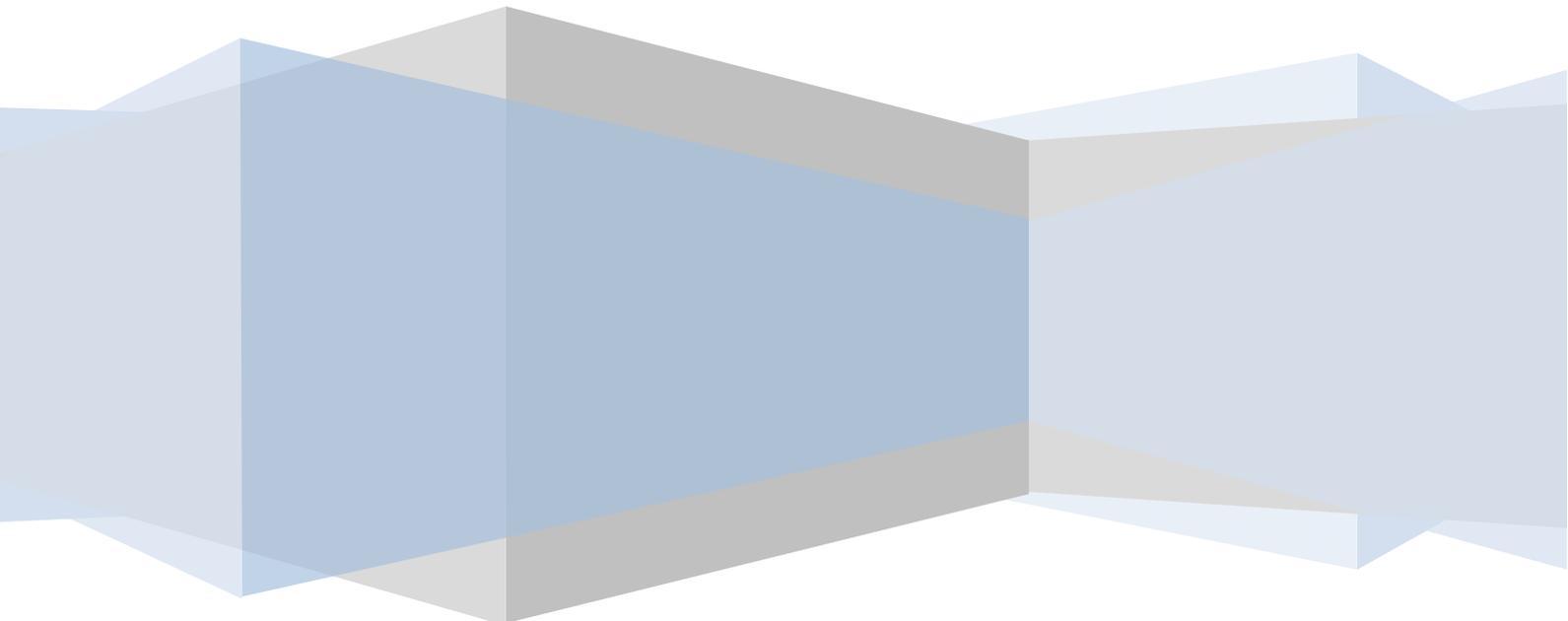




College of Public Health

# Master of Public Health

Applied Practice Experience (APE)  
Guidelines



Reviewed October 2021

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## INTRODUCTION

The mission of Kent State University is to “discover, create, apply and share knowledge; foster ethical humanitarian values; educate students to think critically; expand students’ intellectual horizons; and prepare students for responsible citizenship and productive careers.” To this end, students pursuing a Master of Public Health (MPH) will not only engage with faculty in the classroom but will also apply their knowledge and skills in “real world” settings with support and guidance from community preceptors and the College faculty. These practical experiences are gained throughout the MPH program of study and are particularly emphasized in this Applied Practice Experience (APE). Completion of the APE is also a requirement of all MPH programs accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH).

## SUMMARY OF THE APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE (APE)

Students should discuss with their Kent State Faculty Advisor about the timing of course work. It is encouraged to start no later than 3 semesters before the intended graduation date. After approval has been received, students will enroll in their department’s APE course (i.e., BST, EPI, HPM, or SBS 60192) and will work with the Course Instructor to begin developing the APE project. During this process, students reflect on their completed coursework, identify areas of interest for further study, develop a list of possible sites to conduct the APE, identify MPH professional competencies to address, and generate a preliminary list of learning objectives and activities. In this stage, students are encouraged to think about the “next steps” in their careers and design an APE project that will help them achieve those professional goals.

