

MCH Program Midterm Project Instructions

The purpose of this assignment is for each student to learn about a selected MCH program or policy, and share what they have learned with the rest of the class. It is also an opportunity for you to practice critical public health skills of research, writing, and presenting. This is an individual assignment.

Each student will research a specific **MCH-related public health program or policy intervention**. A list of available program topics and a sign-up sheet are on Blackboard in the Course Assignments folder. **You must sign up for your program topic by September 6.**

Based on your research, you will complete and submit two products, due by **11:59 pm Friday October 9:**

- 1) **A written report** about the program (15% of course grade).
- 2) **A short slide presentation** about your program. Your slides are due with the paper October 9; you will give your presentation and lead a brief discussion in a class session later in the semester (10% of course grade).

Instructions for written report

Your report will provide a **factual overview** of your MCH program or policy intervention, along with **your own analysis** of how the program relates to themes covered in this course.

Format and Style

- Times New Roman, size 12 font, double-spaced, with 1” margins on all sides.
- 1000-1500 words (approximately 4-6 pages) total, excluding References. I will deduct points if you are more than 10% over or under this range.
- Write in a professional style, using complete sentences and paragraphs. Use standard English spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. Proofread carefully.
- Organize your paper using headings and sub-headings to break up text and structure your article, to make it easy for your reader to follow.
- Relevant supporting visuals – such as photos, graphs, data tables, and other images – are encouraged to reinforce your text and enhance the visual appeal of your report.

Content

Your article must include all of the following information:

Program Overview, Purpose & Background:

- The full name of the program, and any acronyms or shorter names commonly used.
- The specific agency or organization that developed and/or administers the program.
- The purpose of the program (sometimes referred to as the program “mission”).
- Information about the origin and history of the program – When was it started? Why? Any other key information about its history? Any controversies or special challenges?

Program Services/ Activities:

- The priority population (sometimes called “target population”) for the program – who does this program serve? Include any specific eligibility criteria, if applicable.
- A description of the key services or strategies delivered through the program – what does this program do?
- Information about how the program is actually implemented in practice. This should give the reader a better picture of what it “looks like”. Consider things like:
 - Who delivers the services or implements the program (what types of staff?)
 - What type of settings it takes place in (clinic, hospital, school, etc...?)
 - What types of organizations carry out this program? Is it implemented by government agencies, community-based organizations, or something else?
 - Does the program follow a specific model, curriculum, or guidelines? Does it require training, or special materials?
 - What is the cost of the program? How is it funded?

Note: different information will be available for different programs. I’ll be looking for at least three of the bullets above, or other relevant information of similar detail.

Program Effectiveness and Impact

- Describe what is known about the effectiveness of the program – i.e., its evidence base.
- What is the reach of the program? Is it nationwide or only in specific communities? How many communities are served, how many people are enrolled or benefit from the program?
- Has this program been shown to result in positive changes in people’s health behaviors, use of health services, or health outcomes?
- Has this program been recognized as a “best practice”?

Implementation in New York State

Use your internet sleuthing skills to find out if your program is being implemented within New York State.

- ***If your program is in NYS:*** provide a brief basic description of New York’s program (name, location, organizations, etc.). Include a link to New York State-specific information (such as a website) for the program. This should not be lengthy, just one paragraph.
- ***If your program is not operating in NYS, or if your program assignment is already specific to NYS (NYS Paid Family Leave):*** include similar information for another state or country of interest to you.

Your Analysis of the Program

- Discuss why this program is needed – i.e., why is it important for the health of women, infants, children, teens, families, etc.?
 - Your discussion should identify specific MCH health issues and outcomes that your program addresses, or has the potential to address.
 - You must support your discussion with data and evidence from relevant sources. You may use resources we learned about in class, or others that you find on your own.
- Discuss how this program illustrates MCH themes and concepts we have discussed in this class, such as:

- Data-Driven/Evidence-Based Practice
- Cultural Competence
- Family-Centered Practice
- Life Course Approach
- Health Equity
- Social Determinants of Health

You must address at least two of these themes/concepts. Be specific about how the program illustrates these concepts. Use specific examples from the program and relate those clearly to the concepts you choose. Your discussion should be supported by relevant citations.

- Your own recommendations for how the program could be expanded, enhanced, or improved. Include a rationale (explanation) for your recommendations.

Information Sources and Citations

Your article must be based on information from published literature and other credible sources. Consumer websites, blog posts, Wikipedia, personal anecdotes and experiences, etc. are not appropriate sources for your paper. It is ok to use readings assigned for class, but you also need to go beyond those to include sources you find on your own.

At a minimum, you should use and cite at least:

- Two **peer-reviewed articles** that were not already assigned for our class;
- One **reading assigned for this class**;
- One source of **population health data**; and,
- Two **additional credible sources relevant to your program** (such as government reports, professional organizational guidelines, official program websites.)

This is a minimum. For most topics, a strong paper will have more than this minimum.

You must cite all sources used for your article. **All ideas, statements, images, data, etc. that are not your own original ideas must be cited.** This means an in-text citation following each statement or image, with a corresponding full citation in the references section at the end of the article. When in doubt, cite!

Use APA format. If you need help with citations, ask me before the paper is due. Citation Fox is a great resource for how to format citations in APA style.

Instructions for Presentations:

Your class presentation will provide a summary overview of the MCH program or intervention you selected, as a way of teaching other students in the class about it. You will submit your slides at the same time as your paper. Presentation dates are spread over the semester as listed on the sign up and syllabus. **Your presentation will be short – 10 minutes maximum.** Thus, you need to choose a subset of key information from your article to incorporate in your presentation.

- PowerPoint is preferred. If you use a different format, please convert to a pdf file for submission to ensure I can open your file and that all formatting is preserved.
- **4-6 slides total**, plus a references slide.
- Slides should be visually appealing, engaging, easy to read. Don't clutter them with too much information. Do not cut and paste full paragraphs from your paper. Remember, you will be able to provide additional detail in your spoken words when you present.
- You have the flexibility to choose what you think is most important for your presentation, from the larger body of information in your paper. Choose key highlights that "tell the story" of your program, and your own analysis of it.
- You should assume that students don't know anything about your specific program, but that they have some knowledge of the related MCH health topics, since your presentation will be part of Unit IV.

Your grade for this part of the project will be a combination of your slide set and your presentation/ discussion in class.

Some helpful hints & tips

- ✓ Pick a topic that genuinely interests you. You're going to work hard on this project and it will make a difference.
- ✓ Be sure to note the date for your presentation when you pick your topic. It isn't generally possible to change your presentation date, because they line up with other course topics.
- ✓ Start working on this project now, and devote time to it each week. Do not wait until the last minute!
- ✓ Ask for help early if you need it. I am very happy to meet with you and talk through any part of the project.
- ✓ Use the instructions above as a checklist for your paper. Make sure you have addressed each item so you don't lose points.
- ✓ Proofread, proofread, proofread. Take pride in your work. Computer spellcheck is not proofreading. If possible, have someone else read your paper and give you feedback. Reading it out loud to yourself is also a good way to spot errors or confusing sentences.
- ✓ The U Albany Writing Center is a good resource if you struggle with writing.
- ✓ Citation Fox on the U Albany Library site is a great resource for formatting citations.