

4.4 Advising and Career Counseling. There shall be available a clearly explained and accessible academic advising system for students, as well as readily available career and placement advice.

- a. Description of the program’s advising services for students in all degrees and concentrations, including sample materials such as student handbooks. Include an explanation of how faculty are selected for and oriented to their advising responsibilities.**

Recognizing the diversity of student backgrounds and academic and/or career advising needs, the program provides several sources of support to students as they move through their academic program.

New Student Orientation: All new students are invited, along with their significant others, to an evening “welcome to the program” session, where they can ask a panel of CEOMPH students and alumni questions about the program. The day after this evening session, new students attend a full-day orientation, which provides an opportunity for the core course faculty and students to interact while the students are provided with an overview of the program and introductions to the first set of core classes. During this day, the students meet with their university program coordinators and MPH office staff to discuss registration, communication, and advising logistics on their specific campuses. The orientation presentation is in Appendix 4.4a.

Students receive a folder information and a flash drive with pertinent forms and information posted on the CEOMPH website at this session, including listings of campus facilities and key contact information for all partner institutions, distance learning technical information, the student handbook, a listing of approved elective courses, and the syllabi for the first two core courses. All of these resources are also listed on the program webpage at <http://mph.neomed.edu/students/student-resources>. The contents of the flash drive are in Appendix 4.4.a. Specific university links to resources such as the university Program Coordinator, writing lab, student services and career services are posted on the web page at <http://mph.neomed.edu/students/university-links>.

The student handbook contains the policies in regards to student advising, which is posted <http://mph.neomed.edu/students/student-resources> (7th bullet down under “general program information.” It states that “The academic advisor (university program coordinator) can offer guidance on choosing electives appropriate to student career goals and interests. In the first semester, students should complete a ‘program prospectus’ so that a plan for timely completion of degree requirements is made. Students will meet with the academic advisor (university program coordinator) throughout the program so that progress may be monitored. The CEOMPH program office, program web site, and university program coordinator are also sources for career counseling and guidance to other campus services.”

CEOMPH Office Student Updates: Throughout the program, students receive email updates about program policies, activities, and resources that affect them. Students get course updates on Thursdays. Students, alumni, faculty and committee members receive conference, fellowship, career opportunity, and other public health information (such as job/internship opportunities, association newsletters, updates on public health policy, etc.) on any day of the week. Additionally, “Wednesday Tips” addressing writing, oral presentation, interviewing, and professionalism advice are sent to all students electronically every Wednesday. Students also receive information on program courses, scheduling and other aspects of the program in these Wednesday Tips. Prior to each semester, the program office sends out information on the next semester’s registration information. The program office and capstone coordinator often advise on courses and projects at this time.

Academic Advising at Participating Universities: University program coordinators serve as academic advisors to the students enrolled in the program through that campus. Students work with them in their first semester of coursework to complete a student prospectus form (in Appendix 4.4.a.), outlining their anticipated academic path. This form includes the student's planned schedule for completion of core courses; it also maps out the elective coursework that they anticipate completing in order to meet their individual academic and career goals. Students meet or make contact with the program coordinator, usually prior to each semester to discuss progress.

Program coordinators are available to provide information about their campuses, general program information, and specific guidance to assist individual students with developing their own academic and career paths. The program has developed guidelines for all program coordinators to facilitate consistency of advice across the program. This document is in Appendix 4.4.a.

For university administrative purposes, the Program Coordinator from the student's home university remains the same; however, all faculty are available to provide advice to students regarding their program choices and curriculum decisions.

Project Advising or Mentoring: During the program, all students are required to complete a substantive public health project (the Capstone Project, described in response to Criterion 2.5.a.), under the guidance of both a faculty preceptor and a community-based preceptor. In addition, many students choose to complete independent study projects or research that also involves the close guidance of one or more faculty members. The MPH capstone coordinator facilitates matching students with preceptors and often provided guidance on the projects as well.

b. Description of the program's career counseling services for students in all degree programs. Include an explanation of efforts to tailor services to meet specific needs in the program's student population.

