



Developing your Proposal

PART 2

18279 MPH Field Placement Preparation

**MEDICAL
COLLEGE
OF WISCONSIN**

This presentation is the second one regarding how to develop your proposal. Now that you have reviewed the first presentation, incorporating explanations regarding how to submit your proposal and details regarding the first half of the form, this presentation will focus on the last three sections of the proposal.

Overview of Presentation

* Proposal Form

IV. Chart of competencies & learning objectives

- Organization of chart
- Objectives
- Competencies & evidence

V. Responsibilities

VI. Agreement and approval



In this presentation, I will provide an in-depth explanation regarding how to complete the second half of the proposal form. First, I will explain the chart of competencies and learning objectives, emphasizing the organization of the chart as well as how to write learning objectives, identify competencies, and determine evidence. Then I will discuss the last two sections of the proposal: responsibilities and agreement and approval.

As I mentioned at the beginning of the last presentation, it would be helpful if you had the proposal form in front of you while I am reviewing each section. If you do not have a printed copy available or have not opened the document on screen, you may want to pause this presentation and gain access to the proposal form so that you can follow along. Please recall, the field placement proposal form is available as a Microsoft Word document on the Field Placement Forms webpage.



Part IV of the proposal form, the chart of competencies and learning objectives, is the section that students struggle with the most, so I will provide a lot of information in this presentation. First, we will discuss the organization of the chart, and then I will speak more in-depth about objectives: what SMART objectives are, how to write learning objectives, and the difference between learning objectives and project objectives. Finally, I will explain what should be included in the competencies and evidence sections.

Organization of Chart

- ☐ Columns

A. Competencies	B. Learning Objectives	C. Activities	D. Evidence
- ☐ Rows
 - ☐ As many as needed
 - ☐ Items linked
- ☐ Organizational tool
 - ☐ Logical
 - ☐ Works for your project
- ☐ Start with activities

The chart of competencies and learning objectives contains four columns and as many rows as are needed. The columns from left to right are competencies, learning objectives, activities, and evidence. Items that are in a row together should all be linked. That means, the activity you complete should help you fulfill the learning objective, which helps you achieve the specified competency.

The chart is an organizational tool, so you should make it logical. Most importantly, you should make it work for your project. You do not necessarily need to have one competency per learning objective per activity. You could have three activities, one learning objective, and two competencies listed in the same row. Alternatively, you could have two activities, two learning objectives, and one competency. Whatever works best for your project is okay.

When you are looking at this chart, do not try to complete it from left to right. Instead, you should start with activities and work your way back to learning objectives and competencies. You should also start with activities when developing learning objectives, so I will explain more about each column after providing some information about objectives.

SMART Objectives

- * **Specific**
 - * What – Who – Where – Which ?
- * **Meaningful / Measurable**
 - * Why – How ?
- * **Attainable**
 - * How ?
- * **Realistic**
 - * Really?
- * **Time-bound**
 - * When ?



Objectives should always be SMART: S-M-A-R-T. This acronym helps you remember the essential aspects of an objective. Objectives should be specific. Explain exactly what you plan to do. Be clear and unambiguous. When you are trying to be specific, consider four “w” questions: What do you want to achieve? Who will be involved? Where will it occur? Which barriers or restraints could you encounter?

Objectives should also be meaningful and measurable. Why is it important, and how will you know when it has been accomplished?

Objectives should be attainable. Is it feasible? How will you achieve this objective?

Objectives need to be realistic. Do you have the resources you need to attain the objective? Will you really be able to achieve it?

Finally, objectives should be time-bound. When you will start and end the objective?

Now that you know the different aspects of an objective, let us discuss how you will actually write your learning objectives.

Writing Learning Objectives

- * Activities

- * What will you do?

- * Resources Needed

- * What do you need to do your work?

- * Projected Outcomes

- * What will completing your activities cause/create?



As I have mentioned before, when you are writing your learning objectives, you should start with your activities. For this, you should answer the question: What will you do? Make a list of all of the activities you plan to complete during your field placement. Break it down into the steps of each process, and be specific.

Next, consider which resources you will need. What do you need in order to do your work? As I have mentioned before, consider not only what you will need from the organization but what you will provide on your own. Additionally, consider things other than physical objects. Access to data or information is often the resource our students spend the most time securing.

Once you have identified which resources you will need and what activities you will complete, project your outcomes. What will completing your activities cause or create? What will the results be?

Writing Learning Objectives (cont.)

- * Learning Objective
 - * What will you learn?
 - * Start with an action verb
 - * Levels of learning from Bloom's Taxonomy
 1. Knowledge
 2. Comprehension
 3. Application
 4. Analysis
 5. Synthesis
 6. Evaluation



In the final step, you should consider the activities you will accomplish, the resources you will need, and the outcomes of your effort to determine your learning objectives. Put the three categories together, and answer the question: What will you learn? By completing that activity, by utilizing that resource, by creating that outcome, what will you learn?

Objectives should start with an active verb, so I have provided a list of verbs in the instructions section of the proposal form. This list was adapted from Bloom's Taxonomy, and it is organized into six levels of learning. Moving from knowledge to comprehension and on to synthesis and evaluation indicates a higher level of understanding. That is, you demonstrate a better understanding of something if you analyze it than if you just apply it. Since you are enrolled in a graduate-level program and because the field placement is a culminating experience at the end of your MPH program, you should be demonstrating a high level of understanding. Therefore, many of your objectives should incorporate verbs from the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation levels.

