MPH

Consortium of Eastern Ohio
Master of Public Health

Capstone Project II Guidelines

**Guidelines apply to students planning
to do capstone projects after taking the Capstone Project I course
Rev. 8/24/19**

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Overview

The purpose of the Capstone Project II course is to provide an opportunity for the student to apply the public health competencies acquired in the core courses to a public health project. It is the culminating experience in the Consortium of Eastern Ohio Master of Public Health CEOMPH) program. Students may register for this course only after all core courses have been successfully completed. Students are also strongly encouraged to take all of the generalist track courses and electives before working on the capstone project. This course should be taken in the last or next to the last semester in the program. The student will select a faculty and community preceptor that will provide guidance and evaluate the work on a project. An approved written product (grant, paper, etc.) must be produced.

The prerequisite for Capstone Project II is Capstone Project I and completion of all core courses. This course should be in your last semester or next to the last semester of the program. The MPH Curriculum Committee should have already approved your project.

Objectives

At the end of this project, students should be able to do the following:

1. Demonstrate the ability to perform public health competencies.
2. Integrate public health principles into a written product.
3. Demonstrate the ability to apply public health academic principles to a practice setting.

Evaluation

Below is the evaluation that your faculty, community preceptor(s) and other team members will use. In addition, they will be indicated if you achieved designated competencies

Based on the information above, please agree on the points provided.	Possible Points	Points Given
Public health competencies addressed • The competencies that the student submits with the application are satisfied (as indicated in the competencies grid.)	50	
Quality of products • The quality of products meets the team's expectations and judged to be applicable to public health practice.	25	
Professionalism displayed • Student is self-directed, follows up on project obligations including project management activities, and displays professional behavior.	25	
Total	*100*	

Grade	Point Total
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Requirements

All students are required to take Capstone Project I prior to Capstone Project II. Students must have completed at least four core courses to take Capstone Project I (Biostatistics in Public Health, Epidemiology in Public Health, Social and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health, and Public Health Concepts are preferred). Students must satisfactorily complete all core courses before registering for the

Capstone Project II. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the rest of their coursework before starting Capstone Project II, so that it can truly be the culminating course in the program; it should be completed in the last or next to the last semester in the program. Capstone Project II is taken for 3 semester credit hours, which is equivalent to about 135 hours of work. All projects must have an overall public health/community-based orientation. Students may choose to do the capstone project within or outside of their current work situation.

At the end of the course, the student will need to turn in the following:

Item to turn in on or before exit presentation day	MPH Program office	Faculty Preceptor	Community Preceptor
Electronic copy of the completed capstone. Give hard copy to preceptors, if requested.	X	X	X
Final IRB summary to IRB office that approved proposal (if appropriate, e.g. expedited or full review performed)	X	X	
Course preceptor capstone evaluation (both faculty and community preceptors should turn in one evaluation).	X		
Capstone evaluation—student feedback form	X		
IRB completion form for the IRB committee that approved your project, if necessary (so that the IRB committee knows that you have completed your project).		X	
For Exit presentation			
Electronic portfolio—includes all of the above. See portfolio guidelines on MPH web page for items that should be included in the portfolio http://mph.neomed.edu/academics/exit-presentation-capstone The electronic portfolio should be submitted at least a day in advance of the exit presentation.	X		

Criteria for Capstone Projects

The following criteria must be fulfilled depending on the number of semester hours taken. A sample capstone project application is in the appendix.

1. *Hours*
   You should plan to spend about 135 hours of work on your project. You will be logging these hours on your time log.

2. *Projects/written product*
   There can be a variety of projects and products that may be acceptable. The faculty preceptor, community preceptor, and CEOMPH Curriculum Committee must approve your selection before you begin the project. All projects need to be based on an application of a theory or model from the coursework. Projects must also follow the recommendations for improvement provided at the end of the Capstone Project I competency assessment exercises.

Product	Product quality
Research study	A research study is one that may involve human subjects or not. It begins with a research question. The final paper may be written for publication in a journal (you do not need to actually have it published; however, agree on a specific format with your faculty preceptor). This might involve survey development, implementation and analysis.

		Evaluation of a program generally starts with the original goals of the program and using methods to see if the goals have been achieved. The written product is generally only useful to the agency that runs the program.

