and reports your progress;
- Tries to integrate you with regular staff and through regular meetings;
- Completes written final evaluation; and
- Collaborates with you, your advisor, and field experience coordinator.

Field experience coordinator's roles and responsibilities:

The field experience coordinator provides the general oversight for the field experience and facilitates the following activities:

- Helps to identify the site;
- Provides advice to the student about site/agency selection and the development of the field experience plan, goals, and objectives;
- Assists with the affiliation agreement process;
- Conducts site visits and other communication between student, preceptor and the site; and
- Reviews your overall progress and evaluates the quality and quantity of your work, reports, presentations, and assigns a final grade based on the agencies evaluation, final report, and other evidence of performance.

Field Experience Paperwork



Field Experience Paperwork

There is some essential paperwork which must be completed before, during, and after involvement with your field experience.

Completion of goals and measurable objectives

- i. Before you begin your field experience, you will meet with the contact person at the agency (preceptor) and determine if the site and work to be accomplished will be acceptable to both parties. If the location is acceptable to both parties, it is the student's responsibility to learn, in specific detail, what you will be accomplishing while at the site.
- ii. Work with the field experience coordinator [and advisor for the MPH student] to develop specific goals and measurable objectives to be accomplished during the field experience.
 - As a guide, for a BCH major, taking HLS 496 for 6 hours (320 hours at the site), they should develop 3-4 goals and 8-12 measurable objectives.
 - For a MPH major, taking MPH 596 for 3 hours (160 hours at the site), they should develop 2-3 goals and 5-7 measurable objectives.
- iii. Once the goals and objectives have been approved by the field experience coordinator you will be allowed to register for HLS 496 or MPH 596.

Field Experience Agreement

- i. The Field Experience Agreement must be completed before the field experience begins. The agreement is located at the end of this handbook (Appendix H). There is a different agreement for BCH and MPH students.
- ii. The agreement includes yours and your preceptor's contact information plus your goals and measurable objectives for the field experience.
- iii. Required signatures include the agency preceptor(s), yours, and finally, the field experience coordinator.
- iv. No hours may be accumulated until the field experience coordinator has signed off on the agreement.
- v. The original of this document goes in the notebook, with a copy being provided to the field experience coordinator.

Confidentiality Policy

- i. The Confidentiality Policy is to be completed and signed by you, your preceptor and field experience coordinator. The form is available at on the home page of the Canvas site for the class and in Appendix C.

Note: The original of this document goes in the field experience notebook.

Student's Daily Log

Regular attendance and documentation of your efforts at your field experience is required.

- i. You will complete, **every day you work**, a typed log or diary of the following:
 - a. what occurred that day;
 - b. what you accomplished or learned;

- c. challenges or obstacles you were involved with;
- d. people you met with and/or meeting attended and the purpose of the meetings; and
- e. hours worked each day (rounding to 15 minute increments).

Note: if you work with a client/patient, use only the person's initials and no other identifying personal information.

- ii. An example of a daily log entry may be as follows:

Sept 5 Attended a staff meeting for 1 hour where we discussed the upcoming community health activity the agency is sponsoring. I updated them on my booth and the materials I was collecting. I made three calls for additional supplies to Mary of X organization, Fred at Y hospital, and Antonio at Z clinic, for the health activity but no one was in their office so I left messages to call me back. I did some research on-line for more information about our health topic so we have information in Spanish as well as English. I put more data into the computer as we make progress on the evaluation project. 8 a.m. – noon, 1-3 p.m. 6 hrs

- iii. It is recommended that you keep a running tabulation, at the end of each month, as to how many hours you have worked for that month and to date, so you are always aware of the number of hours you still need to work. All of this documentation will be turned in, in your Field Experience notebook at the end of the semester.

September worked 80 hours / Total hours worked to date - 100 / Hours remaining = 220

Field Experience Midterm Report

- i. You are required to complete the Midterm Field Experience Report. The form is located in Appendix J. It is the same form for both HLS 496 and MPH 596 students.
- ii. The form is to be completed midway through the field experience (when approximately ½ of the required hours have been completed; ~ 160 hours for BCH students / ~ 80 hours for MPH students).
- iii. You are to report on the progress made towards your goals and objectives accomplished to date.
- iv. You, your preceptor, and field experience coordinator must sign off on this document.
- v. The original of the document will be included in the Field Experience notebook, submitted at the end of the semester.

