

## CHAMBERLAIN UNIVERSITY

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# Master of Public Health (MPH) Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) & Applied Practice Experience (APE) Handbook

## OUR MISSION

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To educate public health students as leaders and change agents who advance scholarship, service and practice in promoting healthy, sustainable communities – locally, internationally and globally

## INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

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The information in this handbook will help you plan for an optimal integrative learning experience (ILE) and applied practice experience (APE). Read all information carefully and follow the guidelines provided.

During the last semester of the MPH degree program, you will complete two courses which satisfy the experiential learning requirements of the curriculum. The courses include MPH-610: Integrative Learning Experience and Applied Practice Experience I (ILE-APE 1) and MPH-620: Integrative Learning Experience and Applied Practice Experience II (ILE-APE 2). Direct all questions about the APE to the APE manager at [mphfieldsupport@chamberlain.edu](mailto:mphfieldsupport@chamberlain.edu).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our Mission.....	1
Introduction & Overview.....	1
Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) Master of Public Health (MPH) Foundational Competencies .....	4
Chamberlain University Master of Public Health (MPH) Degree Program Concentration Competencies.....	5
MPH Applied Practice Experience (APE).....	6
MPH Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) High-Quality Written Product & Presentation.....	9
Professional ePortfolio .....	9
Roles & Responsibilities.....	10
The MPH Applied Practice Experience Toolkit.....	12



**CHAMBERLAIN**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
*COLLEGE of HEALTH*  
**PROFESSIONS**



**All MPH didactic core coursework must be complete before enrolling in the ILE-APE courses. This includes all the following MPH core courses:**

- MPH-598: MPH Student Success & Self-Care
- MPH-500: Introduction to Public Health Systems, Organizations & Practice\*
- MPH-501: Quantitative Methods for Public Health Application\*\*
- MPH-502: Principles of Epidemiology\*\*
- MPH-503: Advocacy in Public Health Policy & Law
- MPH-504: Cultural Competency & Global Public Health
- MPH-505: Public Health Communication & Behavioral Health Theories
- MPH-506: Environmental Health in Public Health
- MPH-507: Public Health Program Planning & Evaluation
- MPH-508: Leadership & Administration in Public Health
- MPH-509: Community-Based Participatory Research
- MPH-515: Epidemiology & Biostatistics for Public Health Application I
- MPH-516: Epidemiology & Biostatistics for Public Health Application II

\* Provisionally accepted MPH students must complete the 1-credit hour MPH-599: Professional Writing course to meet graduation requirements and will need to be passed before entering MPH-500.

\*\* For Students enrolled prior to May 2021.

**Additionally, before enrollment in these courses, you are required to apply for approval, identifying the organization and community preceptor where you will complete the fieldwork requirements for the applied practice experience components of these two courses.**

- The applied practice experience (APE) offers you an opportunity to apply newly developed skills and relate theoretical content to public health practice, requiring 144 hours of community fieldwork (72 hours per course).
- Applications are submitted through the [My Chamberlain](#) portal experience a minimum of 120 days (at least two sessions or 4 months) prior to registration for MPH-610 and MPH-620.
- You may be able to complete your projects and applied practice experience course requirements at your place of employment, if your place of employment is a public health practice setting and permits you to do so. This may or may not include regular duties of your assigned position, dependent upon the outcomes you select for the Applied Practice Experience. You may not use a direct supervisor to serve as your community preceptor.

### MPH-610: INTEGRATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE & APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE I (ILE-APE 1)

In this course, you begin an applied practice experience (APE) in public health, designed to broaden perspectives and support the integration of knowledge gained throughout the MPH curriculum. In collaboration with a community preceptor, the APE helps you apply public health competencies, gain valuable work experience and cultivate professionalism. You will complete a total of 72 contact hours during MPH-610. Through case studies and research methodology, this course will allow you to demonstrate application, integration and synthesis of foundational and concentration public health competencies. You begin a scholarly project involving critical analysis of a public health problem using a population-based approach. You will also begin development of a high-quality written product and two practice-based public health deliverables (to meet the needs of the APE site) that evidence public health knowledge, skills and integrative abilities. This 6-credit course includes 3.0 credit hours of theory and 3.0 credit hours of fieldwork.

