

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

2008-09 REPORT

NMSU Department of Health Science

(Report Completed April 28, 2009)

Academic Program Master of Public Health

Undergraduate _____ OR Graduate X

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PHASE 1 REQUIREMENTS

NMSU MISSION: New Mexico State University is the state's land-grant university, serving the educational needs of New Mexico's diverse population through comprehensive programs of education, research, extension education, and public service.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM MISSION:

The mission of the MPH program is: To provide academic, professional, and service excellence in preparing community health education professionals who will demonstrate competent leadership, innovation, and technical expertise at local, state, national and international levels, in particular with border health problems in communities along the U.S./Mexico border.

GOALS:

The overall goal of the Master of Public Health program is to educate and train the enrolled students to become community health education specialists.

The Master of Public Health program will:

- Prepare individuals for careers in community and public health programs and education in voluntary, private, and governmental agencies.
- Encourage and promote health education within the framework of legal, ethical, moral and professional standards.
- Prepare individuals for successful participation in the professional certification examination process.
- Provide leadership within the health education profession.
- Collaborate with other professionals, staff, communities, and consumers in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of health education programs.
- Conduct and incorporate research findings in health education into practice settings.
- Develop a commitment to intellectual inquiry, self-directed learning, and professional growth.
- Promote undergraduate education as a basis for graduate study.

MPH PROGRAM GOAL STATEMENTS

Education - Related to the departmental and program mission statements are the MPH program instructional goals to prepare community health educators:

- who have knowledge of community health and public health, health promotion and disease prevention;
- for health education responsibilities in program planning, development, implementation, and evaluation;
- to plan and deliver health education programs that reflect cultural sensitivity and which best address health needs among populations living along the U.S./Mexico border;
- to apply appropriate research principles and methods in health education, administer health education programs, and advance the profession of health education.

Research – The MPH program strives to conduct applied and practice-oriented research in community health, involving students whenever possible, focusing on:

- working with local agencies and communities to assess and prioritize health needs and issues of populations living along the U.S./Mexico international border;
- communicating these needs and health priorities to stakeholders and constituency groups;
- identifying external sources of funding that may help communities address these health priorities;
- program interventions, including educational methods and processes, and the evaluation of the resultant effects including what people know, how they learn, and how they use information to improve, protect and restore their health;
- methods of motivating people to improve and protect their health;
- evaluation, analysis and documentation of community health behavior skills that are essential in maintaining a healthy life style.

Research findings from these areas and others are shared with public health professionals via publications and presentations.

Public Service – The MPH program serves to strengthen linkages and maintain cooperative relationships between the MPH program and the NM Department of Health, community health-related agencies, and the communities of southern New Mexico. These relationships foster applied research, public service and ensure that the knowledge gained through the program's instructional efforts are applied to the health-related needs of southern New Mexico. Public service and outreach activities are achieved through close working relationships with the professionals in the field through professional societies by serving on editorial boards and reviewing research proposals, and by providing consultation to official and voluntary agencies.

Specifically, the MPH program has the following service-related goals:

- to engage graduate students and faculty in the department in community based activities through education, research and service.
- to provide expertise in the resolution of international, national, state, and local issues related to the program of health promotion and illness prevention services, especially among under-served populations.

OBJECTIVES:

Consistent with the American Association for Health Education (AAHE), the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC), the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE), University and College mission statements, the MPH program has established the following program objectives. In addition, the current version of the IOM Report on Public Health Professional Preparation will guide the program in its outcome development. The distinguishing feature of this MPH/CHE program is its focus on border health issues because of its proximity to the U.S./Mexico border. In addition, faculty members have established research and service expertise in border health issues.

Graduates of the Master of Public Health program will demonstrate competency in:

- 1) Assessing individual and community needs for health education and assessing community capacities to meet these needs, especially in the region along the U.S./Mexico border.
- 2) Planning health education programs for individuals and border communities based on community analysis.
- 3) Implementing community-based health education programs, particularly along the U.S./Mexico border.
- 4) Applying appropriate research principles and methods to evaluate the effectiveness of community health education programs.
- 5) Coordinating the provision of community health education services.
- 6) Using communication theories and technologies to enable them to act as a resource person and to communicate health education needs and information to the public and policy makers.
- 7) Administering community health education programs, with an emphasis on border communities.

DIRECT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The seven (7) competencies listed above are parallel to pre-determined national competencies established by the profession (in concert with our national health education professional organizations).

