UNMC College of Public Health
Student Portfolio Guidance

Every Master of Public Health (MPH) student is required to develop a portfolio that describes the student's experiences and accomplishments while at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Public Health (COPH). The portfolio is intended to be relevant to their professional development, and to assess educational outcomes for students in the MPH Program.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PORTFOLIO?

- To demonstrate progress toward public health competencies over time.
- To equip students with products (i.e. résumé, professional mission statement and goals, exceptional work samples) relevant to career development and job searches.
- To enhance the relationship between student and advisor, by discussing student's career and educational goals.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIRED SECTIONS FOR THE PORTFOLIO?

1. Title Page
2. Professional Mission Statement and Goals
3. Competency Reflection
4. Work Samples
5. Résumé

HOW WILL YOUR PORTFOLIO BE SUBMITTED AND REVIEWED?

Various portfolio components will be reviewed in person (via in person meeting, phone or skype conversation, etc.) by you and your advisor, as detailed in the following section. In addition, there is an area on Blackboard to upload your portfolio.

The "Portfolio" folder in the Blackboard MPH program area contains a portfolio template for students to download, complete and upload. By April 1 of every year, you must update the Competency Reflection section and then upload the updated portfolio document into the appropriate folder in Blackboard. The other components of the portfolio document (Mission Statement & Goals and Work Samples should be updated as needed. The final, completed portfolio document must be submitted during your final capstone semester.

Your résumé will be uploaded as a separate document. Please name your résumé document using the following format:

LastName_FirstInitial.ResumeYear e.g. Smith_J.Resume2014

You may submit an updated résumé as often as you like.

WHEN IS THE PORTFOLIO DUE?

The final student portfolio must be submitted as a required component of the capstone course. However, it is important to understand that the portfolio is a living document that should be continually added to and updated throughout your time at COPH.

The Competency Reflection portion of the portfolio must be completed annually, by April 1,. Students who do not upload their annual Competency Reflection in Blackboard by the April 1 deadline will be contacted by the Director of Masters Programs.

It is not expected that you create a new portfolio each year, but simply reflect on your experiences in your program and your career goals and then modify and add to your portfolio to make sure that it accurately reflects your current goals and progress toward competencies.

It is highly recommended that you share your professional mission statement and goals, and your résumé with your advisor during one of your first meetings. This will help guide your conversation and ensure that your plan of study aligns with your career aspirations.

GENERAL TIMING	COMPONENT	REQUIRED/ RECOMMENDED	ACTION
First Year	Mission Statement & Goals Resume	Recommended	Review with Advisor Upload in Blackboard if desired
Every Year, by April 1st	Annual Competency Reflection	Required	Review with Advisor Upload completed document in Blackboard
Each Year	Mission Statement & Goals Résumé	Recommended	Meet with Career Services for assistance as needed Review with Advisor as needed Upload revised versions in Blackboard if desired
Final Semester	Complete Portfolio • Mission Statement & Goals • Resume • Competency Reflection • Work Samples	Required	Upload in Blackboard

WHAT DOES EACH SECTION OF THE PORTFOLIO CONTAIN?

1. **Title Page (first page of Portfolio Template in Blackboard)**
    - Student Name
    - Advisor Name
    - Last Date Updated
    - Last Date Reviewed with your Advisor

2. **Professional Mission Statement and Goals (Second section of Portfolio Template in Blackboard)**

    The professional mission statement and goals may be derived from the personal statement you submitted in your application to COPH, but should be more concise and focused. It is expected that your mission statement and goals will evolve as you participate in the program and develop a greater understanding of public health and your place within it. Some personal mission statements are very specific while others are broader, both of which are fine, as long as your statement captures:

    - Why you chose public health and your concentration
    - What you are passionate about in public health
    - The difference you hope to make with your career

    Your professional goals should be refined and updated throughout your time at COPH.

TIP: Bring your professional mission statement and goals to one of your first meetings with your academic advisor. This will help them get a sense of who you are and will help them guide you throughout your program.

