Guidelines for MPH Culminating Projects
Academic Year 2014-2015

Division of Environmental Health Sciences

Revised August 2014
Introduction

The culminating project (CP) is to address an environmental health problem or issue and can take the form of 1) an applied research project; 2) a grant proposal; or 3) a critical review. Other forms are possible with the approval of your advisor. The applied research project will entail the collection or acquisition of data for the purpose of answering an environmental health question. Ideally, this applied research will be suitable for submission as a peer-reviewed journal publication. The grant proposal addresses a practical public health issue and can take the form required by the targeted funding agency, but must include a clear statement of the problem and methods for addressing the problem. The critical review will provide an in-depth analysis of a problem or issue relying on published literature.

Projects that involve human subjects must adhere to policies and procedures of the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) (http://orrrp.osu.edu/irb/).

1. How Does Your Practicum Relate to the CP? The relationship between your CP and practicum may vary from extensive to none. The purposes of these two MPH experiences differ. The practicum is largely externally directed and is intended to provide real-world environmental health experience with government, private industry, or NGO. In contrast, the CP is self-directed and defined (with faculty advice). However, there can be synergy between the practicum and CP in that ideas and opportunities for the CP can arise from the Practicum. Data from the practicum can be used to develop the CP. Synergy between the Practicum and CP can enhance both experiences.

2. CP Report Requirements. Your CP will be evaluated based on your written report and oral presentation. The written report requirements typically include 20-25 pages, double spaced, with 25 references (Table 1). The oral presentation occurs in two parts. The first part may be a public seminar that is 30-40 min in duration and includes 10 min for Q&A. Although not mandatory, this oral presentation is typically scheduled as a part of the Division’s weekly seminar series. Students are to work with their CP and academic advisor in developing their presentations. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule the seminar at a time when both the CP advisor and 2nd reader are available to attend. Both the advisor and second reader must attend the public seminar. The second part of the oral presentation typically follows the public seminar and includes the student, CP advisor, and 2nd reader. Faculty will “discuss” the project with the student to evaluate the student’s mastery of the project and the underlying environmental health principles and concepts. This portion of the exam typically lasts from 30 to 60 minutes. The culminating project is graded S/U.

3. Timeline Considerations. It is the student’s responsibility to plan their efforts so that faculty have adequate time to review their CP draft submissions well before the deadline for signing-off on the Master’s Examination form. Students should plan to submit two complete drafts of their report to their CP advisor before their final draft is submitted to both their CP advisor and 2nd reader. Students should allow a minimum of one week for Faculty to review and comment on draft reports.
Report Content and Format Requirements for an Applied Research Project

1. 20-25 pages in length not including tables, figures or appendices;

2. Include at least 25 references (a minimum 2/3 should be primary literature)

3. Single-side printed on white paper (8.5 x 11 inches) and bound or stapled;

4. Double-spaced with margins of at least one inch on each side.

5. 12 point font; however tables and footnotes may be in 10 point font if necessary;

6. Page numbers should be inserted (center bottom) on each page except the Title Page and the Table of Contents.

7. All Figures and Tables must be numbered and be accompanied by descriptions that allow the reader to understand their content without referring to the CP text, and all appendices must be labeled alphabetically.

8. The Title Page should include the title of the project, the student’s name and degrees, the committee members’ names, The Ohio State University, the month and year of the final project.

9. The report should include the following sections*:
   A) Title Page
   B) Table of contents
   C) Abstract or an executive summary
   D) Introduction and Background
   E) Methods
   F) Results
   G) Discussion
   H) References
   I) Appendices

10. References should follow the American Psychological Association format, http://library.webster.edu/citation/apa.html

11. A hard and electronic copy of each completed report are to be provided to your advisor and 2nd reader, the Division Coordinator, and the Office of Academic Programs and Student Services.

*Report sections may differ for grant proposals and critical reviews. In addition, there may be exceptions for CP’s that follow a specific journal format. See your advisor for guidance.