Practicum Proposal

ATSU MPH Practicum Proposal

Practicum Title

(Title should be appropriately specific and descriptive of your project)

Practicum Site Name with City and State
(For example: Friendship Community Health Clinic, Fargo, North Dakota)

Student’s Name

Practicum Preceptor: Preceptor’s Name

Faculty Advisor: Faculty’s Name

College of Graduate Health Studies

A.T. Still University

Date of Submission
It is important to remember that the practicum project is not meant to be a research project. It is a service learning opportunity. The goal is to engage in a public health activity, which often involves delivering proven public health practices to at-risk people and populations. Broadly, the focus is less on discovering new knowledge (research) as it is on applying knowledge and skills and doing public health in some way with an organization that delivers public health services. As a result, this proposal is meant to provide an explanation of what your service project will be and the final report is meant to be an academic summary (not a research paper) of your practicum service efforts.

Your proposal should follow the format below. Section headings centered and bold and then present the section information that this template outlines double-spaced and left-justified.

**Problem Statement**

Identify the problem, question or issue that you will address. Clearly state the nature of the problem/issue. Why is it a problem? Why should it be addressed? Keep it simple, but clear. Do not go into a long explanation at this point. This is a statement of the problem not an extended discussion or justification.

**Project Description and Overall Goal(s)**

Provide a more detailed statement of what you intend to do in the practicum and what the overall goals of your project are. If your project is part of a larger project (for example your project looks at reasons for patients not filling prescriptions and that is part of a larger project of a hospital attempting to reduce readmissions) be sure to focus on your project not simply the larger project. Goals are broad, generalized statements about the project’s intention. What is the overall goal of your project (the part you are doing, not simply the part it might play in a larger project)? What do you hope to achieve? Goals are different from objectives. Objectives are specific, measurable steps that can be taken to meet the goal. You should state your objectives in
the Objective section of the proposal, not here. This section should also provide a clear statement of who will benefit from the project and how.

Lastly, provide a short description of your Practicum Organization and the importance of the problem, question or issue to the Practicum Organization.

**Rationale**

Clearly explain why the project will or should address the problem statement. You have already identified the problem, now explain how your project will actually engage the problem and have an impact. Tell the reader why and how what you intend to do will help. If it will address one piece in a larger issue/puzzle, say so. If it will completely solve the problem say so. Are there health disparities that you are attempting to address? Has this previously been identified as an area of need? Why are you attempting to address the problem in the way you are? This section should support your project by showing clearly that the specific problem exists and that your project is relevant and appropriate. This section should not be overly broad. For example, if you are creating an anti-smoking intervention in a prison, it should not simply show that smoking is bad and that smoking interventions are good. It should show that smoking is prevalent in the particular population you intend to address and that your project (method of addressing it) is going to be effective in some way. If you are performing a program evaluation, you should explain specifically why that evaluation is a useful method for addressing the desired goal/problem/need. In other words, you should provide a reliable explanation to support the project (need and approach).

**Objectives**
State the objectives that you will use to achieve the goal of the project. Objectives are the tangible concrete steps you take to reach your goals. They are specific observable steps/results that must happen for you to accomplish your overall goal. Identifying the objectives/outcomes you want to bring about will help you clarify and decide what specific work you should do in the project. Objectives should be SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-limited. Each objective should begin with an active verb, for example: define, develop, identify, investigate, prepare, provide, write, etc. At least one of the objectives should identify a product or “deliverable” that comes out of the practicum, for example: a community health curriculum, an educational package, a needs assessment and analysis, a program evaluation report, etc. Again, objectives should be measurable. This means you must state the objective in a way that we can determine if it has been achieved. It may turn out that you do not achieve all of your objectives. This is ok since projects often run into delays or obstacles in the real world. However, list the objectives that you seriously think you can achieve.

Methods

This section should give a detailed description of the actual methodology and methodological tools used to accomplish the goals and objectives of the practicum. What approach will be used? What are the steps/actions that you will take to achieve your objectives? Explain your reasoning. For example (depending on your project): What group will you target? Why? How does that match your problem and your goal? What numbers do you need? Why? Why is the design appropriate to answer or address the issue you are working on? What data will be generated, collected, analyzed, reported? What methods will be used for data collection or analysis? What intervention will you use? How will it be implemented? What is the expected time frame? How will you judge success or failure? You must demonstrate, not just
generally, but with some specificity, that you understand what you are doing and why you are doing it. You should justify your project and your approach. This should include a rough proposed timeline of hours. Consider including a Gantt chart to display your timeline.

**Review**

Provide a more detailed review of the overall practicum project, including a short preliminary literature review (which you will build upon in your final report), that shows us you understand the issue/problem. It is important that your review focus on the specific work you will be doing and not broadly on the general issue. For example, if you intend to create an educational intervention about diabetes for a certain population the review should not focus generally on diabetes. That is too broad. Your review should focus on educational interventions for diabetes (methods, effectiveness, determinates of success, etc.) as well as the connection between the particular population, their need for this intervention, and why you are choosing to approach the problem in the way that you are. The goal of the review is for you to learn and connect what the literature says about how you should accomplish your project. The goal of the review is not a generalized overview of the broad issue/topic that your project is attempting to do something particular about.

A brief review of recent literature should identify and refer to at least 5 relevant and reliable evidence-based sources that were published within the last 5 years if possible. Sometimes, older material is appropriate, but it depends on the topic and what work has been done on it more recently. In your review, you use these sources to clarify the scope or importance of the specific problem and the value or appropriateness of the approach you will use in your project. Again, do not let your review be too general. If you are creating an educational
intervention about diabetes for a particular population (gender, race, socioeconomic status, geographical location, etc.), then your review should focus on the methods you will use in your intervention and diabetes in that specific population (not diabetes generally). The aim of this section should be to deepen the reader’s understanding of the specific context and detail of the issue/problem, to clearly explain how this relates to public health, and to connect your specific project to evidence that suggests your approach is supported by the public health literature. This is an essential part of an evidence-based intervention.

This is not meant to be a complete literature review. It is a preliminary one that you will expand upon in your final report, where you will include more detail about both your approach and the general, broader public health issue.

Competencies

A list of the MPH and MPH-D competencies is provided in the Course Documents section of Blackboard. Depending upon the program in which you are enrolled, identify the competencies that you will address during your practicum experience. There is no predetermined number you should identify. It is neither necessary nor possible to address them all. Identify the primary ones that you will perform or experience as part of the practicum. Provide a brief explanation of how your practicum activities will involve each competency you identify.

References

APA style references that indicate sources used in the proposal as well as resources that may be used in your practicum.