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**Monitoring and Evaluation Certificate**

**Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) Guidebook**

*Options, Deadlines and Everything Else You Need to Know to Get Started on Your ILE*

**Spring 2018**

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# Understanding the Integrative Learning Experience Purpose and Process

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), which is the accrediting body for all schools of public health in the United States, requires that all students receiving an MPH complete an integrative learning experience (ILE).

The ILE is a required, 0-credit component of the MPH. The BUSPH Registrar will register students for the ILE after they have submitted their graduation application

Monitoring and Evaluation Certificate students:

* Must fulfill all the requirements outlined in this document according to the schedule below;
* Are strongly recommended to attend the ILE seminars;
* Are requested to stay in frequent communication with Peter Rockers, Rachel Pieciak, their ILE advisor and one another throughout the ILE process, especially if they will need to miss scheduled meetings.

[CEPH Definition](http://publichealth.uic.edu/sites/default/files//CEPH%20Accreditation%20Criteria.pdf): “The ILE represents a culminating experience and may take many forms, such as a practice-based project, essay-based comprehensive exam, capstone course, integrative seminar, etc. Regardless of form, the student produces a high-quality written product that is appropriate for the student’s educational and professional objectives. Written products might include the following: program evaluation report, training manual, policy statement, take-home comprehensive essay exam, legislative testimony with accompanying supporting research, etc. Ideally, the written product is developed and delivered in a manner that is useful to external stakeholders, such as non-profit or governmental organizations.”

[CEPH Explanation of Why Professional Writing is Central to the ILE:](https://ceph.org/faqs-2016-criteria-integrative-learning-experience/) “One message that we heard strongly from employers was about the need for MPH graduates to be able to engage in substantive, logically flowing writing. . . . . The high-quality written product is meant to be an organization and synthesis of thoughts and information.”

[BUSPH Definition](http://www.bu.edu/academics/sph/programs/mph/): “The BU ILE affords students the opportunity to synthesize foundational and certificate competencies. Students will integrate and apply the knowledge and skills obtained throughout the degree program. ILEs will be tied to the student’s required functional certificate and will incorporate skills and content from their context certificate as appropriate.”

# Monitoring and Evaluation ILE Objectives, Components and Process

The ILE for the M&E Certificate is designed to demonstrate competencies developed during coursework. For students completing the M&E Certificate, there are two options for the ILE: a written M&E Plan; or a written Evaluation Analysis. In addition, all students are required to complete a Reflection Paper. The student’s M&E faculty advisor will oversee the completion of M&E ILEs in a required 0-credit course. The ILE course will follow a seminar style with meetings almost every two weeks. Students will take the ILE course during their last semester.

Students must identify an appropriate Focus Program (Option 1) or Focus Intervention (Option 2) prior to the start of the ILE course in their last semester. They must then submit a completed ILE Concept Note describing their proposed project before the first session of the ILE course. Each student’s faculty advisor must approve the student’s concept note before the student begins work on their ILE. The advisor will also approve the final report and reflection. Students will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Students unable to complete the ILE in the designated semester will receive a ‘J’ grade and will be expected to complete their work in an additional semester.

At the time of the due date students should submit the concept note, M&E Plan or Impact Evaluation Plan and Reflection Paper as three separate word documents to the ILE advisor. As stated in the ILE contract, all submissions are due to the advisor by 11:59pm.

# Relevance to Foundational Competencies

In their courses, students build the following core competencies in Monitoring & Evaluation:

* Design monitoring and evaluation plans for public health programs
* Articulate the purpose of formative, process, and outcome evaluations
* Differentiate between qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods in relation to their strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, with an emphasis on reliability and validity
* Apply analytic methods to evaluate the impacts and costs of public health programs and policies
* Support the use of data from monitoring and evaluation projects in informing evidence based decision making for the development of new programs and continuous quality improvement efforts

The M&E ILE provides students with an opportunity to build on these competencies while honing their written communication and critical thinking skills. The specific foundational competencies students will practice while completing the ILE include:

* **Interpret results of data analysis for public health research policy or practice** by identifying, reviewing, and summarizing evidence relevant to the program or policy they are analyzing.
* **Select methods to evaluate public health programs** by designing either an M&E plan (Option 1) or a data analysis plan (Option 2).
* **Communicate audience-appropriate public health content** by creating a concise written product though a multi-draft process to be distributed to relevant stakeholders.
* **Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process** by conducting a stakeholder analysis to identify relevant stakeholders and develop approaches for engagement.

