



COLLEGE of
PUBLIC HEALTH

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Public Health

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HSMP 4850

Undergraduate Field Experience

Course Syllabus and Field Guide

Congratulations. You are about to begin an incredible journey.

This document provides information relevant to your Public Health field experience course. The field experience course (4850) is the culminating achievement in your quest for your B.S. Public Health degree and is intended to challenge you to observe and practically apply the knowledge and skills presented in your previous public health courses in a practice-based setting. This opportunity is made possible through the cooperative efforts of the university, the College of Public Health and a broad array of public and private health and related organizations.

You are about to enter the “real world” of health practice and make the transition from student to health professional. This is a unique opportunity for you, but you will only realize the full potential of your field experience if you put forth your utmost initiative and inquisitiveness. The way to make the most of your field experience is to “get involved and share your public health voice “by seeking every opportunity to demonstrate your competence and refine your skills for your future endeavors. Former graduates consistently say, “What you get from your field experience is what you reach out and embrace”. This is your opportunity to accrue actual work experience in your profession that will serve you after you graduate and beyond.

All of us at the ETSU College of Public Health offer you our best wishes for a highly successful field internship experience. Please go forth and make the most of the adventures you are about to begin. I hope to have an opportunity to visit you during the semester but in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance in any way.

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HSMP 4850 FIELD EXPERIENCE

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Catalog Description: The 4850 Field Experience is a mandatory nine credit hour course that must be successfully completed to qualify for graduation. This course is to be taken the final semester before your graduation and is offered during fall, spring and summer semesters of each academic year. The field experience is conducted under the supervision of the course instructor along with qualified professionals at approved affiliate organization referred to as **preceptors**.

Course prerequisites

1. You must be an officially declared public health major.
2. You must have completed **all** courses required for completion of your degree plan. Additional courses are not to be taken during your field experience.
3. Advance written approval to enroll in the course from both your undergraduate advisor and the Field Experience Coordinator. A course enrollment permit is required.
4. Your field experience must have a primary focus on public health.
5. Your field experience must be a new learning experience (not your current employment).
6. You must have a designated supervisor (preceptor) within the host organization that is approved by the Field Experience Coordinator.

IMPORTANT: The field experience application process is to be completed the semester prior to your intent to complete the field experience. The due date for completed applications are found on the first page of the Field Experience Application.

Course Purpose and Requirements

Primary course participants:

- You (student)
- Whitney D. Oliver (course instructor)
- Your site-based preceptor(s)

Course Purpose

Under the joint supervision of College of Public Health faculty and an approved field preceptor, this course is designed to provide practice-based learning experiences that validate your mastery of essential public health competencies that were presented throughout your prior curriculum courses. Completion of this course will also provide you with documented public health work experience.

Course Objectives:

1. Provide mentored practical observation and hands-on application opportunities for you to apply and reinforce learned competencies, knowledge and skills taught in the classroom.
2. Give you practical experience as you complete multiple “value-added” projects and assignments within one or more selected areas within a professional public health practice setting.
3. Reinforce an understanding of the importance and reward of community service.
4. Provide an element of exposure to aid in career advancement.
5. Set the stage for an agenda of lifetime learning.
6. Help you successfully pursue your post-graduation career and/or educational goals.

Specific Course Requirements

Personal and Professional Expectations:

1. **Absences:** If for any reason, you find it necessary to be absent from your field experience (i.e., sickness, etc.) you must let your preceptor/supervisor know immediately and when possible, in advance. Failure to do so is unprofessional and therefore unacceptable and may negatively affect your performance evaluation.
2. **Change in address, phone number or name:** immediately notify both your preceptor/supervisor and instructor. It is imperative that we are able to contact you without undue delay should the need arise.
3. **Other issues or problems:** Contact Whitney D. Oliver at 423-439-4483 or via email at oliverwd@etsu.edu and your preceptor /supervisor as appropriate.
4. If you plan to graduate at the end of the semester, are completing your field experience and have not taken the **Academic Profile exam** (“exit exam”) you must do so. This is required by the Tennessee Board of Regents. Call the University Testing Center at 423-439-7842 to schedule a time.
5. Always remember you are representing the College of Public Health and East Tennessee State University and conduct yourself professionally. You are a guest of the affiliate organization and must abide by all their personnel policies (i.e., drug testing, dress code, absenteeism, etc.) If you have questions, concerns, etc. please discuss the situation(s) with your preceptor/supervisor.
6. **Work ethic and professionalism:** You are expected to accept all assignments graciously and complete each in a professional, competent and timely manner. When possible, seek out opportunities to display your creativity and abilities. Display initiative by managing your work, solving problems, find information and display creativity without continually asking your preceptor or supervisor for detailed guidance. Seek opportunities to make

meaningful contributions that add value to your organization and also benefit you in terms of gaining “work experience”.