Program evaluation/ assessment	Evaluation of a program generally starts with the original goals of the program and using methods to see if the goals have been achieved. The written product is generally only useful to the agency that runs the program. An assessment is the estimation of the nature or characteristics of an entity. For example, a **community assessment** is the process of identifying characteristics (e.g. strengths, assets, needs, challenges) of a specified community in order to better understand how best to address concerns
Quality improvement project	Quality improvement involves improving the process or outcome of an organization. Quality improvement tools should be used in the project. Most projects include at least one cycle of process/outcome improvement. The final paper should include components of the quality improvement cycle.
Other projects	Other projects may include the following: • Grant proposal-- The request for proposal (RFP) should contain enough elements to allow the student to apply many of the competencies. An example are public health service-type grants http://www.hhs.gov/grants). • Curriculum development—a curriculum can be developed for an organization. • Cost benefit analysis—determination of the costs may be determined for alternative solutions for an agency. • Other projects as appropriate.

3. *Public health domains and competencies*

Please refer to the MPH web site or final proposal module in Capstone Project I for the public health competencies. *Review the competencies that you will be achieving with the Capstone Coordinator and your preceptors to make sure that you include the competencies that you need to strengthen, as indicated by your Capstone Project I competency dashboard.* All students must include the competencies that are indicated in the respective project booklets. Optional competencies should also be chosen, as appropriate to the project.

	Competency	Research	Evaluation/ Assessment	Quality improvement	Other
C-EVI2	Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context	x	x	x	x
C-EVI3	Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate	x	x	x	x
C-EVI4	Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice	x	x	x	x
C-MGT5	Select methods to evaluate public health programs		x		
C-LEA1	Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making	x	x	x	x
C-COM1	Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors	x	x	x	x
C-COM2	Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation	x	x	x	x
C-IPP1	Perform effectively on interprofessional teams	x	x	x	x
G2	Demonstrate the ability to design, implement and execute a research, assessment, evaluation, quality improvement or other systematic protocol	x	x	x	x
G4	Demonstrate critical evaluation of ethical values, theories, and principles that guide public health inquiry and decision-making	x			

Student Obligations

Students should do the following (refer to appendix for more detailed timeline planning):

Before staring the capstone project

- At anytime, you can discuss ideas with the MPH Program Office (program director and capstone coordinator) or faculty.
- You must consult with an interprofessional faculty team and experts during the planning phase.
- You must complete Capstone Project I, have your preceptors in place, and have the MPH Curriculum Committee approve your proposal.
- Note that you are a "consultant" to the community agency and that CEOMPH will examine the ownership of the project outcome and defer ownership to the agency whenever possible.
- You are the "team leader," so it will be your responsibility to manage your project. You will need to use a Gantt chart and meeting agendas and summaries to keep your project on track.
- Fill in a capstone evaluation form with the competencies that you are using in you capstone project and how you intend to achieve them and submit to your team members after your proposal has been approved by the Curriculum Committee.

During the capstone project

- Meet at least weekly (conference call or face-to-face) with the community preceptor. You should send an agenda prior to each meeting, and a meeting summary should be sent after the meeting.
- Meet at least every two weeks (conference call or face-to-face) with the faculty preceptor.
- Coordinate monthly meetings (conference call or face-to-face) with both the community preceptor and faculty preceptor.
- Submit meeting summaries via email to your preceptors with a cc: to pubhlth@neomed.edu (MPH Program Office). The subject line should contain the following: "[Your last name] Capstone Project meeting summary."
- Follow timeline established during the application process. Notify in writing, faculty, community preceptor, and MPH Program Office, if extenuating circumstances occur and an extension is anticipated.
- Fulfill the competencies, objectives, and timelines outlined in the capstone project proposal.
- If you feel the need to change your preceptor(s), please contact the MPH Program Office with a written reason on why you need to change your preceptor(s). If necessary, the MPH Program Office will contact appropriate parties, who will decide what to do.
- Make sure your graduation paperwork is in place (this should have already been done, if you are anticipating graduation at the end of the semester).