After students have developed a preliminary concept about the APE project they would like to pursue, they will complete the APE Agreement Form. It is suggested that the student contact the Course Instructor to review the concept, discuss placement sites and a preceptor, and further develop the learning objectives. Then, the student should share this document with their Faculty Advisor for review and approval. After the Course Instructor and Faculty Advisor approve the APE Agreement Form, it is signed by the student, preceptor, instructor, and Kent State Faculty Advisor. The student will upload the form to Canvas and keep the original for their files.

Completion of the APE requires a **minimum of 150 contact hours for the 3-credit course or 300 contact hours for the 6-credit hour course**, along with the development and presentation of a professional portfolio. Ordinarily, this means that students will need at least two to three semesters to complete the required number of contact hours and develop and present a high-quality portfolio. When you develop your APE plan, you are required to develop at least two deliverables (products) for the APE site. You should work with the site preceptor to determine the two products. Details on the requirements of the portfolio and presentation are contained in this document.

The APE is graded on a “Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory” basis and the grade is recorded in the student’s Faculty record. The grade is based upon the quality of the portfolio, the presentation, preceptor evaluation, student evaluation, and faculty assessment.

## APE SITE AND APPROVAL PROCESSES

APE projects can be completed in a variety of settings outside of the College, including health departments, non-profit organizations, hospitals, and other community-based organizations. Host sites must sign an Affiliation Agreement to host an APE student and the site must be approved by the Course Instructor. This must be signed and returned to CPH before any hours can be logged. Additional levels of approval may also be required.

### **International Applied Practice Experience Projects**

Students wishing to conduct their Applied Practice Experience outside of the United States, must obtain additional approval by the Office of Global Education (OGE) and must follow additional guidelines, including immunization and vaccination, additional health insurance, and other requirements. Students should be aware that the University and College reserve the right not to approve Applied Practice Experience projects in foreign countries, especially countries with travel restrictions or advisories. Students wishing to conduct their Applied Practice Experience projects in foreign countries must expect and budget additional time to complete the approval process. See the OGE web site for more information: <http://www.kent.edu/globaleducation>

### **Applied Practice Experience Projects at the Student's Place of Employment**

Students wishing to conduct a Applied Practice Experience project inside their place of employment must also obtain additional approval by the Applied Practice Experience Instructor. Applied Practice Experience projects occurring at the student's place of employment must have a scope of work that is "above and beyond" the student's normal job duties. Verification from the student's supervisor may be requested.

## **EXAMPLES OF APE PROJECTS**

An APE project serves as evidence of the student's ability to apply knowledge and skills gained in coursework to a public health problem. APE projects can take many forms, depending upon the student's discipline and interests. Examples of projects by discipline include, but are not limited to:

### **Biostatistics**

- Analyze and report complex statistical information to pediatricians at a local hospital on the association between in utero exposure to pesticides and the healthy development of newborns.
- Develop a registry and participate in the enrollment of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in collaboration with the Veterans Administration.
- Provide biostatistical support to community-based researchers in a range of areas including, but not limited to, sample size calculations and power analysis, research methodology, data management, and data analysis.

### **Epidemiology**

- Develop and test new strategies of presenting complex epidemiologic information to community members.
- Develop and implement a "mixed methods" approach to studying how H1N1 is transmitted in the social networks of homeless youth.
- Perform secondary data analysis of large datasets to answer a public health research question.

### **Health Policy and Management**

- Assess the organizational functioning of a non-profit organization and develop a plan to increase the organization's efficiency and effectiveness.
- Analyze a healthcare policy and develop and test strategies for its implementation.
- Conduct a community-wide health needs assessment (e.g., for health department accreditation).

### **Social and Behavioral Sciences**

- Develop and test a social marketing campaign that reduces the tobacco use behaviors of college students.
- Plan, implement, and evaluate a school-based health education curriculum that reduces unintentional injuries.
- Develop and administer a survey to measure phenomena related to an important public health problem.

For additional ideas, please refer to the professional competencies of each discipline (see Appendix).