# ILE Deliverable Descriptions and Schedule

# Option 1: M&E Plan

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ILE Deliverable** | **Description** | **Submission Date** |
| Concept Note and Contract  | * Approved Concept Note + Signed Contract
 | **January 24** |
| **1** | * Program Summary
* Stakeholder Analysis
* Logic Model
 | **February 21** |
| **2** | * Process Evaluation
 | **March 14** |
| **3** | * Impact Evaluation
 | **April 11** |
| **4** | * Alternative Study Design and Conclusion
 | **April 25** |
| Final ILE Work Product | * Concept Note
* Complete M&E Plan
* Reflection Paper
 | **May 9** |

**All ILE sessions will take place from 1-2pm in CT-374 unless noted.** Student responsibilities for each session have been **bolded**.

January 24: Introduction to the ILE Process

February 7: Peer Review of Deliverable 1 Draft. **Come prepared to review a draft of your first deliverable. This should be a COMPLETE first draft, as good as you can make it at this point. Students will exchange drafts and peer review one another’s work during the session.**

February 21: Review any last questions related to Deliverable 1. Introduce and review expectations for Deliverable 2. **A draft of Deliverable 1 is due to the advisor at 11:59pm. This should be a COMPLETE first draft, as good as you can make it at this point**.

March 14: Review any last questions related to Deliverable 2. Introduce and review expectations for Deliverable 3. **A draft of Deliverable 2 is due to the advisor at 11:59pm. This should be a COMPLETE first draft, as good as you can make it at this point**

March 28: Working session with X,O notation teaching module.

April 11: Review any last questions related to Deliverable 3. Introduce and review expectations for Deliverable 4. **A draft of Deliverable 3 is due to the advisor at 11:59pm. This should be a COMPLETE first draft, as good as you can make it at this point**

April 25: Discussion of project progress to-date. **Draft of the entire M&E Plan (deliverables 1-4) is due to the advisor at 11:59pm. This should be a COMPLETE first draft, as good as you can make it at this point**.

May 9: ILE End of Semester Celebration & Feedback

## Deliverable 1

**Due: February 21**

*Program evaluation is an essential practice in public health and for guiding public health activities such as a) developing evidence-based decisions; b) maintaining and expanding equitable and effective public health programs; and c) promoting transparency and accountability. In an effort to ensure that public health programs honor these principles, public health practitioners must conduct rigorous and routine evaluations.1*

**Part I: Program Summary and Literature Search**

Once you have selected a program to evaluate, clearly state the problem or issue that the program is trying to address. Describe for your reader what is being done to address this issue and in what contexts. Summarize key literature on this topic (e.g. 10 most important papers) and what your program’s approach is for addressing the issue.

**Questions**:

* What issue is your program trying to address?
* What is known about this issue?
* What approach is your program taking to address this issue?

**Part II:** **Stakeholder Analysis**

Before you can evaluate a program, you must identify who are the persons or groups of people that are affected by the program and understand how these persons or groups could influence the implementation of your evaluation. For this deliverable, identify **5** stakeholders and complete the table below, describing the role of each stakeholder in the evaluation and at providing least one key message for each stakeholder.

**Questions**:

* **Identify 5 stakeholders (e.g., local ministry of health).**
* **Describe the role of each stakeholder in the evaluation.**
* **What do you want the stakeholder to hear? How do you effectively engage them? Develop 1 key message to convey to each stakeholder to ensure that your evaluation is a success.**

*Incorporate this table with some accompanying narrative into your paper as Table I.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stakeholder** | **Role in evaluation** | **Key message** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Part III: Logic Model**

Logic Models are a useful tool for planning and evaluating health programs. For planning purposes, logic models are used to articulate the expected outcomes of a given program. They also come in handy when evaluating programs, by allowing stakeholders a way to understand the implications of program decisions on the trajectory of the evaluation2.

