WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MPH PROGRAM

GUIDELINES FOR
ALE I AND II

For All MPH Program Tracks

Community Health
Health Care Management
Environmental Health

Effective Spring Semester 2021
(Updated January 2021,
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MPH Applied Learning Experience (ALE)

ALE **Pre-Requisites:** HEA 520 Public Health Epidemiology and HEA 526 Biostatistics in Public Health. The ALE is the culminating activity for the MPH Program and it is intended to occur after completion of at least 30 credits. The **purpose of the ALE** is to provide students with an opportunity to gain real-world public health graduate-level experience, to introduce students to an agency where they can apply competencies learned in the classroom. To accomplish this purpose, students are responsible to select 3 Foundational Competencies and 2 Track Competencies to develop and then implement the required ALE assignments.

ALE includes two core courses: HEA 649 and HEA 650. These two courses must be completed during the last two semesters of the MPH program. S**tudents cannot register for these courses during the same semester.** Before the start of the ALE II Practicum course, the student must complete ALE I assignments and obtain a passing grade.

(1) HEA 649 (ALE I), 1-credit course, referred to as the Orientation or Preparatory Course.
During ALE I students complete the documentation necessary to secure a site placement; propose two ALE Products, a list of Professional Practice Activities, and a process for the Major ALE Project. During this course, students might be in communication with potential site-supervisors, but there are no on-site hours.

(2) HEA 650 (ALE II) 3-credit course, referred to as the Practicum Course. During ALE II, students complete 200 hours at the approved placement site, where they will implement the proposed Products and Major Project, and will engage in Professional Practices activities.

In addition, the student must complete the pre-requisites mentioned below, they must have at least 30-credits completed

Applied Learning Experience I (HEA 649)
The purpose of the ALE Orientation/ Preparatory course is to prepare students for the ALE II on-site practicum experience. During the **ALE I Orientation** students search for, apply for, and select an ALE professional practice site, complete all required documentation, obtain appropriate site confirmations, propose professional practice products and activities, and develop an implementation plan for their Major Project. Students are required to complete a Major Project Proposal, Two Products Proposal, Professional Practices Activities list. The placement site will be approved by ALE Faculty Advisor after all documentation is on file.

The ALE Faculty Advisor is responsible for supervision and evaluation of the ALE I assignments. Students will submit all required placement documentation on MyWCU and to the Director of Internship and Practicum Experiences (DIPE). The DIPE is responsible for the processing of required forms and affiliation agreements. These forms and affiliation agreements need to be complete by the end of the ALE I. The ALE Faculty Advisor will provide the final approval, and the student will receive a confirmation email for their ALE Placement.

Applied Learning Experience II (HEA 650)
In ALE II students implement their proposed Major Project and two Products, while engaging in professional practice activities at the placement site. The ALE II requirements include:

(1) ALE II Practicum must be scheduled during the last semester of the MPH Program.
(2) Students cannot enroll in ALE II before nor simultaneously with ALE I
(3) Students must complete 200 hours at their placement site, under the supervisions of their ALE Site Supervisor.
(4) ALE supervisors have at least a Master degree in Public Health or five years of experience in public health
(5) MPH course enrollment is allowed during this semester; however, due to the time needed to complete the 200 ALE II onsite hours, a reduced course schedule is *recommended*.
At the end of the Practicum, the MPH students will have a professional practice experience that prepares them for their future careers as public health professionals.

PREFACE

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide information for students, Agency Site Supervisors, and ALE Faculty Advisors regarding the ALE I and II, a 200-hour experience completed during two consecutive semesters. The ALE is designed to help students apply the knowledge and skills earned during the MPH Program while working in a public health-related setting. It is recognized that students benefit from applying the competencies needed in the professional work place as opposed to classroom training alone, and from being mentored by a public health practitioner. Therefore, the transition from classroom to the work setting requires careful preparation. These guidelines will assist students in making informed choices regarding the selection of the ALE placement site where he/she can sharpen competencies learned, benefit from new experiences and grow professionally. These guidelines will also help to coordinate the efforts of ALE Faculty Advisor and Agency Site Supervisor.

INTRODUCTION

MPH Students

The MPH Faculty of the Department of Health at West Chester University congratulates you on your success thus far in your academic experience. You are about to embark on the most important semesters of your graduate work. Your semesters spent in **Applied Learning Experience (ALE)** will allow you to test your preparation as a developing public health professional. This experience is both a challenge and an opportunity. ALE I and II will challenge you to use the theory you have mastered through lectures and discussions and the skills you have practiced in the classroom and laboratory. You will now be applying this knowledge in a real-world public health setting where you will be regarded most often as a staff member. Students are expected to complete 200-hours of internship, to spend time at the agency to complete their major projects, which include two products, and to participate in professional practice activities as instructed by the site supervisor. Students who are full-time employed may need to make arrangements for time off from work in order to be able to complete the required 200h. The major project should focus on a public health problem and/or practitioner issues in public health. Professional practice activities include observation and participation in site activities, interacting with clients/patients, attending meetings (agency and coalition meetings) and providing support for agency activities.

ALE I and II will provide you with an opportunity to grow as a public health professional. There will be role models, tasks, and activities to observe. There will also be times for you to use your own creativity and make a significant contribution to the facility to which you are assigned. Now that the time for your ALE I and II is approaching, we trust that you will find these guidelines helpful in making your decision regarding placement with advisement from your ALE Faculty Advisor. Do not hesitate to discuss your areas of interest in the field of public health as well as individual strengths and weaknesses with public health faculty members. Opportunities will be explored as you and your ALE Faculty Advisor make this important decision about your placement. We have delineated very specific requirements and procedures for ALE I and II. Strict adherence to these guidelines is necessary so you as well as the host site benefit from this cooperative experience. Please remember that in addition to developing your own sense of professionalism, as a graduate student you represent the Department of Health and West Chester University. The strength of any academic program is greatly attributed to the intellect, integrity, competence, and professionalism of its students. You are about to embark on the first leg of your future career. We wish you success.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are responsible for reviewing the ALE Guidelines, Syllabi, and Assignments. The guidelines provide specific details on: ALE policies, requirements, assignment formats, and evaluation criteria. The ALE Guidelines are placed on the MPH Informational D2L site, and on the MPH website. The ALE I and II provide the graduate student a unique opportunity to gain experience in an actual practice setting. Graduate students are placed with an appropriate supervisor at a health department, hospital, health agency, or in industry for two semesters. Each student will complete 300 hours over two semesters. The ALE Faculty Advisor determines along with the student the appropriate placement site. Student input regarding career area choice and interests will definitely be considered. However, the selection will also be based on the ALE Faculty Advisor's professional judgment of the student's abilities and needs as well as the needs and requirements of the agency at which the student is being placed.

The following guidelines have been developed to help the student gain the maximum benefit from this experience.

ALE I and II takes place at one agency site during two consecutive semesters. Once the site is selected and the student commits to completing the experience at that site, the student cannot change his/her site selection. Any adjustments in schedule that need to be made are to be cleared with both the Agency Site Supervisor and the ALE Faculty Advisor. Agency policies, dress codes and procedures appropriate for

professional staff members will be followed by the student. The student is responsible for his/her actions during the experience. Students who arrive at the site under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol are subject to an automatic failure for ALE I and II. If this situation occurs, the student will be removed from the site. Students are expected to produce original material for their major projects. Students who plagiarize materials from agency staff members or other sources are subject to automatic failure for ALE I and II. If this situation occurs, the student will be removed from the site. Professional responsibility that includes confidentially is expected of the student. CONFIDENTIALLY IS TO BE MAINTAINED WITHOUT EXCEPTION. This is a most important area of concern. Divulging information about a client or about confidential agency matters is professionally unethical. A breach in confidentiality could result in legal action, dismissal from the site, a grade of failure for HEA649 and HEA650, as well as ruining the initial phase of a professional career.

The Major Project: A major project will be the responsibility of the student during the experience.
The student's project will be determined by joint agreement among the Agency Site Supervisor, the ALE Faculty Advisor and the student. The project enables the agency to complete an area of work or research which otherwise could not have been undertaken. It provides the student with an opportunity to demonstrate his/her ability to function as a public health professional. The completed project may serve as an important example of the type of work the student is able to accomplish in an actual work setting.

The following are examples of major projects in which the student can expect to be involved:
> a. Developing and accomplishing a needs assessment.
> b. Planning a public health program in response to pre-determined needs.
> c. Implementing a planned public health program.
> d. Evaluation of existing programs or a new program.
> c. Designing and completing research projects.
> d. Development of public health related case studies.

