Simmons UNIVERSITY

Department of Public Health

Master of Public Health Program
Health Equity Change Project Guidebook

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Simmons University Department of Public Health

The Simmons University Department of Public Health (Simmons Public Health) offers a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health and an online Master of Public Health, the Simmons MPH. The Simmons MPH prepares students to address health inequities and positively impact public health at the local, national, and global level. Delivered through a blend of online courses, self-paced content, and live sessions, as well as in-person immersion experiences and a culminating practice experience, the curriculum provides students with real-world skills to ensure that they graduate ready to serve as effective public health practitioners.

The Simmons MPH explores the core areas of public health: epidemiology, biostatistics, health policy/health services, environmental health, and social/behavioral health. Additionally, our practice-based curriculum incorporates courses specifically designed to develop students' leadership, management, advocacy and organizing skills. The culminating experience of the program, the Health Equity Change Project, provides students with on-ground public health experience through which they demonstrate their ability to create, implement, and evaluate projects, programs, and/or campaigns targeted at improving health equity across populations.

Department Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission
Simmons Public Health trains public health practitioners to advance population health and health equity through innovative education, transdisciplinary collaboration, applied research and practice, community organizing and engagement, and health advocacy for systems change. Our programs prepare students in the general principles and practices of public health, and to address structural determinants of health often situated in historical systems of racism and intersectional forms of oppression.

Vision
Simmons Public Health advances a vision where all individuals and communities are assured a fair and equitable opportunity to achieve optimal health and well-being, ensuring inclusivity across identities, locations and circumstances.

Values
Social Justice. We value social justice as a core concept of health equity, which embraces the uniqueness, dignity, and inherent value of all individuals and communities and challenges power differentials and structures that preclude fair opportunity for optimal health for all.

Community Partnership. We strive always to work alongside communities seeking health equity, through partnered knowledge production, community-identified priority setting, and collaborative action towards social change.

Scientific Rigor and Integrity. We strive for outstanding performance in enacting health equity that is built on the foundation of scientifically rigorous research, evidence-based public health practice, and personal and professional integrity and ethics.

Critical Systems Thinking. We employ a critical lens to understand, assess and address broad systems and structures that produce and reproduce inequities and injustices in health.

Transformative Leadership. We advance a model of leadership that challenges existing paradigms, imagines new systems and structures, and embraces innovative approaches to create sustainable change for health equity.

The Health Equity Change Project

The Health Equity Change Project (HECP) is the culminating learning experience of the Simmons MPH program and satisfies the Applied Practice Experience (practicum) and the Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) required of Master of Public Health programs. The HECP evolves over the final several terms of the MPH program.

Through the HECP students synthesize their learning across the curriculum and put acquired skills into practice to develop, implement, and evaluate an innovative project to address a health inequity. Students must complete at least 150 hours in their practicum and must demonstrate attainment of self-selected MPH competencies through a digital portfolio and a major writing deliverable in the ILE.

Overview of HECP Requirements

To successfully meet the requirements of the practicum and the ILE, students must:
- complete 150 hours of a practicum experience, to include planning, implementation, and evaluation of a project to address a health inequity;
- demonstrate self-selected competencies through practical, applied work products (deliverables) that were produced for the practicum site's use and benefit;
- complete a major writing assignment to meet the requirements of the ILE.

HECP Timeline and Course Sequence

Students take a planning course (Public Health Project) and two implementation courses (HECP I & II).

Public Health Project Planning

Public Health Project Planning provides students with the opportunity to work closely with their instructor to design their Health Equity Change Project. During this course students will select MPH and/or concentration competencies the project will demonstrate, submit their final project proposal, and select the format of their ILE.

Health Equity Change Project I & II

During HECP I and II, students implement and evaluate their project. The program strongly recommends that students complete the large majority of their practicum hours during HECP I. This allows students to complete their hours early on during HECP II, which provides more time to finalize deliverables, create their digital portfolio, and complete the ILE.