### MPH-620: INTEGRATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE & APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE II (ILE-APE 2)

In this course, you continue an applied practice experience (APE) in public health, designed to broaden perspectives and support the integration of knowledge gained throughout the MPH curriculum. You will complete a total of 72 contact hours during MPH-620. Through additional case studies and research methodology, you continue to demonstrate application, integration and synthesis of foundational and concentration public health competencies. You conclude the scholarly project culminating with the development of a high-quality written product and two practice-based public health deliverables (to meet the needs of the APE site) that evidence public health knowledge, skills and integrative abilities. You will also present the high-quality written product and submit all course deliverables via your ePortfolio. This 6-credit course includes 3.0 credit hours of theory and 3.0 credit hours of fieldwork.







## COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH (CEPH) MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH) FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

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The Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH) published accreditation criteria for public health programs (November 2016). As a result, the following MPH competencies are incorporated into the Chamberlain MPH degree program curriculum and should be reviewed during your ILE-APE courses.

### Evidence-Based Approaches to Public Health

- **C1:** Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
- **C2:** Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
- **C3:** Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
- **C4:** Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice

### Public Health & Healthcare Systems

- **C5:** Compare the organization, structure and function of healthcare, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
- **C6:** 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

- **C7:** Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health
- **C8:** Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs
- **C9:** Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention
- **C10:** Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management
- **C11:** Select methods to evaluate public health programs

### Policy in Public Health

- **C12:** Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
- **C13:** Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes

- **C14:** Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
- **C15:** Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity

**Leadership**

- **C16:** Apply principles of leadership, governance and management which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision-making
- **C17:** Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges

**Communication**

- **C18:** Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
- **C19:** Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
- **C20:** Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content

**Interprofessional Practice**

- **C21:** Perform effectively on interprofessional teams

**Systems Thinking**

- **C22:** Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

**CHAMBERLAIN UNIVERSITY MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH) DEGREE PROGRAM CONCENTRATION COMPETENCIES**

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1. Apply health behavior theories to assess a public health issue.
2. Apply a community-based participatory research technique to assess community needs.
3. Practice self-reflection to evaluate beliefs, values, feelings or assumptions to identify and solve global public health problems.
4. Develop an action plan to address environmental health challenges.
5. Develop a public health business plan using social marketing and target analysis skills.

(Revised January 2021)







## MPH APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE (APE)

APE is individually driven by you. What does this mean? Managing your own site selection often provides a much richer and more satisfying experience in the field. It means you research organizations and sites that serve vulnerable populations within your community, whereby you can work with and support the organization in addressing needs with an identified population. This is about working with communities and group populations, not 1:1 patient care.

### The Applied Practice Experience (APE) is:

- An essential part of public health training.
- Designed to give you the opportunity to apply skill sets in a real-world setting.
- A way to build practical skills you will need for career success.
- An opportunity for mentoring by a professional community preceptor from a host organization.

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH; [ceph.org](http://ceph.org)) accreditation requirements state that “activities meeting the Applied Practice Experience (APE) [practica or internships] should be mutually beneficial to both the site and student.”

### The purpose of the applied practice is:

*To allow students to apply coursework content to projects and assignments in practice-based settings.*

Examples of APE may include:

- **Program Design and Implementation** – Work to develop and implement an agency program in areas such as health promotion or community intervention
- **Program Evaluation** – Conduct an evaluation of an agency program to determine effectiveness and outcomes
- **Community Assessment** – Assist in conducting a community health needs assessment
- **Community Health Planning** – Assist in various aspects of developing a community health improvement plan
- **Grant Proposals** – Contribute to the research, drafting and submission of a funding proposal
- **Public Health Policy** – Research and analyze public policy or develop an advocacy statement related to a public health issue
- **Applied Research** – Conduct research on a topic of mutual interest with the fieldwork site
- **Surveillance and Investigation** – Conduct surveillance and investigation of reportable diseases and other public health issues
- **Public Health Administration** – Conduct administrative reviews such as financial, policy changes, hospital administration, etc.

Examples of suitable work products include project plans, grant proposals, training manuals or lesson plans, surveys, memos, videos, podcasts, presentations, spreadsheets, websites, photos (with accompanying explanatory text) or other digital artifacts of learning. Reflection papers, contact hour logs, scholarly papers prepared to allow faculty to assess the experience, poster presentations and other documents required for academic purposes may not be counted toward the minimum of two work products.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR THE APE APPLICATION

**To prepare your APE application, you will need the following information:**

- Name of Site/Organization, website if applicable
- Site Contact Name, Phone, Email (person on site who can accept/sign partnership agreement)
- Community Preceptor Name, Phone, Email, Resume/Curriculum Vitae (may be different from site contact)
- MPH Project Proposal Form

The purpose of the **MPH Project Proposal Form** is to provide a brief description of tentative applied practice experience projects which will remain with the agency for use with the community population. This Proposal Form serves the Program to determine appropriateness of the selected site for approval. Discuss this form with the site contact and ask for any information to assist in completing this form, as this will aid in the approval of your site.

