

**American University of Beirut**  
**The Faculty of Health Sciences**

Graduate Public Health Program  
**Master of Public Health**

**Integrative Learning Experience Manual**

Version September 2022

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## **I. Introduction**

To reinforce the student’s understanding of the importance of Evidence-Based strategies in all aspects of public health, the MPH program adopts a unified *Integrative Learning Experience* (ILE) requirement. The guiding principle of the ILE is that it provides the student the opportunity to pursue their interests, strengthen and apply competencies, and work towards their career goals while completing a project of public health relevance.

The purpose of this manual is to lay out the policies and procedures for the ILE for the student and the advisor - to have a consolidated source of information to guide them in the Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) course process.

## **II. Course Description**

The Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) provides an opportunity for students to synthesize the competencies that they have gained during the MPH program by completing a substantive project of public health relevance. Over the course of two consecutive regular semesters, students are expected to design and implement a project that addresses their interests while contributing to the field of public health. A variety of project forms are acceptable within the guidelines set by the Graduate Public Health Program. Each student will develop and implement the project under the guidance of a faculty advisor. The ILE is completed over two semesters: Integrative Learning Experience I (1 credit) and Integrative Learning Experience II (2 credits).

## **III. Competencies**

The student and their academic advisor will agree on a minimum of 3 competencies to be addressed through the ILE. The choice of competencies should depend on the interests and career objectives of the student. The complete list of MPH competencies can be found in Appendix A. The ILE competencies must include at least one core competency and one concentration competency<sup>1</sup>.

## **IV. Policy**

- All MPH students are required to satisfactorily complete ILE I (PBHL399A) and ILE II (PBHL399B).

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<sup>1</sup> There could be additional requirements for students on specific scholarship schemes or enrolled in certificate programs. The details are communicated to these students in due time.

- The student registering the ILE is assigned an ILE advisor from the student's concentration. ILE advisors are assigned by the department chair before the start of ILE I. It is recommended that the ILE advisor is different from the academic advisor. Students should have the same advisor for ILE I and II. It is advisable that in an academic year, an ILE advisor has a maximum of three ILE students for advising.
- All students are expected to meet all three competencies selected for the ILE. If according to the ILE advisor (as assessed through the final ILE product), the student did not meet all three competencies, then ILE II is graded as a fail.
- The pre-requisite courses for ILE II are all core and concentration courses except one core and/or one concentration course if the material of that core and/or concentration course does not affect the ILE project.
- During the semester when the ILE II is registered, the student can register for up to 6 credits in total, including ILE II.
- The ILE project may be linked to the student's Practicum site if the student and their academic advisor decide that this is appropriate to the topics and competencies addressed. It is not required for the ILE to be linked to the student's Practicum site except for students on some scholarship programs.
- The ILE may be linked to an organization, housed at FHS or be independent of any site. If the ILE is linked to an organization, the focal point is the person representing the "site" on the student's ILE project. When the ILE project is housed at FHS, and within the concentration department of the student, the focal point can become the ILE advisor of the student.
- The ILE can be completed at the student's current employment place if the project advances the career or work prospects of the student. This is considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with academic advisor and ILE administrator. The chair of concentration department and GPHP coordinator are informed of the decision.
- In the semester prior to students enrolling in ILE I, the academic advisor meets with the student due for ILE to discuss their interests, career goals and potential projects/topics, based on which a form is submitted to the ILE administrator including suggested project topic for the ILE. This process can be concurrent with the practicum site placement for students doing their practicum over two semesters in order for the student to make a

decision about whether or not to link the Practicum and the ILE prior to the start of the ILE.

- To ensure that the student receives feedback on their ILE project bringing the multi-disciplinary perspective into their project, two seminars per semester will be held at each concentration department with representation from the other two concentrations as well as the Environmental Health and Health Professions departments and in the presence of the students' ILE advisors. During these seminars, the students present and discuss their projects to get feedback from attending faculty members. The ILE administrator coordinates the scheduling of the seminars at the start of every term and the faculty members are assigned by the chairs of departments. It is advisable to hold each set of seminars at the concentration departments within the same week during the semester.
- ILE jury members are identified by the chairs of departments at the start of Spring term. It is strongly recommended that the jury members are neither academic advisors, nor ILE advisors of the students due for poster and presentation. A meeting of all assigned jury members takes place two weeks prior to the poster presentation dates to discuss the rubric.

## **V. Types of ILE projects**

The ILE project could be of different types as long as the project meets three competencies and conforms to the other ILE guidelines, including resulting in a final written product. The ILE advisor must approve the type of project to be conducted by the student. Project types may include:

### **a. Research Project**

The student conducting a research project identifies a research question and develops a research paper addressing a gap or a hypothesis with potential for publication. The student reviews the literature associated with the research question, collects primary or secondary data about the problem using a quantitative or qualitative approach, analyzes the data to either answer the research question or support or refute a pre-selected hypothesis, presents the results, discusses the results, concludes and makes appropriate recommendations based on the study.

