

Educating Public Health Professionals for the Future:

A Competency-based Approach to Public Health Practice

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Presenter Disclosures

Meghan McGinty

(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose



Learning Objectives

- Explain the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) accreditation requirement for a practice experience
- Define the eight domains of the Core Competencies for public health professionals
- Discuss a case study of one school's competency-based approach to fulfilling the CEPH practicum requirement
- Compare self-perceived competence of Master of Public Health (MPH) students before and after their practicum experience



Council *on* Education *for* Public Health Accreditation Criteria

“2.4 Practical Skills. All graduate professional public health degree students must develop skills in basic public health concepts and demonstrate the application of these concepts through a practice experience that is relevant to the students’ area of specialization.” p.1

Source: <http://ceph.org/assets/SPH-Criteria-2011.pdf>



The Challenge

“CEPH [accreditation] criteria serve to link learning with application in practice or research settings. Graduates who prepare for practice in a defined professional specialty area should be ready, when granted their degrees, to begin professional careers with a level of competence appropriate to their education and previous experience...” p.1

Source: <http://ceph.org/assets/SPH-Criteria-2011.pdf>



Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals

1. Analytic/Assessment
2. Policy Development/Program Planning
3. Communication
4. Cultural Competency
5. Community Dimensions of Practice
6. Public Health Science
7. Financial Planning and Management
8. Leadership and Systems Thinking

