

## PHE 690 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

### Overview

The final capstone project consists of two components. The first component is a comprehensive and professional Public Health Program Proposal and the second is an Academic and Professional Reflection.

As the final stop in your journey toward your Master of Science in Public Health, you will complete a capstone that will allow you to demonstrate your knowledge and experience. For the duration of the term, you will immerse yourself in integrating what you have learned in your coursework and practice to create an authentic demonstration of your abilities as a public health professional. The Public Health Program Proposal and Academic and Professional Reflection will serve as evidence and samples of your professional identity and represent the skills and abilities you can bring to a potential employer.

Public health is the science and art of creating healthy communities through education, research, and promotion of healthy lifestyles. In public health, the focus is on health promotion and disease/injury prevention, in contrast to the medical model of care, which focuses more heavily upon diagnosing and treating illnesses and conditions after they occur.

Public health professionals analyze and develop programs that protect the health of individuals, families, and communities in the United States and abroad. The United States is placing a high priority on building up the nation's public health workforce: There is a strong demand for public health professionals and researchers to deal with chronic and emerging diseases, environmental health, healthcare policy and reform, and global health issues. The Master of Science in Public Health program has provided you with the skills to conduct research, affect policy change and development, and implement successful public health programs.

**This assessment will evaluate your mastery with respect to the following outcomes:**

- Solve population-based health problems by applying statistical constructs and epidemiological principles to recognize patterns and trends within the scope of public health
- Integrate assessment, monitoring, and prevention strategies to address environmental insults that improve the health, safety, and quality of life for people in their communities
- Develop evidence-based health program proposals targeted at improving healthcare access, quality, and delivery to ensure community health
- Apply social and behavioral health science frameworks and research to evaluate the development and implementation of programs that change behaviors
- Analyze public health policy and formulate communication outreach strategies to promote the health and social justice of individuals, communities, and populations
- Evaluate the emerging public health issues and trends to develop initiatives that protect and promote the health of individuals, communities, and populations



Final Project Component I, the Public Health Program Proposal, is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure a quality final submission. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules Two, Five, and Seven**. The final proposal will be submitted in **Module Nine**. The Academic and Professional Reflection will be submitted in **Module Ten**.

## Prompt

Working individually and with feedback from peers and your instructor, you will identify, research, and analyze a real public health issue (obesity, mental health, tobacco use, chronic disease, prescription drug abuse/misuse, etc.) affecting a community. You will build this program proposal throughout the term, completing various milestone assignments, meeting deadlines, and refining your plan. You will accompany this written plan with a reflection on your professional journey through the MS.PHE program.

You will first create an appropriate, well-researched public health program proposal. The proposal will include a Statement of the Problem, a Needs Assessment, an Academic Rationale, and Program Recommendations. It will be exemplary of your professional identity and should be considered a representation of the skills and abilities you bring to a potential employer. For this reason, the public health issue you choose should be relevant to an area in which you have interest. You will review a shortlist of resources included in the [Public Health Issue Data Checklist](#) to begin researching topics and data sources for your final proposal. Your instructor will be available to also brainstorm ideas and act as an advisor throughout this process. You will additionally participate in discussion topic peer review sessions, providing feedback to your classmates and receiving feedback on your project.

You will then craft an insightful professional and academic reflection on your journey through your program.

## Evaluation of the Capstone

This capstone will be assessed somewhat differently than other courses you have taken online at SNHU. There are two separate components that will be submitted at different times during the course; however, they both operate together to comprise the whole capstone experience and *are not* assessed separately. You will be evaluated on both of them as a unit in determining whether you have achieved proficiency in each outcome. Both components must be completed at the highest levels, as the strengths of one cannot “make up for” the weaknesses in another. Your instructor will guide you through this process. Your work is expected to meet the highest professional standards.

