The Academic Health Department (AHD) discussion began with the distribution of a document explaining the MPH program’s new Graduate Applied Practice Experiences (GrAPEs). The first part of the discussion focused mainly on the GrAPEs and how it would affect students volunteering/interning with the health department moving forward.

* There was clarification that, as of now, the GrAPEs only apply to the MPH program, although this format may be extended to MS-EOHS program.
* Questions were raised about vaccine and background check requirements. I will explore options to address this with WKU’s faculty. It was also suggested that students have some awareness of our agency’s policies such as the dress code. Since the dietetic internship program has similar requirements, their agreements will be reviewed for ideas to address these issues.
* A question was raised about what the students are supposed to learn from the GrAPES. I explained they must collectively meet 5 competencies from a list included in the student handbook. I will be sending out the current draft of the MPH Student Handbook following this meeting.
* Concerns were raised about the short period of time the students are required to spend with the site and whether students have sufficient time to both receive training on a project and to then conduct the project.
* It was mentioned that there are several projects that would be nice to have done if the personnel were available to conduct them. Everyone was instructed to submit their project ideas to me until a formal submission process was determined.

After the GrAPE discussion, other items included:

* There was discussion of keeping a record of guest lectures/ other WKU involvement for PHAB accreditation purposes. I will look into developing a system for collecting this information. It was suggested that a quarterly information request may be a good approach to collecting this info.
* Questions about what the requirements are to consider oneself an “adjunct” were raised and whether staff who currently serve as part-time faculty should be counted for PHAB purposes.
* Some staff training needs included basic orientation to public health, focusing on the subjects that relate to our branches, for new staff who don’t have PH backgrounds. Also training on how to properly interact with LEP clients since the TRAIN modules for this topic are outdated. Online video lectures/modules similar to the TRAIN courses would work best for these.
* A meet-and-greet/ tour of the facilities was suggested as a way for each agency to better understand each other.