3. **Competency Reflection (Third section of Portfolio Template in Blackboard)**

    This portion of the portfolio is designed for you to reflect on your progress toward core and concentration competencies. Core and Concentration Competencies for your program can be found at the following link:
    http://www.unmc.edu/publichealth/programs/masterofpublichealth/mphcompetencies.html

    Timing: The Competency Reflection is due annually on April 1 throughout your time at COPH.

    Step 1. Schedule a meeting with your advisor. The meeting may include additional conversation points, such as your plan of study, plans for the summer (to gain experience), etc.
    Step 2. **Prior to meeting with your advisor**, identify at least one strength and one weakness with regard to progress toward your core and concentration competencies.

Fill in the Competency Reflection portion of the portfolio template and bring it with you to the meeting with your advisor.

Step 3. Meet with your advisor and discuss your identified strengths and weaknesses. During this conversation, identify strategies to address weaknesses, as needed, via coursework and additional learning experiences.

Step 4. Include a written summary of your conversation with your advisor, including how you plan to address your identified weakness and/or how you plan to utilize your strength.

TIP: For competency areas of strength, identify specific projects or work samples that demonstrate the competency.

4. **Work samples (Fourth section of Portfolio Template in Blackboard)**
   During the job search process you must be able to provide specific examples that illustrate your competencies, skill set and accomplishments. At a minimum, you should be able to discuss them in an interview, or show your work to a potential employer. For example, if you developed fact sheets as a part of your service learning experience, and you are interviewing for a job that emphasizes excellent written communication skills and ability to develop messages for a lay audience, you would want to bring those fact sheets to your interview to show as an example.

   Instructions. In your COPH portfolio, list the specific projects and their related product(s) (i.e. report, presentation, etc.) that you think best illustrate your skillset. For each item, note the competencies that would be showcased best by this example. There is no set minimum or maximum number of items required, but here are some cross-cutting skills that are relevant to most COPH students, and would be desired by potential employers:
   - Data analysis
   - Communication (professional and lay audience, written and verbal)
   - Survey design
   - Needs assessment
   - Ability to work on a team
   - Program design, implementation and evaluation

TIP: Include diverse work samples in your list. Think about the types of jobs you are interested in, and showcase the skills most relevant to those jobs. For example, you might include a survey that you designed through a collaborative process, illustrating both instrumentation skills and collaboration skills.

5. Résumé (Submitted as a separate document in the Blackboard Portfolio folder)

While every COPH student submits a résumé during the admissions process, you should be updating your résumé with new experience acquired during your COPH program and tailoring it to the public health job market. An updated résumé will make it easier for you to respond quickly to job and graduate assistantship openings as well as scholarship openings.

Required sections of the résumé:

a. Contact Information (name, address, email, phone)
b. Educational Information (degree, institution, location, year of graduation)
c. Relevant Professional Experience (paid and unpaid, research and work experience, as relevant to jobs of interest)

Optional sections of the résumé:

d. Publications and Presentations (include posters and manuscripts in progress)
e. Honors and Awards
f. Volunteer and Leadership Experience
g. Professional Memberships
h. Certifications and Licenses
i. Skills (languages, computer, statistical packages)
j. LinkedIn or personal webpage url in the contact information section

Do NOT include:

k. Personal information such as marital status, social security number, date of birth, or nationality
l. Objective statement at the top

TIP: Visit COPH Career Services early during your time at COPH so you can become familiar with résumé development and the tailoring process. COPH Career Services can also help you with your career search, interviewing, and many other tips to maximize your experience at COPH and to make you more employable upon graduation.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO ENHANCE YOUR PORTFOLIO?

Electronic Portfolio (Optional)

COPH Students are encouraged to explore options for compiling an electronic portfolio. LinkedIn offers the ability to link to and upload work examples, which is a good way to highlight your accomplishments. You can also personalize your LinkedIn url, and include that in the contact information area of your résumé. Employers really do look candidates up on LinkedIn, so it's a good idea to take advantage of all of its features!

There are also a number of websites (aboutme.com, wix.com, etc.) that allow you to create a personal website, which many people design to function as a hybrid e-portfolio and résumé.