7. Time requirement and schedule

A minimum of 400 cumulative clock/work hours are required to complete the field experience semester.

Individual “work” schedules may be arranged between you and your preceptor. However, you are expected to dedicate whatever amount of time is requested by your preceptor or supervisor and realize that occasionally you may be asked to work on weekends or evenings.

You will observe the official ETSU Class Schedule and will observe University holidays and scheduled breaks. **It is important, however, that you inform your host preceptor well in advance as a professional courtesy.**

Performance Assessment and Course Assignments

Preceptor assessment of student

The preceptor/supervisor completes two evaluations of the student:

- (a) Midterm Evaluation of Student
- (b) Final Evaluations of Student

The preceptor evaluations include both open-ended and closed-ended questions relating to the objectives of the field experience. Emphasis is on student’s ability to apply essential competencies of community health/health administration and individual professionalism.

*Unprofessional behavior such as use of cell phone, tardiness, unethical or inappropriate conduct can result in a termination of the field placement and, thus, an F in the course.

Process for preceptor evaluation of student:

Register preceptor information in RedCap system by date provided.

Preceptors will be emailed an evaluation link from RedCap.

Students are encouraged to remind their preceptors a week before evaluations are due.

Midterm evaluation: Students and preceptors are encouraged to discuss the midterm evaluations. Submission of evaluation will earn 25 points credit.

Final evaluation: If timeframe allows, it is beneficial for student and preceptor to discuss this evaluation. The preceptor’s final evaluation is a grade item worth up to 300 points.

Course instructor’s assessment of student

Based on the academic aspects of the course as well as the instructor’s subjective evaluation of the student’s individual professionalism. Emphasis is on the following:

- a. Quality and timeliness in completing course requirements
- b. General attitude and enthusiasm
- c. Attention to detail
- d. Creativity
- e. Attendance of required events

Course Deliverables

Confidentiality Statement

Scan and submit via drop box. See Field Experience Forms on D2L for form. Scan and submit this via D2L drop box. (Check D2L for specific dates).

Field Experience Objectives

Using SMART criteria draft a minimum of 5 action-oriented field objectives and action plan(s) for each. (Check D2L for specific dates and examples). Tie each of the objectives back to the competencies for your concentration (Community and Behavioral Health or Health Services Administration) listed on the preceptor evaluations. Not every competency must be met from those evaluations, but the objectives you do have need to be able to match up to those competencies.

See Field Experience Forms on D2L for field objective form. This is submitted via D2L

Field Report Entries

During the course of the semester you will complete four field reports. Entries are due via the D2L discussion board by date and time listed. These are reviewed by your instructor and are a graded component of the course. [Each written assignment, including the Field Report entries is to be written in accordance with proper grammar, spelling and composition skills.]

Field Reports must be equivalent to 1 full typed page and the content should include, at minimum, the following information. To ensure all components are discussed please label each section as 1, 2, and 3 and include the information accordingly.

1. Thorough description of the key experiences you have had during the reporting period
2. Explanation of specific knowledge/skills (not simply course names) from prior public health courses you have applied during the reporting period and how you used them.
3. Detail where you currently are and what you are currently doing; what led you to this point, where you plan on going and what you plan on doing. (Detail where you have been, where you are, and where you are going). Include specifics about projects that you are currently working on, and how they relate to your field objectives and the competencies. What is the objective of the project?

Tough Talks

Workshop providing information on how to have difficult conversations both personally and professionally.

Cover Letter

Locate a job/position you would be interested in applying for and draft a cover letter based on that position. After writing the cover letter, have your preceptor critique the letter utilizing the track changes mode in Word and submit with the tracked changes (under review – track changes – or add comment).

