Public Health Science (PHSC) majors at the University of Maryland are encouraged to incorporate real-world, practical experience into their degree programs through internships. The aim is to integrate fieldwork with the concepts of public health and science learned in the classroom. While an internship is not required for the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree in Public Health Science, PHSC majors may apply up to 6 credits from an approved internship experience towards their Public Health Science Options.

**INTERNSHIP BENEFITS**

Whether in-person or remote, internships offer a multitude of benefits:

- Gain experience
- Develop field knowledge/skills
- Assess interests and abilities
- Make connections
- Strengthen resume
- Boost employability
- Strengthen graduate and professional school applications

**INTERNSHIP ELIGIBILITY**

- The Public Health Science internship is open to PHSC students who complete 45 credits for College Park students, 75 credits for Shady Grove students, and have a minimum GPA of 2.5.
- Credit is allowed for approved internships within the United States, paid or unpaid, in-person or remote.
- The internship must be supervised. The supervisor must have a master’s degree or 5 years of experience in the field.
- Students must be enrolled in an internship course while in an internship. Many students enroll in PHSC399, but internship courses (300 and 400 level) may be taken in other UMD departments/programs with approval in advance by the PHSC Internship Coordinator. Credit cannot be granted on a retroactive basis. Enrollment in PHSC399 is by permission only. Students will get their registration stamp after they have turned in a completed Internship Contract. The PHSC399 internship course may be repeated for up to 6 credits.
- No more than 6 combined credits of internship and independent study may be counted as PHSC options, regardless of course prefix.
- Students who have been employed at an organization for more than 3 months will not be eligible for an internship at that organization unless their job description has changed significantly to reflect a higher level of responsibility.
INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The student is responsible for obtaining his/her internship placement within the guidelines of the program. Students are responsible for contacting the internship site, providing all documents required by the internship site (resume, cover letter, writing sample, etc.), and arranging for an interview. The program will provide support and guidance to locate an appropriate internship site, but ultimately the hiring decision is the sole discretion of the internship site supervisor.

If offered the position, students must complete an Internship Contract with their site supervisor and submit it to the Internship Coordinator by the required deadline (see below). Internship contracts can be found on the Public Health Science internship homepage: https://sph.umd.edu/department/phs/public-health-science-internships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadlines for submitting completed contract:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall internships: August 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring internships: January 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer internships: March 22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If these deadlines fall on a non-business day, contracts must be submitted by the last business day prior to the deadline. Students are encouraged to begin their internship search early in the semester prior, thus ensuring enough time to secure an internship and submit a completed contract by the above deadlines. Failure to secure an internship, receive approval, and complete an internship contract by the deadline generally means a student will not be able to earn credit for the upcoming semester/summer.

Interns are expected to work in accordance with the number of credit hours they are enrolled in for their internship course. The credits and corresponding hourly work expectations are listed below for fall and spring schedules at 15 weeks, and summer schedules at 12 weeks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internship Credits (PHSC399)</th>
<th>Fall &amp; Spring Weekly Hours</th>
<th>Summer Weekly Hours</th>
<th>Total Semester Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>18+</td>
<td>22.5+</td>
<td>270+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For PHSC399, students are required to complete all the requirements included in the course syllabus, as summarized below:

- Mid-term and final evaluations by site supervisor
- Internship presentation (oral and written)
- Class engagement (via social media participation)
HOW TO SECURE AN INTERNSHIP

Before students begin an internship search, they should think about the kinds of work they might like to try in preparation for a career after graduation. It helps to consider population(s) of interest (e.g., persons with disabilities, children, older adults, women, specific race/ethnic group), knowledge and skills areas of interest (e.g., program planning, evaluation, community education), and environments they might like to work in (e.g., hospital, government agency). Internships must be consistent with one or more of the following PHSC competencies:

- Discuss the history and philosophy of public health as well as its core values, concepts, and functions across the globe and in society.
- Use basic public health concepts, methods, and tools for data collection and analysis.
- Identify the major health-related needs and concerns of populations and formulate basic processes, approaches, and interventions as possible solutions.
- Describe the underlying science of human health and disease including opportunities for promoting and protecting health across the lifespan.
- Examine the socio-economic, behavioral, biological, environmental, and other factors that impact human health and contribute to health disparities.
- Demonstrate the fundamental concepts and features of project implementation, including planning, assessment, and evaluation.
- Compare and contrast the fundamental characteristics and organizational structures of the health systems of the United States and other countries.
- Characterize the basic concepts of legal, ethical, economic, and regulatory dimensions of health care and public policy.
- Illustrate the basic concepts of public health-specific writing and communication.
- Interpret and synthesize scientific knowledge to propose evidence-based approaches and solutions to public health problems.

