

APEX Preceptor Guidelines

Preceptor Overview

As a preceptor, you will supervise and help train the next generation of public health professionals through their Applied Practice Experience (APEX). The APEX is a hands-on opportunity to implement student's public health knowledge and skills in a real-world setting with the goal of demonstrating attainment of at least five public health [competencies](#), as established by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). Three of these competencies must be foundational competencies. The student's fulfillment of the competencies will be demonstrated by documentation of two products that are created during the applied practice experience. The products should demonstrate that the student has applied specific competencies in a practice setting. Students will work with their faculty advisor, and preceptor to make sure that the applied practice activities are mutually beneficial to the site and the student.

APEX Basics

- One major option for Applied Practice Experiences (APEX) is a practicum or internship, job, or volunteer position.
- It can take the form of part-time or full-time positions based locally, nationally or internationally.
- It can be paid or unpaid.
- The applied practice experience can be based on current employment.
- Experiences are typically completed over one or two semesters.

How to Become a Preceptor

Identify a project or area of need within your organization. Projects where you could use assistance, program or policy development, data gathering and analysis, or health promotion could be ideal learning opportunities for our students and help your agency with important work. In addition, students may contact you to discuss a possible experience that will mutually benefit the site and the student.

- Sites can create a formal position description for the experience, if you have not yet identified a student.
- Sites can establish the APEX without a formal description with a student you are already working with, a student you know, or with a student who contacts you.

What to Include in an APEX Position Description

- Establish the duration, schedule, location, and whether or not it is a paid experience. Indicate how students will apply for the position.

- Select a student to temporarily join your team. Students will discuss the five competencies and two products with their site supervisor before beginning the experience. The student will be responsible for completing and signing the learning agreement where you will review and sign electronically the student's learning agreement.
- The learning agreement will be forwarded to you as the preceptor, student, course director, and the program coordinator for approval and signatures.

Preceptor Responsibilities

- Oversee and direct the student's on-site experience
- Approve the student's learning objectives, competencies, and products, review, and sign the online learning agreement prior to the start of the experience
- The preceptor and student should agree on the time required to complete projects and complete a meaningful APEx
- Provide students with learning experiences reflective of student's learning objectives and identified competencies
- Contact the APEx faculty advisor, if needed, with questions or to provide feedback outside of the final evaluation
- Preceptors will complete an evaluation of student's competency attainment (e.g. met, partially met, and did not meet). **Note: preceptors will not be responsible for grading students.**

Student responsibilities

Before beginning the APEx, students need to work with the preceptor to agree on the following:

- An APEx that benefits the practice site and enables the student to fulfil APEx requirements
- The competencies to be practiced through the APEx
- The time commitment required (e.g., number of hours/weeks) to complete projects and complete a meaningful APEx
- The products that will benefit the practice site and document the practice of specified competencies through the APEx

Important: Students need to explain to preceptors the timeline and steps involved in completing the online Learning Agreement.

For Additional information please contact your APEx course director.