Each participating university also provides a career advising and counseling center that is available to all graduate students. Services provided include assistance with resume preparation and interviewing skills, as well as job search assistance and services. Additional information is available in each institution's graduate bulletin, and through their websites.

Table 4.6.a. Institution web career guidance websites

Institution	Websites Related to Career Guidance
UA	http://www.uakron.edu/career/students-and-alumni/
CSU	http://www.csuohio.edu/career/
NEOMED	http://www.neomed.edu/campuslife/studentaffairs
OU	http://www.ohiou.edu/careers/
YSU	http://www.yzu.edu/career-services/

Advising at the Program Office: In addition to the services described above, students can also contact the MPH office at NEOMED for academic and career counseling advice. Resumes/CVs and cover letters are reviewed upon request at any time, including after graduation. Interview advice is also provided. The program director will speak to any of the campus students to discuss academic plans and career advancement. The administrative office maintains the program's website, which provides links to public health sites that contain career opportunities or other information that may be of interest to students (<http://mph.neomed.edu/alumni/career-opportunities>). The office also sends job opportunities to all students, alumni, faculty, and committee members through email.

Advising embedded in courses: All students have their resumes/CVs reviewed during Capstone Project I, and a checklist of suggested improvements is provided to each student. During the individual project planning phone call in Capstone Project I, the program director and capstone coordinator ask each student about future career plans, since a goal is to develop a project that would help the student's career development.

Finally, the Careers/Alumni Forum was established in 2015, as a result of the 2014 strategic planning webinars. Held each semester through AdobeConnect, a web conferencing solution, these hour long interviews with alumni explore their current job, employer, and career path. All students are made aware of the forums through email and the interviews are recorded and available at <http://mph.neomed.edu/alumni/career-alumni-forum>.

c. Information about student satisfaction with advising and career counseling services.

Several surveys are sent to determine student satisfaction with advising and career counseling. Students are sent an exit survey, following the exit presentation at the end of the program, and an annual student survey is conducted via email for the new first year students and students who have been in the program for more than one year in January of each year. Survey results from 2015 are in Attachment 4.4.c. Below is an extraction of the survey results from these surveys.

Students also seem mostly satisfied with advising resources. Weighted averages of the career counseling services are mostly >3.00 out of a 4 point scale.

Advising Questions

First/second semester students N=12	Not at all	A little		Moderate amount	A lot	NA	Wtd Avg.
UNIVERSITY: Academic advising services offered by your home university, including the assistance of your Program Coordinator	0	1		3	3	3	3.29
UNIVERSITY: (If you have used it) Career center services offered by your home campus	0	0		1	3	6	3.75
UNIVERSITY: (If you have asked) Career advice offered by your Program Coordinator	0	0		0	5	5	4.00
PROGRAM OFFICE: Academic advising services offered by the MPH program office at NEOMED	0	0		2	6	2	3.75
PROGRAM OFFICE: (If you have asked) Career advice offered by the MPH program office at NEOMED	0	0		1	2	7	3.67
Faculty are able to aid in job-related decisions	1	0		2	3	5	3.17

Beyond first year students=18							
UNIVERSITY: Academic advising services offered by your home university, including the assistance of your Program Coordinator	3	2		2	6	2	2.85
UNIVERSITY: (If you have used it) Career center services offered by your home campus	1	1		1	3	8	3.00
UNIVERSITY: (If you have asked) Career advice offered by your Program Coordinator	2	0		3	4	6	3.00
PROGRAM OFFICE: Academic advising services offered by the MPH program office at NEOMED	0	1		2	9	3	3.67
PROGRAM OFFICE: (If you have asked) Career advice offered by the MPH program office at NEOMED	0	1		4	6	6	3.45
Faculty are able to aid in job-related decisions	1	0		2	5	7	3.38
Exit survey N=21							
UNIVERSITY: Academic advising services offered by your home university, including the assistance of your Program Coordinator	2	1		6	5	6	3.00
UNIVERSITY: (If you have used it) Career center services offered by your home campus	0	1		7	1	11	3.00
UNIVERSITY: (If you have asked) Career advice offered by your Program Coordinator	0	2		5	6	6	3.31
PROGRAM OFFICE: Academic advising services offered by the MPH program office at NEOMED	0	2		4	6	8	3.33
PROGRAM OFFICE: (If you have asked) Career advice offered by the MPH program office at NEOMED	1	1		5	4	9	3.09