Once the student has decided upon the kind of internship he or she wants to pursue, there are resources by which to search for appropriate placements:

- **Public Health Science Program Internship Database**: We offer two approaches to searching our PHSC database for pre-approved internship sites: 1) The database in the form of an Excel spreadsheet offers an easy approach to search for approved internship sites with descriptions of past PHSC internship placements, site addresses, supervisor contact information, and job descriptions. You may filter this spreadsheet by type of organization, interest area (Category), and city. This spreadsheet must be requested by Public Health Science majors by contacting the Internship Coordinator, Nancy Smith, at phscintern@umd.edu. 2) In addition to the Excel spreadsheet is a searchable Word document that is online with secure-access through Box. Please ask the Internship Coordinator for more information.
Career & Internship Services: Help is available in identifying internships of interest, career coaching, and assistance with resume and cover letter writing, interview preparation, and use of virtual job search tools:

- Shady Grove: Call 301.738.6338 or usgcareerservices@umd.edu. Also visit the Career and Internship Services Center (CISC) located within the Office of Student Services.

- College Park: One-on-one appointments may be made through the Careers4Terps online system: https://careers.umd.edu/careers4terps. The SPH Career Center Liaison is Lauren Meier.

Public Health Science Internship Coordinator, Nancy Smith (phscintern@umd.edu).

NEW INTERNSHIP SITES

Students are not restricted to the internship placements listed in the database. Students are encouraged to network, or to peruse websites such as Idealist.org, Monster.com, APHA.org, or NACCHO.org.

New internship sites must be approved. Students should submit a new site approval request via email to Nancy Smith at phscintern@umd.edu. Please follow the format below and include all of the requested information. Failure to include any information could result in non-approval of the internship.

Subject Line: New Internship Approval Request

Body of the email:
1. Your name, UID, email address
2. Site contact information:
   a. Name of organization
   b. Address of organization
   c. Site supervisor’s name (include Dr., Ms., Mr.), and title in organization
   d. Site supervisor’s phone number and email address (both are important)
3. Brief description of organization, including its mission, services, etc. (information should not be cut and pasted from a website.)
4. A list of potential internship activities (be as specific as possible.) These must align with the Public Health Science Competencies referenced earlier.

Students should receive approval or non-approval of a proposed new internship site within 7 – 10 business days of submission of this request. If the internship site is approved, the student can proceed with completion of the Internship Contract. Internship contracts can be found on the Public Health Science Internship webpage at the bottom of the page under Resources: https://sph.umd.edu/department/phs/public-health-science-internships
CONSIDERATIONS FOR SAFE IN-PERSON WORK DURING COVID-19

Approved internships are expected to follow local, state, and national guidelines for employee safety, and will be vetted for this during the internship approval process. New as well as pre-approved internship sites that require in-person work during the Covid-19 pandemic will be vetted for safety measures. These measures will then be communicated to the student. It is important for students to understand the safety measures and decide if they are comfortable with them in advance of starting an internship. Although students are never obligated to stay at a site where they feel unsafe, it is important to do their best to avoid having to leave mid-course by being proactive and thoroughly considering their comfort level with the planned safety protocols. This may involve asking additional questions of the site, and discussing the protocols with their families. Leaving an internship early is typically considered unprofessional as it can pose hardships for a site. Leaving early also has implications for student internship credit. If a student has concerns about safety before, during, or after an internship, it is important to contact the Internship Coordinator immediately.

Safety protocols should address:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Social distancing expectations
- Physical space modifications (e.g., shields; designated entrances and exits)
- Safety training
- Travel restrictions
- Daily health reporting
- Other measures to mitigate risk to self and others

CONSIDERATION FOR REMOTE WORK

Introduction to Remote Work:
The terms remote work, virtual internship, online internship, tele-work, and tele-commuting all mean the same thing—that students complete internships at home, typically from their own laptops. Remote work is acceptable for credit and considered a particularly safe option during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Students must be fully supervised and supported as they gain industry knowledge from within the field of public health.

When completing a remote internship many of the same aspects of a traditional in-person internship still exist including, meetings with your supervisor or teammates, completing a mix of individual and group projects, and learning about the overall organizational culture and field it works in.

Unlike a traditional internship there may exist much more flexibility in the hours you work, project timelines, and how you connect with your team.
Tips for Working from Home:

Workplace
Remote work takes increased focus and initiative which can be hard if you do not have the right space. It is important to set up a comfortable place to support success and keep stress low.

1. Find a workspace other than the couch. The couch does not support your posture and can lead to pain and discomfort if working daily.