**Draft a brief proposal describing anticipated activities that you will participate in while in the field setting, which address the following:**

1. Brief description of agency, including website (if applicable).
2. Brief description of population(s) served by APE agency/site, specifying the targeted population you plan to support.
3. Brief description of at least two tentative projects (based on the needs of the organization).
4. Brief description on the significance of the projects to the agency/organization.

**Identify projects that**

- Align with selected Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) Foundational Competencies and the MPH Program Concentration Competencies.
- Are population-based.
- Are related to your public health interests (i.e., epidemiology and biostatistics, health services management and policy, nutrition, health education/communication or environmental health).
- Are conceptualized to demonstrate a blend of theory and practice, knowledge and skills in public health practice.
- Have a beginning, middle and end so you can complete and develop at least two products over the course of the semester (two course sessions).

- Have significance to the agency, organization or project in which it is based.
- Use data and research but is not primary research, to drive development of the project.

## IDENTIFYING AN APE LOCATION/COMMUNITY PRECEPTOR

Public health is everywhere! There are a wide range of organizations and agencies that can provide appropriate public health learning experiences for students. Some organizations will help identify a community preceptor already working within the agency to oversee and support your fieldwork requirements. Having one site and community preceptor is highly encouraged for both MPH-610 and MPH-620. This promotes continuity of learning and the development of a professional and collegial relationship with the organization and preceptor.

Applied practice experiences may involve governmental, non-governmental, non-profit, industrial, and for-profit settings or appropriate university-affiliated settings. To be appropriate for applied practice experience activities, university-affiliated settings must be primarily focused on community engagement, typically with external partners. University health promotion or wellness centers may also be appropriate.

**Examples of appropriate organizations include (but are not limited to):**

- Community-based organizations
  - Check with your local community center or City Hall – many times there are departments within the local government offices that serve the public health community
- Local or state health departments
- Managed care organizations
- Consulting companies
- Industrial settings
- Hospitals
- Schools
- Federal agencies

The site must be an organization consistent with the focus on vulnerable populations and communities (e.g., a public health agency); non-profit organization that focuses on a particular population (e.g., American Cancer Society); federal agency that provide care/policy making for the federal population (e.g., CDC – Center for Disease Control, WHO – World Health Organization, etc.); or a community outreach program (e.g., Drug Recovery Center, Rehabilitation Clinic, etc.).

If you need a springboard to start your search, we suggest using the search engine, [Find Help](#).

All programs on the Find Help search engine are direct social services which are provided at free and reduced cost to the community which is searched. Not all programs that come through the search will be appropriate for the MPH Applied Practice Experience. However, this gives you a starting point if you don't know where to begin. Additionally, you may schedule a consultation with the Applied Practice Experience manager.

Once you have an idea about possible topic areas, public health issues or APE sites, it is a good idea to contact several potential preceptors to discuss the possibility of a placement. A link to the application form can be found on the My Chamberlain portal at [community.chamberlain.edu](http://community.chamberlain.edu).

## APE SITE COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

A site may have various requirements for you. It is your responsibility to ensure all site compliance measures are understood and completed prior to registering for MPH-610. This may include but is not limited to HIPAA training or other training, background screening, physical examination, drug screening, proof of health insurance and current immunizations, just to name a few measures. The experiential learning specialist will help you identify any compliance measures to be met.

## COMMUNITY PRECEPTOR QUALIFICATIONS

The MPH preceptor is an important member of your applied practice learning experience in the field and one who provides guidance throughout the applied practice. When contacting sites and potential preceptors, keep in mind that the situation is like pursuing a job; you should address the site contact or preceptor formally, provide a brief resume' with your inquiry communication and describe your interests in a concise statement.

Ideally, community preceptors should be master's degree level public health professionals or other healthcare professionals with public health expertise in the area you will conduct your fieldwork. Individuals with relevant expertise in public health policy, ethics, leadership, health informatics, women and children health or other appropriate public health foci will be considered. You should carefully select a community preceptor who has knowledge and experience in your area of interest, with at least two years of experience in their current role.

The preceptor does not necessarily need to be employed by the APE site. However, if the preceptor is not employed at the site, you will need to have a contact on-site who supports your projects and can help regarding knowledge of the organization and key stakeholders.