Resume

Review and update your resumé as needed

Schedule an appointment with ETSU Career Services (Zoom or in person)

- <https://www.etsu.edu/students/careers/student/>

Meet with ETSU Career Services representative

- No later than week prior to due date (see course schedule)

Submit completed resumé checklist and updated resumé to D2L Dropbox

- You will receive a completed checklist with feedback and suggestions

- Checklist must be submitted with resumé to receive credit

LinkedIn Learning

Career preparation through LinkedIn Learning training modules. You will complete one required LinkedIn Learning course and two of your choosing from the list located in the assignment instructions. Be sure to view the instructions to ensure successful completion.

Student Evaluations of Field: Submitted via D2L drop box, see Field Experience Forms on D2L for forms. Must be received by due date before a final course grade can be awarded.

Student's Mid-Term Evaluation of Field Experience: Using the form provided, evaluate your field experience and discuss with your preceptor. Your preceptor will need to sign-off on your midterm evaluation prior to submission.

Student's Final Evaluation of Field Experience: Using the form provided, evaluate your field experience. This evaluation will not be discussed with the preceptor.

Return and Report Meeting

The return and report meeting is to provide face-to-face discussion of items such as internship experiences and challenges, working within councils, and job search and interview strategies. Students are required to attend the return and report meetings unless previously discussed with course instructor.

Major Field Test (MFT) – “Field” refers to field of public health

This is an online exam consisting of multiple-choice questions covering the essential elements of the B.S. Public Health curriculum. The exam is conducted online in the testing center or verified proctor and will immediately display your score. **Passing grade is 70%.** Please see course schedule for date and time.

Submission of Final Presentation (before the presentations)

Copy of final presentation submitted as a separate file via D2L Please see course schedule for date and time.

Final Oral Presentation

MUST BE 12-15 minutes in length – shorter or longer will result in points deductions) Fifteen minutes is not a long time so prioritize content and PRACTICE.

Introduction and Main Points

- Introduce yourself- Your name, public health concentration, where you did your field placement
- Your preceptor's name and position/role in your host organization
- Main points of presentation

Highlight activities, tasks, activities, tasks, exposures, and objectives and action plans

This is the most important part

- Discuss your field objectives, what you gained from the experience and what you contributed to the project, task, activity, etc.
- Summarize your contributions and accomplishments – how you met, or not, your objectives, things you did, projects you completed.
- What were the most beneficial aspects of your field study experience? In what ways are you better prepared now than before this experience? What did you gain from the experience?

Assessment

- Candidly assess the overall effectiveness of your public health education.
- Identify courses that were most beneficial in preparing you for public health practice.
- Offer insights about how we might improve the public health curriculum and/or program to better prepare students for the field experience and beyond.

Closing

- Summarize main points. Tell the audience what your plans are after graduation such as graduate school, employment, travel, marriage, etc. If you have a job share where you will be working and what you will be doing. Thank the audience!

Tip: Utilize presentation software, graphics, charts, tables and other materials that support and enhance your presentation and can be displayed on our College of Public Health web site. **Be sure to submit a copy of your presentation into the appropriate dropbox by due date provided.**

Grading methodology

The final course grade will be assigned by the course instructor based on these criteria and weights:

Preceptor/Supervisor Final Evaluation	300 points
Final oral presentation	200 points
Major Field Test (MFT)	100 points
Instructor’s overall assessment	75 points
Mid-Term Evaluations	25 points
Return and Report Meeting	40 points
Written Assignments	
LinkedIn Learning	30 points
Tough Talks	30 points
Field objectives 1 st draft	20 points
Field objectives final draft	30 points
Cover letter	25 points
Resumé	25 points
Field reports (4 @25 points each)	100 points

1000 Total Points

Points	Grade	Points	Grade
945 - 1000	A	765 - 794	C
915- 944	A-	735 - 764	C-
885 - 914	B+	705 - 734	D+
855 - 884	B	675 - 704	D
825 - 854	B-	0 - 674	F
795 – 824	C+		

Here’s a useful tip for a successful field experience.

Ask your preceptor: “Are there projects you just have not had the time to get to that I might do for you?”

Then do the very best job you can.