Source: <http://www.phf.org/programs/corecompetencies>

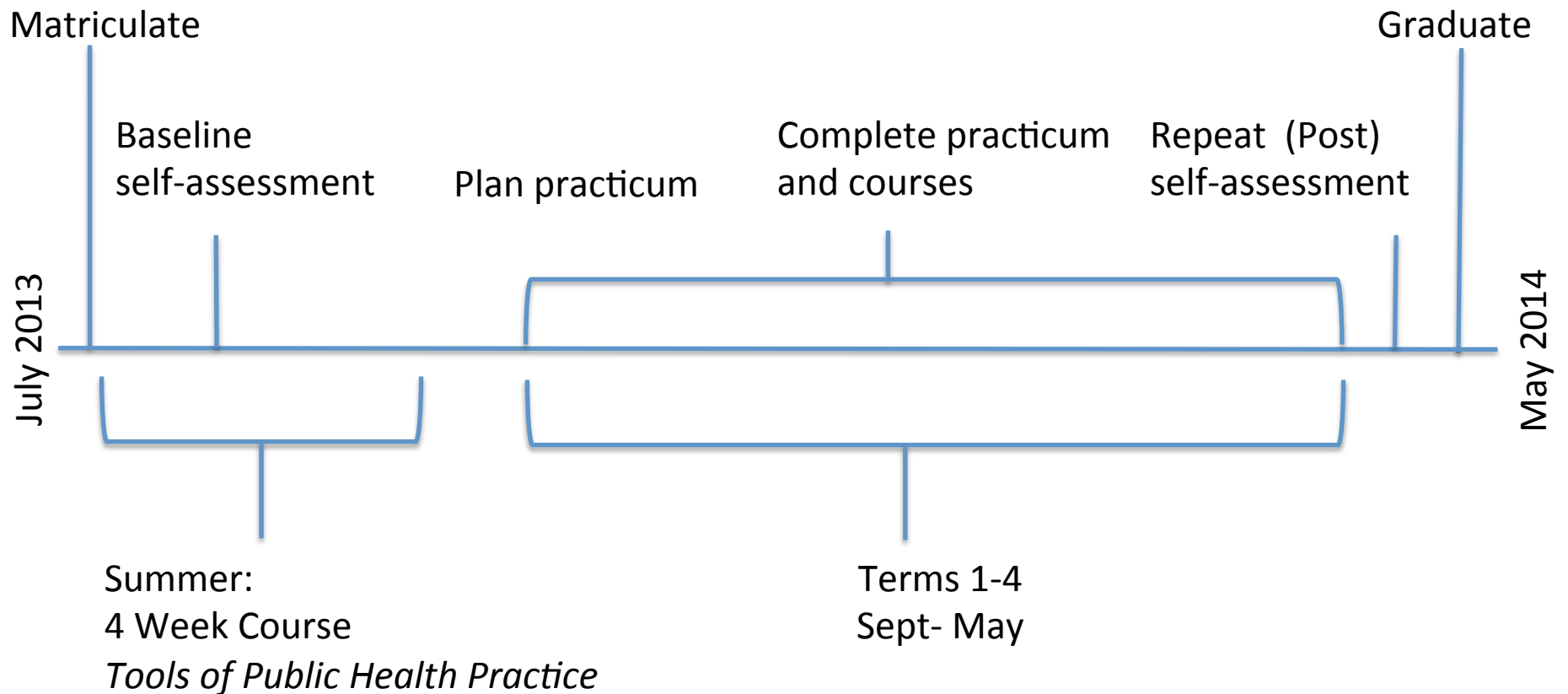


A Case Study - Our Approach

- Integration of workforce competencies and the practicum experience into MPH curriculum
- Students required to take *Tools of Public Health Practice and Decision-Making* course at beginning of MPH program
 - Course Curriculum includes core functions, essential public health services and public health workforce competencies
 - Students complete a core competency self-assessment survey and worksheet to serve as a framework to guide their selection of MPH courses and practicum to align with their strengths and weaknesses, goals, and anticipated or desired professional roles after graduation
- At end of program, students complete post-assessment to document change in competency



A Case Study - Our Approach



Demographics of MPH Survey Respondents (n =110)