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The student has the primary responsibility of developing, conducting, and presenting the Applied Practice Experience project and ensuring that all requirements are met. To this end, the student is responsible for:

### Development Phase

- Reflecting on completed coursework, identifying areas of interest for further study, developing a list of possible sites to conduct the APE, and generating a preliminary list of learning objectives and activities to be reviewed and approved by the Course Instructor.
- Discussing the project details with their Course Instructor to ensure an understanding of what is expected of them and what forms are required before logging contact hours. The instructor must secure a Site Agreement with the community organization before the student can begin the APE project.
- Enrolling in the appropriate APE course (i.e., SBS 60192, 3 or 6 credit hours).
- Completing the KSU-approved CITI training entitled, “Social & Behavioral Research – Basic/ Refresher” (HPM/SBS) or the “Biomedical Research” course (BST/EPI). Please note that this training must be completed before IRB approval can be given. Students that have completed the CITI training in the last three years can waive this requirement by submitting the training certificate to the Course Instructor.
- Submission of the Preceptor’s curriculum vitae (CV) or resume along with the signed APE Agreement Form. Please keep in mind that the Preceptor must hold a master degree (in any field) or have 10+ years of work experience.

### Implementation Phase

- Completing the APE Agreement Form and obtaining all necessary signatures before beginning the project. **Time spent before approval of the APE Agreement Form will not count toward the minimum contact hour requirement.**
- Completing all required aspects of the APE project, as described in the APE Agreement Form.
- Working with the Course Instructor and Faculty Advisor to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of projects involving data from human subjects. **You must have IRB approval before you can start any projects that involves data from human subjects - whether you collect the data or not.**
- Behaving in a professional manner while completing the APE project including appropriate attire, language, communication, and general appearance.
- Documenting the time devoted to the APE project using the approved time sheet (see Appendix).
- Negotiating absences and make-up time directly with the field preceptor. Please note that the Kent State University holiday schedule does not necessarily coincide with the holiday schedule of the field site.
- Contacting the Course Instructor when problems arise including if the student is asked to do anything s/he finds objectionable, sign any documents, perform any clinical functions, or anything else that falls outside of the scope of the APE Agreement Form.
- Completing assignments/tasks given by the Course Instructor.

### **Final Phase**

- Obtaining approval from the Course Instructor of a draft for the report/document that becomes the final APE work products and narrative. Students are required to complete two deliverables and a narrative outlining what they did for the practice experience and how competencies were met.
- Preparing the portfolio (see requirements).
- Obtaining approval of the voice-over recorded presentation from the Course Instructor
- Satisfactorily presenting the portfolio (see requirements).
- Completing all final requirements, including the Student Self-Evaluation (through Qualtrics), Student Evaluation of Preceptor and Site (through Qualtrics), Preceptor Evaluation of Student (through Qualtrics), and Student Abstract/Overview Video.

## **PRECEPTOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The preceptor is located at the host agency and has the primary responsibility for providing a supportive learning environment for the student and evaluating the student's work. To this end, the field preceptor is responsible for:

### **Development Phase**

- Meeting with the student to develop the APE project.
- Discussing the APE project with the Course Instructor.
- Reviewing and signing the final APE Agreement Form (see Appendix).
- Submitting a resume/CV to the Course Instructor that includes professional experience, education, and certifications or licensures. Preceptors should hold either a master's degree (in any field) or 10+ years of work experience.

### **Implementation Phase**

- Providing a safe and productive work environment for the student including a work area, computer, office supplies, or other items needed to complete the APE project.
- Providing access to technical, laboratory, administrative, or other equipment needed to complete the APE project.
- Signing time sheets (see Appendix).
- Maintaining an appropriate professional mentor relationship with the student.
- Supporting the student during the APE project.
- Reporting any problems to the Course Instructor.

### **Final Phase**

- Completing the Preceptor Evaluation of student in Qualtrics. Preceptors should complete this survey via computer rather than mobile device.

## PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

Each student must complete several items as part of the final portfolio which summarizes the APE experience. After completion, the portfolio will become a public document that resides in the department's library. The portfolio requirements vary by MPH specialization. See syllabus for more information.

**Students are required to work closely with the Course Instructor on the development of the portfolio, including submitting drafts by the stated due dates.**

### The APE Final Work Products

In accordance with CEPH guidelines, students must submit two products (i.e., manual, executive summary, program evaluation, training manual, curriculum) and a narrative discussing their project details and how the set objectives and competencies were met. If the student did an APE that reflects a research project, they will need to submit a research narrative in the form of a manuscript. The APE final product requirements may vary by MPH specialization.

The research narrative is a scholarly representation of the APE project. If your APE entails a final work product or technical report for your organization, you are welcome to use that product instead of writing a separate narrative. For example, if you conducted an analysis of a particular policy, collected data, then revised existing policy or created a new policy manual, that policy document may be submitted as the narrative. See syllabus for more information.

