

Practicum Waiver Criteria

Approved by Executive Committee: October 31, 2006

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE

The purpose of the practicum in the master's degree programs is to provide practical training to supplement didactic study for the development of public health professionals. The practicum is a valuable and essential component of training for students who have not worked or have minimally worked in a public health field, or for those making a career change to a new field. Mid-career students are traditionally practicing professionals who already have practical experience in their field gained on the job and have returned to graduate school to obtain the theory and academic credentials for advancement in their profession. Therefore, for those with documented actual practice experience in a field of public health, a waiver of the practicum requirement should be considered.

CRITERIA FOR GRANTING A WAIVER OF THE PRACTICUM

The practicum requirement will be waived for students who meet all four of the criteria below:

1. At least 3 years of documented prior work experience in a field that is closely related to the academic objectives of the student's degree program
 2. Employment that results in possessing the set of skills commensurate with those intended to be achieved through the practicum
 3. Documentation that the student possesses those skills
 4. Approval of the waiver request by the faculty advisor and department chair
- For those entering students with in-depth public health experience of at least 2 years (for example, returning Peace Corps volunteers), the required number of hours in the practicum will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

DOCUMENTATION OF PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

The following are required:

1. Resume or documentation of 3 years' full time work experience in the field of study directly related to the degree program being pursued, with a description for each position, the relevant public health activities, and degree of responsibility.

OR

2. A job description that covers practice experience related to the field of study and describes the areas of practice and type and length of experience.

AND

3. One of the applicant's letters of recommendation must be from a supervisor describing and documenting the applicant's relevant practice experience.

PEACE CORPS MASTER'S INTERNATIONALIST PROGRAM

In order for the Peace Corps assignment to qualify for the practicum, *all of the following are required:*

1. A well-defined and documented practicum project approved by the faculty advisor no later than the mid-service mark, 15 months in country.
2. A practicum report distinct from the summary (3-5 page) report required for the State Department.
3. An additional "culminating experience" different from, but possibly related to, the assignment.