Age

20-25	14%
26-30	55%
31-35	20%
36+	12%

Gender

Female	62%
Male	38%

US Citizen

Yes	55%
No	45%

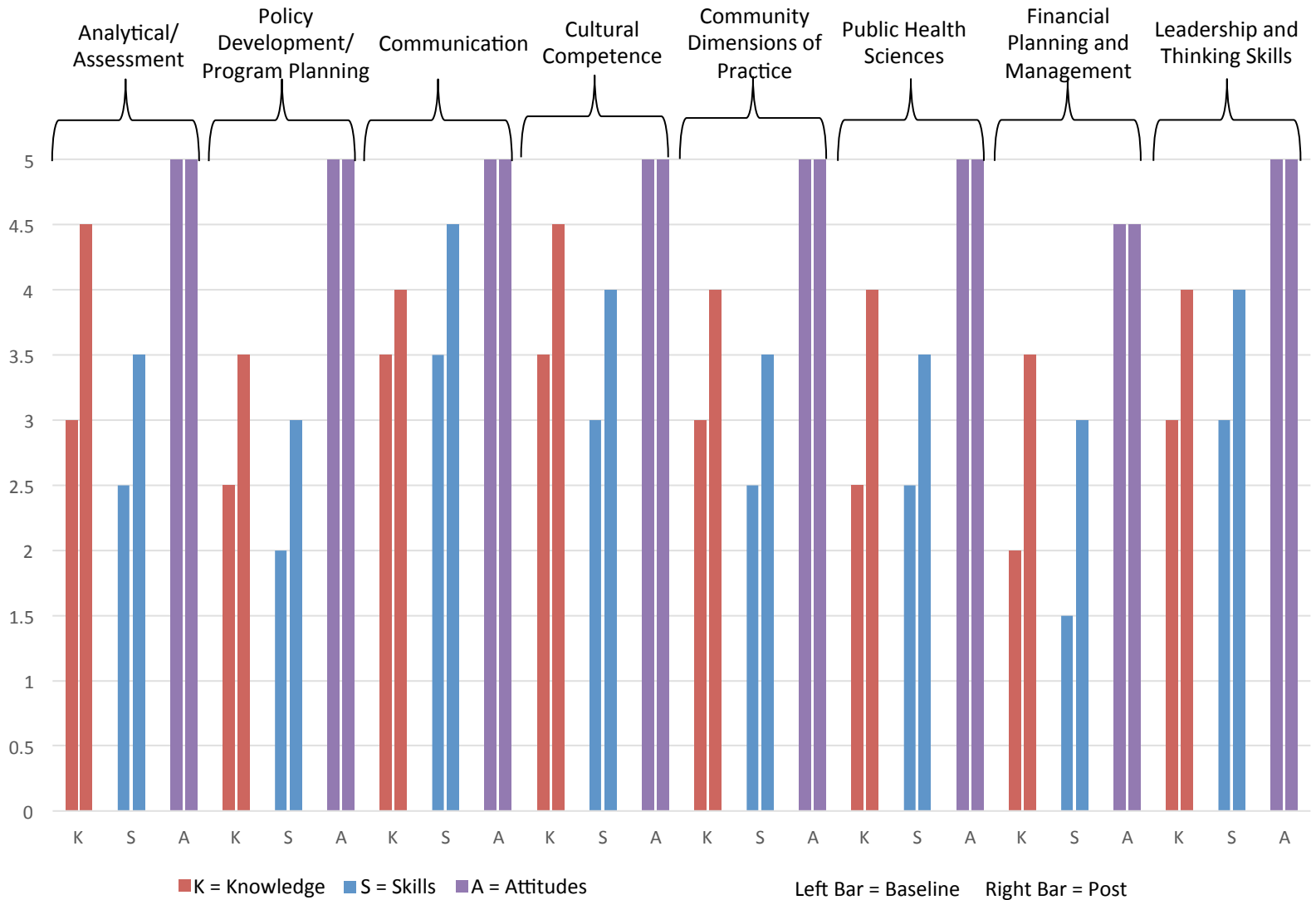
Highest Degree Completed

Bachelors degree	38%
Masters degree	5%
Doctoral degree	6%
Professional Degree (e.g. RN, MD, JD)	48%
Other	3%

Years of Public Health Professional Experience

Less than 2 years	45%
2 years	19%
3-5 years	29%
6-9 years	3%
10+ years	5%

Changes in Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of Master of Public Health Students regarding the Core Public Health Competencies during the MPH program



Recommendations

Logistics

- Allow students time to complete survey during class
- Include 2nd assessment in the exit survey, which is required for graduation
- Enable students to save a copy of their survey results
- Update survey with new releases of competencies

Competency Development

- Students share self-assessment worksheet with advisors
- Share aggregate results with faculty to inform curriculum
- Base course learning objectives on core competencies; instructors should explicitly link objectives to core functions of public health and essential services



Questions?