2. Adjust your chair to ensure the height allows you to sit with your elbow bent at 90° to the table.

3. Adjust your monitor so your screen is about an arm’s length away so that you reduce eye strain and do not have to bend to see, impairing your posture. The top of your screen should be eye-level and if you are working from a laptop you may benefit from purchasing a laptop stand and external keyboard to meet these suggestions. If you have two monitors positioned directly in front of you or if you work from both simultaneously, position them at equal distances in front of you.

4. Limit the need to reach by creating a desk space where your mouse, keyboard, phone and other tools are within reach and you are not having to pivot, lean, overextend or more to get to what you need quickly.

Technology
Working in a remote environment you will be reliant on your technology more than ever and will need to quickly adapt to how your site utilizes each platform.

1. Prior to starting your internship, get acquainted with all technology that your site has noted you will use. If you do not yet know consider learning the basics of some popular ones (Trello, Slack, Gchat, and Microsoft Teams). Consider watching a demo or tutorial to give you the basics.

2. Ask for access as soon as possible. If you start your first day with no access to email, chat platforms, or more, you will be starting a day behind. Reach out to your supervisor a week prior to the start date, noting your excitement to start and clarifying when you will be given an email address and access to any main modes of communication. By clarifying when and how you will connect you will be ready to focus on bigger things your first day such as making connections and understanding your new projects.

3. Be prepared to adjust your technology to your supervisor. While one platform may be easier for you to use, try to match the mode of communication and platform to your Supervisor. For example if you have access to a chat platform and email, but your supervisor always emails, then you should also be mainly emailing. Take care to match your colleagues’ style and tone in communication also. This means that if internally they always use a greeting and signature, then you best also use that. If email is the number one mode of communication you will also need to figure out how to keep everything organized, using clear subject lines and creating folders to store key messages so your inbox does not get overwhelmed.

Make Yourself Known
It is important in every job you have to ensure that you can make connections with your supervisor and colleagues. While working in an office this may occur through in-person introductions, lunch breaks, and meetings. Online internships may limit introductions to a virtual meeting, email chain, or quick message. Make sure you take the time to personally reach out to each new colleague to introduce yourself, share your contact details, and let each know that you are interested in learning as much as you can as an
intern, and providing support where needed. This brief introduction will help everyone feel more comfortable working alongside you and potentially letting you support new projects!

**Clarify Your Projects and Availability**
Start a habit of checking in on a predictable schedule (e.g., at the start of each day) to say hello and layout your work plans for the day. At the end of each work day, it is polite to give a rundown of your progress and let your supervisor know when you are signing off. Your supervisor may ask for a lower frequency of check-ins as time passes and routines are set, but providing strong check-ins at the beginning will let your supervisor know you are reliable, and what you are working on as well as your capacity to take on more work. It will also help to establish a positive and comfortable rapport with your supervisor.

**Schedule Check-Ins**
If your supervisor does not set up a weekly or at least bi-weekly direct check-in within your first week working, take the initiative and reach out and request one to be scheduled. A lot can get lost in translation through written communication (such as someone’s tone, or the importance of the information in an email) and a check-in call will help everyone be on the same page.

**Take Initiative**
Remote work puts more responsibility on the individual to be proactive in requesting support or potentially more work. If you come across times where you are working under 75% of your potential capacity then it is up to you to reach out and see where else you could support.

1. Speak with your supervisor in the first instance to see if there are additional projects or tasks you can take on. If your supervisor has no additional projects, ask them if there are any colleagues you could reach out to and volunteer your support. This may allow the supervisor to make a connection to a colleague for you.

2. If no additional work is to be found, review where you could potentially create work. If you are completing a project looking at social media for the next 2 months, could you go above and beyond looking at 3 months? If you completed a key internal project, was there additional research like a SWOT analysis, or project expansion proposal you could potentially create?

3. Finally, if you are not at capacity for projects and work, and no additional projects can be found at the moment, use this time to brush up on organizational knowledge, as well as skills like software.

**SUMMARY OF INTERNSHIP APPROVAL PROCESS**

1. **Secure Internship.**
2. **Complete Internship Contract.** Work with your internship supervisor to complete this Contract. This will require the expected weekly hours worked, a brief summary of the responsibilities of the position including a description of daily responsibilities or the nature of the project for the internship period. The position should allow the student intern the opportunity to apply the public health competencies found above. *If it is a new internship site*, submit the Internship Approval Request via email. Once approved, complete the Internship Contract.
3. Submit the completed Internship Contract to the Internship Coordinator, Nancy Smith (phscintern@umd.edu).

4. Enroll in PHSC399, or other UMD internship course approved by the PHSC Internship Coordinator.

5. Follow all requirements for your internship course to receive credit.

6. Watch your email for announcements.