### **b. Pilot Intervention**

The student conducts a needs assessment in a community or organizational setting, identifies a problem, and develops and evaluates a pilot

program/intervention to address the problem. The student should produce a paper that presents the methodology used to carry out the needs assessment, the process undertaken to prioritize the problem to be addressed and possible solutions, discusses the results/outcomes of the project, and presents conclusions and recommendations for further implementation.

**c. Evaluation**

The student designs and conducts an evaluation of an existing public health program/policy/initiative. Based on the needs and objectives of the program/policy/initiative, the student designs an impact and/or process evaluation, including the evaluation questions and methodology. The student then works with the program/policy/initiative to carry out the evaluation. The student should produce an evaluation report that, at a minimum, explains the purpose of the evaluation, describes the methods and procedures used, discusses the logistics of carrying out the evaluation, and present the results of the evaluation.

**d. Manual**

The student creates a reference or training manual as part of an ongoing public health intervention/initiative, demonstrating the need for/relevance of the manual, developing goals, objectives and content, and conducting a pilot implementation or assessment of the manual. A report describing the process of manual development, and any results of the pilot implementation or assessment needs to be submitted.

**e. Policy Analysis**

The student conducts in-depth analysis of how a current/proposed policy is being made, identifies the factors that influenced the policy and assesses the extent that evidence is used in the process. The student should submit a case study that explores how and why a certain policy was developed and how it was implemented, explains its impact and draws on lessons learned for informing future public policymaking and provides insights for structuring the decision-making process.

**f. Policy Brief**

The student identifies a public health problem that is relevant to the local context and prepares a policy brief that identifies, appraises and synthesizes relevant research about the problem and its underlying causes, 3-4 policy options to address the problem and implementation considerations. Central to the development of the policy brief is litmus testing, which involves conducting one to one interviews with up to 15 selected policymakers and stakeholders to frame the problem and make sure all aspects are addressed. Students should develop the policy brief in such a way as to present concisely and in accessible language the global and local research evidence to inform deliberations about the problem.

**g. Evidence review**

The student plans and conducts an evidence review following standard guidelines, with potential for publication. The student frames a review question, defines eligibility criteria, develops and runs a search strategy to identify appropriate literature, screens the literature, extracts the appropriate information from the literature, synthesizes the findings, and concludes with implications for policy and research. The student selecting this option must follow one of the commonly accepted standard guidelines for conducting an evidence review in public health.

**VI. Deliverables**

During the Spring semester prior to ILE I, the student submits an " ILE student form" identifying several options for project topic, rationale, objectives and competencies. These need to be considered in line with the career goals of the students upon graduation from the program. The potential projects are then discussed with the academic advisor before deciding on the ILE topic of choice. Over the summer, the student writes a concept note (appendix B) on the project which is then discussed with and approved by the academic advisor before submitting it to the ILE administrator. The concept note is then shared with the ILE advisor at the start of ILE I in the Fall semester.

For ILE I and II, the student submits an ILE Plan (appendix C), IRB pre-determination form and application (when relevant), a Progress Report, an ILE Product, a Response Letter (appendix D), a Competency Attainment Reflection (appendix E) and a poster.

These deliverables are divided between ILE I and ILE II as follows:

**ILE I**

**1. ILE Plan**

The purpose of the ILE plan is to act as an agreement between the student and the ILE advisor on the project that will be developed, along with the timeline that will be followed to complete this project. The ILE Plan also includes the 3 competencies to be addressed through the project. The student should develop the ILE Plan together with the advisor. - Where applicable, the ILE site should be consulted in the process. Changes in ILE topic and competencies is not permitted after the submission of the ILE plan.

## 2. IRB submission

All ILE students submit an ILE pre-determination form circulated by the ILE Administrator who compiles the filled forms and shares with the IRB for feedback. The IRB feedback is then communicated to each student and ILE advisor. Where necessary, the student then prepares and submits an IRB application along with supplementary documents as requested by IRB, after feedback and approval from the ILE advisor. From the perspective of the IRB, the ILE advisor is the Principal Investigator (PI) of the student's project. The student responds to IRB comments in coordination with the ILE advisor. The student is expected to copy the ILE advisor/PI on all correspondence with the IRB, and if there are any delays, the ILE advisor/PI intervenes and corresponds with the IRB for follow-up as per the IRB guidelines.