- **Professional Practice Activities:** In addition to the Major Project, students are expected to participate in Professional Practice Activities at the agency. These activities include: include observation and participation in supervisors and staff work activities, interacting with clients/patients, attending meetings (agency and coalition meetings) and providing support for agency activities. Students and supervisors will complete a Professional Practice Activities Form to identify the types of professional activities and time commitments needed to complete these activities at the agency.
- The student is expected to **establish and maintain good rapport** with his/her supervisor, co-workers and others within the facility and the community where interaction occurs. He/she is to conduct himself/herself in a professional manner throughout the experience.
- The student is to maintain **good communications** with the Agency Site Supervisor and ALE Faculty Advisor. Should difficulties arise at the placement site the student should discuss the situation first with the Agency Site Supervisor. If unresolved, the student should then inform the ALE Faculty Advisor.
- The student is **entitled to observe his/her religious holidays**. Students should not schedule time at the agency during religious holidays. The students should inform the Agency Site Supervisor if time will be missed because of observation of religious holidays.
- The student will **maintain a log of major project and professional service activities** (log forms are found in the appendices section). This log is to be electronically sent to the ALE Faculty Advisor at the end of every two weeks. Additionally, logs need to be included in the project binders for ALE I and II. It is to be typed and neatly organized. The quality of log submissions will be reflected in the final grade. In addition to the daily log of activities documenting major project and professional practice activities, the student is to write a minimum of one "insight" for each week. The "insight" will describe some thought or/discovery he/she has made regarding working as a professional. Logs need to include daily hours, weekly hours, and cumulative hours.

- The student will be **expected to provide his/her own transportation** to and from the agency without reimbursement from West Chester University, the Department of Health or the Cooperating Agency.
- **Health and Criminal Background Checks:** The student will need to meet the requirements of the practice site regarding criminal background checks, health and safety requirements. Students should make sure these requirements are met during ALE I.
- The student should not expect to be paid for the time spent at the agency during ALE I and ALE II.
- The student is **expected to provide his/her own liability insurance** if required by the agency. With approval from the ALE Faculty Advisor, private insurance agents may be contacted by the student for this protection.
- The student **should check with his/her own insurance agent** to make sure that he/she has adequate health insurance and adequate automobile insurance. Verification of automobile insurance may be requested by the agency.

The University is committed to providing the most meaningful ALE possible for each graduate student. The following is a list of the responsibilities assumed by the Department of Health and particularly by the MPH Faculty:

1. The Department assures the student that the courses required to be completed before the ALE will be offered.
2. The ALE Faculty Advisor will evaluate each student's transcript and application to determine eligibility for the ALE I and ALE II.
3. The ALE Faculty Advisor will provide counseling regarding the available placement sites and career goals.
4. The agencies chosen as placement sites for students meet the following criteria:
   a. Provides public health services for a specific group of persons or for many groups or an entire community.
   b. the Agency Site Supervisor holds a master's degree and a minimum of one-year experience in the health field. Supervisors without a master's degree are evaluated according to the number of years of experience in the field, previous relationship with the agency site, and documented accomplishments.
   c. Agency Site Supervisors indicate their willingness to work with a graduate student.
   d. The agency is willing to share in a three-way partnership along with the student and the Applied Learning Faculty Advisor during the entire ALE.
   e. The agency agrees to provide the University with relevant information on the progress of the student.
5. The ALE Faculty Advisor will provide the graduate student with information needed for the ALE such as that found in these guidelines.
6. The Department of Health will provide an opportunity for the Agency Site Supervisor to participate in the selection of the student who is to be placed at the facility through interviews with the student.
7. If requested, the ALE Faculty Advisor will be available to assist in resolving conflicts which arise between the student, Agency Site Supervisors, and/or other staff working with the student.
8. The ALE Faculty Advisor will schedule phone conferences during each semester to discuss the experience with the student and the progress of the student with the Agency Site Supervisor.
9. The necessary project and evaluation forms are found in the Appendices of the ALE I and II Guidelines. These forms will be given to the Agency Site Supervisor during ALE I.
10. The agreement between the student, the practicum site and the university for the student to develop and implement their Major Project and participate in professional practice activities at the practicum site is signed electronically by the student, Agency Site supervisor, Director of internships, and the ALE faculty advisor. (aka Online Placement Request Form)

11. The Site Supervisor Evaluation of the student is completed via REDCap. At the end of the ALE II, the ALE faculty advisor sends out invitations to all site supervisors, to invite them to evaluate their student/s. On the same form, they have the option to download a copy of the Site Supervisor Review (SSR) form. Once the evaluation is completed, the site supervisor receives an automatic email with a PDF file attached to it. The PDF file is a copy of the evaluation, which should be provided and discussed with the student.
12. Site Supervisors must review students' products, major project report, and the poster. They will provide the student/s with a copy of the signed Site Supervisor Review (SSR) Form to ensure that the student has permission to present the material at the MPH poster session.
13. The Student's Site Evaluation is to be completed by the student via REDCap. The ALE faculty advisor provides students with their unique links to the site evaluation form.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COOPERATING AGENCY

Throughout ALE I and II, the cooperating agency agrees to assume certain responsibilities to both the student and the University. Those responsibilities include:
1. Providing the needed supervision of the student with an assigned Agency Site Supervisor.
2. Orientation of the student to the facility, the staff and to others with whom the student may interact.
3. Providing a climate suitable for learning, desk space, access to a telephone and other essential items.
4. Professional Service Activities: Providing student experience of attending committee meetings, working on a committee(s) and attending Board Meetings and other professional service activities. Determining the types of Professional Service Activities for student participation by completing the Professional Practice Activities Form
5. Determining with the student the Major Project to be completed during the ALE I and II, completing the Major Summary Project Form, and forwarding the form to the ALE Faculty Advisor.
6. Providing the student access to the necessary information required to accomplish assigned tasks.
7. Allowing the student to be incorporated into the daily routine of the office or department to the extent possible.
8. Allowing the student opportunity to utilize his/her creative ability as well as expand his/her competencies.
9. Providing reimbursement of expenses for job-related travel according to agency policies.
10. Identify to the student and the ALE Faculty Advisor the need for liability coverage if necessary.
11. Completing the Mid-Term Progress Report and the Final Evaluation and discussing the progress reports/evaluations with the student before forwarding to the ALE Faculty Advisor.

Agency Site Supervisor
The MPH Faculty in the Department of Health at West Chester University is appreciative of your willingness to serve as Supervisor of an MPH graduate student. We trust that this relationship will be beneficial for you and your agency, as well as the student, one that offers both a challenge and an opportunity. All MPH students must complete 200-hour internship during their last semester, as part of the HEA 650 ALE II (**ALE II**). They are expected to spend time at the agency to complete their major projects, and to participate in professional practice activities.

The student's major project should focus on public health problems and allow them to enhance their chosen three core/foundational and two track competencies. Students must engage in professional practice activities include student observation and participation in supervisors and staff work activities, interacting with clients/patients, attending meetings (agency and coalition meetings) and providing support for agency activities. The student and Agency Site Supervisor will need to be in agreement about the time needed to be spent on site before the start of the ALE. Arrangements for time at the site should be flexible and both student and the Agency Site Supervisor need to agree about the time commitment at the agency. Students who are employed at an agency/institution/facility may complete their ALE at their place of employment. However, the experience cannot be related to their current job responsibilities.

The ALE I and II have been designed to be mutually beneficial. The project(s) you plan with the student should be one(s) that has utility to and benefit your agency/ institution and from which the student will gain experientially. ALE I and II, which are required of all MPH graduate students who have completed their required courses and who maintained a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0. Please contact the ALE Coordinator Dr. Ramona Stone (610) 436-6975, if you need clarification regarding any information in these guidelines.

MPH PROGRAM

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal statements and objectives for the MPH Program are divided into the key areas of education, research, service, fiscal resources, diversity, MPH faculty/other resources and MPH faculty qualifications.