### Formatting Requirements of the Applied Practice Experiences Final Work Product

The Applied Practice Experience final work product must adhere to the following formatting requirements:

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>References</b>	The citations and references must follow requirements stated in the "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association" (sometimes referred to as the "APA Manual")
<b>Type Face &amp; Spacing</b>	12-point Times New Roman (unmodified) double-spaced
<b>Margins</b>	1" margins all the way around (top, bottom, left, and right)
<b>Header and Footer</b>	No header. Place the page number <u>and</u> total number of pages in the lower right-hand corner of the footer (i.e., Page X of Y).
<b>Tables &amp; Figures</b>	Tables and figures must be titled in a manner consistent with the APA Manual. Table data should be clearly presented using "Presenting Your Findings: A Practical Guide for Creating Tables"

### APE Project/Abstract Overview

The self-evaluation component of the Applied Practice Experience portfolio is a short video where the student gives an overview of the Applied Practice Experience experience with prior coursework and with the "next steps" in their careers. Sample questions to address in the overview include, but are not limited to:

- Give an abstract/overview of the Applied Practice Experience project and site organization
- How has your Applied Practice Experience experience enriched your overall MPH program?
- How has the MPH program better prepared you for your "next step?"
- What "lessons learned" in regards to leadership style would you share with future MPH students?

## PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to submit a 15-20-minute voiceover presentation of their project. This presentation should be shared with the Course Instructor and Faculty Advisor prior to the final submission. Once approved, this can be uploaded to Canvas and will be shared with CPH faculty.

Students may create their video with any technology that they feel comfortable using. Students that are unsure where to begin can use the feature called “Webcam Recording” on Kent State’s video platform (Kaltura) to create their video. This can be found at [video.kent.edu](http://video.kent.edu). Steps for submitting your video are below:

1. Upload video to Kaltura (skip this step if you record directly within Kaltura).
2. Be sure that the video is set to “published” or “unlisted” so that the instructor can view the video.
3. Copy and paste the link (URL) to your video into the assignment drop box to share the video with your instructor.

## **APPENDIX A**

### APE Agreement Form

# APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE (APE) AGREEMENT FORM

**Student/APE Information**

Student's Name			
APE Title			
Dates(estimate)			
Estimated Hours Per Week		Total Hours (150 or 300)	

**Preceptor/Site Information**

Name of Site			
Full Address			City, State, Zip
Preceptor Name		Phone	
Preceptor Title		Email	

Does the organization/agency employ you? Yes No

***\*If yes (employed by organization/agency), please complete the section below***

**Employment Information**

Job Title	
Supervisor	
Job Description and principal duties*	

\* You may upload a job description

**Differences Between APE and Job Duties**

*Justify how the proposed APE project is "above and beyond" the student's regular job duties.*

## APE Overview

Provide an overview of your proposed APE project. 1) Include background information on the agency in which you will be placed. 2) Where specifically will you be practicing within the agency? 3) What roles and responsibilities will you undertake? 4) Describe the final, written product that you intend to submit in partial completion of the APE requirements (i.e., a work product such as a program/policy manual or handbook, or a research narrative.

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## Professional Competencies

Students must identify at least 5 professional competencies that align with the APE project. At least 3 competencies must be an **MPH Foundational Competency** and the remaining should align with your **specific concentration**. (APE Guidelines Appendix)

Competency #	Description of competency # and detailed explanation on how it will be met

## Project Plan Outline

Read the Logic Model Article and Template (Module 2 in Canvas). Outline the plan for your project in sequential steps. Students must identify 5 measurable project plan objectives, the timeline associated with completing the objectives, the method(s) for meeting the objectives, and what evidence will document the completion of the objectives. Begin the project plan objectives with the following verbs: define, describe, discuss, explain, identify, demonstrate, differentiate, compare, design, formulate, evaluate, assess, or analyze.

Project Plan Objective ( <a href="#">SMART</a> )	Competency	Timeline	Method(s) (Tasks to complete objective)	Evidence

## Human Subjects Research

Does your project involve collecting or using information from a living individual in any way? Collecting or using information includes but is not limited to: performing secondary analysis of existing data; reviewing existing records; conducting interviews, focus groups, or surveys; observing participants; and examining biological specimens.