## 3. Progress Report (1,000-1,500 words without appendices)

The purpose of the progress report is to inform the ILE advisor -about the progress the student made in the ILE over the first semester and for the student to reflect on their attainment of the selected competencies part-way through the ILE. The ILE advisor -grades and comments on the Progress Report (see Table 1). Below is an outline of what needs to be included in the progress report:

- **Introduction**
  - Overview of the report and snapshot of work accomplished so far
- **Methodology**
  - Project's rationale and objectives
  - Elaborate description on the methodology followed
- **Accomplishments or Progress so far**
  - Chronological description of work accomplished with specific details
  - Reflection on progress towards project objectives
  - Discussion of ethical considerations (all projects) and update on progress with the IRB application (if applicable)
  - Challenges during the current semester and actions taken to resolve them
- **Work Scheduled**
  - Discussion of a feasible plan of action for the next semester
  - Explanation of any foreseen challenges with strategies for solving them
  - Timeline of remaining activities
- **Appendices (to be referred to in the text)**
  - Tools used so far (e.g. search strategy of an evidence review, sample of codes adopted from analytical tool, as appropriate ...)
  - ILE plan



## ILE II

### **1. ILE Product Draft (3,500-4,000 words without appendices)**

A draft of the ILE product, including an executive summary of a maximum of 300 words, is submitted to the ILE advisor for review and comment.

### **2. Response Letter**

Along with the final revised ILE product, the student should submit a response letter. The response letter clearly states the changes made in the ILE product draft in response to the concerns expressed by the advisor. The student writes a justification if the student disagrees with any of the suggestions. Further details on the response letter content, format and submission process are found in the appendix.

### **3. Final ILE Product (3,500-4,000 words without appendices)**

The student should submit a final revised version of the ILE product to the ILE advisor - (see Table 1) for grading.

### **4. Competency attainment evidence and reflection**

In this form, the student self-assesses the attainment of the competencies and provides evidence of how the competencies were acquired during the ILE.

### **5. Poster**

The ILE poster session is designed to allow the students to present their ILE projects in the form of a poster presentation. The poster and the oral presentation are assessed by a jury of faculty members from the different concentrations. The student has 15 minutes for oral presentation of their poster; 10 minutes are allocated for presentation and 5 minutes for question and answer, first from the jury members then if time allows questions are taken from the audience.

#### **Poster standard requirements:**

- Size 90cm × 110 (Landscape)
- The name and concentration of the student, the name of the ILE advisor and the title of the ILE project are included on the poster
- The poster is approved by the ILE advisor before submission for poster presentation. A poster not approved by the ILE advisor cannot be submitted.
- The poster is submitted in PDF format in high resolution (2-3 megabytes)

**The poster must include the following sections:**

- **Rationale**
- **Objectives**
- **Process** (including challenges)
- **Outputs/Findings/Results**
- **Public health ethics**
- **Conclusion and Implications**

*Students with special needs*

AUB strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (such as ADHD, learning difficulties, mental health conditions, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please do not hesitate to inform the Accessible Education Office. In order to ensure that you receive the support you need and to facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you must register with the Accessible Education Office (AEO) as soon as possible: [accessibility@aub.edu.lb](mailto:accessibility@aub.edu.lb); [+961-1-350000](tel:+961-1-350000), [x3246](tel:+961-1-350000); West Hall, 314

***Any delay in the submission of any of the ILE deliverables is penalized by a reduction of the relevant grade.***

As previously mentioned, in order to ensure that the student receives feedback from different disciplines of public health, two seminars are held every semester, one in the beginning and one towards the end of term and are attended by the ILE advisors of the students presenting along with representatives from the other disciplines.

During the seminars of ILE I:

- Seminar 1: the student presents their project for 5 minutes including: project significance, project setting (where applicable), objectives and methods.
- Seminar 2: the student presents for 5 minutes: challenges faced so far during the project and ways to overcome them and the ethical considerations of the project.

During the seminars of ILE II:

- Seminar 1: the student presents for 5 minutes on progress, any results attained and potential recommendations based on these results
- Seminar 2: the student presents for 5 minutes on the public health significance of the project and any specific questions or feedback they would like to get from the other disciplines and their colleagues ahead of the poster presentation session.

## VII. Evaluation

The below table summarizes the required course deliverables for ILE I and II and the role of the ILE advisor - in reviewing and/or grading the deliverables.