Education

GOAL: To prepare diverse graduates with the knowledge and skills to pursue successful careers in the field of public health.
1. Objective 1: To recruit and retain diverse graduate students.
1.1. 90% of newly enrolled students will meet the minimum GPA requirement of 2.8 out of 4.0
1.2. 60% of the students accepted into the MPH program will fully matriculate as MPH students.
1.3. At least 35% of enrolled MPH students will represent minority population groups (African American, Latino, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander or Multiracial).
1.4. At least 60% of enrolled MPH students will represent diverse gender identity groups (including CISgender female/woman, genderqueer, gender non-binary, gender fluid, transgender female/woman, transgender male/man, or another gender not listed).
1.5. At least 10% of the students enrolled in the MPH Program will represent international population groups.
1.6. 70% of the matriculated MPH students will successfully complete graduation requirements.
2. Objective 2: To recruit and retain a *diverse* faculty to support the growth of the MPH program.
2.1. At least 60% of the MPH Faculty will represent diverse gender identity groups (including CISgender female/woman, genderqueer, gender non-binary, gender fluid, transgender female/woman, transgender male/man, or another gender not listed).
2.2. At least 20% of the MPH faculty will represent minority population groups (African American, Latino, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander or Multiracial).
2.3. Retention of MPH faculty from underrepresented groups with 80% achieving tenure.
3. Objective 3: To recruit and retain a *qualified* faculty to support the growth of the MPH program.
3.1. All (100%) of the MPH core faculty will have doctoral degrees in the area of expertise.
3.2. At least 80% of the MPH core faculty will also have an MPH degree or a related Master's degree.
3.3. At least 60% of core faculty who hold professional licensure and/or certifications in addition to their doctoral degree will meet the requirements for continuing education.
4. Objective 4: Students will gain relevant public health knowledge and skills through competency-based MPH core/track curriculum.
4.1. 80% of MPH students will complete the core courses with a grade of B or better.
4.2. 80% of MPH students will complete core course key assignments linked to foundational competencies with B or better.
4.3. 80% of MPH students will complete all track courses with a B or better.
4.4. 80% of MPH students will complete track course key assignments linked to track-specific competencies with a B or better.

	4.5. 80% of MPH students will complete the HEA 650 ALE II practicum (applied practice experience) with a B or better.
	4.6. 80% of MPH students will complete the core/track competency-linked major project report (integrated learning experience) in HEA 650 ALE II with a B or better.
	4.7. From matriculation to the end of the ALE 80% of MPH students will report *improvement* in core and track competencies in the exit survey.
5.	**Objective 5:** Graduates of the MPH program will be valuable skilled professionals in the public health-related workforce.
	5.1. Of all MPH students responding to the required exit survey at the end of the HEA 650 ALE II, 80% will report an intention to work and/or seek further training in a public health-related field.
	5.2. Of all MPH students responding to the alumni survey, 80% will indicate employment in a public health-related profession or will be seeking further graduate study or training in a public health-related area.
	5.3. 80% of ALE II site-supervisors will report MPH students are meeting or exceeding professional standards on the site supervisor final evaluation form.
	5.4. 75% of the employers responding to the employer survey or reporting in the Community Advisory Board, will report MPH graduates as 'moderately to completely' prepared to apply foundational competencies in practice.

Research

GOAL: To model and engage graduate students in research and scholarly activity reflecting the theory and practice of public health.	
1.	**Objective 1**: MPH faculty will participate in research and/or evaluation projects or other scholarly activities.
	1.1. 80% of MPH faculty will participate in research and/or evaluation projects or other scholarly activities on an annual basis as demonstrated by peer-reviewed publications, documented research in progress, peer-reviewed conference presentations/posters, books/book chapters, and internal/external grants or contracts.
	1.2. 60% of MPH faculty will participate in collaborative research/evaluation projects with graduate students yearly.
2.	**Objective 2**: Graduate students will participate in research and/or scholarly activity as part of HEA 526 Biostatistics in Public Health, HEA 650 ALE II, and/or individual faculty led research projects.
	2.1. 100% of MPH students will conduct a research project on a topic of their choice as part of the HEA 526 Biostatistics in Public Health core course.
	2.2. 60% of MPH students will conduct research and/or scholarly activity HEA 650 ALE II core course.
	2.3. 50% of MPH students will engage in collaborative research and/or evaluation projects or other scholarly activities with faculty mentorship, through graduate/research assistantships, or funded/non-funded research projects.
	2.4. 80% of MPH students will rate that they are extremely confident/confident in research-related MPH core competencies (#1-4, 7, 11, 15) in the MPH Exit Survey.

Service

GOAL: To model and engage students in activities which promote and support service to the university, public health profession, and the community.
1. Objective 1: MPH faculty will participate in service activities in the public health profession and the community.
1.1. 100% of MPH faculty will join and/or maintain their membership in at least one public health professional organization.
1.2. 80% of MPH faculty will participate in community service directly related to the MPH program at the local, regional, state, national and/or international level.
2. Objective 2: MPH students will have opportunities to participate in service activities in the public health profession, community and at the university.
2.1. 1 or more students from the MPH Student Advisory Board will serve as a student representative on the Full MPH Program Committee and a minimum of one student will serve on each standing MPH Program Committees as evidenced by meeting minutes.
2.2. 5 or more students will serve on the MPH Student Advisory Board and compile annual recommendations to the MPH faculty to review at each August faculty retreat to inform quality improvement efforts.
2.3. 100% of the MPH students will participate in at least one community service activity during the completion of the MPH program.
2.4. The MPH program will sponsor a minimum of four MPH student professional development events during each academic year.
3. Objective 3: The MPH program will annually sponsor public health-related workforce professional development opportunities.
3.1. The MPH Program will sponsor a minimum of two public health workforce development opportunities during each academic year (panel discussions, workshops, or conferences).
3.2. The MPH Program will sponsor a minimum of four MPH student professional development events during each academic year.

CURRICULUM

The MPH Program curriculum provides students with a strong foundation in the core areas of public health. All students must complete CORE courses in epidemiology, biostatistics, environmental health, health administration, social and behavioral science and research methods. The MPH Program offers three tracks: community health, healthcare management, and environmental health.

Each track has additional course requirements. Students must complete a minimum of **46 credits** to obtain the MPH degree, where 28 credits are core courses, and 18 credits of track courses. Among the core courses, there are two practicum courses: a 1-credit ALE I (orientation course) and a 3-credit ALE II (practicum course).

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDITS
CORE		
HEA 503	Foundations in Public Health	1
HEA 520	Public Health Epidemiology	3
HEA 526	Biostatistics for Public Health	3
ENV 530	General Environmental Health	3
HEA 516	Health Care Management	3
HEA 605	Utilizing Systems Thinking in Public Health	1
HEA 615	Policy in Public Health	3
HEA 632	Social and Behavioral Aspects of Health	3
HEA 647	Interprofessional Practice in Public Health	1
HEA 648	Research Methods in Public Health	3
HEA 649	Applied Learning Experience I - orientation	1
HEA 650	Applied Learning Experience II - practicum	3
COMMUNITY HEALTH TRACK		
HEA 531	Community as a Basis for Health*	3
HEA 538	Evaluation of Health Programs	3
HEA 539	Technologies for Community Health Program Management & Administration	3
HEA 543	Strategic Communication for Health Equity	3
HEA 544	Community Health Program Planning & Implementation	3
HEA 645	Global Community Health Promotion	3
HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT TRACK		
HEA 513	Legal Aspects of Health Care	3
HEA 514	Approaches to Health Care Delivery	3
HEA 612	Health Care Financial Analysis and Management	3
HEA 613	Advocacy and Quality of Health Care Services*	3
HEA 614	Health Care Technology & Information Management	3
HEA 616	Strategic Leadership in Health Care	3
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH TRACK		
ENV 524	Industrial Hygiene	3
ENV 547	Environmental Regulations	3
ENV 533	Water Quality and Health	3
ENV 545	Risk Assessment	3
ENV 551	Environmental Toxicology	3
ENV 553	Occupational Health (Elective)- choose one elective	3
ENV 581	Climate Change workshop (Elective)- choose one elective	3

* Community service requirement is completed through these courses

At the end of the program, during the last two semesters, students participate in a 4-credit ALE (ALE). The two ALE semesters are referred to as ALE I (orientation phase) and ALE II (practicum phase). The practicum is a planned in ALE I, and engage in a supervised and evaluated learning experience during ALE II. Specifically, during this experience students plan and implement a major project that is their culminating activity. Examples of major projects or culminating activities include: health communication materials, program development, program evaluation plan, development of health education curriculum, development of case studies, and any product that has utility to the site where the student completes the internship. All students are responsible for completing the major project along with presenting a poster of their work at the end of each semester.

The purpose of the practicum and culminating activity is to allow students to integrate core MPH competencies with selected specialties and to employ newly acquired skills and knowledge to a current public health problem in a community setting. In addition to the culminating activity, the practicum will include student involvement in professional practice activities. These activities include: student observation and participation in supervisors and staff work activities, interacting with clients/patients, attending meetings (agency and coalition meetings) and providing support for agency activities.