Courses and key assignments for the Health Equity Change Project

Project Planning	HECP I	HECP II
❖ Choose competencies ❖ Logic model ❖ Timeline ❖ IRB review ❖ Proposal submission and approval ❖ ILE selection	❖ > 80 implementation hours ❖ Maintain time log ❖ Literature review ❖ Begin ILE	❖ Complete implementation hours ❖ Submit ILE ❖ HECP deliverables ❖ HECP digital portfolio
Live sessions meet periodically. Individual meetings with instructor and preceptor for individualized project development are required.		
Project Planning	Health Equity Change Project Implementation	

Progression through the HECP

The approved Final HECP Proposal developed in Project Planning is considered the student's final plan and contract for the practicum and for the remainder of the HECP. Please note the following requirements for progression through the HECP experience:

- Should the student not secure their practicum placement prior to the Project Planning course they may not be allowed to enroll.
- Should the student not timely submit their project to the [Institutional Review Board (IRB)](), the student may be required to withdraw and/or repeat the course.
- Should the student propose substantive changes to their final proposal, the student may be required to withdraw from and/or repeat a course in the HECP sequence.

Students are required to complete a minimum of 150 hours across the HECP implementation courses in accordance with the following timeline:

- Students must complete at least 80-100 hours of their practicum placement during the first implementation course
- Students must complete a total of 150 hours across these courses by the midterm of

the second implementation course.

Should the student not complete their hours according to this timeline, the student will not pass the practicum requirement or be eligible to graduate.

Preparation across the curriculum

Several MPH core courses provide critical preparation for the HECP. During these courses, students will complete several assignments which provide opportunities to inform and build groundwork toward their HECP. Students are not required to apply these assignments to their HECP topic, but it is highly recommended.

Courses that provide preparation for the HECP include:

Socio-Structural Determinants of Health (MHEO 420): Students complete a root cause analysis of a particular health inequity, relevant in their local community, which includes a literature review and summarizes current knowledge about the inequity, the contributing determinants, and opportunities for intervention.

Community-Based Research for Health Equity (MHEO 435): Students practice research skills and complete a mock research project which allows them to explore a health inequity in their local context. The research topic and study population selected for this course may include those the student is contemplating for their HECP.

Health Advocacy, Community Organizing, and Innovation (MHEO 465): Students complete service-learning embedded with an organization that is active in health advocacy and/or community organizing. Students also complete assignments that allow for analysis of the organization's strategy and practices as they engage in structural and systemic change efforts. The student's HECP partner organization may also serve as the placement for the service-learning requirement.

Competency-Based Learning Goals And Objectives for the HECP

Students customize their Health Equity Change Project through a self-selection of at least five competencies they will demonstrate through their Applied Practice Experience. Students will further demonstrate synthesis and integration of competencies through the Integrative Learning Experience. The ILE must be a high-quality written product that demonstrates synthesis of several competencies which students may self-select through the customized ILE option.

Applied Practice Experience Competencies

Students must identify a set of competency-based learning goals and objectives for the

practicum from the Program Learning Framework ([Appendix I](#)). Students should select competencies based on a careful fit with their practicum. At least three of the five competencies <u>must</u> be MPH foundational competencies). Up to two of the five competences may be MPH concentration in health equity competencies.

Students are required to select <u>five total</u> competencies as follows:

1. At least three competencies should be MPH Foundational competencies

2. Up to two of he competencies may be MPH health equity concentration competencies

Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) Competencies

To meet the ILE requirement, students produce a high-quality written product which evidences synthesis and integration of MPH foundational and concentration competencies. The product should be appropriate for the student's educational and professional objectives. Students may choose the structured ILE format or develop a customized ILE in close consultation with their instructor.

Structured ILE

The Simmons MPH offers a policy statement structure for the ILE. This structure includes a literature review, an analysis of multiple determinants surrounding this health inequity, a review of existing strategies, and the development of evidence-based recommendations to advance a proposal for policy change.

Through this structure students demonstrate synthesis of the following Foundational and Concentration Competencies. Students may also select others as appropriate and, if so discuss this early on with their instructor:

- Foundational Competency 6: Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels

- Foundational Competency 13: Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes

- Foundational Competency 15: Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity

- Concentration Competency 2: Analyze systems of oppression and structural-level determinants of health, including racism and other forms of marginalization, drawing parallels to patterns of health disparities.