**Table 1: Pre-ILE, ILE I and II course deliverables and assessment**

	Deliverable	Reviewed/graded by	Graded? (% if graded)
<b>Pre- ILE</b>	Student ILE project form	Academic advisor	No
	ILE concept note	Academic advisor	No
<b>ILE I</b>	ILE Plan	ILE advisor	No
	IRB submission	ILE advisor	No
	Progress Report	ILE advisor	Yes (100%)
<b>ILE II</b>	ILE Product Draft	ILE advisor	No
	Response Letter	ILE advisor	No
	ILE final product Competency attainment evidence and reflection	ILE advisor	Yes (50%)
	Final poster presentation	Poster jury <sup>2</sup>	Yes (50%)

The rubrics to be used in evaluating the ILE I and II deliverables are found in appendices F, G and H.

## VIII. Timeline

During the Spring semester prior to ILE I, the ILE coordinator meets with the students due for ILE to walk them through the process of and expectations from the ILE. After the meeting the ILE student form is launched and students have several weeks to come up with ILE project options in line with their career goals and submit the form to be discussed with the academic advisor. The concept note is due for submission over the summer and the version approved by the academic advisor is shared with the ILE advisor at the start of Fall semester. The ILE coordinator prepares the ILE timeline and checklist including tasks/deliverables and due dates at the start of Fall for ILE I and at the start of Spring for ILE II. Checklists are shared with students and ILE advisors at the start of each semester.

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<sup>2</sup> The jury responsible for grading the poster presentation consists of three faculty members assigned from the three different MPH concentrations

## **IX. Responsibilities**

To support the students in developing substantial ILE projects through which they can acquire the selected competencies and meaningfully contribute to their career goals, a consistent advising relationship and constructive feedback mechanism is needed. The responsibility is shared by the student, academic advisor, ILE advisor, -, focal point (if the project has one), chair of department, ILE jury members and ILE administrator. Together they need to make the best of this ILE experience in terms of the practical skills gained and the competencies acquired by the students, and the quality of deliverables produced. Outlined below is a detailed description of responsibilities of each of the stakeholders in the ILE.

### **1. Student responsibilities**

#### Regular semester and summer term prior to ILE I

- Fill out the ILE student form shared by the ILE administrator and submit it to the student's academic advisor. The form includes career goals and interests, based on which the student chooses core and concentration competencies to acquire by the end of the ILE. Also in the form the student identifies 2 or 3 ILE project options that align with career goals and competencies.
- Meet with academic advisor to discuss career goals and agree on a potential ILE project
- Prepare a concept note on the ILE project and share it with academic advisor for approval before submission to ILE administrator.

#### During ILE I

- If the project has a focal point, the student is to meet with the focal point at the start of term
- once the ILE advisor is assigned, share with the ILE advisor the concept note approved by the academic advisor
- Meet with the ILE advisor to discuss the project
- Submit the ILE plan to the advisor for discussion
- Meet regularly with the ILE advisor and when necessary with the focal point (where applicable)-
- Actively participate in the ILE seminars
- Keep the ILE advisor updated about progress and report any challenges faced (including delays in securing IRB approval)
- Abide by deadlines and submit ILE deliverables on time.

#### During ILE II

- Meet regularly with the ILE advisor
- Actively participate in the ILE seminars
- Update the ILE advisor (preferably bi-weekly) on the progress made in the project, copying the ILE administrator to keep her in the loop

- Report any challenges faced to ILE advisor and if necessary to chair of department
- Abide by deadlines and submit ILE deliverables on time

## **2. Academic advisor responsibilities**

### Regular semester prior to ILE I

- Help the student explore career objectives
- Upon the student's submission of the student ILE form, meet with student to discuss ILE interest based on career objectives
- Fill out and submit the academic advisor form shared by the ILE administrator summarizing the student's career goals, core and concentration competencies to be acquired by the end of the ILE, along with the title and objectives of the ILE project agreed on with the student
- Review the ILE project concept note submitted by the student due for ILE and make sure it is ready by the deadline to be submitted to the ILE advisor once assigned.

## **3. ILE Advisor responsibilities**

### During ILE I and ILE II

- Review the ILE project concept note submitted by the student at the start of ILE I
- Finalize ILE project competencies with the student
- Assist the student to develop the ILE plan and timeline, and map competencies to activities
- Guide the student on the ILE project including the conceptual framework, practical aspects and ethics, meet with ILE site focal point at least once to ensure a full understanding of the ILE requirements and process (if applicable)
- As PI of the project from the perspective of the IRB, support the student in drafting the IRB application and sign and secure departmental chair signatures for the final IRB application.
- Follow-up with the IRB as per the IRB guidelines particularly in cases where approval delays are taking place.
- If applicable, address any problems that the student may face in relation to the ILE site/community/organization
- Follow-up and meet with the student regularly throughout the ILE
- Review, assess and grade ILE deliverables as described in **Table 1**
- Attend the ILE poster presentation session
- Post the final grades of ILE I and ILE II on AUBsis