Faculty are able to aid in job-related decisions	0	3		4	3	10	3.00
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Weighted averages of the career counseling services are all >3.00 out of a 4 point scale.

Career Counseling Questions

First/second semester students N=12	Not at all	A little	Moderate amount	A lot	NA	Wtd Avg.
Helped you gain a good understanding of the field of public health?	0	0	1	10	0	3.91
Helped you develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be competitive for jobs of your choice?	0	0	1	8	2	3.89
Aided in job placement activities (e.g., identifying contacts or possible job opportunities, providing references)?	0	0	4	3	4	3.43
Contributed to the fine-tuning or further development of your own career goals?	0	0	6	5	0	3.45
Beyond first year students N=18						
Helped you gain a good understanding of the field of public health?	0	0	2	13	1	3.87
Helped you develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be competitive for jobs of your choice?	0	1	6	8	1	3.47
Aided in job placement activities (e.g., identifying contacts or possible job opportunities, providing references)?	0	0	3	7	6	3.70
Contributed to the fine-tuning or further development of your own career goals?	0	3	5	7	1	3.27
Exit survey N=21						
Helped you gain a good understanding of the field of public health?	0	0	3	17	0	3.85
Helped you develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be competitive for jobs of your choice?	0	1	9	10	0	3.45

Aided in job placement activities (e.g., identifying contacts or possible job opportunities, providing references)?	1	3	8	5	3	3.00
Contributed to the fine-tuning or further development of your own career goals?	0	3	6	11	0	3.40

d. Description of the procedures by which students may communicate their concerns to program officials, including information about how these procedures are publicized and about the aggregate number of complaints and/or student grievances submitted for each of the last three years.

The CEOMPH student handbook contains the following policy: “For academic complaints, the student is to provide a written statement detailing her/his complaint initially to the course director of the course. If unresolved, then the statement will be sent to the MPH program director (for core courses) or the student’s university program coordinator (for elective courses). For all of these cases, the program director and university program coordinator will communicate with each other about the academic complaint. If the situation is still not resolved, then the student’s home university procedures will be followed.” The program office is unaware of any formal complaints from students in the CEOMPH program. In most cases, concerns about courses or faculty have been handled and resolved through private discussions with the pertinent parties.

Each university also have their own formal policies that students would follow if the CEOMPH student handbook does not address the issue. These procedures are listed below.

The University of Akron--Any UA graduate student who believes that he or she has valid grounds for a complaint should attempt to resolve the problem through a conference with the faculty member involved, the department head, and/or the graduate advisor. Following that, the student may attempt to resolve the problem with the assistance of the academic dean. If the problem has not been adequately solved at that level or the student wishes to appeal that decision, the complaint is presented to the dean of the graduate school. If the complaint/grievance is not settled to the student’s satisfaction by the dean of the graduate school, the complaint shall become a grievance to be filed with the senior vice president and provost. Upon receipt of the grievance, the senior vice president and provost shall notify in writing the president of graduate student government that a hearing committee should be constituted. An appeal may be made to the president of the university after all of the above procedures have been followed. The president of the university shall assess each case on an individual basis and his/her decision shall be considered final. The procedure can be found at <https://www.uakron.edu/dotAsset/678001.pdf>