Customized ILE

Students may pursue a customized ILE rather than the structured format described above.

This may take the form of, for example, a thesis, journal article, legislative testimony, or other written product.

For the customized ILE, students must select more than one MPH foundational competency and at least one concentration competency. Students should work directly with their instructor to select foundational and concentration competencies and develop the format of their customized ILE.

Students pursuing a customized ILE must submit the Customized ILE Form during the Project Planning course and before beginning the ILE. Students must complete the following:

1. ILE Format. Describe the format of the ILE will, providing as much detail as possible. This should include the type of product, number of pages, and other guidelines you will follow.

2. Competencies. List the competencies selected for the ILE. Students must select more than one foundational and at least one concentration competency.

3. Competency Integration and Synthesis. Explain how the ILE will synthesize and integrate the selected competencies.

4. Rationale. Explain why a customized ILE is appropriate and how it supports the student's educational and professional goals and how the product will benefit or is relevant for your practicum site.

General Requirements for the Health Equity Change Project

Below are the general criteria for the Applied Practice Experience and the Integrative Learning Experience components of the HECP. All students must meet these minimum requirements in order to graduate from the program and receive the Master of Public Health degree.

Applied Practice Experience

The Applied Practice Experience, or practicum, must meet these general requirements:

Must apply public health skills and competencies to a local, statewide, national or global issue of health equity. Students will identify and apply a set of skills and competencies based on their interests and future career goals. They will identify a health inequity to address in partnership with their chosen preceptor (supervisor at the placement organization). The practicum should be responsive to the needs and programming of the organization and achievable within the time limits of the practicum. The project may involve community-based research, which will require advanced planning to allow time for IRB approval.

Must be a significant experience (minimum of 150 hours). Students are required to complete a minimum of 150 hours for their practicum. Activities completed prior to the initiation of the HECP cannot be counted toward this requirement. Students will be required to report on the hours and their preceptor will be required to sign off on them. Students cannot count hours for commuting time, regular meetings with preceptor or any time used for classroom assignments toward the practicum.

Must be conducted within an established organization. Student practicums must take place at an established community organization (practicum site). The organization must have some history of operations and have adequate infrastructure to support the student throughout the practicum. Students will research potential organizations during the planning courses to ascertain suitability and alignment with learning goals and selected competencies. All practicum sites must be approved by the MPH program. Practicum sites may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Community and/or non-profit organizations
- Local health departments
- State or federal agencies
- Voluntary health agencies
- International health organizations
- Healthcare service delivery organizations (e.g. hospitals, community health centers)

Must be supervised and evaluated by a qualified supervisor. Students must identify a qualified supervisor (preceptor) within the chosen organization, to be approved by the instructor. The preceptor will be responsible for providing guidance and supervision to the student throughout the HECP and will be required to provide written evaluations of the student's performance (*i.e.*, professionalism, completion of project, fulfillment of competency-based learning objectives, etc.).

Preceptors should have sufficient relevant public health and/or health equity experience and provide a strong learning environment that enables students to meet their objectives and demonstrate competencies. While preceptors are not required to have an MPH, they should have substantial educational and practice experience. For example:
- A terminal degree (e.g., PhD or DrPH) and current, professional experience in public health and/or health equity;
- At least three (3) years of full-time, professional experience in public health and/or health equity in addition to a graduate degree in public health (MPH);
- At least five (5) years of full-time, professional experience in public health and/or health equity in addition to a graduate degree (MS or MA);
- At least ten (10) years of full-time, professional public health and/or health equity experience in addition to a bachelor's degree.

Integrative Learning Experience

The Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) must meet the following general requirements:

Must be a high-quality, written product that is appropriate for the student's educational and professional objectives. The written product must be relevant to the topic selected and well-referenced, with sources credited appropriately. It should be clear and well-organized, with ideas flowing logically. It should contain minimal grammatical or spelling errors.

