



Developing a Project

18279 MPH Field Placement Preparation



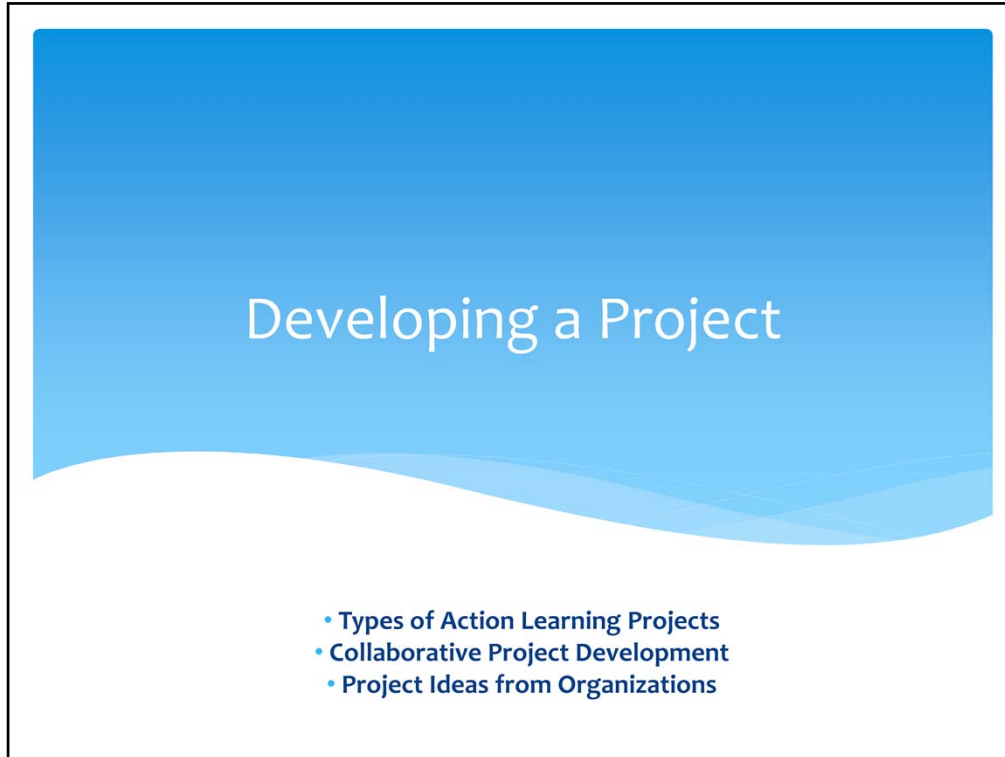
This presentation will focus on the initial stages of developing a project with an organization that supports public health.

Overview of Presentation

- * Developing a Project
 - * Types of projects
 - * Collaborative development
 - * Project ideas from orgs
- * Previous Students' Projects
 - * General info & examples
- * Next Steps
 - * Assignment
 - * Follow up with preceptor & advisor
 - * Initial meeting of FP team



In describing how to develop a project, I will offer advice regarding appropriate projects and discuss how to collaboratively develop a project. I will also provide general information regarding previous students' projects as well as a few examples. Additionally, I will explain the next steps that will occur in the field placement planning process, including your next assignment and the first meeting of your field placement team.



During your in-depth meeting with the potential field placement site, you should start considering what types of projects are available at the organization. In this section, I will first provide you with some general information about the types of action learning projects that are appropriate, and I will discuss how to collaboratively develop a project with an organization. Additionally, I will highlight where you can find information about project ideas developed by organizations.

Types of Action Learning Projects

- * Program Design/Implementation
- * Program Evaluation
- * Community Assessment
- * Community Health Planning
- * Public Health Policy
- * Grant Proposal
- * Applied Research



During your field placement, the project you will complete is considered an action learning project, so you will hear me utilize that term fairly often.

Just as there are many different organizations you can work with, there are also many different types of projects you can work on.

- You could develop and/or implement a program, such as a health promotion project or community intervention.
- You could conduct an evaluation of an organization's program to determine effectiveness and outcomes.
- You could assist in conducting a community health needs assessment or developing a community health improvement plan.
- You could also research and analyze a public policy or develop an advocacy statement related to a public health issue.
- Other ideas include contributing to the research, drafting, and submission of a funding proposal or conducting research on a topic the organization is interested in. However, you should be very careful when considering research because it might be considered human subject research, which would require a formal IRB review process.