Draft a logic model to depict what your intervention is aiming to do and how it will achieve the desired outcome. Be sure to include the following pieces in your model:

* Program/Project title and overall aim
* Key assumptions that you need to make
* Inputs
	+ Money, time, skillsets, technical support etc.
* Activities (*be specific)*
	+ What things is your program doing to address the problem?
	+ Is it a training program? Who is the audience? How many people do you plan to train?
	+ Is it to strengthen facilities? How will you do this?
* Outputs- these are the results of your activities. Frame them in a way to include a specific quality that you will later measure. For example:
	+ X% of trainings where at least 90% pass
	+ #X community meetings with at least 60 participants
* Outcomes- these are specific to your target population. You can think about outcomes in three ways
	+ Short term- represent the most immediate effects to a program
		- Example: knowledge, awareness, attitude
	+ Midterm- represent changes in actions
		- Example: behaviors, practices
	+ Long term- changes in conditions; these are distant in time and harder to measure
		- Example: prevention of X or improvement in Y

The ILE is a way to synthesize and apply skills that you have already learned in previous coursework. As such, you can draw upon resources from previous courses including:

* The first session and assignment from **GH745** focused on [stakeholder analysis](http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/anticorrupt/PoliticalEconomy/stakeholderanalysis.htm)
	+ Use feedback from Assignment #1 to help improve your stakeholder analysis for the ILE
	+ Refer back to the [CDC Framework for Program Evaluation](https://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm)

## Deliverable 2

**Due: March 14**

*Imagine yourself as the implementer of the program or intervention you are using for your ILE. In this capacity, you need to understand the inputs, activities and outputs of your program logic model, i.e. your process evaluation, in order to measure the progress of your program.*

**Part I: Process Evaluation**

Include **two** process evaluation questions that are derived from your logic model.

**Part II:**

In Part I, you described two process evaluation questions. Now, determine a **quantitative indicator** for each of these questions.

Quantitative indicators are a way to measure your process questions. These indicators allow program/project implementers to understand the successes and failures of program operations and to compare them at various points during the implementation of the program.

Example of a quantitative indicator*: the number of people attending a training*

**Part III:**

Describe the ideal data source for your quantitative indicator and describe your data collection process and procedures (e.g. sending interviewers into a community to administer a survey or obtaining secondary data from a routine administrative system).

Provide the parts of the data collection instrument you would use to collect these data. For example, if you would administer a survey, provide the questions as written in the survey instrument.

**Part IV:**

Now consider a **qualitative measure** for each of your process evaluation questions. Qualitative measures are a way to give context, meaning or status to what you are measuring with quantitative data. These measures allow the implementer to understand why the program is or is not making the desired change in people’s lives.

Example of a qualitative measure: *level of satisfaction with a type of service*

**Part V:**

Describe the process and procedures for collecting this qualitative information (e.g. conducting a set of focus group discussions or key informant interviews).

Provide the parts of the data collection instrument you would use to collect this information.

The ILE is a way to synthesize and apply skills that you have already learned in previous coursework. As such, you can draw upon resources from previous courses including:

* Assignment #2 from **GH745**

Monitoring Plan assignment from **GH745**

## Deliverable 3

**Due: April 11**

*Impact evaluations allow program implementers, stakeholders and policymakers to understand whether their program is working as intended and achieving its ultimate goals. Learnings produced by an impact evaluation can be used to ‘do better’, i.e. to improve the design of the program and to reallocate resources to other programs.*

**Part I: Impact Evaluation**

Include **one** impact evaluation question that is derived from your logic model.

**Part II:**

In Part I, you described one impact evaluation question. Now, determine a **quantitative indicator** for each of these questions.

Quantitative indicators are a way to measure your impact questions. These indicators allow program/project implementers to know with some certainty whether the program is having its intended effects.

Example of a quantitative indicator*: population prevalence of diabetes*

**Part II:**

Describe the ideal data source for your quantitative indicators and describe your data collection process and procedures (e.g. sending interviewers into a community to administer a survey or obtaining secondary data from a routine administrative system).

Provide the parts of the data collection instrument you would use to collect these data. For example, if you would administer a survey, provide the questions as written in the survey instrument.

**Part III:**

In order to answer your impact evaluation questions you will need to choose a study design. For the purpose of this task, imagine that you are doing a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT).

* Describe what your RCT looks like
	+ Use proper X,O notation to depict the design
		- *Include a key that explains what each O and X is; remember, X is your program logic model*
	+ Describe your sampling method and include a [power calculation](https://www.dssresearch.com/KnowledgeCenter/toolkitcalculators/statisticalpowercalculators.aspx).
	+ Explain your randomization procedure (e.g. simple, matched).
* Given this design, comment on what threats to valid causal inference are mitigated and what threats persist.

