

**United Arab Emirates University
College of Medicine & Health Sciences
Institute of Public Health**

Master of Public Health (MPH) Programme

Written Assignments

Fall 2017

Institute of Public Health
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Written assignments

During the course students will complete three substantial written assignments.

These will provide an opportunity to pursue a specific area of public health in depth and to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired during the taught part of the course.

The final assignment will require the student to demonstrate that he/she can integrate the various strands of learning acquired during the course to provide a substantial and worthwhile contribution to public health understanding.

Examples of assignments are as follows:

1. A systematic review of literature and research related to a specific topic. This may be a critical review and summary for the purpose of making recommendations for development of a program, change in policy, establishment of standards or program evaluation.
2. A program plan which addresses a significant health problem in a community (community may be defined by geography, ethnicity, worksite, medical practice or insurance plan).
3. A research design or protocol. This would be completed up to data collection phase, including construction of data collection instruments, plans to pilot test the instrument, and methods of analysis of data.
4. A research paper involving data analysis to address a specific problem. The data may be routine data or *ad hoc* data acquired by the student in the course of their work. Generally, students are not required to undertake primary data collection but they may use data that has been collected as part of a research project that they have participated in.
5. A program evaluation involving primary data collection and analysis. This would usually have been undertaken as part of the students work.
6. A policy analysis in which a current or pending health policy is analysed from different perspectives.

The written assignment

Each of the three assignments will be valued at two credit hours.

Each should be between 4000 and 6000 words (excluding references, tables and figures).

The assignment should involve the student reading extensively around the chosen subject and acquiring and practising skills such as computing or statistical methods.

The assignments must have a **critical** approach. Descriptive essays or merely citing research findings are not sufficient at Master's level. Candidates are encouraged to cover a limited topic in depth rather than a broad area shallowly. Assignments should address the public health implications of the topic chosen, not just technical aspects.

Process

Students should propose a topic(s) and title(s) in a 500 written summary. The summary should include objectives, methods and outcomes.

The summary should be sent by e-mail to Dr Tom Loney (tom.loney@uaeu.ac.ae), MPH program director by the end of week six of the start of the term in which the student has registered for the assignment. He will allocate a supervisor for the assignment. The student will be responsible for discussing progress with his/her supervisor, submitting drafts of their work and receiving and acting on feedback.

The deadline for submission of the assignment is usually two weeks before the end of the semester in which the students registers for the assignment. Assignments must be submitted in electronic format (Word document) to allow screening for plagiarism.

Assignments should be of publishable quality. They should be checked for spelling and grammar. References should be properly cited using either Vancouver or Harvard styles. Appropriate font style and size and line spacing should be used. Figures and tables should be appropriately labeled. Poor formatting and "cutting and pasting" will be penalised.

The structure of the assignment should conform to best practice, in particular:

- Literature reviews should be detailed and up-to-date
- The methods used should be clearly described.
- An abstract should be included.
- Justification, interpretation, conclusions and recommendations should be clearly stated
- Use appropriate guidelines to structure your assignment e.g. PRISMA, STROBE, CONSORT etc.

Marking

All assignments are marked by two independent assessors from the Institute of Public Health. The average of the two scores is used to calculate the final mark and grade. If the scores from assessors differ by more than 5% then the assignment is marked by at least one other assessor. Twenty percent of the marks will be awarded for each of the following headings

1. Choice of topic: relevance, justification, abstract
2. Review of literature/what is known
3. Methods, content, findings, arguments, appropriate use of data, statistical methods, or other public health tools
4. Length (5000-6000 words), writing style, presentation, references
5. Overall has the candidate demonstrated public health knowledge, understanding and skills? Has he/she integrated aspects of learning and shown a critical approach?