Guidelines for MPH-HSMP Culminating Project
Division of Health Services Management and Policy

These guidelines apply to students who will graduate under semesters (i.e., autumn 2012 or later)

Last revised August 2013
GENERAL GUIDELINES

The culminating project for the Division of Health Services Management and Policy (HSMP) is intended to provide students with the opportunity to integrate and synthesize knowledge and experience obtained during their academic course of study. For ideas of appropriate topics, review previous culminating projects in the OAPSS (Office of Academic Programs and Student Services) office (Room 100, Cunz Hall) and speak with your advisor. The culminating project is completed at the end of degree requirements, and although every project will be different, there are some general guidelines that are relevant to every project.

1. Students must also choose another faculty member with a primary appointment in the College of Public Health (preferably a member of the Division of Health Services Management and Policy) as a “second reader.” If your culminating project advisor is not your academic advisor, then you must select your academic advisor as your second reader. The culminating project advisor and the second reader constitute your Culminating Project Committee. You may add additional readers to your Committee, although this is rare.

2. The topic and format of each culminating project must be approved by your culminating project advisor. Most culminating projects will fit approximately into one of the following areas: (A) Applied research project (B) Policy analysis; or (C) Comprehensive case study. Other topics and format are possible, e.g. a grant proposal, with the approval of your advisor.

3. In the Autumn semester before your intended graduation (or, in the semester prior to intended semester of graduation), you must meet with and begin working with your project advisor on designing and planning for the culminating project.

4. Before beginning work on your culminating project, write a one or two page proposal which describes your topic; what you will do for the project; and which of the three project types (above) best describes your project. Have your project advisor and second reader sign and date the proposal, and give each of them a copy to keep. Keep one copy for your own records.

If you subsequently decide to change your project, project advisor, or second reader, write a new proposal as above, and inform in writing, any project advisor or reader who will not be involved in the revised project.

5. This document assumes that most students will be completing their culminating projects for a spring semester graduation. If that does not apply to you, please discuss your projected timeline with your adviser.

6. Prior to the semester in which you will graduate (or, in the semester in which you plan to graduate), register for 3 credits of Culminating project credit, PUBHLTH 7998, in consultation with your advisor. Advisor permission must be sent to registration@cph.osu.edu in order for the course to be added. During spring semester, you will present your project to your advisor and second reader at a review meeting for formal approval.
TIMELINE REQUIREMENTS

Students and their culminating project advisor must agree upon a timeline for completion of their project. On the next page is a timeline checklist list for the requirements of the culminating project which can help guide you and your advisor through this process. In addition, your advisor may also ask that you meet other deadlines, such as submitting an outline or draft of your culminating project paper. Remember, you are responsible for meeting all of the deadlines. The Graduate School deadlines for each semester are available at the Graduate School (http://www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu/Depo/PDF/Deadlines_ProfD.pdf)
The following requirements are especially important:

1. As noted in the Timeline Checklist, which is found on the CPH website, it is expected that your advisor will be kept fully appraised of your progress and will see drafts of your project write-up as it develops. The project advisor may require multiple changes before the draft is ready to be presented. Your project advisor and second reader must see a complete draft of your final Culminating Project report a minimum of one month before your expected review meeting date. You must provide both of your committee members with a correctly formatted (refer to page 6), clean and final hardcopy of your manuscript at least two weeks prior to the review meeting date.

2. Two semesters before you intend to graduate obtain an “Application to Graduate” form from the Graduate School’s website at: http://www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu/Depo/PDF/Master%27sGraduate.pdf. Complete your personal information, obtain the signature of your culminating project advisor and list your second reader, and return the application to OAPASS (Room 100 Cunz Hall) by the seventh Friday of the semester prior to the semester of graduation for the appropriate signature of the Graduate Studies Chair. Please note: the application is valid for that semester only. Note that the final date for completing all requirements (including the project presentation) and delivering the Master’s Examination Report form to the Graduate School is generally about 2 weeks before the end of the semester. A specific calendar of dates is available on the Graduate School web site (www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu, click on “Graduation Calendar.”)

3. You will be asked to present your work to your advisor and second reader in a review meeting before the final culminating report is submitted.

4. Upon completion of the review meeting and any final revisions to your culminating project report, your committee will sign your Master’s Examination form. Take the signed copy OAPSS in 100 Cunz Hall.

If you do not meet published graduation deadlines, but have completed all degree requirements by the last business day prior to the first day of classes for the following semester, you may graduate the following semester without registering or paying fees. Many faculty, however, are not available during break to schedule a review meeting or approve revisions to your culminating project paper. Therefore, failure to meet these requirements may require you to enroll for an additional semester.
HSMP CULMINATING PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

There are three typical forms of the MPH-HSMP Culminating Project. These are described briefly below. In consultation with your adviser, you will need to develop specific expectations for your proposed project.

- **Applied research project**
  An applied research project includes data analysis of some sort in order to permit hypothesis testing or evaluation. The expectations of scale and completeness are less than for a thesis, perhaps at the level that one might use for a "pilot study." However, you are expected to use appropriate methods and provide interpretation suitable for the approach taken. A typical applied research project might be an economic evaluation (cost-effectiveness, etc.) of limited scope.

- **Policy analysis**
  This type of project concentrates on critical review of an actual or proposed policy intervention (which may include a proposal of the student’s own design). The methods of inquiry may include traditional data analysis, but should also demonstrate an ability to undertake qualitative analysis. This will involve critical reading, and may include key informant interviews and other sources. A typical policy analysis might be a review of proposed legislation or administrative rule.

- **Comprehensive case study**
  The student writes an original case study of a scope to permit integrative use of skills gained in the curriculum. The adviser will establish the format and expectations, particularly the concern for scope and opportunity for integration. A typical comprehensive case study would require analyzing a real situation, identifying issues, and applying appropriate methods to arrive at recommendations. A typical case study might be a critical review of a specific public health intervention, health policy or health care management decision.

HUMAN SUBJECTS REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT RESEARCH

Questions regarding human subject requirements and student research should reference Appendix H of the CPH Handbook.

MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS

1. Although each culminating project will vary, most manuscripts will be at least 20-25 pages, not including tables, figures or appendices.

2. The manuscript must be typed on one side of the page only and on white paper (8.5 x 11 inches) and bound or stapled.

3. The manuscript must be double spaced, and with a margin of at least one inch on each side.

4. The manuscript must be in 12 point font; however tables and footnotes may be in 10 point font if necessary.

5. Page numbers should be inserted (center bottom) on each page except the Title Page and the Table of Contents.
6. All Figures and Tables must be numbered, and all appendices must be labeled alphabetically.

7. 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.

8. The manuscript may include:
   A) A Title Page
   B) Table of contents
   C) Abstract or an executive summary
   D) Literature review
   E) Agency Description
   F) Methods
   G) Results
   H) Discussion
   I) References
   J) Tables
   K) Appendices

9. References should follow the American Psychological Association format (http://webster.commnet.edu/apa/apa_index.htm).

10. A hardcopy and an electronic copy of each completed manuscript must be provided to your advisor, Division Coordinator, and OAPSS.