Depending on your learning needs, more than one preceptor may be used for a site. The use of multiple preceptors must be approved by and communicated to the faculty and applied practice experience manager. You must provide a Curriculum Vitae (CV) for each preceptor. If the preceptor, mentor and/or field instructor you are submitting for Chamberlain University's review and approval was found using a student-arranged third-party preceptor matching service, please be advised that Chamberlain University will not reimburse any fees you may have incurred.

## CHAMBERLAIN UNIVERSITY MPH PRECEPTOR MANUAL

Preceptors will receive an electronic copy of the [Chamberlain University MPH Preceptor Manual](#) through DocuSign via email one week prior to the start of the ILE-APE 1 course and again at the start of ILE-APE 2 course.

## MPH APE STUDENT LEARNING AGREEMENT

Specific objectives and responsibilities are outlined in the [Student Learning Agreement \(SLA\)](#) with input from the organization, community preceptor and the MPH course faculty. The SLA will be prepared and submitted during the first three weeks of the MPH-610 course and reaffirmed at the start of MPH-620, within the course learning management system.

## MPH APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE HOURS LOG

You may not begin accruing field hours prior to enrollment in ILE-APE 1. The APE projects may entail working individually or with an interdisciplinary agency team on a public health problem or initiative.

**You will log APE hours using a designated logging tool within the courses.**

- Hours may be arranged in conjunction with the APE site, the community preceptor and faculty instructor.
- Chamberlain allows flexibility in scheduling these hours. The requirement may be met with full days, partial days or consecutive days as agreed upon with the community preceptor and site.
- Reflections of activities should include progress achieved during the experience and any insights regarding your public health engagement and impact, as well as noting alignment to your selected competencies.
- The APE Hours Log will be submitted regularly, as designated in the Syllabus, during each course.
- A final complete APE Hours Log will be a required component of the ePortfolio for MPH-620.



**Hours may include (but are not limited to)**

- Direct (in person or remote) contact with the community preceptor
- Assigned tasks by the agency
- Time spent designing and developing your products
- Professional meetings
- Conferences aligned with your selected competencies
- Other activities approved by faculty and community preceptor

## **MPH INTEGRATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE (ILE) HIGH-QUALITY WRITTEN PRODUCT & PRESENTATION**

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The Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) high-quality written product and poster presentation provides you the opportunity to demonstrate and to share with peers a beginning expertise and knowledge of your generalist public health practice. The process serves as excellent preparation for future professional presentations, since podium and poster presentations are valued aspects of professional association and lifelong learning.

**The following criteria apply:**

- You are responsible for coordination of any participation and expenses required for the ILE presentation.
- You are expected to participate in all the ILE presentation sessions for the course(s) in which you are enrolled.
- You should respond to all questions from peers/colleagues regarding your ILE presentation.

The ILE presentation represents your high-quality written product as required by CEPH accreditors. The ILE high-quality written product is a graded assignment.

## **PROFESSIONAL EPORTFOLIO**

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A final ePortfolio, submitted at the conclusion of MPH-620, will be assessed against the degree program outcomes and competencies. The guidelines for the ePortfolio will be available in MPH-620, which will outline required components. Detailed information will be provided with resources available to guide development of the ePortfolio. You must include evidence of at least two products created with the APE organization/site, as well as the APE Hours Log. The ILE high-quality written product must also be included in the ePortfolio. There will also be artifacts of evidence to present in the ePortfolio from the core curriculum.





## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

A successful ILE-APE experience requires collaboration among students, course faculty, community preceptors and experiential learning specialists. Students, faculty and preceptors must assure that APE hours are not misappropriated or falsely represented during the experience. Additionally, students, faculty and preceptors must refrain from unlawful discrimination based on gender, age, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief or disability. Projects and APE hours are intended to facilitate learning and focus on achievement of learning objectives.