## Capstone Component 1: Public Health Program Proposal

The first of two capstone components, this comprehensive and professional Public Health Program Proposal should have four primary sections and demonstrate the knowledge and skills you have honed throughout the MS.PHE program:

- I. **Statement of the Problem:** Outline the scope and nature of the public health problem and identify your overall program goals. The statement should include but not be limited to the following:
  - A. Scope and nature of the public health problem, including target population and community
  - B. Relevant social determinants and epidemiological patterns, trends, and other illustrative demographic information
  - C. Overall program goals, including subordinate objectives and long-term outcomes

- II. **Needs Assessment:** You are not expected to conduct a new needs assessment. Rather, use the provided webpages and your own search using available resources to collect data from other existing programs that are relevant to your program. Your needs assessment should include but not be limited to the following:
- Describe the assets and needs of the community
  - Define the scope of the need
  - Detail the benefits of collaboration
  - Analyze the data
  - Prepare findings, priorities, and actions
- III. **Academic Rationale:** Use evidence-based secondary sources to analyze how the health problem has been addressed historically and is being currently addressed in other communities. Be sure to evaluate the efficacy of the research you review. This is where you will find evidence to support your choice of theoretical frameworks and program model.
- IV. **Program Recommendations:**
- Detail the public health strategies that you plan to implement based on all your research
  - Recommend evaluation methods and performance metrics for monitoring implementation and determining efficacy of the program
  - Address relevant obstacles, challenges, and limitations

This report should be submitted in a professional format. The final report should be in the range of 15–20 pages. In the “real world,” there are usually not any page length requirements. Therefore, the 15- to 20-page range is a suggestion, and you should use your best professional judgment regarding the length of your report.

### Capstone Component 2: Academic and Professional Reflection

This essay is your chance to reveal and discuss your thoughts about the process and outcomes of this project, your journey through your master’s program, and how you plan to position yourself professionally. Writing reflectively allows you to think deeply and consciously about your experiences. Your ability to self-analyze in a business-appropriate manner, to address areas of growth, and to articulate goals and plans is invaluable to successful practice.

This succinct essay should address the following:

- Why did you select this community to plan a program for?
- Justify your choice of theoretical framework and program models, using your research.
- How did you apply the theories and research practices you learned during your academic program and this course to actual practices?
- What would you like to have done had you had more time?
- How will you apply what you have learned to your future academic and/or professional life?
- How has your professional ethical point of view developed from a public health perspective during your degree journey? How do you see yourself positioned to make globally, socially, ethically, and legally responsible public health decisions?

## Milestones

### Milestone One: Problem Identification and Statement

In **Module Two**, you will identify the public health issue you have chosen to research for your final proposal. In a brief but formal problem statement, you will outline the scope and nature of the problem and include a discussion of the community affected by the problem. In addition, you will identify your overall goals in seeking to solve the problem. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

### Milestone Two: Complete Statement of Problem and Needs Assessment

In **Module Five**, you will submit a complete statement of the public health issue you have identified as well as a needs assessment to help inform the program recommendations you will be making as part of Milestone Three due in Module Seven. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

### Milestone Three: Academic Rationale and Program Recommendations

In **Module Seven**, you will provide the program recommendations to solve the public health issue that you have been researching. You will also provide an academic rationale for these program recommendations to ensure that they align with the program goals you identified as the concluding section of the complete statement of problem and needs assessment that you outlined in Milestone Two. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

### Component 1: Public Health Program Proposal

In **Module Nine**, you will submit your final program proposal. This comprehensive and professional proposal should include all four primary sections as outlined in this document: *Statement of the Problem*, *Needs Assessment*, *Academic Rationale*, and *Program Recommendations*. Be sure to incorporate all instructor feedback from your previous milestones. Also, incorporate any feedback you received from your instructor and from your classmates in the discussions and optional journals throughout the course.

Remember, your final Public Health Program Proposal should be submitted in a professional format. The final proposal should be in the range of 15–20 pages. In the “real world,” there are usually not any page length requirements. Therefore, the 15- to 20-page range is a suggestion, and you should use your best professional judgment regarding the length of your proposal. All four primary sections of the proposal, addressed in all three milestones, should be brought together to form a cohesive whole. Be sure to provide a comprehensive introduction and a strong conclusion.

Upload your final Public Health Program Proposal to your ePortfolio in Brightspace. **This submission will be graded using the Final Project Rubric.**

### Component 2: Academic and Professional Reflection

In **Module Ten**, you will submit your final reflection: This essay is your chance to reveal and discuss your thoughts about the process and outcomes of this project, your journey through your master’s program and how you plan to position yourself professionally. Writing reflectively allows you to think deeply and consciously about your experiences. Your ability to self-analyze in a business-appropriate manner, to address areas of growth, and to articulate goals and plans is invaluable to successful practice.