COMPETENCIES

After selection of the ALE site, each student will indicate the competencies (under advisement with the ALE Faculty Advisor and ALE Site Supervisor) to be addressed or enhanced during ALE II, while completing the assignments. The student will select 3 (three) Foundational Competencies and 2 (two) Track Competencies. These competencies will be listed in the Products description, in the Major Project Proposal, and on the REDCap Checklist I form. The Major Project Proposal, the Products' description, the resume and cover letter must be uploaded in REDCap Checklist I, at the end of HEA 649 ALE I course.

Core/Foundational competencies

MPH Foundational Competencies
Evidence Based Approach 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 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 & Healthcare 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 inequalities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community, and societal 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 or implementation 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 multiple dimensions of 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 principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making
Communication
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges
18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content
Interprofessional Practice
21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams
Systems Thinking
22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

Track Competencies

To meet the needs of the individual track areas, each MPH track has its own set of competencies. These competencies have been adapted from each MPH track's professional affiliations.

MPH Track Competencies
Community Health Track Competencies (cohorts before Fall 2019)
1. Generate a report on community health vulnerabilities and assets using spatial and non-spatial data.
2. Develop a grant proposal to fund an equity-focused health promotion initiative.
3. Design a participatory evaluation of a community-based participatory health initiative.
4. Analyze the implementation of a social media communication campaign to promote health equity.
5. Apply a global perspective to design a community health initiative.
6. Utilize technologies to develop strategies for the implementation and management of community health programs.
Environmental Health Track Competencies
1. Identify illness and injury causing agents in workplaces, residences, health care facilities and other institutions, and the outdoor environment.
2. Measure biological, chemical and physical disease agents in any environment and assess compliance with environmental regulations and professional standards.
3. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate toxicological, epidemiological and environmental exposure data.
4. Quantitatively assess risk using mathematical models and communicate risk information to populations served.
5. Evaluate the policy-making process, including the role of politics, ethics, socioeconomics and environmental (in)justice.
6. Develop strategies to communicate environmental health policy issues for different audiences or sectors, using different media.
Health Care Management Track Competencies
1. Engage in activities that are relevant and address current trends and issues of health care management
2. Identify external and internal pressures affecting administrators' functions and their role in organizational politics, resource allocation decisions, and other critical issues
3. Demonstrate the widespread applicability of management theory to diverse types of health services organizations and health systems
4. Apply health care management terminology and concepts to enhance professional development and lifelong learning
5. Analyze health care regulations and legal requirements for health care operations and financial sustainability of health care organizations
6. Leverage the use of information technology to improve the patient experience and outcomes

At the end of the ALE II students will report and document their progress towards competency attainment through the ALE II Assignments: Major Project Report, Professional Practice Activities, and the developed Products. The Major Report will include a self-evaluation of experiences that demonstrate mastery of these competencies. Additionally, all students will be able to assess progress in mastering all of the MPH Core and Track Competencies through the MPH Exit Survey, which is a required assignment at the end of HEA650 ALE II.

ALE GUIDELINES

The purpose of the ALE (ALE) is to allow students to integrate core MPH competencies with selected track specialties and to apply newly acquired skills and knowledge to a current public health problem in a community setting/public health setting. In addition to the Major Project (the culminating activity), the practicum will include development of two products that have utility to the agency, student involvement in professional practice activities. The ALE is a practicum that needs to be completed over two consecutive semesters. The ALE takes place in the final semesters of the program and at least 30 credits, including the pre-requisites, need to be completed before the implementation phase of the practicum (HEA650 - ALE II). As students prepare for the ALE, students need be aware of the following items:

ALE ADVISING

Each student is assigned an academic advisor upon entering the program and students need to meet with their designated advisor for academic counseling. It is the student's responsibility to attend advising sessions. ALE is always on the agenda of group advising sessions. Faculty maintain office hours and might ask students to make appointments for scheduling.

GPA Requirement for ALE

To maintain the integrity of the program, students are expected to achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 after completion of all required core courses and track courses for the MPH Program. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 is needed to be eligible for ALE I and ALE II. The MPH Program is dedicated to a quality educational experience that prepares students for professional positions upon graduation. A program's reputation and quality are reflected by its graduates.

ALE Prerequisites

Students are allowed to complete MPH course and track requirements while completing HEA649/ALE I (prerequisites HEA 520 and HEA 526). No ALE advising will occur until these two courses are successfully completed. In addition, ALE I and II have to be at the end of the program. ALE is a practicum that requires knowledges, skills, and competencies developed through course completion. Students should have at least 30 credits completed, including the pre-requisites, before they consider ALE courses. The ALE Faculty Advisor reviews students' transcripts to ensure that students are ready for the practicum; if they have to continue in the program for more than two semester and/or did not compete the pre-requisites, they will be dropped from ALE I. Students need to register for these courses during the last two consecutive semesters.

Prerequisites for HEA649 ALE I

ALE I and II are culminating experiences and are the final courses taken before graduation during two consecutive semesters. Students will need to complete an ALE - I Transcript Application that will include a list of completed courses and a current transcript with the student's cumulative GPA. This application will need to be reviewed and approved by the ALE Faculty Advisor. Only students with approved applications will move to the next step of agency site selection and interviews. It is important to note that each track may have specific courses that need to be completed before the start of ALE I and students are responsible for meeting with their academic advisors to ensure that courses are completed in appropriate sequence before the start of ALE I. All students (regardless of assigned track) will need to complete the following courses before the start of HEA649 – ALE I as these courses serve as a foundation for developing the Major Project Plan.

      HEA520 Epidemiology in Public Health
      HEA526 Biostatistics in Public Health

Prerequisites for HEA650 ALE II

Student must have a grade in HEA 649 ALE I before starting ALE II. Students are responsible for meeting with their faculty advisors to ensure that courses all completed in appropriate sequence before the start of ALE

II. Students will need to complete an ALE II Transcript Application that will include a list of completed courses and a current transcript with the student's cumulative GPA.

ALE Time Commitments

Time management is essential and students need to work on a project timeline that can be realistically completed (project planning and implementation and preparing the poster) in approximately 30 weeks. Projects need to work within this time frame, therefore careful planning needs to be a priority to complete projects on time. Projects that require a significant amount of time for planning, site approvals, IRB approvals, data collection and analysis. It is important to note that many students in the program have full time jobs, but all students need to complete a total of 200 hours of practicum. Students who are employed may need to make arrangements for time off from work to complete their projects during the ALE I and II. Students are expected to spend time at the agency to complete their Major Projects. The student and Agency Site Supervisor will need to be in agreement about the time needed to be spent on site by the start of the ALE II. Agency Site Supervisors know that this experience is 200 hours and must be completed during the ALE II, in one semester. Arrangements for time at the site should be flexible.

The purpose of the ALE is to introduce students to an agency, to experience how the respective agency works on community /public health problems. Students need to spend time at the agency to observe how the site supervisor and co-workers provide their services to the community. Students will need to participate in on-going professional practice activities (i. e. committee meetings, planning meetings, interaction with clients, etc.). ALE hours need to include time completing the two products and engaging in professional practice activities. We do not require a specific number of hours per day at the site but we do require a total of 200 hours. What can you count toward the 200h Practicum Hours? ALE I classroom preparation hours on campus, meetings with ALE Faculty Advisors, onsite interviews and onsite hours are the only hours that will meet the time requirements for this course. Time spent out of the classroom and off-site in preparing the course assignments will not meet the hourly requirements for this practicum.

Major Project Hours, Professional Practice Hours

HEA649/ALE I: Includes classroom hours and preparatory assignments.

HEA650/ALE II: The 200 hours for ALE II are mostly professional practice hours (Professional Practice Activities) at the site. These hours include attending department meetings, providing supportive services to the agency and attending/participating in agency sponsored activities such as health fairs, community meetings, etc. Hours include major project activities at the site. Two meetings will be scheduled to return to campus to update the Faculty Supervisor about the progress of the major project.

Site Selection Advising and Faculty Supervision

ALE I and II Faculty Supervision: The Faculty Supervisor for ALE I and II will be responsible for coordinating the ALE I and II experience with the student. This includes the ALE I classes, course meetings for ALE II, working with site supervisors, approving and grading assignments along with preparing students for poster presentations. The faculty supervisor is not responsible for advising all students for site selection. Students will need to meet with their track advisors to make sure that they are directed to the appropriate advisor within the track for ALE site selection.

Site Selection Advising Meeting

The advising meetings for site selection should be scheduled within the first two weeks of the start of HEA649/ALE I. Students need to contact their advisor and/or Track Coordinator to arrange for site selection advising.