## Deliverable 4

**Due: April 25**

**Part I:**

In Deliverable 3, you imagined that you were doing a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT). Now imagine that you are not able to conduct a RCT.

* Describe the “next best” study design for your impact evaluation (e.g. controlled before-and-after).
* Explain why this is the most appropriate design
* Given this design, comment on what threats to valid causal inference are mitigated and what threats persist.

**Part II:**

Over the course of this project you have developed various parts of an M&E Plan including: a program summary, stakeholder analysis, a logic model, a process evaluation plan and an impact evaluation plan. Now it is time to tie it all together in a conclusion. As you reflect about what you’ve done, you should address the following questions:

* How will you disseminate your results to stakeholders?
* What are the gaps in the current knowledge and how does the work that you’ve done address those gaps?
* In your opinion, what are the most important questions to address next?

**Part III:**

Now go back and review your entire product. To improve how your M&E Plan reads, develop a Table of Contents and a one-page, 300 word executive summary. Both of these pieces should appear as pages 1 and 2 of your final M&E Plan.

# Option 2: Evaluation Analysis

In preparation for the first session of the ILE course, students will need to identify a health intervention with an available dataset. Data may be obtained from several sources, including: an organization with which the student has a prior relationship (i.e. their practicum organization); a faculty member with data that they are willing to share; or a public data source. Data from published impact evaluations are increasingly being made publically available and students will have the option of using such a dataset to replicate published findings or to investigate an aspect of those data not previously addressed. ***Please note that students who choose to complete this option will need to have an extensive, working knowledge of the dataset.***

If a student chooses to undertake this option for the ILE, the deadlines for interim drafts should be negotiated between the student and advisor. Although the intermediate deadlines may vary from student to student, **the following deadlines are hard deadlines:**

**Concept Note and Signed Contract:** January 24

**Final ILE materials, including the concept note, Evaluation Analysis and Reflection Paper:** May 9

# ILE Reflection Paper

Each student must write a reflective personal statement, not to exceed four single-spaced pages, which explores how the knowledge and experiences acquired while at BUSPH have addressed her/his interested, informed her/his mastery of the certificate competencies and professional development, as well as her/his next steps in her/his career and lifelong learning. Be sure to link to specific experiences in courses, practica, Career PREP, jobs etc., where appropriate.

Please note the reflection must address each of the following questions:

1. Reflect on your achievement of the MPH program and certificate(s) competencies through coursework, your practicum, Career PREP and your ILE project. In which competencies do you feel most confident about performing in a professional setting? In which competencies would you have liked to gain more confidence? What aspects of BUSPH curriculum contributed most to your confidence in each competency? In answering this question, please specify the competencies from your certificate(s) as they are described in the [Bulletin](http://www.bu.edu/academics/sph/programs/). For each certificate the competencies are provided in a bulleted list.
2. Describe valuable learning opportunities that you pursued outside of required coursework and the practicum. This may include any professional development opportunities you pursued, organizations you joined, meetings you attended, or affiliations with a mentor. Please describe how each added value to your professional development and career readiness.
3. Reflect on your preparedness to pursue your career objectives after leaving BUSPH and the steps you plan to take upon graduating. How would you describe your career objectives at this time? How do you plan to pursue these? What challenges do you anticipate? What further knowledge, skills, or professional development opportunities do you wish you had gained while at BUSPH?
4. Reflect on your lifelong learning goals as you now see them. In what areas do you want to deepen your knowledge or competency? In what areas could BUSPH support your continued learning in these areas?

# M&E ILE Concept Note

**Integrated Learning Experience**

**Monitoring & Evaluation Certificate**

*Name: BU ID:*

*Date: Faculty Advisor:*

*Please describe the Focus Program (Option 1) or Focus Intervention (Option 2) that you have chosen:*

*If you have chosen Option 1: Please describe why you have chosen this Focus Program, and why you are certain that you have enough information about this program to develop a full M&E Plan.*

*If you have chosen Option 2: Please describe why you have chosen this Focus Intervention, and why you are certain that you have the necessary data on to conduct an Evaluation Analysis.*

# Monitoring and Evaluation ILE Completion Contract: Spring 2018

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **BUID:**

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Intended Graduation Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**FINAL DEADLINE FOR THE INTEGRATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_understand that in order to graduate in May 2018, my complete and FINAL ILE project and reflection paper must be completed and submitted to my advisor by 5:00pm on May 9, 2018.

