



**Boston University** School of Public Health  
Department of International Health

## **Culminating Experience Guidelines:**

*Options, Deadlines, Forms, and Everything Else You Need to Know about  
Fulfilling the Last Requirement for the MPH*

**Academic Year 2012-2013**  
(Revised August 2012)

## RESOURCES FOR CE QUESTIONS

---

Resources	Contact	When to contact
CE Guidelines		Read first for detailed information on CE procedures, forms, deadlines, etc.
Faculty Advisor		Start talking about your CE with your advisor early. Do not wait until your last semester.
Emily Jump	<a href="mailto:jump@bu.edu">jump@bu.edu</a>	Logistical questions not answered by the CE Guidelines
Monita Baba Djara	<a href="mailto:monitab@bu.edu">monitab@bu.edu</a>	Questions about options, CE advisors
Jennifer Beard	<a href="mailto:Jenbeard@bu.edu">Jenbeard@bu.edu</a>	Non-routine CE questions and problems

## QUICK GUIDE TO CE COMPLETION PROCESS

---

1. Discuss CE options with your Academic Advisor well in advance of deadlines.
2. Choose your CE advisor (either your academic advisor or another IH faculty member).
3. Write your CE Problem Purpose Statement or Project Proposal, including your work plan, and submit it to your CE advisor for approval before the first CE deadlines.
4. Register for a directed study or IH 777 if necessary.
5. Complete the online Request to Complete CE Form, uploading your signed CE completion contract and your Problem Purpose Statement/Project Proposal at the end of the form. If you are unable to obtain your CE advisor's signature, you may forward an approval email to [jump@bu.edu](mailto:jump@bu.edu).
6. Submit at least three drafts to your CE advisor as scheduled in the work plan. Your third draft will not necessarily be your final draft; you will know you are on your final draft when your CE advisor tells you that you are done.
7. Once your CE advisor has approved your final CE, complete the online Submission of CE Form, uploading your CE with cover page and your updated CV at the end of the form.
8. Be sure that either you or your CE advisor has informed the Academic Coordinator that your final draft has been approved.

*Once approval is received, the Academic Coordinator will inform the Registrar and update your records.  
Congratulations! You are finished!*

# Table of Contents

---

<b>1. Overview of IH Culminating Experience Requirement</b>	<b>1</b>
Learning Objectives	
Approval Process	
Documentation Process	
Quality Standards and the Multi-Draft Process	
Student Responsibility	
Special Academic Programs	
<b>2. Options for completing the IH Culminating Experience</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Option 1: Policy Analysis</b>	<b>4</b>
Deadlines	
PPS Checklist	
PPS Template	
<b>Option 2: Journal Article</b>	<b>6</b>
Deadlines	
Proposal Checklist	
Proposal Template	
<b>Option 3: Independent Project</b>	<b>8</b>
Deadlines	
Proposal Checklist	
Proposal Template	
<b>3. Frequently Asked Questions</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4. Checklist for Final CEs</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>5. Rubric for Assessing CEs</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>6. Structuring Your Policy Analysis</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>7. Appendix A: CE Forms</b>	<b>18</b>
CE Completion Contract Fall 2012	
CE Completion Contract Spring 2013	
CE Completion Contract Summer 2013	
CE Cover Page	

## Section

# 1

## Overview of the IH Culminating Experience Requirement

All students must complete a culminating experience (CE). The CE provides students with an opportunity to **synthesize** and **integrate** core public health skills taught in the International Health curriculum. The Department offers three options for completing the culminating experience: a policy analysis, a journal article, and an independent project. MPH/MBA students should consult their advisor for program specific requirements.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THE CULMINATING EXPERIENCE

Upon completion of the CE, IH concentrators will be able to:

1. Synthesize background information gathered using primary and secondary sources, either from a practice partner site or as part of a public health research activity, on a problem of public health interest.
2. Drawing from knowledge and skills learned during course work, use theory to analyze a public health problem, identify causal factors, and explain their inter-relationships.
3. Identify a specific audience and tailor communication accordingly.
4. Explain how a problem should be addressed, and causal factors either mitigated or prevented, through a proposed intervention or course of proposed action.
5. Define strengths and weaknesses of a chosen strategy, compared to other alternatives, previous practice, evidence, or identified “best” practice, taking into account feasibility, cost, cultural appropriateness, etc.

