

**Public Health Program**

**Capstone Writing Manual**

**Capstone Writing Requirements**

The Capstone writing requirements are intended to integrate the internship experience with competencies and skills acquired during completion of the Public Health major. The requirements entail writing an extensive paper and preparing poster presentation. The Capstone Paper summarizes the senior culminating internship experience and links the internship experience to national and international public health concerns. This paper provides an extensive literature review, links between the internship experience and the original goals and objectives set for the internship, reflections on policy and programs, and conclusions linking the internship to national and international public health initiatives. The capstone poster highlights the host agency and programs that were part of the internship experience. The poster is intended to be the basis of a public presentation at a conference locally or nationally. Both documents are considered public and, for example, may be posted on a TCNJ website.

**Outline of the Capstone Paper***Literature Review*

The Capstone paper requires an extensive literature review. The literature review should review the health concern(s), intervention strategies, or policy issues that were the focus of the internship. The literature review should begin with a section for the background to the health concern(s) possibly including extent of the problem, burden of disease, health threat and possible interventions. The next section should describe the host agency and their place within the context of the public health infrastructure. The following section should describe public health approaches to minimizing or remediating the health concern, intervention strategies and/or best practices. The last section should link the health concern to national agendas such as the US Health People 2020 goals and objectives or internal agendas such as those set by the World Health Agency.

The literature review should be tailored to the health concern and host agency and, as possible, be a resource for the host agency.

*The internship experience*

The first section of the internship experience should provide details on the successes achieved. This section could be organized by topic, chronologically or by the goals and objectives originally agreed on for the internship. This section should cover all aspects of the internship experience and include stories that illustrate the experience and highlight the successes and achievements of the intern.

The second section should outline areas where the internship experience could have been improved. This section should be written generally highlighting organizational and policy aspects. This section should end with suggestions and recommendations applicable to the host agency and/or the TCNJ Public Health program.

*National and Global Recommendations*

Drawing on past courses and knowledge of national and international public health initiatives, this section should discuss how their academic understanding of the health concern(s) was expanded based on the internship experience. This section should highlight how best practices, policy and other initiatives could be informed by the internship experience. This section should conclude with recommendations that could inform national and international health initiatives.

*Conclusions*

The final section should highlight the student’s final thoughts about their internship experience and provide guidance for other public health students who may pursue a similar internship experience.

*Appendix*

Materials developed as part of the internship experience should be included in the appendix such as: brochures, surveys, web pages and other materials and products.

*Citations*

All references should be in the American Journal of Public Health format.

**Outline of the Capstone Poster**

The Capstone poster highlights the host agency and programs and activities that were part of the internship experience. The poster includes pictures, diagrams, tables and section narratives. Sections usually include a background for the disease or health concern, information about programs and activities, and outcomes and successes. Research focused internships may include study design, results and conclusions. Posters should follow American Public Health Association guidelines

(<https://www.apha.org/events-and-meetings/annual/presenter-information/poster-session-guidelines>).

Posters generally fit within a 4 foot high by 8 foot wide format and are either a series of Power Point printed pages or one page that is formatted to include all of the information required.

The poster should include the logos of the host agency and TCNJ in the top corners. The title should be in a font that can be easily seen from a few feet away and should fit between the logos. The author list starts with the student and includes the host agency personnel involved in the internship as well as TCNJ faculty advisor if that advisor had an important influence for the internship experience.

From the APHA guidance: Materials should include the title of the presentation and list of authors. Letters in the title should be at least 1 inch high. Bring all illustrations needed -- figures, tables, color photographs, charts. The material should be well labeled and legible from a distance of 10 to 15 feet away. Lettering should be bold. If you will be posting typed material, use a large font size (24 point font) on white, non-glossy paper. Use 1-inch margins. Avoid use of fancy fonts. Use upper and lowercase letters. Sans serif fonts such as Veranda are much easier to read than Serif fonts.

**Presentation of the Capstone Poster**

Students are expected to submit an abstract to a TCNJ, local or national conference related to public health. The TCNJ public health conference is planned for the Spring semester and is a venue for public presentation of student posters. Students are expected to stand by their posters for the duration of the conference and to discuss the poster and their experience to conference attendees. Presenters should be prepared to distribute copies of the poster and/or other materials to promote the host agency.

**Overall Content of Written Requirements**

All paper and poster contents must be approved by the Capstone faculty advisor prior to sharing with the host agency. While the host agency does not officially approve the written contents, the host agency is given ample opportunity to review written documents prior to making documents available such as posting on the TCNJ website.

Students must secure permission for all photographs and/or reproduced graphic images.