If any modifications are indicated, a revised set of goals and objectives will need to be submitted with the form.

Evaluations

Agency & Health Ed Responsibilities Evaluations of Student

- i. Field Experience Evaluation – a 2 page form to be completed by the Agency Preceptor(s).
- ii. HLS 496 **or** MPH 596 - Field Experience, Preceptor Evaluation, Evaluation relating to Health Education Areas of Responsibilities
 - a. It is your responsibility to get the two (2) forms to your preceptor(s). The preceptor can return the completed form to you – for inclusion in the notebook – **or** – they can mail, scan and email or fax the completed form to the field experience coordinator – and it will be included in the notebook when it is submitted at the end of the semester.
 - b. The original of these documents goes in the notebook.

Agency & Health Ed Responsibilities Evaluations by Student

- i. This is a five page form to be completed by you as an evaluation of the site and experience. The form is found at:
http://www.nmsu.edu/~hlthdpt/forms/form_i.pdf
- ii. HLS 496 **or** MPH 596 - Field Experience Student Evaluation, Evaluation relating to Health Education Areas of Responsibilities
 - a. Complete these forms and include it in your notebook. It may be shared with the agency; this is at your discretion.
 - b. The original of these documents goes in the notebook.

Format for Notebook

You are to submit a white 1-2" (preferable) 3-ring binder at the end of the semester with the following information included:

- i. Field Experience Agreement (original)
- ii. Midterm Field Experience Report (original)
- iii. Information about the agency – a brief 2-3 page statement, created by you (not cut and pasted from the agency's website), providing an overview of the agency's history, mission, catchment area, target population served, funding sources, etc.
- iv. Daily log which is to be presented in a typed, professional format, void of typos or grammatical errors.
- v. Major project(s) completed, including supplemental materials, e.g., curriculum and handouts created, surveys developed and disseminated, etc.
- vi. Training attended or special skills acquired.
- vii. Evaluations from you and your preceptor(s).

Note: Materials in the notebook will not be returned to the students as the notebooks become the property of the Department of Public Health Sciences. If students wish to retain originals of certificates, etc. they may submit copies in their notebook.

Frequently Asked Questions



Frequently Asked Questions

When do I begin?

You may register and begin your field experience after you have completed a significant portion of the core program requirements, including the school core courses and specialty track core courses for Masters in Public Health students. It is recommended to have your field experience be one of the last courses you take in your degree program.

Refer to Understanding the Field Experience section for further details and deadlines.

How do I find a field experience placement?

Finding a field placement is like finding a job. If you are a BCH student, you are responsible for working with and contacting the field experience coordinator, to assist you with finding a placement. However, there are many people who can help you. Talk with your advisor, other faculty, and other students who have completed their field experience requirement.

MPH students are to work with their advisors and the field experience coordinator in the selection of a site and the subsequent development of their goals and objectives.

In collaboration with the field experience coordinator, identify agencies that are working on health issues that are interesting to you. Explore options throughout the state, region, country or the world. You can refer to the list of agencies available at <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/fieldplacements2.pdf>

This list will provide you with some possibilities as well as an enlarged range of sites for your consideration. It is recommend that prior to contacting any of the sites listed, you check with the field experience coordinator to see if: 1) the site is accepting students at this time; 2) if the site may already have committed to accept a student for the semester you wish to complete your field experience and/or; 3) if the site is unable to take students at this time.

If there is an agency you are interested in that is not listed, please call and find out if they would accept student interns or would be open to exploring the possibility.

Does the field experience have to be border health related?

While there are many unique and challenging health issues and field experiences here along the border, BCH and MPH students have completed field experiences across the state and region, at federal and state agencies, and at private organizations throughout the United States and in other countries. You are encouraged to explore the wide range of possibilities and settings that are available in the health field. However, you must remember all field experience sites must be pre-approved by the field coordinator.

Can I graduate if my field experience is not complete?

NO. You cannot graduate or earn your degree until all documents are completed, approved and all requirements have been met and the grade submitted.

