

Department of Social, Behavioral, and Population Sciences
Guidelines for the ILE or Public Health Analysis (PHA)
Updated Fall 2021

Introduction

All masters programs in Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine require students to complete an Integrated Learning Experience (ILE). The ILE is the means by which students synthesize and integrate knowledge acquired in course work and apply theory and principles. The product of the ILE is a high-quality written public health analysis document that demonstrates achievement of the core and program competencies.

For students in the Department of Social, Behavioral and Population Sciences meet this requirement by completing the Public Health Analysis (PHA). Nutrition MPH students should discuss whether to complete the PHA or take the SBPS 7980 Professional Practice Seminar Nutrition class with their advisor.

The following are suggested guidelines for completing the PHA.

What is a Public Health Analysis?

The PHA is a planned project that addresses a public health issue and demonstrates the application of skills, synthesis of knowledge, and analysis of real-world problems in public health. The PHA project may take several forms, and all must generate a high-quality written document that could be used by organizations and individuals outside of Tulane. Examples of the types of projects for the public health analysis include: an applied research project that examines a public health issue; a critical review of a public health issue that include synthesis and analysis of the topic with recommendations; an evaluation of a public health program or project; or a policy analysis with supporting research. **In the past, most students have chosen a critical analysis of a public health issue based on a literature review.**

The first step of the process is for the advisor and student to develop specific objectives for the PHA that are aligned with the MPH program competencies. The PHA must address a specific issue that is important to public health practice. Examples of topics that would be appropriate for a PHA are:

- The Efficacy of the Ebola Vaccine and Public Perception on West Africa
- Examining the role of Insurance Type in Access to Health Care for Adults and Children in Louisiana
- The South's Undue Burden: How a Pandemic-Era Ruling Undermined Abortion Rights in the Gulf South
- Police Sexual Misconduct: A Systemic Crisis

PHAs must be newly written documents and may not represent a re-use (in whole or in part) of papers completed for classes. Re-used papers will be considered plagiarized.

If the student chooses to do a critical review, the PHA must include a thorough review and analysis of the scientific literature on this topic. This literature review must be based only on primary sources from peer-reviewed journals and grey literature (i.e., non-peer-reviewed reports

issued by organizations such as the CDC, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). The report must include a discussion of the implications of the literature review, with recommendations for public policy or practice.

Format: The PHA should be between 12 and 15 pages (3,600 to 4,500 words), double-spaced, not including the abstract or references. The abstract should be 250 words or less. References must be in either APA format or the format used by the American Journal of Public Health (AJPH).

What timeline should be followed?

The attached SBPS PHA Checklist describes the required schedule for completion of the PHA.

Students must register for SPHL 7950 Culminating Experience at least once (in their next-to-last or their last regular semester). Students may register for the culminating experience up to two (2) times.

The student and advisor should identify the topic and objectives of the PHA at the beginning of the next-to-last regular semester (i.e., Fall or Spring, depending on when the student started the program) prior to the student's anticipated graduation (the penultimate semester). For example, for students graduating in May 2024, this discussion should start in early Fall 2023. By the fourth week of classes of that semester, the student should submit a PHA proposal to their advisor consisting of the following parts:

- Title
- PHA objectives
- An abstract or a description of the paper
- A working bibliography of at least three references.

Final PHA reports **should be submitted by students to their advisors by the end of the first week of classes of their final regular semester (see below for instructions on how to submit this to your advisor)**. See the PHA Checklist for further details of the PHA process. Your advisor may make changes to the timeline based on their availability and PHA workload.

How do I submit my PHA?

Final PHA reports must be submitted via email to a Box folder by the end of the first week of classes of the final semester. Below are the submission instructions:

1. Save your PHA as a word document **using the following protocol:** Your Name. Your Advisors Name. Date you are submitting the file. (Ex.: JaneDoe.Seal.1.15.24).
2. Email your PHA to your advisor and to Anita Jobson-Wolfe
3. One or both of them will email you that they have received your final PHA

How will PHAs be evaluated?

The following assessment rubric will be used to evaluate the PHA. **The advisor and the student can revise the rubric as needed to ensure that the assessment criteria fit the PHA.**

Objective	Description	Comments and scoring by faculty advisor 1= not acceptable 2 = acceptable 3 = above average 4 = outstanding N/A = not applicable
Goals and specific objectives	Goals and objectives clearly stated; and aligned with the program competencies.	
Background and significance	The issue and why it is relevant to public health is clearly described	
Methods	The methodology used for the PHA is sound and clearly described. Critical analysis includes a description of the databases accessed, key words used in the search, years of review included, and the approach for summarizing the literature.	
Summary of findings/results	The summary of project activities and findings are well organized and demonstrate program skills.	
Analysis and interpretation	The data is compiled and analyzed using the appropriate methods, as described in the methods section.	
Discussion	The discussion shows critical thinking and problem-solving using data. The interpretation of findings is based on the data and shows problem solving skills. Shows achievement of the core and program competencies.	
Conclusion	Conclusions are supported by the data and recommendations are feasible.	
Written communication	The abstract is concise and accurately describes the project. The paper is well organized and shows consistency and flow from the goals/objectives through the conclusions. It is at least 12 pages double spaced and free of grammatical and spelling errors.	

The PHA may be checked for plagiarism using the software package, Turnitin, or another similar package.

The advisor will grade your PHA as Pass, Minor Revisions Needed, or Major Revisions Needed within two (2) weeks after submission. The evaluation will be based on the overall quality of the PHA and according to the criteria specified in the rubric.

Upon successful completion of the final paper, students are responsible for completing the school's ILE Completion Form (available on the SPHTM intranet) and submitting the form to the departmental Program Coordinator. The department will keep a copy of the PHA report in a digital archive that will be available for program review.

What happens if I do not get a passing grade on my PHA?

If your advisor determines that minor or major revisions are needed, then your PHA does not meet the standard for a passing grade, and you will be given comments and suggestions for improvement. Ideally, if those comments are taken seriously and addressed appropriately, you should pass this PHA requirement. In exceptional situations where the student does not adequately address deficiencies in the PHA by the deadline for confirming graduation, a student may not be allowed to graduate until their PHA is brought up to the standard for passing.