These competencies are directly measurable at several different levels:

- Successful completion of all core required coursework for the degree program, which collectively address each of the 7 competencies. Some classes address primarily one of the seven competencies; other courses address more than one competency. Collectively all 7 competencies are fully addressed throughout the curriculum, and we have tables put together illustrating this for our external national accrediting body (SABPAC).
- CHES Pass Rates are one of the more tangible direct measures of student learning. CHES is the “Certified Health Education Specialist” examination, and it is a national credentialing examination. Twice per year we receive reports indicating the pass rate of our students on this examination.
- Field Experience Evaluations represent a key component for assessing our students and what they have learned. Students are required to spend 160-clock hours in the field working as a health educator prior to graduation. Site supervisors, who are professional health educators,

complete an extensive evaluation of each student, assessing their level of achievement towards demonstrating capacity in each of the 7 competencies.

- Exit Evaluations provide each of our students an opportunity to assess their own level of achievement and command of the 7 competencies.
- Alumni Surveys provide each of our graduates an opportunity to assess their own level of achievement and command of the 7 competencies, after a few years in the workforce.

PHASE 2 MODIFIED TO MEET PHASE 3 REQUIREMENTS

ONE DIRECT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME:

A direct student learning outcome for the MPH Program is the field experience which is required for all MPH students. Although the field experience is also required for the Bachelor of Community Health degree, the level of expectation is significantly higher and appropriate for the MPH. This field experience is hosted by health-related organizations such as the Department of Health and other nonprofit agencies. During the field experience, MPH students have the opportunity to demonstrate degrees of competency in the aforementioned objectives. These program objectives are based on responsibilities and competencies outlined by accrediting bodies and professional organizations within the field of public health.

WHAT EVIDENCE WILL BE USED TO ASSESS THE IDENTIFIED DIRECT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME? (This could be a completed project, essay, presentation, solution to problem, etc. – something that *students have produced.*)

Upon completing the field experience, the following outcomes assessment tool is completed:

- Agency Supervisor Evaluation: This evaluation addresses the student's mastery of the MPH Program objectives as observed by the agency supervisor at the field experience site. Near the end of the field experience, the supervisor responds to the witnessed competency in the seven (7) objectives using the following scale:
 - 5 = Student greatly exceeded competency expectations in this area
 - 4 = Student exceeded competency expectations in this area
 - 3 = Student demonstrated competency in this area
 - 2 = Student was deficient in this competency area
 - 1 = Student was grossly deficient in this competency area
 - n/a = This competency is "not applicable" to the student's field experience

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

WHO WILL PROVIDE THE EVIDENCE:

The MPH students will provide the evidence as they demonstrate gained competency in the MPH Program objectives through the field experience. Agency supervisors will provide evidence by documenting their observations of program objective acquisition using the agency supervisor evaluation. Generally, the field experience requirements are completed at the end of fall and spring semesters annually. However, in a few cases, field experiences are completed over the summer.

WHO WILL COLLECT THE EVIDENCE:

The advisor of the field experience collects and reviews the agency supervisor evaluations. This will be shared with the department head and the program coordinator developing the MPH database.

WHERE:

The MPH Program is in the process of reviewing and revising all outcomes and assessment tools, direct and indirect, in preparation for upcoming national reaccreditation. An Access database is being developed in tandem with the revising of the outcomes and assessment tools, including the field experience agency supervisor evaluation.

WHEN:

It is anticipated that the Access database will be completed and data from the Spring 2009 field experience agency supervisor evaluations will be imputed by June 30, 2009.

HOW:

Data from the agency supervisors' evaluation from the field experience will be manually imputed into the Access database. A query will need to be designed to quantify the rates of student competency in the seven (7) MPH Program objectives.

HOW AND BY WHOM, WILL THE EVIDENCE BE QUANTIFIED?

At present, there is a program coordinator dedicated to reviewing and revising the outcomes and assessment tools as well as developing the Access database. In late May 2009, she will begin working with a student employee to enter data from the spring semester field experience agency supervisor evaluations.

WHAT ARE THE DEFINED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE?

The field experience agency supervisor evaluation addresses the MPH Program objectives using the following scale:

- 5 = Student greatly exceeded competency expectations in this area
- 4 = Student exceeded competency expectations in this area
- 3 = Student demonstrated competency in this area
- 2 = Student was deficient in this competency area
- 1 = Student was grossly deficient in this competency area
- n/a = This competency is “not applicable” to the student’s field experience

WHAT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE IS CONSIDERED EVIDENCE THAT THE STUDENTS ARE LEARNING THE INTENDED OBJECTIVE?