Is the field experience ever waived?

NO. If you have questions or concern please contact the field experience coordinator.

Can I get paid to complete my field experience?

While it is uncommon, some sites may pay students completing their field experience. Programs such as the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and the Directors of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE) program (see contact information on Page 28) provide living expenses while students complete their field experience at their designated sites. These placements are competitive. For both of the above named programs, they have strict deadlines so refer to their websites and be sure that your completed application materials are submitted before their stated deadlines.

Some sites have small budgets to pay a stipend to a student or reimburse them for gas, etc. This is site specific and not common. If a reimbursement or stipend is offered to a student, it can be accepted. Other sites may have AmeriCorps monies (for example) to pay students. If students can obtain such a position, while still fulfilling their field experience responsibilities, it is acceptable.

Field Experience Resources

There are people and a variety of resources to assist you as you identify and work in your field experience.

The Field Experience Coordinator:

The field experience coordinator has many contacts in the region, around the state, and in various places in the nation where past students have completed their field experience. This person is the one who has the final word on your field experience site and activities, so it is wise to establish and maintain lines of communication early.

If you have a particular interest in exploring field experience options that may be outside the range of “normal”, e.g., an international placement or one with a national organization, talk to the field experience coordinator at least one-two semesters in advance to make sure that any long term planning is underway.

Be sure to keep the field experience coordinator informed of your search for a site and how it is progressing.

Faculty Members:

Communicate with your faculty members. If they mention a possible site where some exciting work is occurring, ask if it might be considered a possible field experience site. Open the discussion between your faculty member and the field experience coordinator to determine if the site may become a field experience site.

When a faculty member invites guest speakers into the class, listen carefully to determine if their organization may be a possible field experience site. Ask if they accept field experience students.

Department of Public Health Sciences List Serv:

The Department of Public Health Sciences has a list serv which disseminates information to current students, staff and faculty as well as alumni. When jobs or possible field experience sites are made available, they are posted on the list serv.

To get on the Department list-serv, contact Dr. Sue Forster-Cox (sforster@nmsu.edu) and request to be placed on the list serv. Provide your NMSU email address to complete this request.

Fellow Students:

Many of your fellow students have already completed their field experience and are good resources. They will be able to provide an overview of the type of work the agency completes, populations served, and the range of experiences they had.

Bulletin Boards:

Remember to check the bulletin board in the Department, outside the classrooms and at the south end of the halls on all three floors. Throughout each semester you will find new listings of internships and jobs that may be used to fulfill the field experience requirement.

Regional, State and National Programs:

Many national agencies, e.g. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, Indian Health Services, NM Department of Health, etc., have internship opportunities. Regionally and at the state level, many agencies are seeking field experience students to support their programs' efforts. It is suggested that students review agency websites plus speak with faculty and the field experience coordinator for possible leads and suggestions.

One program that has been utilized by both graduate and undergraduate students over the years, for placements **outside** of New Mexico, is the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) at http://www.hacu.net/hacu/Default_EN.asp.

Another resource is the Directors of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE) program. Both graduate & undergraduate students enrolled in minority-serving institutions (NMSU is a minority-serving institution) can earn academic credits and valuable knowledge through the program. The program places qualified students in a variety of positions within federal, state and local health departments, community-based organizations and other health-related agencies. Contact Mariela Alarcon-Yohe, MPH, 202-552-4402 for more Information on these programs.