## **4. Focal point responsibilities**

When the ILE project is linked to an external organization or to a faculty member at FHS (not from the student's concentration), the feedback of the focal point is important to make sure that the

deliverable produced also answers to the needs and requirements of the site/project. The responsibilities of the focal point include:

- During the academic year prior to ILE I, provide ILE administrator with potential ILE projects available for interested students to choose from
- During ILE I and II, meet with the student and advisor as needed to discuss the ILE project plan, timeline and output and ensure a full understanding of ILE requirements and process
- Address with the ILE advisor any issue that arises with the student in relation to the ILE project
- Review and comment on the progress report (at the end of ILE I) and the final ILE product (at the end of ILE II) before submission to the ILE advisor (no particular format or rubric for these reviews by preferably provide written feedback).

#### **5. Chair of department responsibilities**

- Identify available ILE advisors in the semester prior to ILE I, and assign them to students based on the students' topics and expertise of the faculty members
- Share with the ILE administrator and the other FHS department chairs the representatives to the ILE seminars, by semester.
- Approve any changes of ILE advisors with the knowledge of the ILE administrator
- Report the teaching loads associated with advisors to the Dean's Office
- Address any issues raised by students in the department with regards to ILE I and ILE II
- At the start of ILE II, assign ILE jury members from the department.

#### **6. ILE jury member responsibilities**

- Attend the jury members meeting scheduled two weeks prior to the poster presentation dates to discuss the poster presentation rubric.
- Attend the poster presentation sessions at the end of ILE II
- Evaluate and grade the ILE posters and presentations according to the rubrics
- During the Q&A of the poster presentation session, ask questions pertinent to the content beyond clarification questions.

#### **7. ILE Administrator responsibilities**

- Explain ILE policies and procedures to students due for ILE
- Explain ILE policies and procedures to potential host organizations
- Maintain and update a profile of potential ILE projects as a back-up to students not identifying a suitable independent project
- Launch the forms related to pre-ILE and follow up with students and academic advisors on their submissions
- Based on the forms submitted by the academic advisors, prepare the list of ILE students and their projects

- Make sure the final ILE plans submitted by the students abide by CEPH requirements (in terms of competencies)
- Coordinate the scheduling of the seminars at the start of every term
- At the conclusion of ILE I and II, check that advisors and jury members submitted the rubrics
- Maintain records of students' ILE plans, progress reports, final products and advisors' and jury members' evaluations
- Coordinate the poster presentation sessions at the end of ILE II
- Evaluate the ILE process on a yearly basis
- Revise and update the ILE manual when necessary.
- Provide copies of the e-posters for posting on the FHS portal

**X. Appendices**



## Appendix A: MPH Competencies

### MPH Core Competencies

<b>Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health</b>
1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice
<b>Public Health &amp; Health Care Systems</b>
5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels
<b>Planning &amp; Management to Promote Health</b>
7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs
<b>Policy in Public Health</b>
12. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes
14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity
<b>Leadership</b>
16. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges
<b>Communication</b>
18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content
<b>Inter-professional Practice</b>
21. Perform effectively on inter-professional teams
<b>Systems Thinking</b>
22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

### **MPH Health Management and Policy Revised Concentration Competencies**

1. Assess how the structure, organization, delivery, and financing of health care systems affect system performance in terms of efficiency, quality, equity, and effectiveness
2. Apply systems thinking approaches to improve healthcare organizations' performance and responsiveness
3. Apply quality tools and concepts to evaluate and improve performance in health care organizations
4. Perform strategic analysis to plan and design healthcare initiatives and services
5. Apply the principles of planning, budgeting, management and evaluation in healthcare related programs and projects
6. Demonstrate ability to analyze and interpret relevant financial data for efficient management of healthcare programs and organizations
7. Utilize health information systems and data analytics to support evidence-based decision making at the organizational and system levels
8. Apply public policy principles, frameworks and tools to understand health problems and priorities
9. Evaluate policy options to address health challenges including economic, legal and political implications
10. Utilize knowledge translation strategies and tools to communicate effectively and influence health policy and system decision making

### **MPH Health Promotion and Community Health Revised Concentration Competencies**

1. Demonstrate a critical understanding of multidisciplinary theories/frameworks utilized in health promotion research and practice
2. Employ theoretical knowledge and methodological skills in health promotion program planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
3. Conduct rigorous quantitative and qualitative research for health promotion
4. Use participatory approaches in community health programs and research
5. Promote social justice and equity in health promotion research, practice, and policy

### **MPH Epidemiology and Biostatistics Revised Concentration Competencies**

1. Discuss the extent, distribution and determinants of common and emerging communicable and non-communicable diseases, and mental health disorders of local, regional and global importance
2. Discuss prevention and control strategies/programs for common and emerging communicable and non-communicable diseases and mental health disorders
3. Design epidemiological studies to investigate public health research questions