Site Interviews and Placements

Students need to have their site placements confirmed before the end of mid-semester (approximately 7 weeks). Interviews with prospective placement sites should be arranged before the end of mid-semester.

Placements need to be confirmed with completion of the letter of agreement and major project summary form by the end of mid-semester.

ALE Deadlines for Site Selection
All ALE placements should be approved and confirmed by the end of the ALE I semester.

- Missed ALE Site Confirmation Deadlines: If sites are not confirmed by the deadline, due to no fault of the student, an IP grade will posted.
- ALE Faculty Advisor Policy for Site Confirmations and Site Interviews: Students need the approval of the ALE Faculty Advisor before scheduling an ALE site interview. All new sites need to be approved the ALE Faculty Advisor before interviews are scheduled. Students should not contact sites without the approval of the ALE Faculty Advisor. Students will meet with their ALE Faculty Advisor during the first few weeks of the ALE I semester to begin working on site selection.
- Important Note: ALE Faculty Advisors are not available to assist in student placements during winter and summer breaks. Students need to plan on ALE site confirmations during the fall or spring semesters when ALE Faculty Advisors are available for advising and ALE site confirmations.

Delay in Obtaining the ALE Site within the Required Time Frame
All students completing ALE I are required to obtain their placement site by mid-semester. ALE placement advising appointments are scheduled during the first three weeks of the semester. It is the student's responsibility to meet with their ALE Faculty Advisor to discuss ALE site selection. It is expected that students are placed by mid-semester to begin their onsite practice hours during the second half of the semester. Students are expected to spend the first half of the semester in active search for their ALE site. If students delay the search for their ALE site due to the demand of other course work during the first half of the semester, it is recommended that students drop ALE I and schedule ALE I for the following semester. It is the student's responsibility to keep the ALE Faculty Advisor up to date about any issues or problems with obtaining a ALE site within the required time frame. Student risk point deductions from their final grade if site placement is delayed due to non-emergency situations.

ALE at Student's Place of Employment
Students who are employed at an agency/institution/facility may complete their ALE at their place of employment. However, the experience cannot be related to their current job responsibilities. For example, a student who is working in a county health department in the area of maternal/infant health may not complete his/her project in that division or department. However, the student can select a different department (ex, chronic disease prevention and control) to complete their project with a site supervisor not related to the student's current position.

No matter the setting where students complete their ALE practicum, the two products must have utility to the agency/site, the major project report must include substantive narrative in each required section (see template), and they must complete and report on all relevant professional activities. The two foundational and three track competencies must be reflected by the ALE products and activities, and the student must explain how the chosen competencies are reflected in the ALE outcomes.

IP Grades in ALE
It is expected that students use appropriate time management during the ALE I and II semesters and obtain the placement site along with completing all of the appropriate paper work and assignments within each semester. All ALE I requirements need to be completed within the 15-week first semester and all ALE II requirements and professional practice hours need to be completed within the 15-week second semester.

An IP (In Progress) grade will only be assigned to a student who cannot complete ALE I or II due to an extreme emergency or illness. Proof of the emergency situation and/or illness will be needed. The IP will

be replaced with a grade when the student completes the course requirements. A student who receives an IP for ALE I will not be able to begin the ALE II until the IP is changed to a letter grade. Students requesting an extension for ALE I or II will need to complete an extension request and attach proof of need.

Proof can include a physician's note verifying an illness or a letter from the Site Supervisor indicating a need for a one semester extension due to site related issue that caused a delay in assignment completion or other types of proof as indicated by the Faculty Supervisor. If an IP grade is assigned, the student will have only one semester extension to complete ALE I and one semester extension to complete ALE II. If a student cannot complete their ALE I or ALE II assignments after the additional semester extensions, the student will receive an F grade for ALE I or ALE II.

ALE COURSES

ALE I COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this course will enable students to complete the ALE I assignments that focus on the development of a major project plan / proposal. This preparation will include a comprehensive and integrated application of the MPH curriculum in the development of the major project plan that will be completed during ALE I. Students will also be introduced to the role of the agency in the community setting. Students will select their community practice site for the ALE assignments under the supervision of the Applied Learning Experience Faculty Advisor.

ALE I COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. Identify and select an Applied Learning Experience practice site, which would benefit from the application of public health principles through an agency online review.
2. Apply and synthesize the knowledge and skills learned during the MPH Program to the planning of the culminating project (the Major Project).
3. Select and apply three or more MPH Foundational competencies and three or more MPH Track competencies that will be the focus of the culminating activity.
4. Effectively maintain records, data and other public/private information in an ethical and secure manner.
5. Demonstrate how public health practice relates to the administrative, organizational, policy issues, funding, community relationships and other challenges found in agencies and organizations focused on public health issues.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the political, economic, social, and organizational context for the delivery of services in the public health.
7. Develop professional skills through participation of the completion of assignments during ALE I.
8. Demonstrate professional work habits during the completion of the ALE I assignments.

ALE I ASIGNMENTS

Transcript Review
The purpose of this assignment is to obtain from each student the list of courses completed to date, to ensure that all students registered for this course are able to complete all of the program's requirements the following (last) semester. Select the form specifically developed for your track. Fill out the requested information, save the form, and upload it on D2L by the end of the first week. **Also, please apply for candidacy, if you did not already.**

Resume and Cover Letter
All students need a resume and a cover letter when applying for internships. Review the D2L resources on how to create a professional resume and a professional cover letter properly tailored to a specific position, to help you be competitive on the labor force market.

Placement Request Application
This is an online form that will help track the approval process for your ALE site placement request. Placement at a site is an ongoing collaborative process initiated by the student and completed with coordinated effort from ALE faculty, CHS director of internships, and the anticipated site supervisor. **Please DO NOT submit multiple online placement forms.** If you need to make any changes to your submission you must contact Ms. Stephanie Kienle (skienle@wcupa.edu)

1. When applying for a placement request
    a) <u>Students who have a confirmed placement opportunity</u> with a community site/current place of employment, will enter information about their site and site supervisor for approval. The site will be contacted to confirm ability to host student and provide supervision throughout practicum.
    b) <u>Students who do NOT have a confirmed placement at time of application </u> with a community site, will be asked to include information about their top 3 preferred sites to consider, along with any additional areas of interest. This information will help ALE coordinators assist students in attaining a position at a community site.
2. After submitting the placement request application
    a) Site and supervisor will be asked to confirm student placement and the status of the required affiliation agreement will be reviewed (see 2c.).
    b) Students who submit the application without a confirmed placement (1b) will work with ALE coordinators throughout applying and confirming a placement opportunity. After a site has been confirmed the ALE coordinators will update the student's application with the final site and supervisor information.
    c) Once the site and supervisor information are confirmed, the status of WCU required affiliation agreement with the site will be reviewed. If a site is not already affiliated with WCU the agreement approval can take several weeks – months to complete. CHS director of internships and practicums will work with new sites to facilitate the approval of the affiliation agreement.
3. **After confirmation the site affiliation agreement is on file**, the required placement documents will be identified, and students will receive notification via WCU email of what they need to complete and submit for the final approval of their site placement.
    a) Site placement requirements vary and depend on the terms of the affiliation agreement on file. Requirements include items such as liability insurance, background clearances, health screenings, attestation forms, etc.
    b) Students may be required to submit documents directly to their site for approval, and it is the student's responsibility to discuss with their site/supervisor regarding all onboarding requirements to complete before beginning on-site hours.
4. **After students complete all necessary site placement requirements**, the application will be reviewed for final approval to begin your ALE practicum. Students will receive a notification via email when their placement request application has been fully approved. Again, the proof of placement will come

to you in the form of an email, and I need a copy of that entire email, on D2L. → Students **MUST** save as/print as a PDF file the EMAIL confirming **APPROVAL** (no screenshots please) and upload it as proof of site confirmation on D2L, for points. Thus, you will need to upload on D2L proof that you started the online application, proof that you obtained your required clearances, and at the end of the semester, proof of placement approval.

Professional Practice Activities (PLANNING) Agreement
Once the student has a placement confirmed, the student will develop a list of professional practice activities and estimate the number of hours for each type of activity, ideally, in consultation with the future site supervisor. Nevertheless, in order to develop this list, you will need to familiarize yourself with the agency and the types of services /programs they deliver, and with the population they serve. This list will be useful to you during the brainstorming process for product development.

Products Description
The two products must be relevant to the 3 core and 2 track competencies that you selected as the focus of the Major Project Plan.