### STUDENT

- Submits an APE Application at least 120 days prior to the start of the first ILE-APE course or prior to a change in the preceptor or site.
  - **Applications which are submitted within 30 days of a requested APE session will be deferred allowing adequate time for processing.** Late applications can delay progression in the program and degree completion.
  - Obtains and submits required documents for preceptor(s).
  - Assists with completion of required agreements with the site.
  - Complies with all site requirements, which may include but are not limited to: proof of liability insurance, HIPAA training or other training requirements, background screening, physical examination, drug screening, proof of health insurance and current immunizations prior to starting the first APE course and per site requirements – these site compliance requirements are due 30 days prior to the practicum start.
- Reports directly to the preceptor: The relationship between you and the preceptor should be built on mutual respect, trust, communication and understanding.
  - Accepts instruction from preceptor or site administration as a learning opportunity.
- Demonstrates competencies related to course outcomes by completing all required assignments and activities.
- Maintains communication with the ILE-APE course faculty.
- Seeks early resolution when learning goals are not being met.
  - Communicates concerns and problems to the preceptor.
- Complies with the University's Student Code of Conduct policy, which can be found in the [College of Health Professions Student Handbook](#).
  - Abides by all requirements, policies and procedures of the APE site.
  - Exhibits professional demeanor, behavior, appearance and communication.
  - Adheres to deadlines.
- Provides for and funds all travel arrangements and any associated expenses.

## APE MANAGER

- Provides consultative services to support students to prepare APE applications.
  - Coordinates the APE experience for the student with the ELC.
  - Communicates regularly with all students to verify and vet their APE sites.
  - Reviews and approves APE site and community preceptor for appropriateness for meeting student learning goals and course outcomes.
- Communicates and problem solves on a regular basis with the ILE-APE faculty to ensure that the APE process is successful.
  - Investigates and responds to complaints from the APE site, preceptor or student.

## MPH ILE-APE FACULTY

- Defines competencies and program outcomes as a foundation for student learning goals in each ILE-APE course.
- Approves the Student Learning Agreement (SLA).
  - Assist the student in clarifying educational goals and competencies to be strengthened by the placement.
  - Suggests activities to enhance the educational experience.
- Instructs students to abide by APE site policies, procedures and requirements.
- Maintains communication with student and preceptor during the ILE-APE courses.
  - Meets with preceptor and student on a regular basis during the session.
  - Provides support to the student and preceptor, available via email or telephone.
- Evaluates academic performance of students.

## MPH COMMUNITY PRECEPTOR

- Collaborates with MPH faculty and MPH student to promote success in the ILE-APE courses, including achievement of course objectives (student learning agreement).
  - Provides supervision of public health practices and constructive feedback about performance in the APE.
  - Guides/supports the student in next steps throughout the project as needed.
  - Asks to review work periodically.
- Creates a meaningful experience for the student.

- Provide feedback to Chamberlain and attends meetings with faculty as requested.
  - Participates in the Preceptor Survey, distributed two times during the student's APE experience.
  - The survey will be distributed via email during Week 8 for each course session.
- Arranges a schedule with the student for completing the necessary hours.
  - Orients the MPH student with the APE site environment, policies and procedures.
  - Identifies suitable experiential opportunities that align with the course outcomes and competencies.
  - Allows sufficient time for supervision and instruction in the form of routine interactions.
  - Serves as mentor in professional development.
- Provides the student with qualitative and constructive feedback, privately.
  - Feedback should be specific and timely, based on observation of behavior and skills.
  - Feedback should include descriptions of specific behaviors with both positive and negative statements.

- Protects from disclosure all personally identifiable student-information or records of their participation except as set forth by an agreement or required by law.

If the preceptor and student cannot resolve an issue, the faculty and APE manager should be contacted immediately.

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SPECIALIST (ELS)

- Email students enrolled in MPH-515, MPH-509 and MPH-503. This email will contain instructions on general APE procedures and how manage the applied practice organization/agency site selection process and application.
- Support Site/Preceptor Matching Service requests.
  - Requests permitted when at least FIVE agencies have denied partnership and student has engaged in at least two coaching calls with either an ELS or the APE manager.
- Contact the requested site, identify required compliance documentation and initiate contract development for the site – if such a contract is needed, after the APE manager has approved your application.
- Confirm student's compliance with site requirements prior to the start of each ILE-APE course.
- Facilitate the process of changing preceptor(s) when requested by you/site and approved by the APE manager.








## Our Mission:

To educate public health students as leaders and change agents who advance scholarship, service and practice in promoting healthy, sustainable communities – locally, nationally and globally.






## THE MPH APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE TOOLKIT

### LITERATURE

-  Academic Catalog
-  Viewbook
-  MPH Degree Program Curriculum Grid
-  Academic Calendar
-  MPH APE Preceptor Manual

### FORMS & WORKSHEETS

-  MPH APE Hours Log
-  MPH Student Learning Agreement
-  MPH Project Proposal

For more information, email [mphfieldsupport@chamberlain.edu](mailto:mphfieldsupport@chamberlain.edu)



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