We are back with Part II of this multi-part series on presenting SPH/PHP Criteria D2 and D4 in your self-study. If you missed Part I, you can always find it on our website, here, or download this PDF to save for a later date.

Now that you’ve considered all the prerequisites (addressed in Part I), it’s time to begin filling out the D2 and D4 templates. First things first, make sure you’ve identified the correct SPH and PHP Date Templates. Let’s start with Template D2-2…it should look something like this:

Assessment of Competencies for MPH (all concentrations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Course number(s) and name(s)</th>
<th>Describe specific assessment opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Apply epidemiological methods to settings and situations in public health practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming, and software, as appropriate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Documentation requests 3-5 provide additional instructions in the 2021 Criteria. Let’s start with #3:

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)

**Completing Template D2-2**

- Make sure that you know how to fill out Template D2-2 if the following cases apply to you:
  - If your dual degree and/or distance-based students complete a different core curriculum, you will need to add additional rows to the D2-2 template. *Note that we do not want you to create separate templates for each variation; rather, you should create multiple rows as needed in a single template.
Here is an example of what that might look like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity</th>
<th>PHS 5XX: Public Health Policy (MPA/MPH dual degree students)</th>
<th>Public health policy memo (requires consideration of equity)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OR PHS 5XX Problem-Solving in Public Health (all other MPH concentrations; all distance-based students)</td>
<td>Critical analysis paper: “Describe how your evaluation plan will measure the impact of the proposed policy on public health and health equity”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- If you map foundational competencies to concentration-specific courses, include a separate row for each concentration. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings</th>
<th>PUBH 5XX Health Care Across the Lifecourse: From Policy to Practice (all concentrations except HMP)</th>
<th>Policy analysis paper (Part 2) compares organizational structure and function between the U.S. and another country.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HMP 5XX Health Care Organizations (MPH HMP students)</td>
<td>Comparative analysis exercise: compare the organization, structure and function of the U.S. health care and public health systems with another OECD country’s health systems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Column 2** is going to be populated with a single course number & name in 99% of cases (except in the cases noted above where some (e.g., distance-based students) complete different classes or foundational competencies are taught in concentration-specific courses). We do want to encourage units to innovate, and over time, units might start using other assessments that aren’t strictly tied to a required course, but our experience is that the middle column is generally one or more required courses.
  - We understand and expect that your curriculum likely reinforces the competencies throughout several courses and it’s not uncommon that two or more classes assess the same foundational competency. **However, for the sake of review, choose the highest, clearest, best example per competency.**
    - The only exception to this is if one class does not assess the full competency statement. A common example is foundational competency 2. Often, students take a biostatistics or other data analysis course that assesses the quantitative portion of FC 2, while the qualitative assessment occurs in a different course. In this case, you would list both courses (**column 2**) and assessments (**column 3**).
• **Column 3:** Choose the best example assignment for each competency.
  o Include a couple of sentences describing the assessment opportunity in this column. Below are some examples of descriptions and their strengths and weaknesses.

Example 1:

| 5. Compare the organization, structure, and function of health care, public health, and regulatory systems across national and international settings | PHS 5XX: Public Health System Organization and Delivery | Discussion post 4 (rubric attached)  
Midterm exam (multiple choice, T/F, short answer) |

• In this example, the unit has mapped foundational competency 5 to a discussion post and midterm exam. Let’s break down why there is likely not enough information for reviewers to verify compliance based on this level of detail in column 3:
  o “Discussion post 4” and “midterm exam” do not provide enough information about HOW the specific assessment addresses the competency.
  o While the unit has included the rubric for the discussion post in the ERF, it is unlikely that, without the specific question students respond to and/or student instructions, reviewers would have enough information to verify compliance.
  o Unless the unit includes the exam questions that specifically address this competency, it is unlikely that reviewers could verify compliance.
    ▪ Additionally, let’s look at the verb in this competency: “compare” will likely require more than a multiple choice or true/false question.
• How could the unit have improved this documentation?
  o More detail! Include the questions/discussion posts students must respond to or include the student instructions.
    ▪ For example, “Discussion post 4: students respond to the following question...[include question]. Students must also comment on two peers’ discussion posts, contrasting their peer’s response to their own.”
    ▪ Midterm exam, essay 1: Students respond to the following essay prompt on the midterm exam... [include prompt]

Example 2:

| 5. Compare the organization, structure, and function of health care, public health, and regulatory systems across national and international settings | PHS 5XX: Public Health System Organization and Delivery | This competency is assessed across quizzes, a healthcare systems policy brief, a comparative health short paper, and two roundtables. |

In this example, the unit has mapped foundational competency 5 to a host of different assignments. Let’s break down how the unit could have strengthened this response:
  o More is not always better! Pick the clearest example and pay attention to the verb. With the five different assignments here, reviewers will have to go looking for the best example
of competency assessment. With a verb like “compare,” reviewers will likely look for details about the “comparative health short paper” first.