Must demonstrate synthesis and integration of MPH Foundational Competencies and Health Equity Concentration Competencies. Students will select competencies to demonstrate through the ILE to include more than one foundational and one concentration competency. Synthesis and integration requires merging and incorporating competencies to produce a novel and significant contribution, demonstrating the impact the work has on the topic and in the field.

Must be evaluated by faculty. The ILE will be reviewed by the HECP instructor and a second reader from the Department of Public Health faculty. It may also be reviewed by the preceptor to determine fit and use for the practicum site.

Should reflect learning garnered through comprehensive research and through the HECP implementation and evaluation experience. Students are expected to collect, analyze, and evaluate a wide range of scholarly sources, data, and other reliable information about the health inequity that is the topic of their HECP to inform their ILE. Thus, students are strongly encouraged to use the HECP assignments as well as preparatory courses to become familiar with the topic of the ILE and to conduct preliminary research and writing.

Should be developed in a way that is useful to external partners. Students should craft their ILE in a way that might serve the needs of the organization and its community partners. The ILE should support advancing health equity in the local context through, for example, significant findings, evidence-based recommendations, or proposals for advocacy.

HECP Digital Portfolio

Students are required to complete a HECP Digital Portfolio to evidence demonstration of competencies. The final portfolio is meant to document and catalog the HECP deliverables and to be a useful tool as the student seeks out future employment opportunities. The digital portfolio must include:
- the ILE written product
- a project summary or abstract
- the project proposal
- at least two practicum deliverables
- analysis of competency attainment

- a Health Equity Change Project video

Each student's digital portfolio will be added to the Department's MPH HECP Digital Portfolio repository, available for Simmons students, faculty, and staff to view.

Roles And Responsibilities

Students

Before and during the development of their Health Equity Change Project, students are required to complete a number of important tasks toward their success with this culminating experience. While they will have support of their program faculty and preceptor, students are ultimately responsible for the following tasks:

- Research and select a practicum placement on their own initiative. This practicum placement will be with an established organization to develop, implement, and evaluate an innovative project that proactively addresses an issue of health inequity (see above).
- Select a preceptor within the organization they chose for their HECP.
- Complete the Practicum Placement Site Approval Form and submit for program approval.
- Draft and finalize the HECP Proposal. Students must have this plan approved and signed by the preceptor, and must submit it with the HECP Proposal Approval Form by the required deadline for program approval.
- Build a digital portfolio
- Log 150 practicum hours, to be submitted periodically and approved by the preceptor
- Submit interim and final evaluation forms
- Maintain professionalism at all times, in representing the program and the university throughout the practicum and community-engaged experiences.
- Submit all course assignments, attend all live sessions, and complete any required asynchronous content.

Preceptors

Preceptors support students through the practicum supervisory role, providing direction and advice to students where necessary. Preceptors also evaluate the students' performance and ensure that the project meets the organization's needs. Preceptors should:

- meet with students 3-4 times to collaboratively design the project and ensure that the project adds value to the organization
- review the student's project proposal and planned work products to ensure agreement on the project
- review and approve student hours
- provide interim and final evaluations of the student's performance
- supervise and provide regular feedback to students during the implementation of the HECP (ideally weekly)
- review and approve the student's final work products
- report any problems or concerns to the instructor and/or program

Faculty

Instructors will guide students throughout the HECP, providing structure and support for successful completion of this culminating program experience. In addition to their typical responsibilities as MPH faculty, instructors are responsible for the following tasks:

- Review and approve the Practicum Placement Site Approval Form.
- Review and approve the HECP Proposal Approval Form.
- Review practicum hours submitted by the student.
- Assist and provide guidance to students through the development and implementation of their HECP and related assignments (through live sessions and individual office hours).
- Assist and provide guidance to students through the development of the Integrative Learning Experience assignments and final report (through live sessions and individual office hours).
- Review and approve Preceptor/Student Evaluation Forms.

Simmons University Policies and Student Resources

Please refer to the Simmons University Core Policies and Student Resources for more detail on university-wide policies and student resources. These include the Student Handbook, Academic Integrity Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, and information concerning Accessibility Services.

Simmons University prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Please see the University's Notice of Non-Discrimination for information on how to report concerns or questions relating to sex discrimination.