Collaborative Project Development

- * Ask the organization
 - * What projects are you working on?
 - * Which projects need help?
- * Considerations
 - * Feasibility
 - * Time commitment
 - * Depth (not breadth)
 - * Your interests
 - * Impact



When you are discussing project ideas with a potential site, keep in mind that this is a collaborative project. The site has to identify the project as a need, and you need to be interested in the project. You can start the conversation by just asking what projects the organization is working on and which projects they could use assistance with. Many organizations that support public health are short-staffed, so they have many projects that could use assistance. Some projects have already been started and could just use a helping hand while others have been waiting a while for someone to have the time to implement them.

In my meetings with organizations, I have found they usually have a list of projects that students could work on, so it is not a problem to find an interesting project. The problem is to not be sucked in too fast or too far. So many of these organizations have so much need that you want to help in any and every way you can. While you are certainly able to volunteer extra time, you need to be very careful in planning your field placement project. Make sure it is reasonable and feasible. Consider the time you can commit to the project and remember that activities often take longer than you think they will. Having a focused project will make completing the field placement easier, and you will create a more meaningful product because you will be able to delve deeper. Depth is much more important than breadth because depth is what allows you to demonstrate graduate level work. If your project is too broad, you will not be able to focus enough on any one section to really demonstrate your skills.

Also, do not forget to consider what you are really interested in. While the site might identify the project, you have to be interested in it for it to be worthwhile. Additionally, consider the project's impact on all levels: personally, professionally, organizationally, and community-wide. Will this project fulfill your field placement goals? Will it help you achieve the experience and competency you want? How will the project benefit the organization? They identified the project as a need, but how much impact will it make? And how will that impact resonate through the community? These are all of the questions you should consider.

Project Ideas from Organizations

- * Projects identified by organizations
- * Submitted to MPH program
- * Available on Field Placement Project Ideas webpage
 - * Project description & responsibilities
 - * Required knowledge & skills
 - * Contact person



Some organizations that are interested in working with our MPH students have already identified projects on which they would like assistance. They have submitted these project ideas to the MPH program, and they are now posted on the field placement webpage entitled Project Ideas. Although most of the organizations are located in southeastern Wisconsin, some are located in other areas of Wisconsin and even in other states. The postings usually include a description of the proposed project, a list of the responsibilities the project would entail, a list of the knowledge and skills a candidate would need, and contact information for a person at the organization. If you are interested in learning more about one of the projects, please contact the person listed using the information provided.

As I mentioned in the last presentation, these projects clearly meet the requirement of being identified by the site as a need. However, it is also very important that you be interested in the project. Some students may see this website as an easy fix. They might think, *the organization has already developed the project, so I will not have to do as much work*. However, this description is merely a project idea. You, as the student, will still need to contact the organization and coordinate with them to develop the actual project, and you will still need to create a proposal. This website just provides a convenient listing of the projects on which organizations could utilize assistance.

Previous Students' Projects

- Overview
- Examples
 - Colorado Health Department
 - Milwaukee Mobile Market

In this section, I will provide some general information about the projects on which previous students have worked as well as details regarding two examples.

Previous Students' Projects

- * Examples of Previous Students' Projects
- * Evaluate health interventions
- * Analyze work-related injuries
- * Assess emergency response needs
- * Create quality assurance program
- * Evaluate/implement health program
- * Educate the community



Previous students have completed action learning projects in a number of different areas. Samples are provided on the Field Placement Previous Projects webpage, which is linked on this slide. I will also describe a few of the featured presentations right now, and in the next few slides I will describe in further detail two projects whose presentations are not provided on the Previous Projects webpage.

- One student surveyed pharmacies in Erie County, New York, about issues related to New York's Expanded Syringe Access Program (or ESAP). This program permits pharmacies and health care providers to sell up to 10 syringes per transaction without a prescription. ESAP was developed to decrease transmission of blood-borne disease, particularly among injection drug users, and the health department wanted to determine pharmacists' practices and opinions regarding the program. You can visit the Field Placement Previous Projects webpage to view the student's PowerPoint presentation, which includes results of the survey.

- Another student created a quality assurance program for a safe haven in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The organization wanted to be able to provide data for grant requirements on a continual basis and assess their program for improvement and further grant seeking. The student created a continuous quality improvement plan as well as specific quality forms for the organization's programs, including their peer support group program, which meet federal funding agency requirements.

- Another student analyzed work-related injuries at a health care organization and conducted a cost-benefit analysis regarding the purchase of lift equipment across the system. The student considered employee safety, patient safety, government mandates,

and the cost of employees' injuries in determining his recommendation, which the organization was seeking. View his PowerPoint presentation on the Field Placement Previous Projects webpage to see the analysis.