At the end of the capstone project

- Make sure the preceptors have enough time to grade your written project before grades need to be submitted.
- Turn in the final written product at the end of the academic semester. Make sure preceptors and the MPH office have at least an electronic version. Please provide a hard copy to your preceptors, if requested.
- Make sure your project team members turn in one evaluation form with your grade.
- Turn in an electronic copy of the written product and complete capstone template to the program office within your electronic portfolio. This can be turned in on or before exit presentation day.
- Make sure your preceptors fill out an evaluation form and submit it to the MPH Program Office at pubhlth@neomed.edu (at the exit presentation is permissible).
- Turn in Capstone Evaluation—Student Feedback form to the MPH Program Office.
- If you have fulfilled the requirements for graduation, submit your exit presentation application. Your capstone evaluation must be turned in by your preceptors before you are permitted to do your exit presentation.

MPH Program Office Roles and Obligations

The MPH Program Office consists of the program director, capstone coordinator, and program assistant. All may be reached at pubhlth@neomed.edu.

The MPH Program Office staff will do the following:

- Introduce the capstone project requirements to new students.
- If necessary, provide suggestions and locations for capstone projects.
- Assist students in developing their capstone projects through Capstone Project I.
- If necessary, assist in matching a community preceptor(s) and faculty advisor/preceptor and suggest other team members to the student. Orient preceptors to the capstone project process.
- Review capstone application and present to Curriculum Committee for approval.
- Collect meeting summaries and/or Interim Progress Reports.
- Answer any questions during the course of the project.
- Transmit the final capstone grade to the appropriate university.

Faculty Preceptor Roles and Obligations

The faculty preceptor is a graduate level faculty member from one of the CEOMPH partner universities. He/she does not need to have an MPH faculty appointment to be a preceptor. The faculty preceptor does not necessarily need to have expertise in the capstone topic but should have expertise in the methodology that the student will be using in the project.

The faculty preceptor will do the following:

- Provide the academic structure for the project.
- Assist the student in developing a project plan during the C3P20 process in Capstone Project I, in conjunction with the community preceptor and the student.
- Advise the student regarding preparation of an appropriate written product for his/her project.
- Assist the student in obtaining IRB approval for the project, if necessary.
- Meet (either by conference call or face-to-face) with the student at least every two weeks to assess progress.
- Meet (either by conference call of face-to-face) with the student and community preceptor at least once a month to assess progress.
- Respond to meeting summaries if the student is not making adequate program or turn in a mid-term progress report if no meeting summaries are being submitted by the student. Submit an end-term evaluation. Interim evaluations may be contingent on the project progress.
- Provide a grade for the student on the Capstone Project Evaluation Form to the MPH Program Office at pubhlth@neomed.edu. Signatures and comments from both faculty and community preceptor should be submitted on the same form.

Community Preceptor Roles and Obligations

The community preceptor is a member of the community who works at an organization that can provide the setting and population appropriate for the MPH student project. The community preceptor should have the expertise and authority to guide the student and allow access to relevant organization resources.

The Community Preceptor will do the following:

- Provide direction on the application of the public health competencies to the project.
- Provide a setting in which the student may demonstrate his/her public health skills.
- Sign and turn in a community preceptor agreement form to the MPH office.
- Assist in developing a project plan during the C3P20 process, in conjunction with the faculty preceptor and the student.

- Assist in developing an appropriate written end product.
- Meet (either by conference phone or face-to-face) with the student weekly.
- Meet (either by conference phone or face-to-face) with the student and faculty preceptor to assess student progress once a month.
- Assist the student during the project, using expertise and experience.
- Turn in a mid-term progress report and end-term evaluation. Interim evaluations may be contingent on the project and number of credits.
- Provide a grade for the student on the Capstone Project Evaluation Form to the MPH Program Office. Signatures and comments from both faculty and community preceptor should be submitted on the same form.

Expert Consultants/Other Potential Members of the Capstone Project Team

The expert consultants should be professionals who have topic expertise and can be contact during the planning or implementation phase of your project. You will be given suggestions of faculty/experts to contact, and the student should contact others as agreed upon by the Capstone Coordinator. Expert consultants can also provide suggestions on items such as data analysis, model/framework, methods, or other areas.

Other potential members may include additional faculty preceptors, additional community preceptors, experts in the field, or statistical support personnel.

Consortium of Eastern Ohio Master of Public Health Program Contact Information

Amy Lee, MD, MPH, Program Director
Phone: (330) 325-6164; Fax: (330) 325-5907; E-mail: afl@neomed.edu
Contact for questions on general program administration questions. You can also contact for assistance with capstone project administration and questions.

Kim Trowbridge, MEd, CHES, Capstone Coordinator
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Contact with questions on capstone project administration and coordination.

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