Students may also wish to consult information concerning the student grievance process.

Appendix I: Program Learning Framework (Competencies)

The Simmons MPH Program Learning Framework encompasses nationally-recognized foundational public health knowledge and competencies (CEPH, 2024) as well as competencies specifically targeted to advance leadership for health equity. Through the HECP practicum and ILE, students demonstrate and synthesize self-selected competencies.

MPH Foundational Competencies (CEPH, 2024)
Evidence-Based Approaches to Public Health
1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice
Public Health & Health Care Systems
5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and systemic levels
Planning & Management to Promote Health
7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design, implementation, or critique of public health policies or programs
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs
Policy in Public Health
12. Discuss the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes

14.	Advocate for political, social, or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
15.	Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity

Leadership

16.	Apply leadership and/or management principles to address a relevant issue
17.	Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges

Communication

18.	Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
19.	Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation to a non-academic, non-peer audience with attention to factors such as literacy and health literacy
20.	Describe the importance of cultural humility in communicating public health content

Interprofessional Practice and/or Intersectoral Practice

21.	Integrate perspectives from other sectors and/or professions to promote and advance population health

Systems Thinking

22.	Apply a systems thinking tool to visually represent a public health issue in a format other than a standard narrative

MPH in Health Equity Concentration Competencies

1.	Analyze the history and principles of health equity, human rights, and social justice and apply to the discipline and practice of public health
2.	Analyze systems of oppression and structural-level determinants of health, including racism and other forms of marginalization, drawing parallels to patterns of health disparities
3.	Appraise one's own position, values, and biases, within the systems and structures that shape population health
4.	Employ skills of community organizing, advocacy, and participatory methods to engage community members in assessing and/or addressing community health issues
5.	Appraise public health as a vehicle for transformative change by analyzing an existing health equity initiative as a model of social innovation.

Appendix II: Sample Competency-Based Practicum Learning Objectives

Further guidance on competency interpretation and demonstration may be found here, as provided by the MPH accreditation council CEPH.

MPH Foundational Competency	Learning Goal and/or Objective
MPH-7: Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health	Utilize capacity mapping to evaluate the assets present in a local community to address racial and geographic inequalities in childhood obesity.
MPH-9: Design a population-based policy, program, project, or intervention	Develop a project proposal to address on a systemic or structural level a population-level health outcome that is inequitably distributed
MPH-13: Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes	Identify and analyze the interests of key stakeholders needed to address inequalities in recreational facilities in a local community.
MPH-15: Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity	Compile and critique a list of local policies designed to address inequalities in exposure to childhood trauma.
MPH-19: Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation to a non-academic, non-peer audience with attention to factors such as literacy and health literacy	Present and discuss root-cause analysis of racial inequities in childhood obesity rates to local community members and advocacy organizations.
Health Equity Concentration Competency	Learning Goal and/or Objective
CC-2: Analyze systems of oppression and structural-level determinants of health, including racism and other forms of marginalization, drawing parallels to patterns of health disparities.	Critically analyze the root causes of racial inequities in childhood asthma rates across neighborhoods.
CC-4: Employ skills of community organizing, advocacy, and participatory methods to engage community members in assessing and/or addressing community health issues.	Utilize participatory facilitation techniques (e.g. ORID or SHOWED) to engage community members and stakeholders in group discussions about policy solutions to address local police brutality.

Appendix III: Examples of HECP Projects

For the HECP, students are encouraged to pay particular attention to 'upstream' determinants of health to reveal the systems and structures that create disadvantages in health. Once students determine the health equity issue of interest, they must carefully analyze its associated determinants to identify points of intervention to advance health equity.

The following examples may serve as a guide in developing learning goals and objectives for the practicum.

Health Equity through Education of Medical Students. The purpose of this project was to promote cultural humility, understanding of structural inequities and strategies to address the inequities, through service learning. With the understanding that service learning provides first hand experiential learning to address health inequities, this project is the development of the service learning curriculum. This project required collaborative effort from the Community Health centers where the students will be placed in to develop a relevant and meaningful experience that address the community's needs. The end product was an integrated, innovative curriculum that optimizes the assets and resources of the medical school and community sites and provides opportunities for all participating parties.

