



DOWNSTATE
HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

MPH Integrative Learning Experience Handbook

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What is the Integrative Learning Experience?

The Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) is a two-credit culminating experience that requires the student to integrate and translate knowledge, theory and skills learned in the classroom into a final paper and presentation. The ILE is designed to strengthen foundational and concentration-specific public health competencies, complement the student's interests, and advance professional and career goals. The ILE requires a student to integrate knowledge acquired throughout the Masters of Public Health Program. The ILE proposal form must be developed in conversation with and then subsequently approved by the student's Faculty Advisor.

The ILE project consists of an analytic paper (the "ILE paper"), and the development and delivery of an oral presentation for faculty and other attendees (the "ILE presentation"). The ILE paper will typically be based on a literature review, policy analysis, or a data project. After acceptance of the final paper by the Faculty Advisor, the student will make an oral ILE presentation (with slides) on his or her work. The ILE presentation will provide an opportunity for the student to receive input and feedback on the ILE from faculty, staff, and students across the Downstate community. The completed ILE project must demonstrate a student's mastery of competencies in their own department, as well as their ability to integrate the competencies for foundational public health knowledge. Please see the schedule of milestones and due dates in the section entitled "Eligibility, Timing, & Requirements."

NOTE: Students are expected to complete the ILE in the semester in which they are enrolled. The ILE is assessed as either "Pass" or "Fail." When a student is unable to complete the ILE in the semester in which they are enrolled, the student must contact the Faculty Advisor to determine the appropriate resolution, whether to withdraw from the course or receive an "Incomplete". If it should be determined by the Faculty Advisory that an "Incomplete" is warranted, the student must complete all requirements within 1 year of the first day of the semester in which an incomplete is assigned. If an "I" is not fully resolved within this timeframe, the course grade will be calculated based on all coursework submitted by the end of the timeframe. The course instructor may extend the timeline for completing the course requirements in special conditions (i.e., student leave of absence, continuing extenuating circumstances, etc.). In this case, the course instructor will send an additional email to the student, stating the amended timeline, with a copy to the chair of the department.

Eligibility, Timing, & Requirements

Timing

Students should register and complete the ILE in the semester in which they plan to graduate. The ILE is completed in the final semester of the MPH Program, typically after the APEx is completed.

Eligibility

Students must meet the following prerequisites before enrolling in the ILE:

- Completed all required foundation courses
- Completed or currently enrolled in all required concentration core courses
- Completed or currently enrolled in the APEx

Registration

Students must register for the concentration-specific 2-credit Integrative Learning Experience course (Pass/Fail) in the semester in which they plan on graduating. Students should discuss their plans for the ILE when meeting with their Faculty Advisor prior to course registration. Students must register for concentration-specific course code (e.g., HPMG, HCAD, EOHS, CHSC, EPID, or BIOS 6001 Integrative Learning Experience) at the outset of the semester in which they plan to complete the ILE. Students are responsible for initiating meetings with their Faculty Advisor prior to registration and throughout the ILE. Students should consult the syllabus for their respective departmental course (e.g., HPMG 6001) for specific submission requirements, including whether to upload to the departmental course site in Brightspace.

Timeline for ILE submission requirements

| ILE Requirement | Deadline | Submission Process |
|---|---|--|
| ILE Proposal Form | Must be signed by the student and Faculty Advisor and submitted before the last day of the Drop/Add Period | Send the signed ILE Proposal Form to the Faculty Advisor |
| Draft ILE paper | One month before the last day of classes | Draft submitted to the Faculty Advisor |
| Draft ILE presentation | The draft ILE presentation must be reviewed by the Faculty Advisor one week before the final ILE presentation | Draft presentation submitted to the Faculty Advisor |
| Final ILE presentation | The final ILE presentation must be presented to the SPH and Downstate community prior to completion of the ILE | Send the final ILE presentation to the Faculty Advisor |
| Final ILE paper and ILE and Paper Assessment Form | The final ILE paper must be approved by the Faculty Advisor. The Faculty Advisor will then complete the ILE Paper Assessment Form and send to the Department Chair for final review and signature approval. | Send the final ILE paper to the Faculty Advisor and Chair. Faculty Advisor and Department Chair sign off on the ILE Paper Assessment Form. |

Note: The Faculty Advisor and Departmental Chairperson must sign off on the ILE prior to ILE completion and graduation.

ILE Proposal Form

All students are required to submit a completed ILE Proposal Form which documents the student's proposed ILE paper topic and associated public health competencies. The student will develop the project in consultation with the Faculty Advisor. Prior to beginning the ILE, the ILE Proposal Form must be signed by the student and the Faculty Advisor, then sent to the Departmental Coordinator by the last day of the Add/Drop Period. The Proposal Form serves as an agreement between the student and the SPH Program. In signing the Proposal Form, the student is affirming that the proposed ILE project does not represent duplicate work that has been submitted elsewhere for another course requirement.

ILE Work Products and Competencies

The ILE will culminate with two required elements: (1) the ILE paper; and (2) the ILE presentation. It is important that students consult with their Faculty Advisor on various stages of writing the paper and developing the presentation. The final ILE presentation is a required 15-20 minute oral presentation of slides to consist of following elements from the ILE paper: Introduction, Public Health Significance, Methods, Results, and Discussion/Conclusions.

The ILE deliverables must address and strengthen three (3) student-selected MPH competencies. Two (2) of these must be Foundational Competencies and one (1) must be a Concentration Competency from the student's home department. See the complete list of [MPH competencies](#). The selected competencies must be identified on the ILE Proposal Form. Upon completion of the ILE paper, the student and Faculty Advisor will assess whether the selected competencies were successfully reflected by the project. Demonstration of the identified competencies is required for completion of the ILE. Integration of the student-selected competencies in the ILE paper is reflected in the ILE Paper Assessment Form to be completed by the student and Faculty Advisor and must include the Advisor's and Departmental Chairperson's signature.