<https://dhpe.site-ym.com/>

Appendices



Appendix A: The Field Experience Step-by-Step Checklist

1. ____ **Meet with your field experience coordinator and discuss general interests and field placement ideas.**
You should begin thinking about and finding a placement at least the semester before you plan to register for your field experience. Remember you are integrating knowledge learned in the classroom and applying this to a “real-world” setting, be creative!
2. ____ **Identify a site and have it approved by the field experience coordinator and preceptor.**
Sites should be identified and approved by:
November 1st for spring semester candidates
April 1st for summer and fall semester candidates
If an affiliation agreement is required between the organization and NMSU, it will be started at this time; discuss the matter with the field experience coordinator.
3. ____ **Meet with your field experience coordinator and complete goals objectives.**
Begin to work on your objectives, outline responsibilities, potential activities, and personal and professional goals for the field experience. These must be approved and signed off by the field experience coordinator and the preceptor. The final copy will go into your field experience notebook.
4. ____ **Agreement signed by the preceptor, student, and field experience coordinator.**
December 10th for spring candidates
May 10th for summer and fall candidates
5. ____ **Register for the Field Experience (HLS 496/ MPH 596)**
6. ____ **Keep a Daily Log**
Once you have begun your field experience, keep a daily log following the format provided earlier. Please see Appendix H for details. Record hours worked and activities/events. Your field experience coordinator may ask to see your log from time to time, and it must be included in your field experience notebook to turn in at the end of the semester.
7. ____ **Complete Mid-term progress report**
Contact the field experience coordinator and be able to summarize your activities as outlined by your goals and objectives. Complete the form “Field Experience Mid-Term Progress Report” in Appendix J.
8. ____ **Give your preceptor the form “Preceptor Evaluation of the Student” & Health Education Responsibilities evaluation form**
The preceptor will return the completed forms to the field experience coordinator or directly to the student by the appropriate deadline for grading.
9. ____ **Complete the “Student Evaluation of Site” form and the Health Education Responsibilities evaluation form and place in the field experience notebook.**
Students complete these two forms and place the originals in their notebook.
10. ____ **Prepare your final field experience notebook and voice over presentation.**
Prepare the notebook as outlined in Appendix M of this manual.

Appendix B: Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession

CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE HEALTH EDUCATION PROFESSION

PREAMBLE

The Health Education profession is dedicated to excellence in the practice of promoting individual, family, group, organizational, and community health. Guided by common goals to improve the human condition, Health Educators are responsible for upholding the integrity and ethics of the profession as they face the daily challenges of making decisions. Health Educators value diversity in society and embrace a multiplicity of approaches in their work to support the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of all people.

The Code of Ethics provides a framework of shared values within the professions in which Health Education is practiced. The Code of Ethics is grounded in fundamental ethical principles including: promoting justice, doing good, and avoidance of harm. The responsibility of each health educator is to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct and to encourage the ethical behavior of all those with whom they work.

Regardless of job title, professional affiliation, work setting, or population served, Health Educators should promote and abide by these guidelines when making professional decisions.

Article I: Responsibility to the Public

A Health Educator's responsibilities are to educate, promote, maintain, and improve the health of individuals, families, groups and communities. When a conflict of issues arises among individuals, groups, organizations, agencies, or institutions, health educators must consider all issues and give priority to those that promote the health and well-being of individuals and the public while respecting both the principles of individual autonomy, human rights, and equality.

Article II: Responsibility to the Profession

Health Educators are responsible for their professional behavior, for the reputation of their profession, and for promoting ethical conduct among their colleagues.

Article III: Responsibility to Employers

Health Educators recognize the boundaries of their professional competence and are accountable for their professional activities and actions.

Article IV: Responsibility in the Delivery of Health Education

Health Educators deliver health education with integrity. They respect the rights, dignity, confidentiality, and worth of all people by adapting strategies and methods to the needs of diverse populations and communities.

Article V: Responsibility in Research and Evaluation

Health Educators contribute to the health of the population and to the profession through research and evaluation activities. When planning and conducting research or evaluation, health educators do so in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations, organizational and institutional policies, and professional standards.

Article VI: Responsibility in Professional Preparation

Those involved in the preparation and training of Health Educators have an obligation to accord learners the same respect and treatment given other groups by providing quality education that benefits the profession and the public.

Approved by the Coalition of National Health Education Organizations February 8, 2011

Posted with permission from the Coalition of National Health Education Organizations, <http://www.cnheo.org/>

Appendix C – Confidentiality Policy

New Mexico State University
Department of Public Health Sciences

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Public Health Sciences that all students in their field experience must sign a statement regarding the confidentiality of patients/clients. This policy is for the protection of these individuals. In signing this form, the student states that s/he will not disclose any names or information regarding the patient/client to peers, friends, or relatives.

I agree to protect the confidentiality of all patients/clients in all situations.