Food is Medicine for Adults with Disabilities. This Health Equity Change Project (HECP), Food is Medicine for Adults with Disabilities, is a support project for the Food and Health Policy group of Community Servings. The project delivered work products that contribute to the Food and Health Policy group's effort to obtain sustainable funding for Community Servings' Food Is Medicine food intervention services for the adults with disabilities population.

Narcan Educational Training: A Health Equity Intervention to Reduce Opioid Overdoses. The purpose of this Health Equity Change Project (HECP) was to address the opioid crisis and the disproportionate impact on historically oppressed communities. This project examined the determinants and differences between racial and ethnic groups related to higher risk for opioid overdose. The analysis included, but was not limited to, access to mental health, addiction services, and Naloxone (Narcan) prescriptions at the primary care level. This project was developed in collaboration with Beth Israel Lahey Health Primary Care and the Addiction Medicine division. Throughout this project, educational tools were developed to help reduce racial and ethnic inequities impacting opioid interventions.

Reframing How We Report and Improve Weight Status in Somerville, MA. This project examined inequities in childhood obesity between communities of color and white communities. This project used quantitative survey results, reviewed previous programs aimed at addressing childhood obesity, and created an array of deliverables that discuss the

structural determinants of health and offer policy and programmatic recommendations based on its findings.

Examples based on inequities in obesity. The following are examples of projects and associated deliverables focused on racialized inequities in obesity; specifically, higher incidence and prevalence rates among African American people as compared with white people in an urban community.

- Complete a GIS mapping analysis of fast food versus fresh food accessibility across the city to reveal dynamics of structural racism, and prepare a stakeholder report and/or policy advocacy plan targeting City Council.

- Complete a needs and assets assessment focused on access to green space, walking paths, and low-cost exercise opportunities, including focus groups and community surveys.

- Engage in community organizing, collaboratively preparing and delivering popular education modules focused on land policy, imminent domain, and other advocacy levers for reclaiming abandoned lots to create urban gardens.

- Analyze federal food policies subsidizing obesogenic food products and create an app to facilitate national policy advocacy in the lead up to federal hearings on such policies.

- Complete a policy analysis of school district lunch and vending machine policies and create a policy advocacy campaign in collaboration with the parent teacher organization.

- Create and implement a health advocacy and communication plan during the mayoral election, focused on transportation and food issues, including organizing stakeholder meetings with candidates and writing a series of opinion editorials and press releases on the health equity issues and existing data.

Appendix IV: HECP Responsibilities and Limitations

Identifying HECP Opportunities

While faculty will mentor and support students by providing them career advice and preparatory resources, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to seek and secure their practicum placement placement. The student should be proactive in networking and researching local opportunities within their community context. The following resources may be helpful as a starting place to identify potential organizations and resources.

- [Idealist](#) is a helpful website for identifying organizations working on key issues in your local context. Use the search engine functions to designate your city or community and key topic(s) of interest.
- [The American Public Health Association](#) (APHA) is an organization whose mission is to improve the health of the public and achieve equity in health status. When you access their website, click on the *Careers* tab and then look for internships/fellowships on the left side of the page.
- [NonprofitJobs.org](#) is a website where you can find not-for-profit employers and their job openings. By clicking on the *Search Job Postings* tab you can access a search engine where you can specify your city, job type, and other information that can help you to make a more specific search.
- [Internships.com](#) is a helpful website to identify internships in different areas. To navigate this page you can type the area of interest and your city in order to make the search more specific.
- [Public Health Jobs](#) is a useful website where you can find jobs, internships, volunteer, and fellowship opportunities in the field of public health. Once you access the website you can specify your search by area of interest and your city to find potential opportunities in your local area.
- [The Hunger Center](#) is a non-profit organization that "*works to make issues of domestic and international hunger a priority to policymakers in the U.S. government, and to raise a new generation of leaders to fight against hunger and poverty.*" On the website you can find different options for fellowships that address issues related to hunger, poverty, social inequality, and racism.

