

**GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH POLICY AND
MANAGEMENT**

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE PROGRAM

SPECIAL PROJECT GUIDELINES

The guidelines for the special project include the following sections:

- I. Purpose of the Special Project
- II. Registration for Special Projects
- III. Project Proposal
- IV. Topics for the Special Project in Health Policy and Management
- V. IRB Approval
- VI. Submission of the Special Project Report to the Departmental Archive

I. Purpose of the Special Project

The purpose of the special project is to give the student an opportunity to apply the analytical skills and concepts learned in the MPH degree program to the solution of a management or policy problem in an operational health services program or policy setting. The special project will demonstrate the critical thinking skills of the student as he/she prepares for a career in health service. The special project should be relevant to the field of health policy and management and the long-term professional goals of the student.

II. Registration for Special Projects

MPH students in the Department of Health Policy and Management should register for the special project following completion of all core courses and at least 30 credit hours of the MPH program. Project design should begin earlier than this registration, and with the consent of the advisor the student may implement the project concurrently with completion of the final course work. Each special project must have a contract form signed by the faculty advisor which specifies the nature of the project and designates an anticipated date of completion. Each MPH student will register for 3 credit hours of Special Project.

III. Project Proposal

A written proposal describing the idea must be submitted to the student's faculty advisor prior to approval of the project. The proposal is a document that should be written following careful discussion and planning with the advisor. By the time the proposal is completed, questions be resolved about the scope and breadth. The proposal achieves concurrence between the student and advisor on the nature and length of the project and must be formally approved in writing before the student begins the project.

The proposal should include the following topics: a) an introduction and statement of the problem to be solved, b) a review of the relevant literature, c) a statement of the objectives of the Special Project and the methods to be used for achieving each of them, and d) references and supporting Appendices (if appropriate). This format will also be used for the final report.

IV. Topics for the Special Project in Health Policy and Management

The student's faculty advisor will discuss with the student the process of generation of the special project topic and offer suggestions for the location of the Project. The topic should be relevant to the coursework taken in the student's Program of Study and should be consistent with the student's career goals. The topic should be one in which the student solves a management problem in a health services organization or develops a policy document for an organization operating in the health sector.

V. IRB Approval

The IRB must approve any project consistent with university requirements. A number of IRB approval types exist, some of which require only submission of brief information. More complicated applications may require an appearance before the full board. The guidelines for review of studies with human subjects should be obtained from the IRB.

VI The Final paper should include the following:

Format For Proposals and Reports for Field Experience, Special Project, and Internship

TITLEPAGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Statement of the Management Problem
- 1.2 Objectives of the Internship
- 1.3 Review of Relevant Literature

2.0 Methods

- 2.1 Methods for Achieving Each Objective
- 2.2 Timetable for the Management Study

3.0 Results

(This section should be organized according to the objectives stated in section 1.2, above.)

4.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 4.1 Executive Summary of the Results (This may be placed at the beginning of the Internship Report.)
- 4.2 Conclusions

APPENDICES

NOTE: The Internship Proposal will include sections 1.0-2.0 (plus expected Results), and the Internship Report will include sections 1.0-4.0.

Submission of the Special Project Report to the Department Archive

After the Special Project is finished, and approved by the Faculty advisor, a copy must be submitted to the Department secretary who will file it in the departmental archive. In addition, the Faculty advisor retains a copy of the final project report.