- Agency supervisor evaluation – a minimum score 80% which is equivalent to a grade of B or better

WHAT NUMBER OR PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS OBTAINING A SATISFACTORY LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE IS SUFFICIENT TO DETERMINE THE PROGRAM IS PROVIDING THE NECESSARY COMPONENTS IN AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO MEET PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS?

- Field Experience Agency Supervisor evaluation – 90%

WITH WHOM WILL FINDINGS OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS BE SHARED? WHEN? HOW?

The findings of the MPH Program assessment process will be shared in multiple venues. The outcomes and assessment reports and reporting for accreditation with the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) are posted on the department website. Thus, they are made readily available to prospective students, current students, faculty, staff, field experience preceptors, and potential employers.

Findings from the assessment process will also be shared directly with faculty and students. Once the data from the field experience supervisor evaluation is entered into the database and a query is developed, a report will be generated. This report will be shared with faculty members during one of the regularly scheduled faculty meetings three times per year (after fall, spring and summer semesters). During these meetings, discussion will be encouraged so that collaborative ideas will be generated to strengthen the MPH Program. At the same time, this will also provide an open forum to address any weaknesses that may surface. By engaging in this process, faculty members’ commitment to the Program and ultimately the students will continue to grow.

In addition, presentation of this data will be shared with MPH student organizations and the general MPH student population on an annual basis. During this presentation, suggestions will be solicited from the students and their feedback, when possible, will be acted upon by the department. As students are publicly made aware that their voice is meaningful to MPH Program administration, students will be more likely to engage and view themselves as valuable stakeholders.

ASSESSMENT DATA:

DATE ASSESSMENT TOOK PLACE:

The agency supervisor evaluation is currently being completed and collected from students who did their field experience during the Spring 2009 semester.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS:

Although the agency supervisor evaluations are in the process of being completed and collected, it is anticipated that there will be evaluations from fourteen (14) MPH students.

STUDENT SCORES:

Data not yet available

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PERFORMING SATISFACTORILY:

Data not yet available

DOES THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PERFORMING SATISFACTORILY MEET THE DEPARTMENTS STATED BENCHMARK?

Data not yet available

INTERPRETATION:

Data not yet available

DISCUSS HOW THE ASSESSMENT DATA SUPPLIES INFORMATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM TO REFLECT ON THE DESIRED OUTCOME:

Data not yet available

FUTURE PLANS:

The following table has been developed to assess a direct student learning outcome for future outcome assessment activities. The MPH Program is a responsibility and competency based degree which is reflected as program objectives. These responsibilities and competencies have been developed by the national organizations and accrediting bodies in the public health field. In the agency supervisors' evaluation for the field experience, these responsibilities and competencies are observable and assessed. Once the data from the Spring 2009 agency supervisors' evaluation is quantified it will be discussed during one of the regularly scheduled faculty meetings in the fall of 2009. Although it is not possible to predict the results at this time, if the data suggests that students are exceptionally strong or

deficient in some of the responsibility and corresponding competency areas, these will be used by the faculty and department administration to make amendments and improvements to the program.

Sample Table: Assess a Direct Student Learning Outcome Based on MPH Program Objectives						
	5 = Student greatly exceeded competency expectations in this area	4 = Student exceeded competency expectations in this area	3 = Student demonstrated competency in this area	2 = Student was deficient in this competency area	1 = Student was grossly deficient in this competency area	n/a = This competency is "not applicable"
Responsibility 1 Assess individual and community needs for health education						
Student shows ability to access existing health-related data						
Student shows ability to collect health-related data						
Student shows ability to distinguish between behaviors that foster and hinder well-being						
Student shows ability to determine factors that influence learning						
Student shows ability to identify factors that foster or hinder the process of health education						
Student shows ability to infer needs for health education from obtained data						

DO ASSESSMENT FINDINGS INDICATE A NEED FOR INCREASED LEARNING OF THE INTENDED OUTCOME?

As the data is not yet available, it is not possible to determine.

IF SO, WHAT STEPS WILL BE TAKEN BY THE DEPARTMENT TO FOSTER INCREASED LEARNING OF THE INTENDED OUTCOME?

N/A

IF NOT, WHAT DID THE DEPARTMENT LEARN ABOUT THE INTENDED OUTCOME?

N/A

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS:

DISCUSS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR ASSESSMENT PROCESS:

As the data is not yet available, this is not yet possible to determine.

DISCUSS ANY INTENDED CHANGES TO YOUR ASSESSMENT PROCESS:

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