Beyond these types of clearing house websites, be sure to access local resources focused on non-profit and government opportunities related to public health. This may include the Chamber of Commerce, local Health and Human Services offices, and other public or private organizations networking coalitions of community organizations.

Financial Compensation

Financial compensation for the HECP is not prohibited and is a matter to be negotiated between the student, the preceptor, and the practicum site. The possibility of payment is not a consideration in the approval of the practicum.

It is the student's responsibility to cover any fees that may be associated with the site. Unless the practicum site agrees to cover such expenses, students should plan to pay for costs related to traveling, immunizations (if needed), or any other costs related to their project.

We recognize that ultimately this is an inequity perpetuated by a systemic structure; however, the experience garnered throughout the HECP is critically important for our students.

Employment

If a student hopes to develop the HECP at their current place of employment they should inform their instructor as soon as possible during project planning. The student must:
  ● carefully outline how this project represents entirely new work, rather than an extension of work that is already part of their professional role;
  ● justify how and why this placement site is the optimal site for addressing the health inequity on which the HECP will focus.

Generally speaking, we strongly encourage students to complete the practicum outside of their current employment to expand their community-based experiences and networking opportunities, all the while building their resume in public health and health equity.

International Placements

Students may complete the HECP practicum placement internationally. We encourage advanced and careful planning with the faculty and preceptor to ensure completion of the practicum during the time constraints of the HECP. When planning, students should also take into account connectivity and strong communication through the experience for timely submission of required evaluations and forms, assignments, and other HECP requirements.

Students wishing to pursue this option must understand that there is inherent risk that international placements may introduce unpredictable or unforeseen obstacles or challenges which may result in course failure and/or delayed graduation. This is not the responsibility of the MPH Faculty or program.

Appendix V: Assignments Across All HECP Courses

Public Health Project Planning

- ☐ HECP Agreement
- ☐ Professional Development Activity
- ☐ HECP Logic Model
- ☐ HECP Timeline
- ☐ IRB Submission
- ☐ draft HECP Proposal
- ☐ final HECP Proposal
- ☐ Proposal Approval Form

Health Equity Change Project I

- ☐ Time Log
- ☐ Interim Self-Evaluation
- ☐ Competency Demonstration Worksheet
- ☐ Preceptor Student Evaluation – Interim
- ☐ Literature Review
- ☐ Literature Review Presentation

Health Equity Change Project II

- ☐ Final Self Evaluation
- ☐ Final Time Log
- ☐ Final Competency Demonstration Worksheet
- ☐ Preceptor Student Evaluation – Final
- ☐ Integrative Learning Experience
- ☐ HECP Digital Portfolio
- ☐ HECP Spotlight

Appendix VI: Health Equity Change Project Agreement

Health Equity Change Project Agreement

The HECP Guidebook provides comprehensive information about the expectations and requirements of the HECP. This agreement is to ensure that you have reviewed the Guidebook, understand the requirements, and received any needed clarification before embarking upon this experience.

I have read the HECP Guidebook and understand the following requirements and expectations:

- ☐ I am required to select and demonstrate five total competencies through my practicum deliverables.

    - ○ At least three of those competencies must be MPH Foundational competencies.

    - ○ I may also select up to two MPH Health Equity Concentration Competencies.

- ☐ I must submit my final HECP proposal by the end of MHEO 490 Public Health Project Planning.

- ☐ I must submit my project for review by the Simmons University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

- ☐ My HECP practicum will be implemented and completed, with a minimum of 150 hours, during MHEO 495 HECP I and MHEO 496 HECP II.

- ☐ As part of the HECP, I must also complete the Integrative Learning Experience (ILE).

- ☐ I must develop at least two practice-based products (deliverables) that demonstrate competencies I have selected for my practicum.

- ☐ I will develop a digital portfolio using the program-required platform which will highlight my deliverables and how they meet the selected competencies.

I understand the expectations and requirements of the Health Equity Change Project. My instructor has answered any questions and provided clarification where necessary.

Your name

Enter your name here

Date

Feb 17, 2024