As I said, the list is available in the proposal form instructions, but let me provide you with some examples now. Verbs indicating knowledge include define, identify, and list. Verbs indicating comprehension include describe, discuss, explain, and illustrate. Verbs indicating application include demonstrate, prepare, present, and utilize. Verbs indicating analysis include compare, determine, differentiate, and investigate. Verbs indicating synthesis include create, develop, integrate, and propose. Verbs indicating evaluation include assess, conclude, revise, and verify.

Learning vs. Project Objectives

Learning Objectives

- * What will you learn?
- * Benefits you
- * Ex - Demonstrate the appropriate use of statistical software

Project Objectives

- * What will the project achieve?
- * Benefits the project and organization
- * Ex - Select an appropriate statistical software package

Learning objectives are not project objectives, and sometimes students get confused between the two. While both types of objectives are important, the learning objectives are the ones you should list in the chart of competencies and objectives. If you would like to incorporate project objectives into your proposal, a good place would be the project description, part III.

Of course, that is not to say that a learning objective can never be a project objective or vice versa, and that is where a lot of the confusion comes in. Sometimes they can be the same, but not always. The difference is in the purpose. A learning objective answers the question, what will you learn? A project objective answers the question, what will the project achieve? Learning objectives benefit you, as the student completing a service learning project. Project objectives benefit the project and, therefore, the organization.

To provide you with an example, a learning objective might be to demonstrate the appropriate use of a particular statistical software package. While it benefits the project and organization for you to be able to utilize the statistical software appropriately, most of the benefit is to you in learning how to utilize the software. On the other hand, a project objective might be to select an appropriate statistical software package. While you may learn a lot in trying to figure out which package would be best, the project and organization benefit most from having the appropriate package.

Many of the objectives students develop qualify as both a learning objective and a project objective. For instance, if you are developing a proposal, creating a presentation, evaluating a program, or interpreting the results of data analysis, those would all be considered beneficial to both you and the project or organization, so they would be both a learning and a project objective.

Competencies

- ☐ Refer to list
 - ☒ MPH Program Competencies webpage
 - ☒ Competency Self Assessment
- ☐ Link to objectives and activities
- ☐ Write exactly the same
 - ☐ No editing
- ☐ Select >6 you'll enhance during FP



Thinking about the chart of competencies and learning objectives, you should now be able to fill in the columns for activities and learning objectives. Next you should select your competencies. Competencies are outcomes that are linked to workforce needs, and they are defined by employers or the profession. Activities are usually specific while learning objectives are broader and educationally focused. Competencies are the broadest of the three, and they are focused on practice.

Since the Master of Public Health is a practical degree, rather than an academic one, we focus on competencies throughout the program. Each of our courses is mapped to the program's competencies to ensure that we are helping you achieve skills and practice in each of these areas. However, the field placement is your opportunity to really enhance your competency in a few choice areas.

As you know, the MPH program's competencies are listed on the MPH Program Competencies webpage, which is located under the Current Students tab on the MPH website. Additionally, they are listed in the Competency Self Assessment you completed a few weeks ago. In that document, you identified competencies you wanted to enhance during your field placement. Now you should go back to that document and determine whether the activities you have planned will actually enhance the competencies you wanted to target.

Going back to the chart, you have already developed learning objectives for specific activities. Now you should link competencies to those objectives and activities by placing them in the same row. The competencies should be listed exactly as they appear on the webpage and in the Competency Self Assessment. You should not edit them in any way. That means you are not writing new competencies; you are just selecting from the list. You should identify at least six competencies that you will enhance by completing your activities and achieving your learning objectives.

Evidence

- * Physical objects
- * Proof
- * Often obvious
- * Examples
 - * Notes from meetings
 - * Products developed
 - * Results of research
- * Don't create anything specifically for evidence



The last column in the chart of competencies and objectives is evidence. This is one that students struggle with because they want to put their outcomes in this section. While an outcome might be evidence, that is not always the case. Evidence is a physical object that you could use to demonstrate you have completed your activities. If I asked you for proof that you completed an activity or achieved a learning objective, what products could you present? Often, these objects are obvious, and students are thinking too hard about it. For instance, if you attended meetings, you could provide notes from the meetings as evidence. If you are developing a report, you could present that report as evidence. If you are researching literature, then the results of your literature review could be used as evidence.

You should not be creating anything just to have evidence of your activities. Please do not think that you need to generate extra reports or papers to submit as evidence. You also do not need to have anyone sign something, saying that you have attended a meeting. You are a graduate level student, and we are trusting that you are doing what you say you are doing. You will probably never be asked to provide evidence of your activities. However, if there is a situation, then this evidence would be very useful. For instance, if you state that you are working and generating products, but your site preceptor states you have not been doing anything, then we could use the evidence to demonstrate your activities.



To finish the instructions regarding the proposal form, I will explain the last two sections: Responsibilities and Agreement and Approval.

Responsibilities & Agreement/Approval

- * V. Responsibilities
 - * Read / review
- * VI. Agreement & Approval
 - * Don't fill out
 - * You agree
 - * Site Preceptor & Faculty Advisor agree & approve



In part V of the proposal form, you should review your responsibilities and ensure you are able to and will fulfill all of them. For part VI, you should not fill anything out. I will fill out this section for everyone. However, you should review the paragraph and understand what you are agreeing to. By submitting your proposal to your faculty advisor, site preceptor, and me, you are agreeing to the responsibilities in part V. Once your faculty advisor and site preceptor are satisfied with your proposal, they will email me their approval. I do not ask for their signatures because it is cumbersome to fax a document around for everyone to sign. Instead I accept an email from them, stating that they approve of the document as it is written.



Questions?

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I have tried to provide all of the pertinent information I could think of in these presentations about proposal development, but I am sure other things will come up. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. I am happy to speak with you about your specific project and provide advice and recommendations, so do not hesitate to contact me. I am looking forward to reading your proposals!