1. The new accreditation standards require students to develop **two main products** during their Applied Learning Experience.
2. These two products must be relevant and useful to the agency where you will be placed and where you will complete the required 200h.
3. There are a variety of product types from which you can choose (ex, technical reports, posters, presentations, marketing materials, to all sorts of data collection, data analyses, and database development) or you can propose a new product. E**xamples include** written assignments, projects, videos, multi-media presentations, spreadsheets, websites, posters, photos or other digital artifacts of learning; more examples are listed below.
4. Materials may be produced and maintained in any physical or electronic form- our MPH program chose to meet this requirement by creating a REDCap database of student Ale outcomes (REDcap Checklist 2).
5. Each **student must present documentation demonstrating individual competency attainment.** Combined degree students have opportunities to integrate and apply their learning from both degree programs through applied practice experiences.
6. The two products must be relevant to the 3 core and 2 track competencies that you selected as the focus of the Major Project Plan. This specific assignment is intended to speed up the product approval process.
7. The **final description** of your approved products must be included in the final Major Project Plan. You will need to (a) describe the two products, (b) explain how these two products are useful to the agency (their utility), (c) also, discuss/describe/explain their utility to the community, and (d) explain how these two products have enhanced your competency in the chosen core & track competency areas.

ALE Products Examples
- Logic Models for Agency Program Plans (Provide an example of the logic model for this project)
- Community Health Marketing Campaigns on social media for an Agency Program (provide an overview a social media marketing campaign)
- Best Practice Program Reviews with Recommendations (for example: Best Practice Guidelines for Mobile Breast Cancer Screening Programs, provide examples of these best practices recommendations)
- Prepare Grant Proposals (provide an overview of a grant proposal)
- Develop Health Promotion Videos, PowerPoint Presentations and Multi-media presentations (Provide examples of these health promotion multimedia items)
- Develop Health Promotion Materials (provide examples of Brochures, Newsletters, Health Promotion Fact Sheets)

- Agency Website Development (provide an example of the website)
- Survey Development (Provide an example of the survey)
- GIS Mapping Projects (provide examples of GIS mapping of a health issue)
- Evaluate Community Health Programs (provide an example of the evaluation plan for the program)
- Health Promotion Curriculum (provide example of a health promotion curriculum)
- Community Health Programs for an Agency (provide an overview of the Community Health Program)
- Plans for social media for a Community Health Program (provide a detailed plan for social media for a Community Health Program)
- Assess and/or Develop Policies for Issues Identified by the Agency (provide an example of this policy assessment)
- Policy Evaluations (provide examples of the policy evaluation plans)
- Budget Development (provide examples of the project budget)
- Strategic Plan Development (provide examples of the project's strategic plan)
- Quality Assessment Program Development (provide examples of the quality assessment program)
- Develop a Data Management Plan for a Health Program (provide examples of the data management plan)
- Assess the Delivery and Management of a Health Program (provide examples of the delivery and management plan for the health program)

Major Project Plan

This is a project proposal where you can explore and explain what professional activities and products you plan to develop during your internship, during the ALE II. Should be about **3-4 pages**, single-spaced, Times New Roman, 11pt, 1inch. (See the template on D2L).

1. **Introduction to the Problem/Issue**
   Provide a brief introduction to the problem/issue (ex, health or related social issue) that will be the focus of your Major Project. Discuss the role of the agency in addressing the issue in the community. Report on local data or information about the problem, and its impact on the community.
2. **Literature Review**
   Develop a systematic review of peer reviewed literature focused on your chosen problem/issue. You are required to use professional citation software (EndNote).
3. **Project Need/Justification/Significance**
   Describe the need for this project, and develop a justification for its significance to the agency and to the community. How will the agency and the community benefit from this project? Describe the specific agency and community needs that this project will meet.
4. **Professional Development Plan & Product Description**
   (1) Professional Development Plan- Describe your plans to acquire practical training and/or continuing education while working with the placement agency. What skills will you develop or enhance?
   (2) Products Development Plan - Describe the two required work products that you plan to develop. Clearly state when and where do you plan to implement the proposed project plan and products.
5. **Proposed Project Methods -**Describe the implementation plan proposed for Applied Learning Experience II.
   (1) Project Goal and Objectives - Students will list one overall goal, SMART objectives, and associated activities and outcomes.

(2) <u>Target Population Analysis</u> - Students need to provide an overview of the target population who are impacted by the health problem. This can include information on demographics, education, socioeconomic status, etc.

(3) <u>Proposed Project Activities</u> - Students need to provide details on the methods/interventions/activities that will be implemented during the ALE II (ex, development of health education curriculum or of case studies, plans to conduct needs assessment or risk assessments or quality assurance reviews, etc.). For students completing the alternative assignments format, these would be your work products.

(4) <u>Plans for Evaluation of the Project</u> - Students will need to discuss plans for evaluating the methods sections of this project plan. Students will provide detailed evaluation plans for the project methods and activities.

(5) <u>Project Timeline</u> - Students will provide a timeline for project completion during ALE II.

(6) <u>Major Project Meets the Mission of the Agency -</u> This section should address how this project meets the mission of the agency.

6. **References** - List of references used in Major Project Plan in APA format. **EndNote is required.**

7. **Appendices** - do not delete this section, simply ignore it for now.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

In accordance with Federal Regulations, all campus activities involving human research participants, animals, or hazardous materials must have prior approval of the West Chester University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Students may need IRB approval for ALE Projects. If the IRB approval is needed, the ALE Faculty Advisor will provide the forms and students will be responsible for submitting the IRB approval forms to the IRB Committee **before the start of ALE II.**

Attendance

ALE students are required to attend class sessions; office hours cannot be used to make up for missed sessions. Students are also required to attend the Poster session where the HEA 650 students share their internship experience.

Placement Checklist 1 (REDCap Form)

Finally, at the end of the HEA 649, you will receive via email a unique link to a REDCap placement form (Checklist I), which collects (1) student information (name, WCU ID, email, track, etc.); (2) site/ supervisor placement information; (3) chosen competencies (3 core and 2 track competencies, type of products). It will also ask you to upload a copy of the Major Project Plan, of the Products Description, and of your cover letter and resume. All students enrolled in HEA 649, will complete this form, regardless of instructor. It is database where we maintain all ALE-related information. When you receive your unique link in your WCU email, complete the form, and, once you submit it, you will receive an automatic email confirmation with a PDF attachment. Upload the PDF attachment on D2L, for points.

ALE II COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to enable students to complete their culminating experience professional portfolio at their placement site, selected during the prior semester during the orientation phase (HEA 649/ ALE I). This course is the Practicum phase of the applied learning experience. Students will develop and implement their proposed major project, two professional products, and will engage in professional practices activities mutually beneficial to the student and to the site. Students will complete 200 on-site practicum hours. **CONFIDENTIALLY is to be maintained without exception, at all times**. This is a most important area of concern. Divulging information about a client or about confidential agency matters is professionally unethical. A breach in confidentiality could result in legal action, dismissal from the site, and will definitely result in a grade of failure for HEA650, as well as ruining the initial phase of a professional career.

ALE II COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Continue to apply and synthesize the knowledge and skills learned during the MPH Program in the design of culminating project.
2. Continue to apply three or more MPH foundational competencies and two or more MPH Track competencies that remain the focus of the culminating project.
3. Effectively maintain records, data and other public/private information for the culminating project in an ethical and secure manner during completion of culminating project.
4. Demonstrate how public health practice relates to the administrative, organizational, policy issues, funding, community relationships and other challenges found in agencies and organizations focused on public health issues.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the political, economic, social, and organizational context for the delivery of services in the public health.
6. Continue to communicate effectively with a variety of public health professionals during completion of the culminating project.
7. Complete an ALE II Professional Binder with all of the required project components and ALE II assignments and present a poster at the MPH Poster Presentation to faculty, students and community members summarizing the work completed during the ALE.