[Link](#)

Previous Students' Field Placement Projects:

<http://www.mcw.edu/mphprogram/CulminatingExperiences/FieldPlacement/Siteandprojectideas.htm>

Giardia – Colorado Health Dept

- * Problem
 - * Increase in giardia cases
 - * 5-year median = 131
 - * 2010 = 219
- * Project
 - * Determine cause & need for intervention
 - * Identify refugee populations & agencies
 - * Interview agency personnel
 - * Analyze aggregate data
 - * Research diseases



One student, whose presentation is not posted on the Field Placement Previous Projects webpage, worked with a county health department in Colorado to determine the cause of a sudden increase in giardia cases and whether the health department needed to intervene further. The previous 5-year median of giardia cases was 131; however, in 2010, 219 cases were reported, and most of the cases were among refugees entering the health department's county.

To accomplish her project, the student identified area refugee populations and the agencies serving those populations. She also interviewed case management agency personnel to learn more about their procedures, including how they interact with refugees. Furthermore, she analyzed aggregate data previously collected by the health department and researched communicable diseases endemic to the major refugee populations' countries of origin.

Giardia – Colorado HD (cont.)

- * Results

- * Increase in refugees & giardia
- * New case definition
 - * Asymptomatic = suspected

- * Recommendation

- * Current follow-up unnecessary

- * Impact

- * Staff workload reduction

	2006	2010
Refugees	311	1,092
Giardia Cases	118	219



The student found that the county's refugee population had grown from 311 in 2006 to 1,092 in 2010, and the number of giardia cases increased during that timeframe, too, from 118 in 2006 to 219 in 2010. However, most of the cases of giardia in refugees were asymptomatic, and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment recently changed the case definition of giardia. Since the change, only symptomatic cases are considered confirmed; asymptomatic cases are classified as suspected.

Based on this information, the student determined that the increase in giardia cases did not warrant increased involvement of the health department. Furthermore, because of the follow-up provided by other organizations and the revised case definition, the follow-up the health department was currently providing – on what are now considered to be suspected cases – is no longer needed. She presented these findings to the leadership of the health department at a very opportune time because the health department's staff had recently been reduced. Not only could this student's project have assisted in a staff workload reduction, it also could have helped change the health department's policies.

Nutrition Education at Mobile Markets

- * Problem
 - * Food deserts & lack of knowledge re: healthy eating
- * Project
 - * Develop nutrition education at Mobile Markets
 - * Formal IRB review process required
 - * Analyze previous collected survey data
 - * Attitudes, beliefs & behaviors regarding eating
 - * Food security & purchasing behaviors
 - * Interest in nutrition education



Another student worked with the Center for Urban Population Health in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to help develop community engaged nutrition education at Mobile Market sites. SHARE Wisconsin's Mobile Markets are hosted by community-based organizations and work to bring healthy, affordable foods into neighborhoods that are underserved by traditional grocery stores. Nutrition education project partners incorporate a number of organizations, including the Center for Urban Population Health, SHARE Wisconsin, the City of Milwaukee Health Department, the UW-Extension Nutrition Education Program, UW-Milwaukee, and the Medical College.

The Center for Urban Population Health previously administered surveys to Mobile Markets customers to collect various information, and the student analyzed this data as one part of her field placement. Because conducting surveys involves interaction with human subjects, the Center went through a formal IRB review process through UW-Madison before administering any surveys. When the student submitted her proposal incorporating this information, the MPH program's IRB consultants had to communicate with the IRB at UW-Madison about the review process before the student could begin working on the project.

The surveys the Center administered collected limited general demographic data as well as information regarding attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors around eating (with a strong focus on fruits and vegetables); food security and purchasing behaviors; and interest in nutrition education.