4. Demonstrate ability to write software codes to manage and analyze health data through the use of multiple statistical software
5. Apply inferential statistics and advanced statistical approaches such as regression modelling to analyze complex health related data
6. Interpret and communicate statistical findings in oral and written format
7. Review, synthesize and communicate published epidemiological findings in oral and written format
8. Appraise the quality of epidemiological evidence by evaluating studies for bias and other sources of systematic errors

## Appendix B: ILE Concept Note Template

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT**  
**FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES – MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH) PROGRAM**  
**INTEGRATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

### Concept Note\*

#### Why an ILE concept note?

The ILE concept note is a relatively concise preliminary description of ideas pertaining to your ILE project with an overview of the idea behind it. It is used to:

- Help you think through an angle/focus of your project idea from beginning to end
- Draft the plan for conducting the project to help answer your research question
- Give readers (mainly your academic advisor, chair of department and eventually ILE advisor) a snapshot of your project for preliminary approval

#### Outline of your concept note (700-1,000 words using 12 font, single space Times New Roman)

**1. Introduction:**

- What has been done before (Brief literature overview and synthesis to show the gap in the literature)
- A description of the context relevant to the project in question (Where is it taking place, the political, social and health situations, etc.)
- Who is involved?

**2. Objectives:**

- The objectives of the project, using scientific action verbs (To explore, identify, describe, assess, evaluate, test, compile, conduct, etc.).

**3. Project Description:**

a. Methods/approach

- What approach/es/design you will use?
- How will you do it (Collect data or develop your project/description of steps)?
- Who is your population of interest? (Characteristics, choice, sample size)
- How will you analyze the data, or produce the project output?

b. Significance

- Why should people care to learn about this?
- What does it add to the conversation about it in the discipline?
- What are the public health implications? (Be realistic)
- Summary timeline of steps/tasks (how long will each step/task take to complete?)

**4. Competencies:**

- What are the three competencies you intend to acquire by the end of your ILE?

**Due date:** To be determined in due time every academic year.

**Appendix C: ILE Plan Template**

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT  
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES – MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH) PROGRAM  
INTEGRATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE PLAN**

Name of student: -----

Student ID: -----

ILE Advisor: -----

Concentration: -----

ILE Project Type: -----

ILE Project Title: -----

**Please provide a brief description of your ILE project, including the project objectives:**

**Instructions to Students:** Indicate the three competencies you aim to acquire through your Integrative Learning Experience (must include at least one core and one concentration competency) and map these competencies to the activities that will help you to achieve them. You must demonstrate evidence of having acquired all three competencies at the end of ILE II in order to complete the ILE requirement.

	<b>COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED</b> (Core and concentration competencies)	<b>ACTIVITIES</b> (Which ILE activities will help you to achieve this competency?)	<b>EXPECTED TIMELINE</b> (time required and approximate completion date for each activity)
1.			
2.			
3. <sup>3</sup>			

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<sup>3</sup> There could be additional requirements for students on specific scholarship schemes or enrolled in certificate programs. The details are communicated to these students in due time.

## **Appendix D: Response Letter Template**

### **Response letter template:**

[Insert date here]

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. [insert advisor's name]:

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback and suggestions on my Integrative Learning Experience final product.

Below are my point-by-point responses to your remarks. I also attached my revised product, with edits in 'Track Changes', based on your feedback.

**1. Comment 1:** [insert comment]  
Response: [insert response]

**2. Comment 2:** [insert comment]  
Response: [insert response]

I hope that you find the revised version of my product and the above responses satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,

[Student Name]

### **Sending the response letter:**

- The response letter is submitted to the ILE advisor -along with the final ILE product.
- The response letter file is named "ILE Response Letter\_Student Name".

**Appendix E: Competency Attainment Reflection Template**

**Competency Attainment Reflection Template**

Name of student: -----

Student ID: -----

ILE Advisor: -----

Concentration: -----

ILE Project Type: -----

ILE Project Title: -----

<b><u>Competency</u></b> <b><u>(write the text of each competency selected for the ILE)</u></b>	<b><u>Was the competency attained? Student's evaluation (YES/NO)</u></b>	<b><u>Evidence of attaining this competency (Demonstrate how you attained this competency. You may refer to ILE deliverables by providing document name, page number and paragraph number, as well as discuss the process used to develop the deliverables.)</u></b>
Competency 1		
Competency 2		
Competency 3 <sup>4</sup>		

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<sup>4</sup> Include the 4<sup>th</sup> competency in case this is required by the student's scholarship or certificate.