Student / Date

Agency Preceptor / Date

NMSU Field Experience Coordinator / Date

Appendix D: Resume Writing Tips

Career Services can help you with the following both in person or online. Visit them at <http://careerservices.nmsu.edu/>. It is recommended that you establish an account in Aggie Career Manager to use as a repository for your resume and other documents.

- 1. Determine your objective**
Structure your resume to fit the objective you have identified, if you are applying for a teaching position, highlight, focus, and structure your resume to fit a clear objective.
- 2. Your resume is a tool to market yourself**
Identify your features and strengths, why are you are unique, and convey that in your resume.
- 3. Your goal is to obtain an interview**
Be clear and concise; do not go into detail about every position. You are generating interest so that the employer will want to contact you so that you can explain your accomplishments.
- 4. Use action words**
Use bulleted statement with action words like prepared, presented, monitored.
- 5. Lead with your strengths**
Resumes are typically scanned in 30 seconds. Take time to develop either bullets or a format that clearly supports your objective.
- 6. Review the position description.**
Use key words listed in the job description and match them in your resume.
- 7. Highlight the positive**
Focus on duties and responsibilities that support your objective.
- 8. Construct the resume to read clearly**
Leave white space, limit the length to 1-2 pages, and use a font no smaller than 10 point.
- 9. Have someone review and proof-read your resume**
You are often too close to the resume to see errors or potential questions; feedback from others can be useful input.

Adapted from:

Hackett, A. (2007). Quest Career: Resume writing tips to help you write a resume.
Retrieved from <http://www.questcareer.com/tips.htm>.

Appendix E: Interviewing Tips

Optimal Resume (<https://nmsu.optimalresume.com/>) has an Interview Preparation module in which you can create a mock interview.

When you interview keep in mind some of the following:

Be prepared:

1. Find out all you can about the organization by looking at their website for the mission statement, vision, and goals.
2. Find out what activities current employees are involved with and where you might be able to fit in.
3. Dress to impress; be professional and on-time. Turn off your phone and throw away your gum before meeting your preceptor.

During the interview

4. Listen carefully to questions; if you feel a question is unclear ask politely for clarification.
5. Pause before answering so you consider all the facts.
6. Keep answers and ideas focused and to the point, discussing only the facts or ideas needed to respond to the questions.
7. Focus on your success, give positive information about yourself, and avoid being negative.
8. Maintain eye contact even when searching for answers to questions.

Prepare yourself ahead of time and think about how you would respond to the following questions:

1. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
2. Why do you want to work in this field or at this organization?
3. What skills and experience would you bring to this organization?
4. What motivates you?
5. How do you measure success?
6. What type of people do you have the most trouble getting along with in the workplace, and how do you handle them?

Appendix F: Sample letter of introduction

Name
Address
City, State, Zip Code
Phone Number

Date

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is _____. I am a student at New Mexico State University pursuing my Bachelor's Degree in Community Health. As a Community Health student, I am required to take part in a field experience study. This gives me the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world problems and solutions. It would be beneficial for me if I might fulfill my field experience at your facility under the supervision of a health educator.

It is my belief that your facility would greatly benefit by having me. In order to fulfill my field experience portion of my degree, I must complete 320 clock hours. Ideally, I would like to do this over the summer, and if needed, into the fall. Attached is the "Field Experience Handbook" printed from the NMSU Department of Public Health Sciences website at <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/fe.pdf>

Personally, I am very interested in working with the elderly concerning geriatric care and prevention. I feel that I would greatly benefit from working in your facility because I would like to work with the elderly in an assisted living facility or nursing home after I graduate this December. Your facility would also benefit in having a productive asset capable of assuming responsibility and fulfilling tasks. The field experience assignment provides your agency an opportunity to observe me as a prospective employee in the field of public health.

This is strictly voluntary. I am a very motivated worker and eager to dive into whatever may lie ahead. Please feel free to contact me with your questions at any time. I look forward to your reply at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Appendix G: Sample of field experience goals and objectives

Each student will develop goals and objectives for their field experience.

- BCH students, taking HLS 496 for 6 credits, are to develop 3-4 goals and 8-12 measurable objectives.
- MPH students, taking MPH 596 for 3 credits, should develop 2-3 goals and 5-7 measurable objectives

Sample (for a MPH student)

Note the CHES competencies identified throughout the pages (†).