### THE APPROVAL PROCESS

Students may begin their CE after they have completed 25 credit hours. Students must choose a CE advisor to work with throughout the semester; for most students, this will be your academic advisor. If you decide to work with an IH Faculty member who is not your academic advisor, be sure to let your academic advisor know. For students enrolling in IH 777 to complete the CE, your CE advisors will be the teaching faculty.

Approval for a CE will not be given for work that has been previously completed. Students should seek approval prior to beginning work on their chosen option. While students may base their CE on previous work, the CE paper or project must be substantially new work and not a revision or rewrite of previous work.

All written work will involve a multi-draft process. Most students write and submit three drafts to their CE advisor for comments and suggestions. A fourth version is often necessary to complete the paper or project. ***In order to successfully complete the culminating experience, the student must demonstrate application of a broad range of core skills from across the curriculum and synthesis and integration of knowledge.***

### THE DOCUMENTATION PROCESS

At the beginning of the semester, students working on their CE are required to complete and submit a signed CE Contract, a Project Proposal/Problem Purpose Statement, and an online [Request to Complete CE Form](#). The *Request to Complete CE Form* is available through the IH Blast website, and all other forms are available online and at the back of this document. You may upload your CE Completion Contract and Problem Purpose

Statement/Project Proposal at the end of the online form. If your advisor is unable to physically sign your CE Contract, you should forward an approval email to Emily Jump in lieu of a signature ([jump@bu.edu](mailto:jump@bu.edu)).

Once you have completed your CE and it has been approved by your CE advisor, please forward your advisor's approval email to [jump@bu.edu](mailto:jump@bu.edu). Additionally, you will need to submit an electronic copy of your final CE with cover page, an updated CV with a non-BU email address listed, and the online [Submission of CE Form](#). You may upload your completed CE with cover sheet and your CV at the end of the online form. If you have any trouble with the online form, you are welcome to submit documentation in person or by email to the Academic Coordinator, Emily Jump.

## QUALITY STANDARDS AND CE ADVISOR'S ROLE

In order to complete the CE, all IH concentrators must demonstrate application of a broad range of core skills from across the curriculum and synthesis and integration of knowledge. Final papers (Options 1 & 2) will only be approved if they have met this standard of high quality, graduate level, analytic writing. Independent Projects (Option 3) will receive approval once they have fulfilled the objectives defined in the committee-approved project proposal and represent high quality graduate work. The same high quality standards are expected of all culminating projects, whether or not they are credit-bearing.

All papers must be cited appropriately, using either American Psychological Association (APA) formatting (author, year) or Vancouver numbering system (also known as the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Medical Journals).

***We strongly encourage all students to learn to use Zotero (<http://www.zotero.org/>), Mendeley (<http://www.mendeley.com/>) or another bibliographic software program.*** Zotero and Mendeley are open-source program that you can download to your computer and also use online.

CE advisors will read and comment on 3 drafts of a paper. If the 3<sup>rd</sup> draft is close to being done but still needs some work, the advisor may ask for a 4th and final draft. CE advisors will not read more than 4 drafts. The third draft should only be submitted to your advisor once it is as close to a final product as you can make it (meaning all citations should be in place, all sections completed, abstract attached, etc.)

Occasionally, CEs need more than the standard 3-4 drafts because they do not yet meet masters-level qualifications. In this event, your CE advisor will decide on a course of action in consultation with Rich Feeley, the DIH Associate Chair.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Students should meet and/or correspond regularly with their CE advisor to provide progress updates. Advisors will provide feedback on each draft submitted. Subsequent revisions must fully address faculty concerns. A student may choose not to follow through on a suggestion made by the CE advisor, but should note his/her rationale in a note in the draft, in an email, or in discussion. Questions about faculty feedback should be clarified with the CE advisor. Students are responsible for staying in touch with CE advisors. Deadlines missed without prior advisor consent may jeopardize finishing the CE in time for graduation.

## STUDENTS ENROLLED IN IH707, MI PROGRAM, MA/MPH OR MPH/MD PROGRAM

Students enrolled in the Philippines or Kenya Programs in their final semester, the Peace Corps Masters International Program, the Graduate Medical Sciences Program who are planning to be in Boston for an abbreviated stay, or applying to medical school or any other academic program **are strongly encouraged to complete the CE BEFORE they leave Boston.** See Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

## INCOMPLETES AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

*Regardless of whether a CE is taken for credit or not, a CE started in one semester must be completed, at the latest, by the final due date of the subsequent semester.*

**If you do not take the CE for credit**, you are still required to finish the CE within 2 semesters. If you do not, you will be required to register for a 1 credit directed study.