**Appendix F: Rubric for assessing the ILE I Progress Report (100%)** (The rubric has been automated. No need for calculation by the ILE advisor to compute the grade over 100. The formula is built in, in the automated rubric)

Expectation	3=Meets expectations	2=Partially meets expectations	1=Does not meet expectations
The methods are appropriate to the objectives			
Methodological design is scientifically rigorous			
The student has critically reflected on progress towards competency attainment			
The student has addressed ethical considerations (all projects not just human subject research)			
The student has discussed both challenges: a)- during current term and b)- unforeseen challenges			
The student has discussed strategies for resolving the challenges			
A feasible plan of action is developed for the next phase			

**Appendix G: Rubric for assessing the ILE Poster Presentation (50% of total ILE II grade)**

The poster and the student presentation will be evaluated by a jury panel which consists of three representatives from the different MPH concentrations. The purpose of the poster is primarily to evaluate the *process* of the ILE, whereas the assessment of the ILE product focuses on the outputs. The student submits their poster and the jury evaluates and grades the poster before the poster presentation session. Using the same automated rubric, the same jury then evaluates and grades the poster presentation during the poster presentation session. Criteria 9-13 relate to poster and presentation only and should not reflect student response during Q&A

Expectation	Exemplary (5)	Strong (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (0-2)
<b>Poster design</b>				
Visual aids and/or graphics are effectively used to present key information with no redundancies (graphics, explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities)	Analysis and reference to information is appropriately supported by a <u>variety</u> of supporting materials and visual aids	Analysis and reference to information is appropriately supported by materials and visual aids	Analysis and reference to information is somewhat supported by materials and visual aids	Analysis and reference to information is insufficiently supported by materials and visual aids
The poster is well organized and easy to follow (introduction, conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) and the visual characteristics are enhancing the readability and the flow (color, font, etc...)	Organizational flow is clearly and consistently observable and supported by visual characteristics to result in the cohesiveness of the presentation content.	Organizational flow is clearly and consistently observable within the presentation.	Organizational flow is intermittently observable within the presentation.	Organizational flow is not observable within the presentation.
<b>Presentation</b>				
Presentation style is professional (use of language, eye contact, body language, vocal expressiveness and level of confidence and connection with the audience)	Effective communication skills used to make the presentation compelling.	Effective communication skills used make the presentation interesting.	Communication skills used make the presentation understandable.	Communication skills used detract from the understandability of the presentation.
Oral presentation is clear	Sequence of the orally presented information is very clear and easy to follow	Sequence of the information is generally clear and jury is able to follow for the most part	Content of the presentation is loosely connected and lacks clarity. The jury members need to ask clarification questions to understand	No apparent logical order of the oral presentation, unclear focus and impossible to follow

Responses to questions demonstrate strong command of material related to the project	Presenter is very well-prepared and delivers ideas in a professional, clear and concise manner.	Presenter is well-prepared and delivers ideas in a professional, clear and concise manner.	Presenter is somewhat prepared and delivers ideas in a clear and concise manner.	Presenter is clearly unprepared and does not deliver ideas in a clear and concise manner.
The student finishes the presentation in the time allocated	Presenter finishes the presentation in exactly ten minutes	Presenter finishes the presentation in seven to ten minutes	Presenter finishes the presentation in less than 7 minutes	Presenter finishes the presentation in more than ten minutes
<b>Project content</b>				
Objectives are backed by a strong rationale and are significant for public health	Central message is compelling, precisely stated, and strongly supported	Central message is clear and consistent with the supporting material	Central message is basically understandable but not well supported	Central message is not explicitly stated in the presentation
	There is an insightful discussion of how the project relates to and enhances discipline.	There is a discussion of how the project relates to and enhances discipline.	There is some discussion of how the project relates to the discipline.	No or little discussion of how the project relates to the discipline.
Methodological approach is clearly conveyed and scientifically rigorous	The most appropriate tools and methods are selected taking into consideration all relevant aspects of the project.	Appropriate tools and methods are selected taking into consideration many relevant aspects of the project.	Appropriate tools and methods are selected taking into consideration some aspects of the project.	The tools and methods selected do not take into consideration major aspects of the project.
Analysis approach is appropriate to the methods applied	The evaluation and analysis of data/results are thoughtful and insightful.	The evaluation and analysis of data/results are fairly thoughtful and insightful.	The evaluation and analysis of data/results are sufficient, but somewhat lacking thoughtfulness and insight.	The evaluation and analysis of data/results lack thoughtfulness and insight.
Results/findings are effectively presented	The data/results are critically evaluated to thoroughly address the problem.	The data/results are critically evaluated to address the problem.	Findings address the problem.	Findings do not address the problem.
Conclusions/recommendations are supported by findings	The conclusion is comprehensive and aligned with the results.	The conclusion is focused and aligned with the results.	The conclusion is adequate and, to some extent, aligned with the results.	The conclusion is not aligned with the results.