By [last day of semester], [your name] will have completed the following in partial fulfillment of MPH 596 [or HLS 496] – Field Experience at the [location of field experience].

Goal 1: Increase my knowledge of services provided by [agency or department].

Objectives:

1. Learn about the [agency or department's name] mission, target population(s), and outreach activities by reviewing past events and activities, brochures and pamphlets, the website, and conversing with staff by [date – day, month], 201x.
7.6.6 Facilitate professional growth of self and others†
2. Familiarize myself with the classes, services, and programs offered through the [x, y, and z programs] by reviewing respective websites and visiting locations when necessary by [date], 201x.
6.1.2 Identify valid information resources†

Goal 2: Assist in implementing the [name of program] for the [agency or dep't].

Objectives:

1. Research other [agency, state, programs] policies for content, implementation, and enforcement ideas to include in the policy through utilizing web searches and directly contacting other programs, etc by [date].
1.2.6. Conduct searches of existing databases for specific health-related data†
6.1.3 Critique resource materials for accuracy, relevance, and timeliness†
2. Arrange and maintain a steering committee, beginning the second full week of classes, with various members of on- and off-campus organizations and departments to discuss the implications and possibilities of [x, y, z], meeting for the duration of the semester.
1.1.2 Identify stakeholders to participate in the assessment process†
7.5.3 Advocate for health-related policies, regulations, laws, or rules†
3. Research surveys used in other programs, using x, y, and z resources by [date].
6.1.2 Identify valid information sources
4. Modify chosen survey by [date] and pilot it with X number of people.
2.3.6 Pilot test strategies and interventions
5. Obtain completed surveys from at least x number of people by [date].
1.3.1. Collect primary and/or secondary data†
1.3.6 Use data collection instruments and methods†

Goal 3: Educate the general population on important public health issues through health and wellness programs, events, and take-home materials.

Objectives:

1. Create and manage 2-3 outreach and awareness events on various public health topics, including but not limited to: heart disease and diabetes, sexual health and healthy relationships, alcohol and drug abuse, tobacco harm reduction; all events must be completed by [date].
 - 5.3.7 Facilitate efforts to achieve organizational mission†
 - 5.4.8 Model professional practices and ethical behavior†
 - 7.1.1 Identify current and emerging issues that may influence health and health education†
2. Develop print materials (such as brochures, fact sheets, flyers, and/or press releases) in English for the abovementioned events at least one week prior to each event.
 - 3.1.3 Use strategies to ensure cultural competence in implementing health education plans†
 - 7.2.1 Create messages using communication theories and models†

Note:

† NCHEC Areas of Responsibilities and Competencies for the Health Education Specialist, retrieved from <http://www.nchec.org/files/items/nch-mr-tab3-110/docs/areas%20of%20responsibilities%20competencies%20and%20sub-competencies%20for%20the%20health%20education%20specialist%202010.pdf>

Note: These are sample learning objectives meant to guide you. You will need to develop your own based upon your specific interests and activities.

Appendix H: Field Experience Agreement



New Mexico State University
Department of Public Health Sciences
Phone 575-646-4300
Email sforster@nmsu.edu
Dept web site <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/>

HLS 496 Field Placement Agreement

The purpose of the field experience is to provide the student with practical experience in the application of public health principles within the structure and function of an appropriate program or agency. For more information on the requirements for the field experience, please visit <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/field-experience/>

This form constitutes an agreement between the student, the agency, and the NMSU Department of Public Health Sciences to pursue the above purpose through the goals and objectives herein defined.

Student Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Mobile: _____

Degree: _____

Anticipated Date of Graduation: _____

I have obtained approval to conduct my field experience during the _____ semester, _____ for _____ credit hours.

The agency at which I will perform the experience is:

Agency: _____

Agency Preceptor/Title: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone and Email: _____

The goals and objectives which will guide my field experience have been agreed upon by the agency preceptor, field experience coordinator, and by me; they are attached.