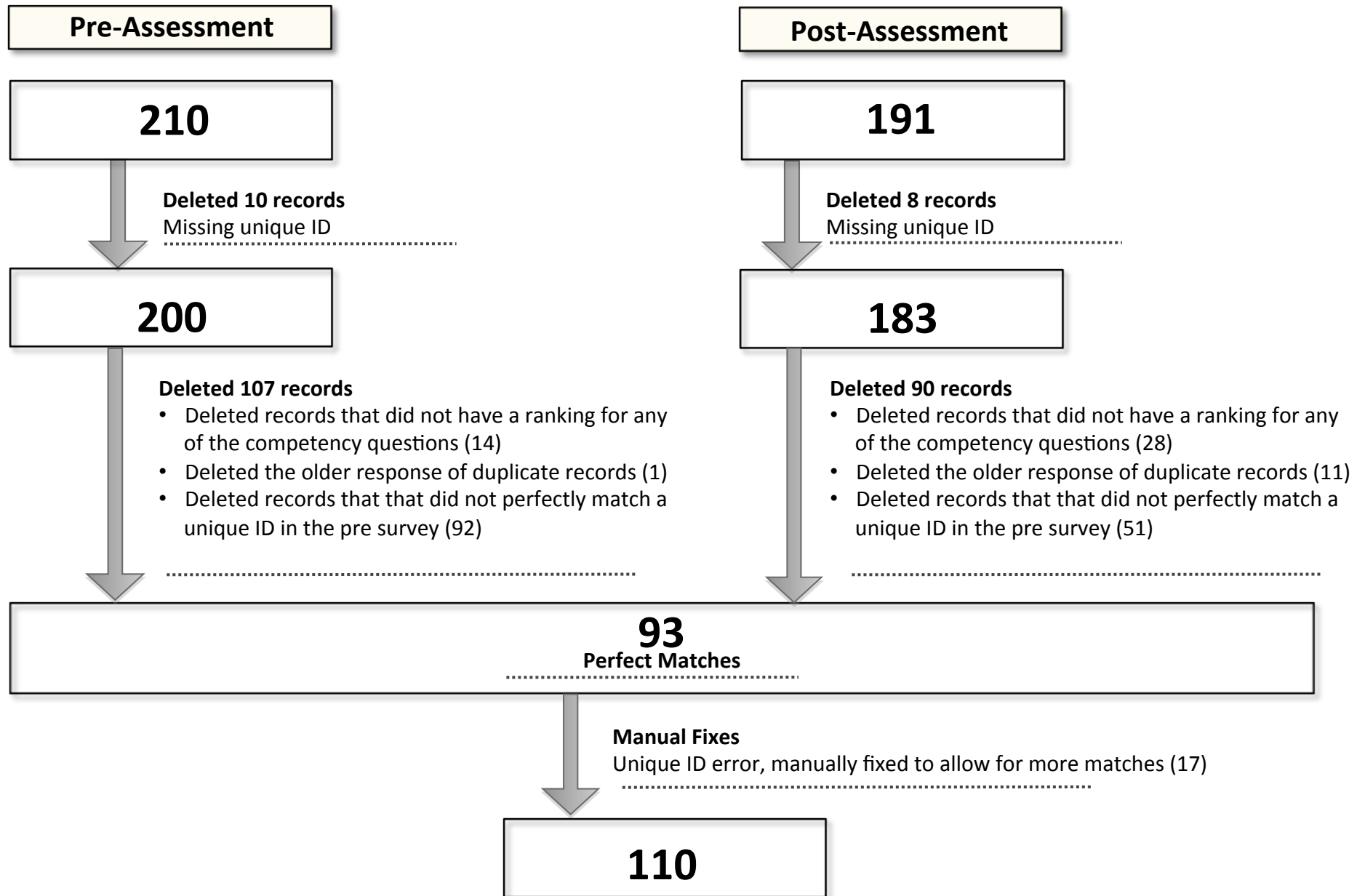


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MPH Competency Survey Summary of Data Selection



Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals Self-Assessment Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Competency (knowledge, skills & abilities)	Your strengths knowledge, skills, and experiences	Gaps knowledge, skills, experiences you seek	Your specific short term (within this year) goals	Opportunities you will seek, to help you achieve your goals	Potential Barriers you can identify to achieve your goals	Your specific actions to achieve your goal(s) (include timeframes)
<p>Analytical/Assessment Ability to collect and analyze data that relate to the health status of populations, to recognize the integrity and comparability of data, and to use data to address public health issues.</p>						
<p>Policy Development/Program Planning Ability to collect and analyze information that is relevant to public health policy issues and policy implementation and to manage or participate in program planning and evaluation.</p>						
<p>Communication Ability to identify or assess the health literacy of populations and to effectively communicate public health information using a variety of written and oral communication approaches.</p>						
<p>Cultural Competency Ability to recognize and respond to the diverse needs that are a result of cultural differences and to consider the role of cultural factors in the accessibility, availability, acceptability, and delivery of public health services.</p>						

The Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals, 2011 Accessed at http://www.phf.org/resourcestools/Pages/Core_Public_Health_Competencies.aspx.



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Community Dimensions of Practice Ability to identify and maintain partnerships with stakeholders and community partners to promote the health of the population and to gather and use community input to inform public health policies and programs						
Public Health Sciences Ability to retrieve and describe scientific evidence related to a public health issue, concern, or intervention, to determine the requirements for the ethical conduct of research, and to contribute to building the scientific base of public health.						
Financial Planning and Management Ability to describe/interpret the interrelationships and organizational structures, functions, and authorities of local, state, and federal public health agencies, to develop a programmatic budget and manage the program legally within budget constraints, and to evaluate and improve program performance.						
Leadership and Systems Thinking Ability to describe how public health operates within a larger system and to incorporate systems thinking into public health practice, to identify/analyze organizational problems, and to evaluate, improve and modify organizational practices in consideration of the changes of the public health system						

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Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals Self-Assessment Worksheet

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Questions for Reflection

1) What competency is most important to you and why?

2) What competency do you most want to develop your skills in this year and why?

3) If you had to add one competency to this list what would it be and why?

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