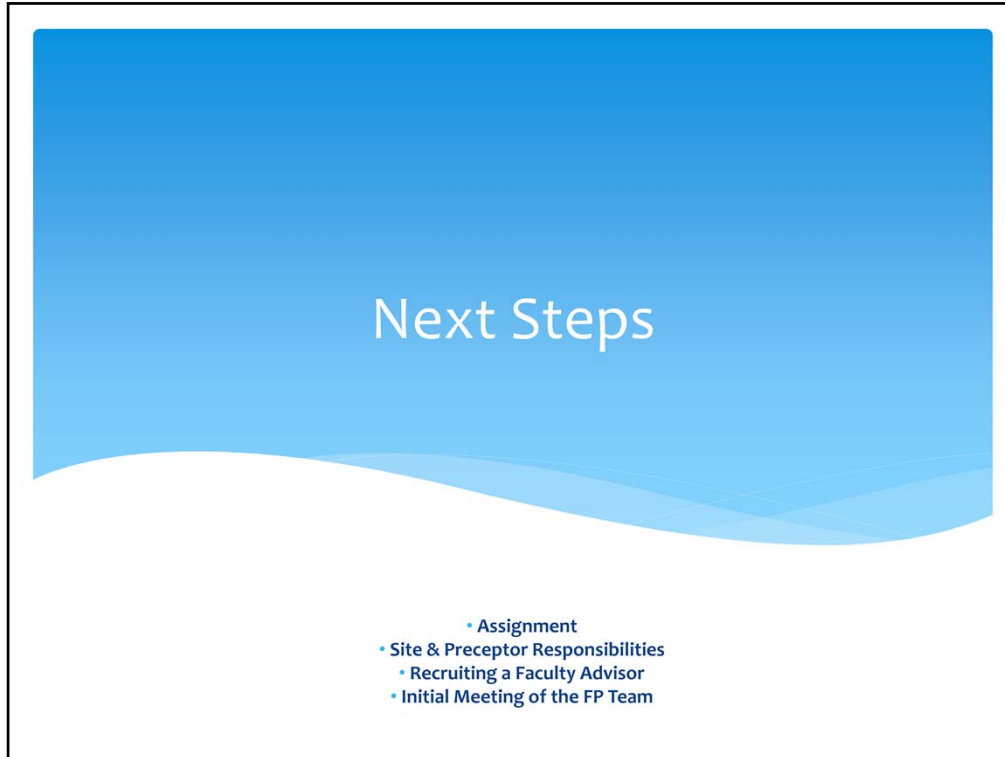
Nutrition Education at MM (cont.)

- * Results
 - * General Info
 - * 262 surveys (240 complete)
 - * 54% live in low SES zip code
 - * Knowledge, Attitudes & Activities
 - * 69% physically active
 - * 98% eat cooked vegetables
 - * 83% know how to prepare fruits - 88% vegetables
 - * Food Security
 - * 40% concerned about enough food
 - * 50% limited choices because of money



262 surveys were administered, and 240 of those were completed. Among much other data, findings include: 54% of respondents live in a zip code identified by the Milwaukee Health Report as low socio-economic status. Regarding their knowledge, attitudes, and activities, 69% reported participating in physical activities or exercises outside of their work during the past month, and 98% reported eating cooked vegetables. 83% said they know a lot about preparing fruits, and 88% said they know a lot about preparing vegetables. With regard to food security, 40% reported concern regarding having enough food, and 50% stated they have limited choices because of money.

The Center for Urban Population Health, and the other program partners, will utilize this baseline information, along with various other resources, to develop evidence-based, culturally appropriate, community engaged nutrition education at the Mobile Markets. Although this student was not able to actually develop the educational materials, she completed a valuable foundational step that others will use to move the project forward. In fact, another MPH student from our program conducted her field placement with the Mobile Markets program the semester after this student finished, and the second student completed the next steps in the process, further leading to the achievement of the program's goal: to promote consumption of nutritious food and knowledge of healthy food preparation methods and food selection.



After developing a project idea with the organization you would like to work with, a number of activities will take place. In this section, I will explain your next assignment as well as the next steps in the planning process.

Assignment

Paragraph description of your project

Contact info for site & preceptor

Site	Preceptor
Name	Name & credentials
Mailing address	Job title
Website	Email address
Phone number	Phone number



Once you have decided which organization you would like to work with and developed a general project idea with them, you should submit a paragraph description of your proposed project as well as contact information for your potential site and preceptor. (Even if I was involved in your meeting with the site, you should still submit this information.) If I have not yet done so by this point in time, I will provide you with feedback on your proposed project to make sure it is reasonable and feasible and does not involve human subject research. Additionally, I will use the paragraph description of your project to recruit a faculty advisor for you.

When you submit the contact information, please be thorough. For the site, please include the organization's name, mailing address, website and phone number. For the site preceptor, please include the individual's name, credentials, job title, email address, and phone number. As I have mentioned a few times before, I will contact your site preceptor to orient him or her to the role and start the time-consuming preliminary paperwork, which I will provide more details about in the next slide.

There is a deadline for submitting the paragraph description and preceptor contact info, but please feel free to turn it in earlier if you already have plans in place.