Cleveland State University--Any CSU student may file with the office for institutional equity or the ombudsperson a written complaint which shall include a statement of the grievance, the particular university regulation, policy, rule, or action at issue, the harm alleged to have been suffered by the complaining party, and the relief sought. (1) Discrimination grievance. Complaints alleging some kind of prohibited discrimination shall be filed with the office for institutional equity. (2) Other grievances. All other grievances covered by this rule shall be filed with the university ombudsperson. If the student’s grievance is not resolved informally, the grievance will be forwarded by the university ombudsperson or the office for institutional equity, to the student grievance board through the office of the vice president of student life. The recommendation of the student grievance board will include the vote and may include minority opinions as well as the redress sought and copies sent to the office for institutional equity or ombudsperson, as

appropriate, and to the concerned parties, The president of the university shall give written notification of her or his decision to the concerned parties, the office of institutional equity or the ombudsperson, and the student grievance board after receipt of the recommendation of the student grievance board. CSU's grievance procedure is found at <https://www.csuohio.edu/compliance/student-grievance-procedure>

Northeast Ohio Medical University--Use of the NEOMED Office of the Ombudsman is voluntary and no one should be compelled to seek assistance through the office of the Ombudsman to seek redress for a grievance it is a non-binding option for students. Information on the Office of the Ombudsman can be found at <http://www.neomed.edu/officesanddirectory/office-of-the-ombuds/about/informal>

Ohio University--An OU student may grieve academic matters not involving grade changes. These issues may include course content and instructor behavior. Ohio University takes the position that academic freedom protects faculty and students' research and scholarship activities as well as material introduced in the classroom and must be assured during the academic appeal process. However, instructors are expected to show proper judgment in the classroom and should avoid persistently intruding material which has no relation to their subject. If a student wishes to grieve an academic matter that is not protected by academic freedom as defined above, the student should first seek resolution of the matter with the instructor. If resolution is not reached, the student should take his or her grievance to the department chair or school director. If resolution cannot be reached at that level, the student should consult the dean of his or her college. The student should be aware that they may contact the [Ombuds Office](#), for advice and counsel at any time during the academic grievance processes described above. The policy is located in the student handbook at https://www.ohio.edu/students/handbook/policies/index.cfm#CP_JUMP_323433

Youngstown State University--The Graduate Student Grievance Procedure at YSU provides the graduate students with a formal channel through which complaints concerning academic matters may be heard. It creates a system whereby the student may receive assistance in pressing a claim within the organization of the University. To the extent possible, a pre-grievance process is conducted at the college level; if the issue is not resolved at this step or is delayed by departmental inactivity, the student will arrange a meeting with the college dean to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved at this step, the student may initiate a formal grievance through the College of Graduate Studies. The College of Graduate Studies will only review grievances filed by students in graduate programs that are reviewed and unresolved at the college level. College administrators and faculty shall initiate procedures for resolving formal grievances as identified in existing university and college policies. Complaints related to violations of equal opportunity policies will be reviewed by the Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity. They will not be reviewed by the College of Graduate Studies. The entire procedure can be found at <http://cms.ysu.edu/college-graduate-studies/graduate-student-grievance-procedure>

e. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met and an analysis of the program's strengths, weaknesses and plans relating to this criterion.

This criterion is met. The program has sufficient resources for student advising and career counseling.

Strengths: Since the last self-study, the program has increase career advising, because student surveys indicated that they wanted more assistance. Since then, resume/CV reviews and career planning have been made a part of the Capstone Project I course. The Wednesday Tips contain job search and professionalism tips. The program office and program coordinators help students schedule their coursework through the student prospectus and during each semester's course registration period. The new alumni/career forum will hopefully provide more resources for students to explore their options and interact with alumni.

Weaknesses: Because the program's students are diverse, it is difficult to gauge the type of advising for each student. Some students already have jobs, some student are seeking jobs, and some students are looking for further education. Each student has a unique set of career development and advising needs.

Plan: Continue to see ways to enhance guidance through the program. Offer opportunities and advice through different methods, such as networks, email, website and within courses.