- If five assignments are mapped to this competency, reviewers will expect to see copies of all five assignments in the ERF. See the next section of this guidance document for info on what to include in the ERF.
  - If you choose to map competencies to quizzes, you must identify the specific quiz question(s) that assesses the skill and include a copy of the quiz questions in the ERF (e.g., Quiz 2: questions 5-7, Quiz 5: question 10).
  - If you choose to map competencies to a paper, include a summary of the prompt to which students respond in Template D2-2. Instead of “healthcare systems policy brief,” try “students compose a policy brief titled ‘Toward a Global Policy Framework’ that provides a comparative analysis of healthcare and public health systems in England and in the United States and recommendations for global policy considerations.”
  - If you choose to map competencies to discussion post questions or group discussions during class, include the following:
    - The question to which students respond in the discussion post.
    - The question to which students respond during in-class discussions AND how you assess each individual student’s competence in a group discussion setting.

Example 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Compare the organization, structure, and function of health care, public health, and regulatory systems across national and international settings</th>
<th>PHS 5XX: Public Health System Organization and Delivery</th>
<th>Didactic Opportunity: Week 3: History of Health Policy and Reform in the U.S. &amp; Week 4: Global Health Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment: Homework #2 Comparative Health Systems: Students compare attributes and deficits of the U.S. healthcare system against a comparative system (student choice among Canada, Germany, British systems) from the following dimensions: affordability, availability of services, access to care for persons with low-income, patient choices, and ease of navigation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elements that make this the best example and an easy review for the site visit team:

- A description of how students are didactically prepared is not required; however, evident didactic preparation is often helpful in confirming an appropriate assessment. Additionally, the unit has identified the weeks this topic is covered, which facilitates easy review of the syllabus/weekly schedule for relevant information.
- The unit has picked one assignment/example to demonstrate assessment. The description of the assignment is detailed enough for reviewers to confirm appropriate competency assessment. The unit uses key words from the paper that reflect the competency in the assignment details, which also facilitates review (e.g., compare, U.S. healthcare system, Canada/Germany/British systems).
- In this example, the unit included the course syllabus with a weekly schedule that included the readings assigned in weeks 3 and 4. The unit also included the student instructions for the Comparative Health Systems Homework 2 as a screenshot from the LMS.
Now that we’ve covered how to fill out Template D2-2, let’s consider best practices for what to include in the ERF. Here is the corresponding documentation requests:

4) Provide supporting documentation for each assessment activity listed in Template D2-2. Documentation should include the following, as relevant, for each listed assessment: (electronic resource file)
   - assignment instructions or guidelines as provided to students
   - writing prompts provided to students
   - sample exam question(s)

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)

Although we often refer to “syllabi” as key documentation for the ERF, in 99.9% of cases, you must include additional documents beyond the syllabus when documenting assessments! The documentation requests, printed above, acknowledge this.

Reviewers will look in the ERF to
1. verify that the mapped assignment fully assesses all aspects of the competency.
2. confirm didactic preparation in cases where it is not apparent from the title or content of the course. Reviewers understand that an epidemiology course provides didactic instruction in epi methods without needing additional detail. Competencies that address “soft skills,” such as foundational competencies 16-19 and that address practical skills, such as 10 and 14, are more important to address directly, given that most units don’t offer a class whose primary purpose aligns with these skills.

To address item 1 above, units should include
- a copy of the assignment with the full set of instructions provided to students
- exam/quiz questions; do not include the full quiz/exam without identifying specific questions
- case studies: include the case and questions or prompts
- rubrics if there is explicit/obvious reference to assessment of the competency
- (in addition to the materials above) explanation and documentation demonstrating how individual students’ competence is assessed if the assignment is a group project

Many units accomplish item 2 above by including documentation that may include
- a weekly reading schedule
- screenshots from the LMS or learning modules
- instructor PowerPoint presentations
- links to external sources like videos, journal articles, case studies, etc.
- syllabus IF explicit documentation of didactic preparation is present

While we presented all of the above guidance with a focus on Criterion D2, the same guidance applies to Criterion D4 (Template D4-1 and corresponding ERF).
We hope this was useful for you as you prepare your self-study and ERF for submission. What questions do you have? Always feel free to reach out to your staff contact for clarification or review. Not sure who your staff contact is? Email submissions@ceph.org and we’ll put you in touch.

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