

Master of Public Health Program Assessment Report (Academic Year 2015-2016)

The MPH Program, as a Council on Education for Public Health-accredited program, conducts annual assessment of student performance on required competencies. Competency-based Education is linked to outcomes that represent critical workforce skills, knowledges and values as defined by employers and the profession.

WSUMPH Program Core Competencies

1. Apply evidence-based knowledge from behavioral and social sciences, biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health, and health care organization to understanding and improving the health of the public.
2. Use appropriate research and analytical strategies to address public health issues.
3. Communicate public health principles and findings to professional and community audiences using a variety of media and methodologies.
4. Collaborate sensitively, professionally, and ethically with individuals from diverse cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
5. Recognize dynamic interactions between human and social systems and how they affect relationships among individuals, groups, organizations, communities, and other structures.
6. Demonstrate the ethical choices, values, and professional practices implicit in public health decisions, giving consideration to the effect of choices on community stewardship, equity, social justice, and accountability.

Evidence of Competency Attainment

In 2015-2016 evidence of student competency attainment was collected from assessments of student scholarly work in the Master's Project course. In this course students prepare a scholarly paper involving an analytic activity relevant to public health (e.g. a policy draft, case study, needs assessment or program evaluation, clinical improvement project, secondary analysis of existing data). The findings are also presented orally in a research presentation to faculty, peers, and the public.

In 2015-2016, using Master's Projects to assess competencies, student (n = 11 graduates; data not available on 1) scores in competency areas assessed were as follows:

1. Application of Evidence-Based Knowledge.
Score average 92.5% or 3.73/4.0 on a revised scale. Range 89.3-100%; 3.4 – 4.0
2. Scholarly Research and Analysis
Score average 91.2% or 3.75/4.0 on a revised scale. Range 89-93.3%; 3.5 – 4.0
3. Communication, Written
Score average 93.1%, Range 88.5 – 98%.
4. Communication, Verbal
Score average 3.75/4.0, Range 3.0 – 4.0

Summary

- Student competency performance is notably above the program's minimum expectation of 83% (or a score of 3 out of 4) for graduation.
- These outcomes are consistent with our performance measures historically, and they indicate that students continue to meet competency expectations. This year the MPH in Biostatistics program had its first graduates. The competency assessments for these students were among the highest in cohort, which is a tribute to students and faculty responsible for this program.
- In 2015-2016 our program assessment action plan continued to refine assessment metrics and process. We revised and updated our rubrics to capture student performance in sub-areas of the Master's Project course and expanded competency assessments into the Practicum course. The new assessment processes were initiated in fall, 2015 and will continue into 2016-2017 as students complete their Projects.

Thanks to program stakeholders and students for making important contributions to ensuring the quality of the program and its graduates.

Drs. Campbell-Voytal, Neale, MPH Curriculum Committee members, and the MPH faculty