

Guidelines for Body of Internship Report Epidemiology

This is a general outline for the writing of an internship report for the Epidemiology concentration of the MPH Program. The student should meet with the Internship Committee to negotiate the specific format for the internship report prior to beginning the report. However the content points described below will apply.

General Guidelines:

This report is to be written as a professional report. It is not to be written as a 'stream of consciousness'. It is recommended that the student use the suggested headers which are listed at the end of this description. You can add other headers or sections as needed. Do not repeat information from one section to the next.

Be concise in your writing style. You can put the agency report as an appendix to the internship report and then include in the report the activities that were used in the conduct of completing the internship work scope. Suggested page limits are listed below.

Because this is to be a professional report: avoid use of colloquialisms, avoid use of contractions; avoid use of the first person tense, except in the problems encountered section.

Required Sections

The type of internship experience will vary dramatically between students, from a data analysis report for an agency or study to an evaluation of a health education program. However, the actual report does have some required elements. Sections 1-7 of the Thesis outline (described elsewhere in this document) need to precede the following elements which comprise the Body of the Paper. In general, the Body of the Paper has a 25 page limit. Suggested outline and section headers are listed at the end of this description of elements for the Body of the Paper.

1. Introduction - [4 pages]
 - a. Broadly describe the issue addressed by the internship.
 - b. Describe the overarching objectives of the internship project in the context of the field. State any hypotheses (null or alternative), if applicable.
 - c. Describe the specific goals, proposed outcomes and learning objectives, and activities of the internship.
 - d. Describe the components of the sponsoring site. Include the mission statement, organizational structure, and funding sources.
2. Background [5 pages]
 - a. Summarize the literature on the topic and how the broad goal of the internship relates to what is known.
 - b. While there are not a specific minimum number of references that is required, it is expected that this literature review will include a review of primary literature and not rely solely upon websites and review articles. This should be discussed with the Internship Advisor.
3. Methods [5 pages]
 - a. Describe the methodology employed: specifically describe any actions taken to achieve the internship goals, evaluate the results or analyze the data. Specific items may vary between internships depending upon the goals of the internship. The following items are examples of items that may be included:
 - b. Describe any special approvals needed and place copies in an appendix (College IRB determination submission and response; IRB approval, animal subjects approval, Radiation Control Approval, Certificates of special training attained to accomplish tasks etc.)

- c. Describe the study design employed including any recruitment or technique of recruiting the population evaluated by the work. Characterize the study population in relation to the specific study design (e.g., cohort study or case-control study).
- d. Describe all data collection methods including questionnaires, methods of administration, validation, data entry, quality assurance measures. If the internship included development of questionnaires or databases or data entry systems, include information about the steps required to complete the project.
- e. Describe analysis plan, including variable creation. Include in appendix data dictionaries or variable lists created as part of internship. Include in the analysis plan statistical tests to be used. If appropriate, discuss the power and the significance level in the context of the hypotheses to be tested.
- f. Describe how the necessary tasks were implemented and coordinated.

4. Results [5 pages]

- a. The contents of this section may vary depending on the objective/task. In broad strokes, describe what was produced or evaluated. Use of summary tables and figures is encouraged. Place actual products (e.g. agency report or manuscript) in appendices of the internship report.

5. Discussion [3 pages]

- a. Evaluate what the results or output mean and describe the public health impact. As applicable to your internship:
- b. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the implemented study design, statistical analyses, and data collection. It is appropriate to discuss potential confounding was addressed, potential impact of bias on results.
- c. Relate the internship findings to the knowledge base of the field.
- d. Discuss problems encountered, if any, and solutions proposed or utilized
- e. Per the internship manual for all students: *The “discussion” section of the internship report should demonstrate the student’s ability to:*
 - *Accept responsibility, assess situations, make or recommend decisions based on the assessment, and evaluate the progress and effectiveness of work performed;*
 - *Adapt to work in difficult situations; manage time effectively and use the sponsoring site’s resources, procedures and structure effectively;*
 - *Present ideas, negotiate and resolve conflicts in a professional manner;*
 - *Work effectively in diversified task-oriented groups as well as with clients, and;*
 - *Adhere to commitments made to the sponsoring site, colleagues, and clients, with professional integrity and impartiality.*

6. Address the issues described earlier in the manual to be included for all students under discussion [2 pages]

- a. *Discuss how the project relates to public health (covers all core areas). Specifically, what core functions were addressed, and which of the ten essential services were provided?*
(<http://www.health.gov/phfunctions/public.htm>)
- b. *Keep in mind, the purpose of the final report, along with the Internship Presentation, is to determine the student’s ability to:*
 - i. *Demonstrate public health knowledge and relevance*
 - ii. *Demonstrate the ability to integrate public health skills*
 - iii. *Demonstrate technical writing and oral presentation skills*
 - iv. *Assess the completion of the planned learning objectives*

7. Conclusions [1 page]

- a. Summarize internship findings as appropriate

- b. Provide an overall evaluation of the experience, conclusions, and recommendations regarding future use of the site, agency or program.
8. Finally, the student should go back to the “Thesis outline” and be sure to include Sections 9 (appendices) and 10 (references). It is recommended that the student should utilize a reference manager system, such as EndNote, to assist in the citing of references and creation of the final bibliography or reference list.

Suggested Headings for Body of Report

Introduction

 Internship Project Objectives

 Specific Goals & Activities for Internship

 Sponsoring site

Background or Literature Review

Methods

 IRB Review & Special Approvals Required

 Study Design

 Population

 Data Collection Methods

 Analysis plans

 Other Activities

Results

Discussion

 Problems Encountered

Conclusions

Appendices

References