Sample MPH ILE Project Titles

- Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic Quarantine on Weight Gain in Teenagers in Central Brooklyn
- APICHA Survey and Evaluation to meet the Needs of the LGBTQI Asian and Pacific Islanders in NYC
- Contact Tracing – Current Research and Perspectives
- Analyzing factors that Impact Potential Mortality of COVID-19 in Persons with Type II Diabetes
- Diversifying Health Care Fields by Enhancing Pipeline Initiative
- Social Determinants of Health and COVID-19 Outcomes Improving Patient Safety Through Medical Student Education
- Why are Black Moms Dying?
- Integrating Health and Human Services: A Comprehensive Analysis of Local-level Models and Recommendations for New York City
- Shifting the Resources and Awareness of the Black Birthing Experience The Public Health Hazard of Rickettsialpox in New York
- The Public Health Impact of Racism on Maternal Health Strategies to Reduce Disparities in Maternal Morbidity and Mortality
- Evaluation of the Association Between Maternal and Infant Outcomes and Health Barriers in Flatbush

Summary of Deliverables and Due Dates

| Due Date | Data analysis milestone | Literature review milestone | Policy brief milestone |
|----------|--|---|--|
| Week 1 | Choose dataset and develop research question | Choose research question | Identify public health issue and policy topic |
| Week 2 | Submit ILE Proposal Form | Submit ILE Proposal Form | Submit ILE Proposal Form |
| Week 3 | Literature review and literature review table | Literature review table, PRISMA diagram | Develop and submit concept paper and overall paper outline |
| Week 4 | Table of exposure vs. potential confounders, analysis plan, table shells | Summary table of literature main results; evaluate whether results can be synthesized | Identify the public health significance of the topic selected, including a table summarizing what we know about the public health problem and detailed outline |
| Week 5 | Draft methods section, draft tables, draft results section | Draft literature review; Add sources as needed, updating PRISMA diagram | Draft introduction of the public health significance of the problem and policy topic to be addressed |

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|---------|--|---|--|
| Week 6 | Discussion section | Revise literature review; Add section about the implications for policy and practice and suggestions for further research | Identify 2 to 3 policy alternatives, drawing on those proposed previously or advocated for by relevant intermediaries/advocacy organizations |
| Week 7 | Introduction and literature review | Introduction section: significance and background, why literature review is necessary; Add citations and references as needed | Draft description of at least two evaluation criteria and analyze and evaluate the policy alternatives against one another |
| Week 8 | Abstract and complete first draft | Abstract and complete first draft | Draft recommendations and abstract of Policy Analysis; Submit to Faculty Advisor |
| Week 9 | Revision suggestions returned by advisor | Revision suggestions returned by advisor | Revision suggestions returned by Faculty Advisor |
| Week 10 | Submit revision | Submit revision | Submit revision |
| Week 11 | Create presentation slides | Create presentation slides | Create presentation slides |
| Week 12 | Presentation slides approval by advisor; Presentation practice session Oral presentations – Dates TBD | Presentation slides approval by advisor; Presentation practice session Oral presentations – Dates TBD | Presentation slides approval by advisor; Presentation practice session Oral presentations-Dates TBD |
| Week 13 | Oral presentations – Dates TBD | Oral presentations – Dates TBD | Oral presentations-Dates TBD |

Frequently Asked Questions

Can the ILE requirement be waived based on work experience?

No. Exemptions are not granted for the ILE. A student's work experience prior to enrolling in graduate school at the SUNY Downstate School of Public Health, while important to professional development, was not guided by the knowledge gained in coursework at the SPH. Therefore, prior work experience does not substitute for the ILE requirement.

What is the difference between the Applied Practicum Experience (APEX) and the Integrative Learning Experience?

An APEX is a supervised practice experience in the field of public health designed to enhance a student's professional skills and knowledge. The ILE is a higher-level written product that requires the synthesis of knowledge and evidence on a particular public health topic. It is important to remember, that even if an APEX and ILE are related to each other, they must be distinct projects. While an APEX requires the completion of deliverables which may take the form of a literature review, the ILE is an additional requirement and cannot serve one of the required 2 deliverables/products of the APEX. To fulfill the ILE, students are expected to write a paper and give an ILE Oral Presentation based on the ILE Paper.

Can I be registered in APEX concurrently with my Integrative Learning Experience?

Yes. Typically, however, the ILE is completed in the final semester after the APEX is complete.

What if I do not complete my ILE in the semester I registered?

Students are expected to complete the ILE in the semester in which they are enrolled. The ILE is assessed as either a "Pass" or "Fail." In cases where students are unable to complete the ILE in the semester in which they are enrolled, the student must contact the Faculty Advisor to determine the appropriate resolution, whether to withdraw from the course or receive a grade of "Incomplete". If it should be determined by the Faculty Advisory that an "Incomplete" is warranted, the student must complete all requirements within 1 year of the first day of the semester in which an incomplete is assigned.

Does the ILE show up on my transcript?

Yes, the ILE will show up on the transcript and will be graded as "Pass/Fail".

What format should I use for the title page for my ILE?

Please use the following format on the first page of the written document.

Title of Paper *(Insert)*

by

Student Name *(Insert)*

Previous Degrees *(Insert Degrees separately, include University and Year of graduation)*

Integrative Learning Experience Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Public Health

In the School of Public Health, Department of *(Insert)*

Supervisor: Faculty Advisor Name and Credentials *(Insert)*

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, DOWNSTATE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

Month, Year *(Insert)*