

SUPERVISOR GUIDE: HOSTING A PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCE RESEARCHER

Thank You!

We appreciate your willingness to supervise a student researcher from the Public Health Science Program. This guide outlines the requirements for earning academic credit (PHSC389 course) through a research independent study with your laboratory. For full details on research for credit, visit the [PHSC Experiential Learning website](#).

PART 1: Expectations & Eligibility

Timeline

Students can earn credit for research three times a year, aligned with the UMD academic calendar.

- Spring: late January - May (deadline January 15)
- Summer: late May - August (deadline May 15)
- Fall: late August - December (deadline August 15)

*****All agreements must be finalized before the semester starts.**

Approval Criteria & Expectations

The independent study research experience must meet these criteria:

- ☐ Aligned with PHSC program competencies.
- ☐ Significant complexity with minimal clerical tasks.
- ☐ Clearly delineated tasks and projects with tangible deliverables.
- ☐ Learning opportunities using different skills and tools.
- ☐ Primarily active learning, not shadowing or observation.
- ☐ New learning, not tasks the student has previously performed.
- ☐ Can be in-person, remote, or hybrid.
- ☐ Assign a designated supervisor who will oversee the student.
- ☐ Proper onboarding and training.
- ☐ Safe and adequate workspace, tools, and supplies; meeting CDC, state, and local guidelines.
- ☐ Protocols for privacy and data security.

Supervisor Expectations:

- ☐ Bachelor's degree or higher.
- ☐ Weekly check-ins, direction, and feedback (virtual or on-site).
- ☐ Facilitate learning and opportunities for professional development.
- ☐ Provide regular work hours to meet minimum requirements.

- ☐ Provide clear guidance and direction to the student researcher.
- ☐ Sign off on hours worked on the Timesheet.
- ☐ Complete Performance Evaluations and provide constructive feedback.

Student Expectations:

- ☐ Clearly communicate with the Supervisor and PHSC program about schedule & changes.
- ☐ Maintain professional etiquette.
- ☐ Meet or exceed expectations for agreed-upon duties and project deliverables.
- ☐ Track hours for the Timesheet. Meet or exceed the minimum hours required per credit hour.

Hours Requirement

Credits are earned based on hours worked, at 45 hours per credit.

Course Credit Hours	Total Hours Needed	Weekly Hours (Fall & Spring)	Weekly Hours (Summer)
1	45	3	4
2	90	6	8
3	135	9	12
4	180	12	16
5	225	15	20
6	270+	18+	25

PART 2: Program Overview

Who we are:

Established in 2014, PHSC is one of UMD's largest majors, with a diverse student body, 2/3 of whom are female. It is the largest majority-female STEM program on campus. PHSC students are thinkers, doers, leaders, advocates, analyzers, and the leaders of tomorrow! Our students aspire to various careers, including medical and allied health professions, entering the workforce, or pursuing advanced degrees in public health. Applied experiences help clarify their goals and provide invaluable professional knowledge and skills.

What we know:

Coursework & Core Competencies

The public health science program is an interdisciplinary major with a strong curriculum grounded in the physical and natural sciences, supplemented by core public health courses such as biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health, and global health.

What we do:

Past duties and projects include:

- Data Collection & Analysis:
 - Collect biological samples (e.g., blood, urine) under supervision.
 - Perform basic laboratory tests (e.g., blood glucose levels, cholesterol tests).
 - Analyze data using statistical software (e.g., SPSS, R).
 - Prepare and process samples for analysis.
- Lab Maintenance & Management:
 - Maintain and calibrate laboratory equipment.
 - Prepare and label reagents, solutions, and samples.
 - Ensure proper storage and disposal of hazardous materials.
 - Keep detailed and accurate records of experiments and results.
- Research Support:
 - Assist in designing and setting up experiments.
 - Conduct literature reviews to support research projects.
 - Prepare slides and specimens for microscopic examination.
 - Support molecular biology techniques (e.g., PCR, gel electrophoresis).
- Health & Safety Compliance:
 - Follow laboratory safety protocols and procedures. Participate in safety training and drills.
 - Ensure compliance with regulatory requirements (e.g., OSHA, CDC guidelines).
- Communication & Reporting:
 - Write lab reports and summaries of findings.
 - Collaborate with research team members on project updates.
 - Present research findings in meetings or conferences.
- Specialized Tasks:
 - Conduct environmental health assessments (e.g., water quality testing).
 - Engage in epidemiological surveillance activities.
 - Support public health interventions (e.g., vaccination campaigns).
 - Participate in quality control procedures to ensure accuracy and reliability.

Next Steps & Questions

Please reply via email or phone to confirm that you are willing and able to supervise this student for the assigned number of hours and the identified projects.

Questions? Contact Shannon Edward, Experiential Learning Manager, at sedward@umd.edu.