ALE II ASSIGNMENTS

Transcript Review

The purpose of this assignment is to obtain from each student the list of courses completed to date, to ensure that all students registered for this course are able to complete all of the program's requirements the following (last) semester. Select the form specifically developed for your track. Fill out the requested information, save the form, and upload it on D2L **by the end of the first week. Apply for candidacy. Attach a copy of your transcript.**

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

In accordance with Federal Regulations, all campus activities involving human research participants, animals, or hazardous materials must have prior approval of the West Chester University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Students may need IRB approval for ALE Projects. If the IRB approval is needed, the ALE Faculty Advisor will provide the forms and students will be responsible for submitting the IRB approval forms to the IRB Committee **before the start of ALE II.**

Student Logs

You must complete 200h during the ALE II. Use the log form to track the number of hours completed at your site; upload the most up to date file every week on Friday evening before 11:59pm. Hours include ALE preparation hours in the classroom, visits to the agency (interviews with Site Supervisors) and Professional Practice Activities at the site. Logs are to be typed and neatly organized, and include substantive information. **The quality of log submissions will be reflected in the final grade.** In addition to the daily log of activities, the student is to write a minimum of one "insight" for each week. The "insight" will describe some thought or/discovery he/she has made regarding working as a professional. Logs need to include daily hours, weekly hours, and cumulative hours. All logs will need to be included in the project binder. <u>If logs are not submitted on time, expect a 5-point deduction on the final grade.</u>

Two ALE Products

The new accreditation standards require students to develop **two main products** during their Applied Learning Experience. These two products must be relevant and useful to the agency where you will be placed during ALE II, and will complete the required 200h. There are a variety of product types from which you can choose (ex, technical reports, posters, presentations, marketing materials, to all sorts of data collection, data analyses, and database development) or you can propose a new product.

E**xamples include** written assignments, projects, videos, multi-media presentations, spreadsheets, websites, posters, photos or other digital artifacts of learning; more examples are listed below. Materials may be produced and maintained (either by the school or program or by individual students) in any physical or electronic form chosen by the school or program. Each **student must present documentation demonstrating individual competency attainment.** Combined degree students have opportunities to integrate and apply their learning from both degree programs through applied practice experiences. **The two products must be relevant to the 3 core and 2 track competencies that you selected as the focus of the Major Project Plan.** The final description of your approved products must be in your Major Project Report.

ALE Major Project Report
This report will include A minimum of 30 pages - double spaced – in Times New Roman 11pt font, 1 inch all around, is required. Word template is available on D2L. and you are expected to use it; EndNote is required.

1. **Introduction to the Problem/Issue**
   Provide a brief introduction to the problem/issue (ex, health or related social issue) that will be the focus of your Major Project. Discuss the role of the agency in addressing the issue in the community. Report on local data or information about the problem, and its impact on the community.
2. **Literature Review**
   Develop a systematic review of peer reviewed literature focused on your chosen problem/issue. EndNote reference software is REQUIRED.
3. **Project Need/Justification/Significance**
   Describe the need for this project, and develop a justification for its significance to the agency and to the community. How will the agency and the community benefit from this project? Describe the specific agency and community needs that this project meets. Include here the list of Core and Track competencies
4. **Methods and Data**
   Describe the implementation plan you envision to follow during Applied Learning Experience II. These are some of the same components that were in the Applied Learning Experience Major Project Plan. They will need to be added to this report with updates for project activities, data collection plans, data analysis and the time line. *Students need to remember that now that the project is implemented, they will need to review the narrative and check to change future tenses to past tenses for this report.*
   (1) Goal and Objectives- Students will list 1 project goal, 4 process objectives and 1 outcome.
   (2) Target Population- Students need to provide an overview of the target population who are impacted by the health problem. This can include information on demographics, gender, age, ethnicity, educational levels, socioeconomic status, etc.
   (3) Project Activities - Students need to provide details on the methods/interventions/activities implemented during Applied Learning Experience II: ex, development of health education curriculum, of case studies, of needs assessment or risk assessments, quality assurance reviews, etc.
   (4) Data Collection- Students will discuss the actual data collection procedure for interventions or activities that were implemented in this Major Project Plan.
   (5) Data Analyses
   (6) Results
   (7) Project Timeline
5. **Project Recommendations and Conclusion**
   Discuss the successes & the challenges encountered of program implementation. Students will discuss the lessons learned during this project and how this project adds to the related research (students should relate this section to the research cited in the literature review and other sections of this report). Students will provide recommendations as a result of the project implementation. For example, these could be

recommendations to the agency for improvement and changes to a program as a result of program evaluation. Other recommendations can include ideas for further study or suggestions for increasing services as a result of a needs assessment. This section will focus on the issues generated during project implementation and completion.

6. **Major Project Meets the Mission of the Agency**
7. **Professional Development Plan & Product Description**
    (1) Professional Development -Describe your plans to acquire practical training and/or continuing education while working with the placement agency. What skills did you develop or enhance?
    (2) Products Development - Describe the two required work products that you plan to develop. Clearly state when and where did you implement the proposed project plan and products.
8. **Professional Practice Activities Report**
    (1) Types of Professional Practice Activities: Describe the types of Professional Practice Activities opportunities at this site.
    (2) Professional Growth and Development: Describe the contributions of these practice activities to your professional growth and development.
    (3) Public Health Professional Role: Relate these Professional Practice Activities to your role as a public health professional.
    (4) Skills Acquired: Identify specific skills acquired through participation in Professional Practice Activities (ex, program planning and evaluation, needs assessment, program management, grant writing)
9. **Reflections**
    In this section, you must reflect on your overall experience at your site, and on how the chosen core & track competencies were attained throughout the internship. Describe in what ways did your work on the major project, on your products, and your professional activities are relevant and relate to the competencies you have chosen. You must clearly relate each of the five competencies to specific components of your project, to your products, and to the professional activities carried on at the site during ALE hours; identify specific skills that are related to each of your five selected competencies. Note that each section requires a one-page narrative.
    (1) Overall Experience: On one-page, reflect on your overall experience of working at this site.
    (2) Core Competencies: On one-page, describe how you attained the 3 MPH Core Competencies through the completion of your Major Project, Products, and Professional Practice Activities.
    (3) Track Competencies: Similarly, on one-page, explain how were you able to attain the two MPH Track Competencies though your Major Project, Products, and Professional Practice Activities.
10. **References**
    List of references used in Major Project Plan in APA format. **EndNote is required.**
11. **Appendices-** do not delete the pages with appendices titles; you will need them for the binder.

Poster
Each student will produce a professional poster that summarizes the Major Project Report. A template for the ALE Poster, which will be presented at the ALE Poster Session, and examples of prior students' posters will be available on D2L. Since there are a wide variety of projects the poster format may vary from project to project. Examples of posters are found on the ALE II D2L site. The format is a PowerPoint slide, printed as a 1-page PDF. The poster cannot be counted as one of the two products; this is because it is not developed for the purpose to meet an agency need.

During the last week of the semester, all HEA 650 students in the MPH program present their practicum experience via a poster session to the entire Health Department. The session is also open to site-supervisors and faculty members outside the Health Department. For this assignment- you are supposed to revise your *ALE poster draft* as per the comments received from the faculty-supervisor and the site-supervisor. You will present the final version of your revised poster. If you miss the draft submission deadline, you may not receive the comments in time to make any revisions. Posters presented without going through supervisor's review should expect a 30% deduction in the score.

Professional Practices Activities (PPA) Tally Form
Students will need to complete a Professional Practice Activities and document competency attainment in the Major Project Report completed during ALE II. The purpose of this report is to document the types of Professional Practice Activities and how participation in these activities contributed to the mastery of MPH Core and Track Competencies related to the student's Major Project, ALE Products, and Professional Practice Activities. Students will be assessed on their professional performance during the internship at the agency including relationships to staff, ability to accept guidance from site supervisor and staff, the ability to relate to agency populations groups, the ability to organize and maintain an effective work schedule along with the ability to relate theory to practice. Students will be expected to participate in Professional Practice Activities throughout the semester. The Professional Practice Activities include: student observation and participation in supervisors and staff work activities, interacting with clients/patients, attending meetings (agency and coalition meetings) and providing support for agency activities. The student and Site Supervisor agree on the student participation in Professional Practice Activities by completing the Professional Practice Activities Form at the time of placement site finalization. Specifically, this form reports on your professional activities with the number of hours spent on each type of activity. You will extract the information from the bi-weekly student logs, and tally the number of hours by activity. All activities described in the student logs (ex, outreach meetings, products design and development, etc.) must be accounted on the PPA tally form, and the total number of ALE hours must add up to 200h, and on the student logs too. This form MUST be signed by the site supervisor and by the student before it is submitted for my signature.

Site Supervisor Review (SSR) Form
The site supervisor form serves as the site's approval of your final project, of the two products, and of your poster. Be aware that some sites may have restrictions in terms of the information is made publicly available on the poster. Always consult with your site supervisor regarding the information you pull out from the Major Project and present via the poster. You cannot present your poster without this form, which must be signed by you, by the site supervisor, and by the ALE faculty.