**If you take the CE for credit** (IH777 or a directed study) and do not finish the CE in the same semester you start, you can request an Incomplete ("I"). If your CE is not finished by the final due date of the subsequent semester, the "I" will be changed to a failing grade. Students may appeal this decision in the case of serious extenuating circumstances, such as a death in the family or personal illness.

**If you have finished your coursework but not the CE**, you must apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA). You may take up to 2 semesters of leave to finish your CE, but you should keep in mind that once the CE is started, it must be completed, at the latest, by the end of the subsequent semester. Students who want to finish the CE after their LOA has expired must petition the IH department to re-enter the program. The petition must include a work plan for finishing the CE within one semester and, if the petition is granted, the student must register for a 1-credit directed study. The CE must be finished within the time period indicated in the work plan or the student will receive a failing grade.

Appeals and petitions should be made in writing and sent to the Associate Chair, Rich Feeley, who will decide on a case by case basis.

All students are subject to the Grading Policies available at [sph.bu.edu/registrar/policies](http://sph.bu.edu/registrar/policies). International students must be in compliance with visa regulations and any student who will not finish his/her paper in time should speak with the Academic Coordinator, Emily Jump, as soon as possible.

## Section

# 2

## Options for Completing the IH Culminating Experience Requirement

### OPTION 1— POLICY ANALYSIS

This option can be taken for 0, 1, or 2 credits. Students may sign up for a 1 or 2 credit directed study (IH941) with an IH faculty member. Students opting for the directed study or 0 credits submit all drafts to their CE advisor. The same high quality standards are expected of all CEs, regardless of whether they are credit-bearing or not.

Alternatively, students may elect to enroll in IH777 (2cr), a writing workshop in which students work on their policy analysis (Option 1) throughout the semester. In IH777, all drafts of the paper are commented on by the course co-instructors.

The policy analysis usually addresses a public health or management problem observed during the practicum. Students should focus on a policy or program-related issue relevant to an identified host organization or a set of policy makers, gather and analyze background information and evidence, and propose recommendations. You are strongly encouraged to base your CE on your practicum, but students may choose a topic not related to their practicum with the approval of their CE advisor.

- The policy analysis should be approximately 12-20 pages (double-spaced). Length is determined by the scope of the question and the needs of the audience.
- Ideally, the analysis will fill a need expressed by the organization and will be delivered to them upon completion.
- ***As you prepare for your practicum***, keep this option in mind and consult with your field supervisor or another relevant person in the organization about policy issues they would like you to explore in your culminating experience.
- ***If you've already done your practicum*** and are still in touch with your contacts, you can ask what sort of policy analysis would be useful to them.
- In some cases, students identify organizational/policy problems during their field experience that they want to explore but do not feel will be well-received by the organization. This exercise will give you practice in communicating potentially unwelcome or controversial analysis diplomatically and constructively. However, the decision about whether or not to submit the analysis to the organization is up to you.
- In the event you are unable to base your CE on the practicum, you may propose another policy analysis in consultation with the CE advisor. Students completing a CE based on the practicum cannot complete their CE in the same semester as their practicum. For students not basing the CE on the practicum, it may be possible to complete both in the same semester. This will be at the discretion of your CE advisor, who will gauge the scope of each to determine feasibility.

***All students completing this option*** must submit a brief problem purpose statement (PPS), which addresses the significance of the topic and the primary resources you will be using, a working outline, and a bibliography by the deadline listed below (see below for PPS template).

See page 8 for details about structuring a Policy Analysis. Examples of CE Policy Analyses by IH alumni are available on the IH Blast website under the CE tab: <http://www.bu.edu/ihblast/ih-ce/examples/>.

## OPTION 1 DEADLINES

**The deadlines for submitting the PPS and final drafts are hard deadlines.** Both may be submitted earlier but not later than the indicated date. Deadlines for the 3 intermediate drafts are guidelines and can be determined in consultation with your CE advisor. A work plan for submitting the intermediate drafts **must** accompany your proposal. Once you have agreed on a work plan with your advisor, you can only change deadlines with the consent of your CE advisor. ***Your paper will be final when your CE advisor agrees that it is done. Most papers need 3 drafts, but sometimes more are necessary.***

Fall 2012 Graduation	Spring 2013 Graduation	Summer 2013 Graduation
PPS & CE Contract: <b>Sept. 14</b>	PPS & CE Contract: <b>Jan. 23</b>	PPS & CE Contract: <b>May 17</b>
Draft 1: October 12	Draft 1: February 15	Draft 1: June 7
Draft 2: November 9	Draft 2: March 15	Draft 2: July 5
Draft 3: December 7	Draft 3: April 12	Draft 3: August 2
Final Draft: <b>December 19</b>	Final Draft: <b>April 26</b>	Final Draft: <b>August 16</b>

## OPTION 1 PPS CHECKLIST

Use the outline below as the template for your PPS, adding whatever other information you feel is necessary. For helpful information on completing your PPS please see the IH Blast CE tab.