By signing below, all parties involved agree to meet their responsibilities as outlined in the "Field Experience Manual" located on-line at <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/field-experience/>

Student: _____ Date: _____

Agency preceptor: _____ Date: _____

Field experience coordinator: _____ Date: _____



New Mexico State University
 Department of Public Health Sciences
 Phone 575-646-4300
 Email sforster@nmsu.edu
 Dept web site <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/>

MPH 596 Field Experience Agreement

The purpose of the field experience is to provide the student with practical experience in the application of public health principles within the structure and function of an appropriate program or agency. For more information on the requirements for the field experience, please visit <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/field-experience/>

This form constitutes an agreement between the student, the agency, and the NMSU Department of Public Health Sciences to pursue the above purpose through the goals and objectives herein defined.

Student Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Mobile: _____

Degree: _____

Anticipated Date of Graduation: _____

I have obtained approval to conduct my field experience during the _____ semester, _____ for _____ credit hours.

The agency at which I will perform the experience is:

Agency: _____

Agency Preceptor/Title: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone and Email: _____

The goals and objectives which will guide my field experience have been agreed upon by the agency preceptor, field experience coordinator, and by me; they are attached.

By signing below, all parties involved agree to meet their responsibilities as outlined in the "Field Experience Manual" located on-line at <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/field-experience/>

Student: _____ Date: _____

Agency preceptor: _____ Date: _____

Field experience coordinator: _____ Date: _____

Appendix I: Daily Logs

Regular attendance and documentation of such attendance is required. Students will complete, **every day they work**, a typed log or diary of the following: 1) what occurred that day; 2) what they accomplished or learned; 3) challenges or obstacles they were involved with; 4) people they met with and/or meeting attended and the purpose of the meetings; and 5) hours worked each day (rounding to 15 minute increments).

An example of a daily log entry may be as follows:

Sept 5 - Attended a staff meeting for one hour where we discussed the upcoming community health activity the agency is sponsoring. I updated them on my booth and the materials I was collecting. I made three calls for additional supplies to Mary of X organization, Fred at Y hospital, and Antonio at Z clinic, for the health activity but no one was in their office so I left messages to call me back. I did some research on-line for more information about our health topic so we have information in Spanish as well as English. I put more data into the computer as we make progress on the evaluation project. 8 a.m. – noon; 1-3 p.m. – 6.0 hrs

125 hours worked to date / 195 hours remaining

It is recommended that students keep a running tabulation at the end of each month as to how many hours they have worked for that month and to date, so they are always aware of the number of hours they still need to work to complete the required hours for the Field Experience. All of this documentation will be turned in inside the student's Field Experience notebook at the end of the semester.

Appendix J: Field Experience Midterm Report



New Mexico State University
Department of Public Health Sciences
Phone 575-646-4300
Email sforster@nmsu.edu
Dept web site <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/>

Field Experience Midterm Report

Students must complete and submit this form *midway through the field experience (after 125-175 contact hours for BCH and 50-75 hours for MPH)* and secure the preceptor's and the field experience coordinator's signature.

The original of this report will be included in the Field Experience notebook submitted by the student at the end of the semester.

Student name _____

Student is taking the following class: HLS 496 _____ MPH 596 _____

Expected semester of graduation _____

- Briefly describe your progress to date and submit as an attachment.
- If your objectives have changed, attach a copy of your revised objectives.
- If there are challenges or issues arising at the site, please identify them and a realistic plan of action or resolution.

SIGNATURES

The student is currently making successful progress on the agreed upon practicum.

Student _____ Date _____

Preceptor(s) _____ Date _____

FE Coordinator _____ Date _____

Appendix K – Preceptor evaluation forms

Preceptors are to complete two (2) evaluations:

1. Preceptor Evaluation - Evaluation relating to Health Education Areas of Responsibilities (see below)
2. Preceptor evaluation, for BCH or MPH - this evaluation link is on the Canvas site for the class.

HLS 496 - Field Experience*

Preceptor Evaluation

*Separate one for MPH students on Canvas site

Evaluation relating to Health Education Areas of Responsibilities

Below are the seven Areas of Responsibilities that a Health Education student is to obtain in the course of studies in the BCH program. Please evaluate them, placing a mark under the term that indicates the degree you feel the student demonstrated the different skill sets while completing their Field Experience with your agency. Please provide an example of how the student demonstrated the skill in the space provided.