## Appendix G: Guidelines for Evaluating the ILE Final Product (50% of total ILE II grade)

Assessment of the ILE final product is divided between evaluation of the quality of the ILE product itself (60%) and the supporting documentation that demonstrate the process undertaken to realize the product (40%). The ILE final product is the outward facing public health resource for public use that is the result of the student’s ILE (e.g. manuscript for publication, training manual, health promotion campaign, video, policy brief etc). The assessment of the ILE final product is conducted by the ILE advisor -based on standards in the public health field for the type of project conducted by the student. Supporting documentation for the ILE final product should be assessed by the ILE advisor -using the automated rubric below.

Expectation	Exemplary (5)	Strong (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (0-2)
The need/gap filled by the project is demonstrated by the literature review or other background research	A clear rationale of PH significance is stated, literature is well synthesized and reflects the gap in research or practice.	The project topic is significant and researchable.	The project topic is researchable and fairly developed.	The project topic is too general, wide-ranging to be researchable, vague or impractical.
Methodological approach is scientifically rigorous	The most appropriate tools and methods are selected taking into consideration all relevant aspects of the project.	Appropriate tools and methods are selected taking into consideration many relevant aspects of the project.	Appropriate tools and methods are selected taking into consideration some aspects of the project.	The tools and methods selected do not take into consideration major aspects of the project.
	The methodology is clearly outlined, methods are correctly implemented and in alignment with the methodology.	All elements of the methodology are well developed and clearly explained.	Critical elements of the methodology are well developed; however, more subtle elements are ignored or unaccounted for.	Critical elements of the methodology are vague or not well developed. There is misunderstanding of the methodology.
	All data and information are valid, comprehensive, suitable for the project, and collected from all appropriate sources.	All data and information are valid, comprehensive, and suitable for the project.	Most data and information are valid, sufficiently comprehensive, and suitable for the project.	Data and information are not suitable for the project.

Analysis approach is appropriate to the methods applied	The evaluation and analysis of data/results are thoughtful and insightful.	The evaluation and analysis of data/results are fairly thoughtful and insightful.	The evaluation and analysis of data/results are sufficient, but somewhat lacking thoughtfulness and insight.	The evaluation and analysis of data/results lack thoughtfulness and insight.
	The data/results are critically evaluated to thoroughly address the problem.	The data/results are critically evaluated to address the problem.	Findings address the problem.	Findings do not address the problem.
Conclusions/recommendations are supported by findings	There is an insightful discussion of how the project relates to and enhances discipline.	There is a discussion of how the project relates to and enhances discipline.	There is some discussion of how the project relates to the discipline.	No or little discussion of how the project relates to the discipline.
	The conclusion and recommendations are comprehensive and aligned with the results.	The conclusion and recommendations are focused and aligned with the results.	The conclusion and recommendations are adequate and, to some extent, aligned with the results.	The conclusion and recommendations are not aligned with the results.

In addition to the grade attached to the ILE final product and supporting documentation, the table below illustrates the automated form that is to be filled by the student to self-assess her/his attainment of the competencies selected for the ILE and demonstrate evidence of this attainment. The student should submit her/his reflection along with the ILE final product and supporting documentation.

<b><u>Competency</u></b> <b><u>(write the text of each competency selected for the ILE)</u></b>	<b><u>Was the competency attained? Student's evaluation (YES/NO)</u></b>	<b><u>Evidence of attaining this competency (Demonstrate how you attained this competency. You may refer to ILE deliverables by providing document name, page number and paragraph number, as well as discuss the process used to develop the deliverables.)</u></b>
Competency 1		
Competency 2		
Competency 3 <sup>5</sup>		

<sup>5</sup> Include the 4<sup>th</sup> competency in case this is required by the student's scholarship or certificate.

The above automated form submitted by the student feeds into the automated forms to be filled by the ILE advisor -(illustrated by the table below) to evaluate the student’s competency attainment. The advisor and - fill the form by referring to the student’s self-assessment and the ILE final product submitted by the student.<sup>6</sup>

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b><u>ILE advisor’s evaluation</u></b> (Competency met, or Competency not met)
Competency 1	
Competency 2	
Competency 3 <sup>7</sup>	

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<sup>6</sup> All students are expected to meet all three competencies. If according to the ILE advisor, the student did not meet all three, then ILE II is graded as a fail.

<sup>7</sup> Include the 4<sup>th</sup> competency in case this is required by the student’s scholarship or certificate.