### Checklist:

- Set up a meeting with your advisor or faculty mentor to discuss your topic and work plan for finishing your paper and to discuss topic possibilities. **Or**, register for IH777.
- Copy and paste the template below into a new document and start filling it in.
- If you are not taking IH777, submit your PPS to your CE advisor.
- If you are taking IH777, submit your PPS to teaching faculty. (The deadlines for students enrolled in IH777 may differ from those given here.)

## OPTION 1 PROBLEM PURPOSE STATEMENT TEMPLATE

Name:

Advisor:

Title:

Organization:

### I. Problem and Purpose (1 paragraph)

- Define the policy question you will be exploring and your objective for the analysis
- Explain the significance of the topic
- Identify the resources you will be using
- Identify your audience

### II. Working Outline: (as detailed as possible)

### III. Work Plan for Submitting Drafts: (Do not complete this section if you are enrolled in IH777.)

### IV. Working Bibliography: (approximately 15 to start with)



## OPTION 2—JOURNAL ARTICLE

Students doing an Option 2 CE will be required to register for this option as a 2-credit directed study (IH941). In this option, the student will develop and submit a manuscript to an academic journal for publication. The Department will issue a call for submission three times a year to accommodate the January, May, and September graduation cycles. In response to the call for submission, students will submit well-written paper proposals consisting of a Problem Purpose Statement, an outline of the intended analytical methods, details about the data set to be used, and a timeline for completion. An IH faculty approval committee will review proposals and approve projects based upon the soundness of the proposal and the feasibility of getting the project completed within the intended timeline.

***Students applying for this option must have a faculty mentor from the IH department who agrees, in writing, to work intensively with the student throughout the semester.*** The faculty mentor serves as CE advisor and will need to sign off on the project proposal formally before it is submitted to the approval committee. In order to ensure that the faculty approval committee has sufficient time to review your proposal before meeting, it is imperative that you communicate with your CE advisor well in advance of posted submission deadlines. Failure to do so may result in your CE not being reviewed or accepted by the committee. Students are required to meet with their CE advisor throughout the writing process. The advisor's role is similar to that of a Senior Author or Scientific Director, who provides direction and advice to the student, but the student must do the actual analysis and writing.

Option 2 papers must be ready for submission to an academic journal in order to be considered final. The decision about whether or not a draft is ready for submission and therefore final will be at the discretion of the CE advisor.

## OPTION 2 DEADLINES

***The deadlines for submitting paper proposals and final drafts are hard deadlines.*** Both may be submitted earlier but not later than the indicated date. Students who choose this option are encouraged to start the proposal process early and to submit the proposal for review prior to the deadline to allow extra time to complete the paper. Deadlines given for the 3 intermediate drafts are guidelines and can be determined in consultation with your CE advisor. A work plan for submitting the intermediate drafts ***must*** accompany your proposal. Once you have agreed on a work plan with your advisor, you can only change deadlines with the consent of your CE advisor.

Your paper will be final when your CE advisor agrees that it is ready to be submitted to a journal. The submission date and logistics can be arranged with your CE advisor.

<b>Fall 2012 Graduation</b>	<b>Spring 2013 Graduation</b>	<b>Summer 2013 Graduation</b>
Proposal & CE Contract: <b>Sept. 6</b>	Proposal & CE Contract: <b>Jan. 10</b>	Proposal & CE Contract: <b>May 8</b>
Draft 1: October 12	Draft 1: February 15	Draft 1: June 7
Draft 2: November 9	Draft 2: March 15	Draft 2: July 5
Draft 3: December 7	Draft 3: April 12	Draft 3: August 2
Final Draft: <b>December 19</b>	Final Draft: <b>April 26</b>	Final Draft: <b>August 16</b>

## OPTION 2 PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

Use the outline below as the template for your proposal, adding whatever other information you feel is necessary for the IH Curriculum Committee to judge the merits of the paper proposal.