Yes No

**\*First complete the IRB determination form located in Module 2. This should be completed by you and then shared with your Faculty Advisor to ensure accuracy. If your research is human subjects research you will then work with your Faculty Advisor to complete the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) forms at KSU and receive approval before collecting or using human subjects data. IRB approval may also be required from partnering agencies.**

**NOTE: Major deviations such as content, description or objectives from this agreement require the completion and approval of a new form along with permission by the APE Instructor.**

## CITI Program Training

*\*Important* - A valid Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (HPM, SBS) or the Biomedical Research (BST/EPI) training certificate is required. CITI training is required for the Grant Writing course. If CITI training was taken prior to the APE, it must **not** expire prior to the end date of the APE. **You do not need to do this training again unless your certificate has or is expiring (please check the expiration dates).** Upload the valid CITI certificate to Canvas.

Completed CITI training Yes No

## Signatures

By signing below, the student and preceptor agree with the policies, procedures, and expectations stated on this document, the APE Guidelines document, and any associated syllabi. Signatures should be collected in the following order: 1) student 2) preceptor 3) instructor 4) faculty advisor then back to 5) instructor. Please send via email and include email address below.

Student _____	Date _____	Preceptor _____	Date _____
Email _____		Email _____	
APE Instructor _____	Date _____	Faculty Advisor _____	Date _____
Email _____		Email _____	

## **APPENDIX B**

### Foundational and Discipline Competencies in the MPH

## FOUNDATIONAL and DISCIPLINE COMPETENCIES- 60192

The Applied Practice Experience project can address a variety of competencies from the MPH degree program. You will work with the Program Instructor on the final selection of MPH degree competencies for your Applied Practice Experience project. The following are the MPH degree competencies.

The Applied Practice Experience allows each student to indicate **no less than five competencies, of which, at least three must be from the Foundational Competencies list**. The competencies need not be identical from student to student, but the applied experiences must be structured to ensure that all students complete experiences addressing at least five competencies, as specified above. The applied experiences may also address additional foundational or concentration-specific competencies, if appropriate (CEPH Accreditation Criteria,2016).

### FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

#### Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice

#### Public Health & Health Care Systems

5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and 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
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges

## Communication

18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
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

## **DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES**

### **Biostatistics**

- A1. Describe basic concepts of probability, random variation and commonly used statistical probability distributions.
- A2. Describe preferred methodological alternatives to commonly used statistical methods when assumptions are not met
- A3. Distinguish among the different measurement scales and the implications for selection of statistical methods to be used based on these distinctions
- A4. Apply common statistical methods for inference

### **Epidemiology**

- B1. Identify the principles and limitations of public health screening programs.
- B2. Explain the importance of epidemiology for informing scientific, ethical, economic and political discussion of health issues.
- B3. Comprehend basic ethical and legal principles pertaining to the collection, maintenance, use and dissemination of epidemiologic data.
- B4. Communicate epidemiologic information to lay and professional audiences.
- B5. Evaluate the strengths and limitations of epidemiologic reports.

### **Health Policy & Management**

- C1. Analyze and apply key elements of legal processes to the creation and regulation of health policy
- C2. Apply the principles of planning, implementation and evaluation of public health programs and effectively communicate outcomes
- C3. Evaluate the financial performance and management of public health organizations
- C4. Integrate and apply interdisciplinary concepts and "systems thinking" for resolving policy and/or organizational issues
- C5. Develop and demonstrate problem-solving skills related to a health policy and/or management concern
- C6. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of different health care systems and how they affect the delivery, value, and equity of care

### **Social & Behavioral Sciences**

- D1. Apply and evaluate basic social and behavioral theories that effect health behaviors.
- D2. Analyze the role of social determinants in the onset and solution to public health problems.
- D3. Use the principles of ethics, social justice and advocacy in improving the health of diverse populations in a culturally competent manner.
- D4. Analyze emerging social and behavioral issues and create evidence-based interventions.

## **APPENDIX C**

### APE Time Sheet

# APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE (APE) TIME SHEET

## Student/Project Information

Student's Name

APE Title


## Bi-Weekly Log

For the Week of

--

Date	# Hours	Activities
Week Total:		
Total To Date:		

For the Week of

--

Date	# Hours	Activities
Week Total:		
Total To Date:		

## Signatures

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Kent State University  
College of Public Health  
Moulton Hall  
800 Hilltop Dr.  
Kent, OH 44240

[www.kent.edu/publichealth](http://www.kent.edu/publichealth)  
[publichealth@kent.edu](mailto:publichealth@kent.edu)  
330-672-6500 (tel)  
330-672-6505 (fax)