Site & Preceptor Responsibilities

- * Submit field placement [site application](#)
 - * 1 page form
 - * Available on [Field Placement Forms webpage](#)
 - * Includes resume/CV
- * Sign [affiliation agreement](#)
 - * Legal agreement
 - * May be edited (with approval)
 - * Time-consuming



As mentioned in the last presentation, there are a number of responsibilities the site and preceptor must fulfill before you will be eligible to begin working on your project. Remember, you are not responsible for ensuring your preceptor completes these activities; however, you may not start your project until they have been fulfilled. I will coordinate with your site preceptor to make sure they understand their role and responsibilities, including completing a site application and affiliation agreement.

The site application is a one page form that does not take long to fill out. It incorporates general information about the site and confirms that the organization is interested in working with our student on a project. The document is available on the Field Placement Forms webpage under the second section, which is for site preceptors. To complete the application, the site preceptor must submit their resume or CV in addition to the form. (In case you are wondering, we utilize the resume or CV as written documentation that your site preceptor has the experience necessary to fulfill the role.)

The other document that must be completed during the planning stages of your field placement is the affiliation agreement, which is a legal document that the organization must execute, meaning sign, with the Medical College. The agreement is required because you will be working at the site but earning credit from us. I will work with your site preceptor, or another representative at the site, to execute this agreement, so there is nothing you specifically need to do for it. However, you are not allowed to start working

with the organization on your project until it has been fully executed, meaning it has been signed by all parties.

The Medical College can be flexible with the language and content of the affiliation agreement, so we can usually work things out. However, there have been cases in which we could not write an agreement that would meet everyone's needs. For instance, the litigious nature of New York State makes it extremely difficult for health departments there to sign our agreement. In some instances, we could not meet their legal requirements, so students had to find other organizations to work with. (A few health departments in New York were able to get exceptions to their legal requirements, but it was a time-consuming process, which leads me to my next point.)

Even if we can execute the agreement, it often takes a long time. Larger organizations tend to take longer than smaller ones because of the different levels the agreement has to pass through. If four people have to look at it and it sits on everyone's desk for a week, then a month has already passed. Additionally, edits can be time-consuming, and sometimes we go through as many as seven drafts. If there are changes that need to be made, they are usually developed by the site and then they have to be approved by the Medical College's legal department. As you can see, it is important for you to provide me with your site preceptor's contact information as soon as possible. I need to start working with him or her right away to make sure we have enough time to get the legal agreement squared away.

Recruiting a Faculty Advisor

- * Recruited by program director & me
 - * MCW faculty member
 - * Hopefully has expertise in project area
 - * May take some time
- * Contact faculty advisor
 - * Introduce yourself
 - * Describe proposed project



As I mentioned a few slides previously, I will utilize the paragraph description of the proposed project you submit to recruit a faculty advisor. Remember, the faculty advisor is a Medical College faculty member who will advise and evaluate your field placement. If you know of a faculty member with whom you would like to work, please let me know. That person may have other responsibilities and not be able to fulfill the role during your specific timeframe, but it is always good to ask. If you do not name someone, the program director and I will try to identify a faculty member who has expertise in the area of your project (although the College does not have faculty members who are knowledgeable in every subject). Some of the faculty members will know about the MPH program because they teach courses or have advised MPH students previously; however, others may not have been involved with the MPH program previously, so this might be their first experience with us. Sometimes it takes a few days or weeks for a faculty member to have all of his or her questions answered in order to make a decision regarding whether he or she would like to advise you, so this process can take some time. That is another reason why it is important for you to share your project idea with me as soon as possible.

Once a faculty member has agreed to act as your advisor, I will provide you with his or her contact information. You should call or email the faculty member to introduce yourself and provide information about your proposed project. When you introduce yourself, make sure to highlight not only your background but also your goals for the field placement, your MPH, and your career. You will work closely with your advisor on your field placement, and possibly your capstone project, too. You will get to know this person fairly well, and he or she will be able to provide you with valuable advice not only about your specific project but also about building your career.

Initial Meeting of FP Team

- * Team members
 - * Faculty advisor
 - * Site preceptor
- * Prefer
 - * In-person meeting
 - * Phone conference
- * If meeting impossible
 - * Introductory email



Once your faculty advisor and site preceptor have agreed to work with you, we will try to schedule an initial meeting of the entire field placement team. Remember, the team is made up of your faculty advisor, site preceptor, you (as the student), and me (as the coordinator). It is best if we can schedule an in-person meeting or phone conference so that everyone can speak to one another. Then we can introduce ourselves and discuss the project plan in real time. If that is not feasible, I will send an introductory email to the team members. This will help everyone identify the other team members and their roles, and we can discuss the project plan over email.



Questions?

Contact: Kim Contardi
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As always, if you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing about your potential projects.