Upload your Academic and Professional Reflection to your ePortfolio in Brightspace. **This submission will be graded using the Final Project Rubric.**

## Deliverables

Milestone	Deliverable	Module Due	Grading
One	Problem Identification and Statement	Two	Graded separately; Milestone One Rubric
Two	Complete Statement of Problem and Needs Assessment	Five	Graded separately; Milestone Two Rubric
Three	Academic Rationale and Program Recommendations	Seven	Graded separately; Milestone Three Rubric
	Component 1: Public Health Program Proposal	Nine	Graded holistically with Component 2 using the Final Project Rubric
	Component 2: Academic and Professional Reflection	Ten	Graded holistically with Component 1 using the Final Project Rubric

## Final Project Rubric

This rubric will be applied to both components of the final project as a whole. No component will be assessed on its own, and being strong in one component will not make up for weaknesses in another component. However, your instructor will keep a running narrative about where you stand in relation to showing proficiency in the outcomes as you progress through the course. The “Possible Indicators of Success” are examples for you and the instructor of the types of concepts to look for to demonstrate proficiency. They are neither exhaustive nor proscriptive and should be used as guides for illustrating how your capstone embodies the outcome. All outcomes are weighted equally.

<b>PHE-690-01: Solve population-based health problems by applying statistical constructs and epidemiological principles to recognize patterns and trends within the scope of public health</b>	<b>Proficient</b> 100%	<b>Not Proficient</b> 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to critically analyze population-based health problems, concepts, models, and statistical constructs?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to clearly identify and define the health status of the population?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to establish the connections between health, disease determinants, and the public health problem?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to apply relevant and appropriate peer-reviewed academic resources?		
<b>PHE-690-02: Integrate assessment, monitoring, and prevention strategies to address environmental insults that improve the health, safety, and quality of life for people in their communities</b>	<b>Proficient</b> 100%	<b>Not Proficient</b> 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to select health status indicators based on meaningful and measurable goals that will be used to measure success?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to evaluate a community-based needs assessment on the given case study?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to identify the components needed to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for people in their communities?		

Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to apply relevant and appropriate peer-reviewed academic resources?		
<b>PHE-690-03: Develop evidence-based health program proposals targeted at improving healthcare access, quality, and delivery to ensure community health</b>	<b>Proficient</b> 100%	<b>Not Proficient</b> 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to evaluate the relevance and application of an evidence-based health proposal to the key areas of healthcare access, quality, and delivery to ensure community health?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to identify the needs of the population that the health program proposal will serve?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to determine the steps to take in order to cultivate effective and efficient health outcomes based on quality metrics?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to develop a culture of ongoing and sustainable health improvements for the population it will serve?		
<b>PHE-690-04: Apply social and behavioral health science frameworks and research to evaluate the development and implementation of programs that change behaviors</b>	<b>Proficient</b> 100%	<b>Not Proficient</b> 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to explain the role within social and behavioral health science frameworks, theories, concepts, or models in order to impact behavior change?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to explain a plan for addressing the challenge or opportunity and how it will improve public health?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to apply relevant and appropriate peer-reviewed academic resources?		
<b>PHE-690-05: Analyze public health policy and formulate communication outreach strategies to promote the health and social justice of individuals, communities, and populations</b>	<b>Proficient</b> 100%	<b>Not Proficient</b> 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to present results to the community for policy considerations when appropriate?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze the relevant public health issues and clearly articulate the policy implications associated?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to effectively integrate the ability to communicate and reframe complex public health issues?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to understand the social determinants of health and how it correlates with social justice, disparities, and equity?		
<b>PHE-690-06: Evaluate the emerging public health issues and trends to develop initiatives that protect and promote the health of individuals, communities, and populations</b>	<b>Proficient</b> 100%	<b>Not Proficient</b> 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to identify emerging public health issues, solutions for improving health, and managing disease with regard to the selected theories, concepts, or models discussed in the health proposal?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to establish a well-constructed proposal that takes into account diverse viewpoints on emerging public health issues?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to critically analyze public health trends and apply that analysis to develop initiatives that protect and promote the health of individuals, communities, and population?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to describe a challenge or opportunity associated with improving public health in the selected region and/or population?		