REDCap forms
This is a central database that we'll help us keep track of student placements, chosen competencies and products, and make it easy to access the file repository of ALE Outcomes for accreditation. The sender of the REDCap emails is Dr. Ramona Stone; do not ignore those emails, they have your unique link.
1. ALE I Checklist
   At the end of the ALE I semester, you have received an email with a unique link to a REDCap form, asking you for information about the placement, site/supervisor/schedule/professional activities/ project/ products, and your chosen core and track competencies as a focus for the ALE II. Check the information and correct any errors you might find.

2. ALE II Checklist
   At the end of ALE II semester, you will receive a similar request; you will be asked to upload the final versions of documents in original format (ex, checklist 1, major project report, products, poster, PPA form, and the ALE binder).

3. Site Supervisor Evaluation of the Student
   The site supervisors will evaluate your professional performance at their site. This will include the development of a working relationship with the ALE Faculty Supervisor and the Agency Site Supervisor including the ability to accept guidance from the site supervisor and staff, the ability to relate to agency populations groups, the ability to organize and maintain an effective work schedule along with the ability to relate theory to practice. Students will be evaluated on their participation in professional practice activities (ex, supervisors and staff work activities, interacting with clients/patients, attending agency or coalition meetings, providing support for agency activities, etc).

Once they submit the form, they will receive an email confirmation with a PDF attachment. That PDF file will show your site supervisor's site evaluation scores. The site supervisor will discuss their grading with you and will provide you a with a copy. Please read it carefully and respond to their comments if you wish to provide an explanation for less than perfect scores. The PDF attachment must be uploaded on D2L, and your comments can be included in that assignment's comment box. At the end of the semester, we will use the site supervisors' emails (provided by you in the Checklist 1) to ask them to evaluate your on-site professional performance. We will let you know when the form is sent out to them, and we will follow up with them until we get a response.

4. Student Evaluation of the Site

   Conversely, at the end of the semester, students will receive an invitation to a REDCap form where they are expected to evaluate the site. The purpose of this form is for us to learn about your overall experience as an intern at the agency where you were placed.

5. MPH Exit Survey

   Finally, to maintain accreditation of the MPH program, we are required to engage in a series of data collection efforts. Part of this effort, are the MPH Exit surveys, Alumni surveys (1-year), and Stakeholder survey (5-year follow-up), in which we include all of our graduates.

ALE Project Binder

The Project Binder is a PDF document/ binder that will be uploaded in REDCap (Checklist 2) and must include the sections described under the ALE Major Project Report (above). Usually, after the poster session, students meet individually with the ALE faculty, revisit all of their documents, and bind the final versions into a large PDF document. Here are a few reminders:

   Major Project Report

- use the template, do not change it; ask for help if you don't know how to use it.
- do not remove any section,
- do not remove the Table of Contents
- do not remove the appendices title pages
- do not change the fonts and the formatting
- you must use EndNote
- remove my text and type your own, while keeping the formatting the same.

   Appendices:
   A. Product 1
   B. Product 2
   C. Poster (1-page PDF print)
   D. Checklist 1 - Placement information
   E. Site Supervisor Review form (signed)
   F. Student Site Evaluation form (PDF sent in the confirmation email)
   G. Student Logs
   H. Professional Activities form (the tally must add up to 200h); must have all signatures.
   I. Cover Letter
   J. Resume

ALE II POSTER SESSION

The Poster Session is the culmination of your MPH degree work; it advertises you, your work, the agency and your supervisor too. Typically, a professional poster involves showing your work to numerous researchers at a conference or seminar. Then, as viewers walk by, your poster should quickly and efficiently communicate your research. However, our poster session will be on Zoom. An announcement is sent out widely to the department, college, and to the stakeholder community.

You will be required to give a short presentation on your research of 3-5 minutes. *Students are expected to* arrive prepared, dressed professionally and sign on zoom 30 minutes before the scheduled session. After each student presents their work, we will use breakout rooms to provide the opportunity for the audience to visit with the presenters and ask questions.

The MPH Poster Sessions are scheduled on a Friday evening at 5PM, at the end of the fall/spring semesters before the week of final exams for a two-hour time period. The summer Poster Session is scheduled during the faculty retreat, usually the third week in August in the afternoon. Next, we suggest a few strategies that may help your draft and revise your poster.

Poster Content
The following items are usually found on a poster (summarized from the research report).

> Introduction
> Goals & Objectives
> Competencies
> Products
> Methods
> Results
> Conclusions/ Implications
> Recommendations
> Reflections
> References

Writing Strategies for Poster Sessions
Developing your poster's content may seem like a breeze. After all, you just have to cut and paste parts of your research onto the board, right? Wrong! To be successful, a poster requires planning how you will depict specific information and providing text and graphics to capture your audience's attention. The final material that goes on a poster is quite unlike what most researchers and writers generally write for other contexts. The poster session calls for much more attention to visual impact than other forms of writing do. And the restricted space of a poster requires careful condensing of ideas that we would write about at length for other forums.

Clarity
Because you'll have very little space to explain your ideas and your readers will take very little time to skim your poster (usually about five minutes), you must communicate your main points quickly and clearly. If your poster sends a muddled message or takes too long to figure out, readers won't bother to work through the confusion. Instead, they'll move on to the next poster. So checking clarity is vital.

Readability
Readability refers to the ease of comprehending your poster. Typical "readability" indexes stress using short, familiar words and short, simple sentences. But a poster may need to express complex or difficult material quickly, and so short, easy words and sentences may not work for your poster. A good way to check readability is to read your poster aloud. If you can "hear" your poster and it makes sense, you probably have a good start. If you stumble over any sentences, revise those. Then ask a few people typical of your

target audience to read aloud a sample layout of your poster while you listen. Note when they stumble over sentences or puzzle over missing connections between sentences. Watch how they move from chunk to chunk of the poster and consider rearranging to enhance the flow of ideas. The more work you do to ensure that readers can comprehend your ideas, the more successful your poster will be.

Visual Presentation
Visual presentation of a poster is just as important as clarity and readability. If readers can understand your ideas, but only when they move to 18 inches from the poster, then you've lost most of your audience. If readers slow down their reading because you've used a script font, your poster may be lovely but uncommunicative. A successful poster combines clear ideas with optimal visual cues to make understanding your ideas as easy as possible.

Layout
To make a good impression, your poster must be attractive and informative. To help you accomplish this, consider the following:
- Provide a title and your name in larger text. This helps your audience determine whether or not they are interested in your topic.
- Remember that viewers will typically expect information to flow from left to right and from top to bottom. If you want to use a different flow, be sure to give explicit signals on your poster.
- Use headings and subheadings to label your information. Keep these short and to the point since they function as an index.
- Use the same size margins on both graphics and text.

Font Sizes and Lettering
Because your audience will be standing from four to eight feet away from your poster, you must make your text readable from a distance. Use at least a 32-point font for your text, and at least a 44-point font for the title. Your font style should be legible also. Avoid using italicized or fancy scripts. Highlighting with colors or underlining important information is acceptable, but make sure your font style is consistent over the entire poster. Don't use more than one style. Avoid using all capital letters except for the title. The emphasis of capital letters helps titles stand out, but in general all caps take longer to read than mixed upper- and lower-case letters.

Colors and White Space
Colors can help liven up your poster. Some experts recommend you use only one color plus black, while others suggest you choose several colors. When using more than one color, consider the overall impression your poster makes. Since dark-colored objects generally draw the eye to a specific area, consider when and why you might need to do this. You also might consider using warm colors, such as red, orange, and yellow since these are typically more inviting. As you plan your poster, be sure to leave ample white space. This makes your poster appear less cluttered, and helps you distribute information proportionally.

Text on the Professional Presentation Poster
One of the most common mistakes made when creating professional posters is providing too much text-based explanation. After looking at numerous posters in a matter of a few hours, the last thing your audience wants to do is read your entire paper. As a general rule, you should present two to three key points from each of your paper's sections. Typically, a poster always includes an abstract, the research questions/problems, methodologies, results summarized, and conclusions. Under these headings, though, be sure to include focused information. If your results lead to multiple conclusions, ask conference organizers to include your work in multiple sessions. Also, always have copies of your paper with you for those viewers who want more extensive details.

Graphics on the Professional Presentation Poster
Only rarely is research so focused and narrow that a poster can include all the data, results and conclusions of a professional research project. As you choose the information to present on the poster, don't rely solely on graphs and tables you've already drafted for a formal paper on your research. Instead, look at key information in a new light and choose the best visual forms to present the subset of data and results you decide to highlight on this poster. Information for *Creating a Professional Poster for a Poster Session* from: http://writing. colostate. edu/guides/speaking/poster/index. cfm