**Submission Checklist:**

- Set up a meeting with your advisor or a faculty mentor to discuss your interest in doing this option and to ask if she/he is willing to work with you and to discuss topic possibilities and target journals. Be sure to do this well ahead of the proposal due date.
- Submit the proposal to your CE advisor ahead of the deadline in order to get suggestions for revision and approval for submission to the IH Curriculum Committee.
- Ask your CE advisor to email the Academic Coordinator to indicate that she/he has read the proposal and agrees to work with you toward completion and submission of the paper to an academic journal.
- Copy and paste the template below into a new document and start filling it in.
- Submit an electronic copy of the proposal to the Academic Coordinator by deadline.
- Register with your CE advisor for a 2-credit directed study (IH941). Directed Study and Add/Drop forms are available from the Registrar's Office and online on at <http://sph.bu.edu/registrar> on the forms page.

**OPTION 2 PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

---

Name:

Advisor:

Title:

Target Journal:

I. Objective: (1 paragraph)

II. Significance/Rationale: (1 paragraph)

III. Data Source/Evidence Base: (1 paragraph)

IV. Working Outline: (as detailed as possible)

V. Work Plan for Submitting Drafts:

VI. Working Bibliography: (approximately 15 to start with)

### OPTION 3—INDEPENDENT PROJECT

This option can be taken for no credit, or as a 1 or 2 credit directed study (IH941). The objective of this option is to encourage creative and innovative projects from students who have an idea for a CE that does not fit into the previous two options. The Department will issue a call for submission three times a year to accommodate the January, May, and September graduation cycles. An IH faculty approval committee will review proposals and approve projects based upon the soundness of the proposal and the feasibility of getting the project completed within the intended timeline. Possible examples of independent projects include a film documentary, an advocacy campaign, a public forum, a fundraising project, etc.

Students applying for this option must have a CE advisor from the IH department who agrees in writing to work intensively with the student throughout the semester. The CE advisor will need to formally sign off on the project proposal before it is submitted to the committee. In order to ensure that the faculty approval committee has sufficient time to review your proposal before meeting, it is imperative that you communicate with your CE advisor well in advance of posted submission deadlines. Failure to do so may result in your CE not being reviewed or accepted by the committee. Students are required to meet with their advisor throughout the semester in order to ensure they are on track with their project deliverables.

The final product will be evaluated by the student's advisor or another appropriate faculty mentor. The project will be deemed "complete" based on case-by-case criteria to be proposed by the student. Films might be screened, town hall meetings will transpire and follow-up activities completed, websites launched, etc.

### OPTION 3 DEADLINES

***The deadlines for submitting project proposals and completion are hard deadlines.*** Both may be submitted earlier but not later than the indicated date. Students who choose this option are encouraged to start the proposal process early and submit the proposal for review prior to the deadline to allow extra time to complete the project. If you are planning a public presentation, be sure to plan according to the SPH calendar. A work plan must accompany your proposal, including set dates when you will check in with your faculty mentor to report progress on your project. Once you have agreed on a work plan with your advisor, you can only change deadlines with the consent of your CE advisor.

<b>Fall 2012 Graduation</b>	<b>Spring 2013 Graduation</b>	<b>Summer 2013 Graduation</b>
Proposal & CE Contract: <b>Sept. 6</b>	Proposal & CE Contract: <b>Jan. 10</b>	Proposal & CE Contract: <b>May 8</b>
Draft 1: October 12	Draft 1: February 15	Draft 1: June 7
Draft 2: November 9	Draft 2: March 15	Draft 2: July 5
Draft 3: December 7	Draft 3: April 12	Draft 3: August 2
Final Draft: <b>December 19</b>	Final Draft: <b>April 26</b>	Final Draft: <b>August 16</b>

---

**OPTION 3 PROJECT PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**

---

Use the outline below as the template for your proposal, adding whatever other information you feel is necessary for the IH faculty approval committee to judge the merits and feasibility of the project.

**Submission Checklist:**

- Set up a meeting with your advisor to discuss your interest in doing this option and to ask if he/she is willing to work with you. If you will need additional assistance outside of your adviser's field of expertise, the two of you can brainstorm about other potential faculty mentors or resources.
- Submit the proposal to your advisor **ahead of the deadline** in order to get suggestions for revisions and approval for submission to the IH faculty approval committee.
- Copy and paste the template below into a new document and start filling it in. There are example proposals available on the IH Blast. Please consult these as you are writing your proposal.
- Your proposal must include a work plan detailing deadlines for various phases of the project and a schedule for checking in with you advisor.
- Submit an electronic copy of the proposal to Emily Jump, Academic Coordinator, by due date noted above.