The overarching objective of the Monitoring and Evaluation ILE is to give students an opportunity to hone research, critical analysis, and communication skills that will be vital to their future careers. It is a 0-credit requirement of the BUSPH MPH program. ***All students must successfully complete the ILE in order to be eligible to graduate. That means that you must complete your ILE this fall semester if you intend to graduate in May 2018.***

Students completing the ILE have two options: a written M&E Plan; or a written Evaluation Analysis. In addition, all students are required to complete a Reflection Paper

I understand that there will be **no** exceptions to the policy. Students who finalize their ILE materials after **May 9** will be moved to a January 2019 graduation date. Students are expected to be in frequent contact with Peter Rockers, Rachel Pieciak and their advisor and must go through the multi-draft process. Students are also strongly encourage to attend ILE sessions, facilitated by Professor Rockers, on Wednesdays from 1-2pm.

**Draft due date guidelines:**

***All students must submit a one-page concept note to their advisor by January 24, 2018. This deadline and the deadline for the final project and reflection paper are hard deadlines.*** *All deliverables should be submitted to advisors by 11:59pm on the due date.**The additional deadlines outlined below only apply to students completing Option 1.*

**Concept Note and Contract:** January 24

**Draft of Deliverable 1** : February 27 **Deliverable 2:** March 14 **Deliverable 3:** April 11; and **Deliverable 4**: April 25

**Final M&E Materials (Concept Note, Final Paper and Reflection Paper):** May 9

**Definitions:** For both ILE Options, all written work must go through a multi-draft process.Students will be responsible for submitting materials to their advisor. Final M&E ILE materials have gone through a multi-draft process and has received approval from the ILE advisor.

**NOTE:** This contract must be signed and submitted to the Program Manager, Rachel Pieciak, rpieciak@bu.edu, in order for you to be eligible to finish your ILE in time for May 2018 graduation.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

ILE Advisor : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Assessment Rubric for Monitoring & Evaluation ILE

This grading rubric was designed to be used across all functional certificates. For this reason, the categories are general but applicable to all Integrative Learning Experiences and will be applied to the specific deliverable(s) required by the certificate.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Assessment Dimension | Needs Improvement (1) | Acceptable (2) | Proficient (3) |
| ***Writing:*** *clear, concise, well-organized, correct grammar & usage* | Writing has deficits in multiple areas that could be professionally detrimental | Writing has deficits in some areas and lacks some clarity but overall is acceptable in professional settings | Writing is clear and concise and is a strong professional product  |
| ***Use of evidence:*** *Evidence is relevant, sources correctly cited, and synthesized to effectively provide insight into the question/issue* | Evidence is weak and/or not relevant to the question/issue posed with sources poorly cited | Evidence is somewhat relevant and timely to the question/issue posed with some sources correctly cited  | Evidence is relevant, timely, and clearly summarized with sources correctly cited |
| ***Application of findings:*** *Implications of evidence, research, and/or findings are clearly identified and justified, and actions recommended are comprehensive, feasible, innovative, and ethical* | Recommendations do not logically follow from evidence, are questionable and/or inappropriate, and/or not comprehensive, feasible, innovative, and/or ethical | Recommendations somewhat flow logically from evidence and are justified though there are gaps, and/or recommendations are somewhat comprehensive, feasible, innovative, and/or ethical | Recommendations flow logically from evidence, are well-argued, and/or are comprehensive, feasible, innovative, and/or ethical |
| ***Overall presentation:*** *Clear communication of main points with engaging presentation style & incorporation of appropriate visuals* | Presentation is poorly organized, timed, written, and/or does not connect with the audience/reader | Presentation is somewhat organized and delivered in a somewhat engaging manner within time boundaries and/or written specifications | Presentation is clearly organized and delivered in engaging manner within time boundaries and/or written specifications |
| ***Reflection:*** *Questions are thoroughly addressed and demonstrate self-awareness and insight and competencies are mastered* | Writer does not thoroughly engage all questions, does not demonstrate self-awareness and insight, and/or mastery of competencies is not apparent | Writer somewhat engages all questions, demonstrates average self-awareness and insight, and/or demonstrates some competency achievement | Writer engages all questions, clearly articulating learning, change, and insights to drive further development, demonstrates self-awareness, and/or demonstrates mastery of competencies |