I. Assess needs, assets, and capacity for health education

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

II. Plan health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

III. Implement health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

IV. Conduct evaluation and research related to health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

V. Administer and manage health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

VI. Serve as a health education resource person.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

VII. Communicate and advocate for health and health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

Appendix L – Student evaluation forms

BCH and MPH students complete two (2) evaluations

1. Student Evaluation - Evaluation relating to Health Education Areas of Responsibilities (see below)
2. Student evaluation of the site – this evaluation is on the Canvas site for the class

HLS 496 - Field Experience*

Student Evaluation

*Separate one for MPH students on Canvas site

Evaluation relating to Health Education Areas of Responsibilities

Below are the seven Areas of Responsibilities that a Health Education student is to obtain in the course of studies in the BCH program. Please evaluate them, placing a mark under the term that indicates the degree you feel that you, as a student, demonstrated the different skill sets while completing your Field Experience at your agency. Please provide an example of how you demonstrated the skill in the space provided.

I. Assess needs, assets, and capacity for health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

II. Plan health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

III. Implement health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

IV. Conduct evaluation and research related to health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

V. Administer and manage health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

VI. Serve as a health education resource person.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

VII. Communicate and advocate for health and health education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Example:

Appendix M: Notebook guidelines

Students will complete and submit a notebook (typically a white 1-2" 3 ring binder) at the end of their field experience. One generic format that students use is that of organizing the material using different clearly marked colored tabs to include:

- Field Experience Agreement
- Midterm Field Experience Report
- Information about the agency – a brief 2-3 page statement, created by you (not cut and pasted from the agency's website), providing an overview of the agency's history, mission, catchment area, target population served, funding sources, etc.
- Daily log which is to be presented in a typed, professional format, void of typos or grammatical errors.
- Major project(s) completed, such as materials, e.g., curriculum and handouts created, surveys developed and disseminated, etc.
- Training attended or special skills acquired.
- Evaluations from you and your preceptor(s).

Do not include:

- Copies of manuals or handbooks that you used at your site;
- Pamphlets that do not directly relate to your experience, e.g., handouts to make the notebook more full;
- Any **original** certificates or awards as the notebook becomes the property of the Dept. of Public Health Sciences and you will not get them back; and
- Any confidential information to include client or patient names.

These are basic ideas as to how to organize the notebook. One can get many more ideas by seeing one of the office managers in the Dep't of Public Health Sciences office, CHSS room 102, and gain permission to review past notebooks.

Notebooks are due the last day of the semester, unless other arrangements have been made with the field experience coordinator. A grade for the field experience cannot be given until a complete notebook has been submitted.

All notebooks become the property of the Department of Public Health Sciences. If the student wishes to keep the originals of certificates or other materials obtained over the course of the Field Experience, it is permissible to provide copies in the notebook.

Appendix N: Field Experience Grading Criteria

Applies to HLS 496 and MPH 596 students

Criteria for grading of the field experience will be as follows:

10% - Quality of the field experience voice over Power Point presentation (or similar technology)

- Follows a logical progression
- Provides an overview of agency
- Overview of field experience responsibilities to include key learning experiences
- Application of learning to career plans
- Time limit observed
- Information was presented in a clear, concise, easy to understand manner

50% - Assumption of responsibility for the field work experience

This includes the completion and documentation of the goals and objectives outlined before the field experience began;

Student's professional appearance, performance, and participation at the site, including completion of activities and responsibilities; and

The timely submission and completeness of all of the following required materials and approvals:

- Notebook containing:
 - Field Experience Agreement (the original)
 - Information about the agency
 - Daily log (typed)
 - Major project(s) completed (and supplemental materials, e.g., handouts created, surveys developed and disseminated, etc.)
 - Training attended or special skills acquired
 - Evaluations from the student and their preceptor(s).

40% - HLS 496 or MPH 596 agency preceptor(s) evaluation and site visit by field experience coordinator. If a visit cannot be made in person, a conference call or skype session are highly recommended. If a site visit cannot be made due to distance from NMSU to the national or international site or incompatibility of schedules, the evaluations and notebook will have greater weight in the grading.

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