

D2. MPH Foundational Competencies (SPH & PHP)

All MPH graduates demonstrate the following competencies.

The school or program documents at least one specific, required assessment activity (e.g., component of existing course, paper, presentation, test) for each competency below, during which faculty or other qualified individuals (e.g., teaching assistants or other similar individuals without official faculty roles working under a faculty member's supervision) validate the student's ability to perform the competency.

Assessment opportunities may occur in foundational courses that are common to all students, in courses that are required for a concentration or in other educational requirements outside of designated coursework, but the school or program must assess *all* MPH students, at least once, on each competency. This requirement also applies to students completing an MPH in combination with another degree (e.g., joint, dual, concurrent degrees).

Assessment may occur in simulations, group projects, presentations, written products, etc.

Since the unit must demonstrate that all students perform all competencies, units must define methods to assess individual students' competency attainment in group projects. Also, assessment should occur in a setting other than an internship, which is tailored to individual student needs and designed to allow students to practice skills previously learned in a classroom. Additionally, assessment must occur outside of the integrative learning experience (see Criterion D7), which is designed to integrate previously attained skills in new ways.

These competencies are informed by the traditional public health core knowledge areas, (biostatistics, epidemiology, social and behavioral sciences, health services administration and environmental health sciences), as well as cross-cutting and emerging public health areas.

Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health

1. Apply epidemiological methods to settings and situations in public health practice
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming, and software, as appropriate
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy, or practice

Public Health & Health Care Systems

5. Compare the organization, structure, and function of health care, public health, and regulatory systems across national and international settings
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities, and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community, and systemic levels

Planning & Management to Promote Health

7. Assess population needs, assets, and capacities that affect communities' health
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design, implementation, or critique of public health policies or programs
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project, or intervention
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management¹
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs

¹ "Resource management" refers to stewardship (planning, monitoring, etc.) of resources throughout a project, not simply preparing a budget statement that projects what resources will be required.

Policy in Public Health

- 12. Discuss the policy-making process,² including the roles of ethics and evidence**
- 13. Propose strategies to identify relevant communities and individuals and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes**
- 14. Advocate for political, social, or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations³**
- 15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity**

Leadership

- 16. Apply leadership and/or management principles to address a relevant issue⁴**
- 17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges⁵**

Communication

- 18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors**
- 19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation to a non-academic, non-peer audience with attention to factors such as literacy and health literacy**
- 20. Describe the importance of cultural humility⁶ in communicating public health content**

Interprofessional and/or Intersectoral Practice

- 21. Integrate perspectives from other sectors and/or professions to promote and advance population health⁷**

Systems Thinking

² This competency refers to technical aspects of how public policies are created and adopted, including legislative and/or regulatory roles and processes, ethics in public policy making, and the role of evidence in creating policy.

³ This competency refers to the ability to influence policy and/or decision making, such as through community mobilization, educating policy makers, etc. Ability to argue in support of (or in opposition to) a position, as in a standard debate, is not sufficient. Students must produce a product that would be part of an advocacy campaign or effort (e.g., legislative testimony, fact sheets, advocacy strategy outline, etc.).

⁴ Such principles may include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration, and guiding decision making.

⁵ "Negotiation and mediation," in this competency, refers to the set of skills needed when a common solution is required among parties with conflicting interests and/or different desired outcomes. Such skills extend beyond the level of negotiation required in a successful intra-group process; effective communication within a work group or team is more closely related to competency 16.

⁶ See this document's Definitions section or Criterion G1 for CEPH's definition of humility in the context of the accreditation criteria.

⁷ This competency requires direct engagement (place- or distance-based) between the student and an individual or individuals in a profession or sector other than public health; students must combine the external sector/profession's perspective and/or knowledge with their own public health training to complete a task, solve a problem, etc.. Role-playing, in which public health students assume the identity of an individual from another profession or sector to which they do not already belong, is not an acceptable substitute for actual engagement with an individual or individuals from a profession or sector outside of public health.

22. Apply a systems thinking tool to visually represent a public health issue in a format other than standard narrative⁸

Required documentation:

- 1) List the coursework and other learning experiences required for the school or program's MPH degrees, including the required curriculum for each concentration. Information may be provided in the format of Template D2-1 (single- and multi-concentration formats available) or in hyperlinks to student handbooks or webpages, but the documentation must present a clear depiction of the requirements for each MPH degree. (self-study document)
- 2) List the required curriculum for each combined degree option in the same format as above, clearly indicating (using italics or shading) any requirements that differ from MPH students who are not completing a combined degree. (self-study document)
- 3) Provide a matrix, in the format of Template D2-2, that indicates the assessment activity for each of the foundational competencies listed above (1-22). If the school or program addresses all of the listed foundational competencies in a single, common core curriculum, the school or program need only present a single matrix. If combined degree students do not complete the same core curriculum as students in the standalone MPH program, the school or program must present a separate matrix for each combined degree. If the school or program relies on concentration-specific courses to assess some of the foundational competencies listed above, the school or program must present a separate matrix for each concentration. (self-study document)
- 4) Provide supporting documentation for each assessment activity listed in Template D2-2. Documentation should include the following, as relevant, for each listed assessment:
 - assignment instructions or guidelines as provided to students
 - writing prompts provided to students
 - sample exam question(s)(electronic resource file)
- 5) Include the most recent syllabus from each course listed in Template D2-1, or written guidelines, such as a handbook, for any required elements listed in Template D2-1 that do not have a syllabus. (electronic resource file)
- 6) If applicable, assess strengths and weaknesses related to this criterion and plans for improvement in this area. (self-study document)

⁸ Systems thinking tools depict or map complex relationships, demonstrating, for example, how component parts of a system interact with and influence one another. Examples include causal loop diagrams, systems archetypes, network analyses, and concept maps. Logic models and evidence tables are not sufficient to address this competency.