---

**OPTION 3 PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

---

Name:

Advisor:

Project Title:

Organization:

I. Objective: (1 paragraph)

II. Significance/Rationale: (1 paragraph)

III. Methods

IV. Project Deliverables

V. Work Plan (including your definition of Completion):

**Section****3**

## Frequently Asked Questions about the IH Culminating Experience

The following frequently asked questions will give you a broader understanding of the culminating experience as well as important details to help you complete the process as smoothly as possible.

### GETTING STARTED

- What is a culminating experience (CE)?
- What are the IH CE options?
- When can I start working on my CE?
- I want to work on my CE this semester. What should I do first?
- What forms/documents do I need to complete in order to start working on my CE?
- Where can I find the CE contract, CE Guidelines, and online forms?

### FURTHER INFO

- I haven't completed my practicum yet. Can I still do an Option 1 Policy Analysis?
- Do I have to complete my CE for credit?
- What's the difference between the practicum trip report and the CE policy analysis (Option 1)?
- What is the difference between a CE advisor and your IH academic advisor?
- Does my CE advisor have to be an IH faculty member?
- Who should take IH777?

### SPECIAL CASES & TROUBLESHOOTING

- The submission deadline is —, but I can't reach my advisor. What should I do?
- I started a large project over the summer and now I've decided that I would like to use this work as my CE project (option 3). Is this possible?
- I am done with all of my course work, but still need to do my practicum and culminating experience. Is it possible to finish both in the same semester?
- I am enrolled in the Kenya Field Studies Course, is it possible to complete the CE in time to graduate in September?
- I am a dual degree student enrolled in both the MPH and GMS, MSW, MBA, or MD program. Do all of the rules regarding the CE apply to me?
- I just found out that I have been accepted to medical school (or another academic program). It's May and the new program starts in August, but I still haven't completed my CE. What are my options?
- I'm leaving for the Peace Corps in 6 months. When should I complete my CE? Which option is best for me?
- I am working on an article manuscript (Option 2) for my CE. I have spent the whole semester analyzing my data and now it's December and I still haven't started writing. Can I still graduate in January?

---

## GETTING STARTED

---

### What is a culminating experience (CE)?

As defined by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH):\*

*All professional degree programs . . . shall assure that each student demonstrates skills and integration of knowledge through a culminating experience.*

*A culminating experience is one that requires a student to synthesize and integrate knowledge acquired in coursework and other learning experiences and to apply theory and principles in a situation that approximates some aspect of professional practice. It must be used as a means by which faculty judge whether the student has mastered the body of knowledge and can demonstrate proficiency in the required competencies.*

### What are the IH CE options?

Option 1: Policy Analysis

Option 2: Publishable Journal Article

Option 3: Independent Project

### When can I start working on my CE?

In order to start working on your CE, you must have completed 25 credits of coursework. Most students complete their CE after the practicum, but there are several exceptions to this.

### I want to work on my CE this semester. What should I do first?

First, read the CE Guidelines. Second, contact your academic advisor to let them know you are planning to work on your CE this semester. If you would like your academic advisor to be your CE advisor, make sure they are willing and able to do so this semester. If they are too busy or if you would like to work with a different IH faculty member as your CE advisor, be sure to let that person know as well as your IH academic advisor.

### What forms/documents do I need to complete in order to start working on my CE this semester?

You will need to:

1. Fill out a CE Completion Contract for this semester with your signature and your CE advisor's signature. If you can't get your CE advisor's signature, you may forward me an email from them showing that they agree to work with you this semester.
2. Create a problem purpose statement (Option 1) or project proposal (Option 2 and 3).
3. Everyone working on their CE must complete the online request to complete CE form so that the Academic Coordinator, Emily Jump, can track your progress.

Ideally, you will upload your CE completion contract and pps/ project proposal via the online form, but you may also submit these documents by email, fax, or in person. You will need to get ALL of these items to the Academic Coordinator by posted submission deadlines in order to complete your CE this semester.

### Where can I find the CE contract, CE Guidelines, online forms, and past examples of CEs?

You can find all of these on the IH Blast under the CE tabs. Click on the CE heading for general information, CE Guidelines, and CE completion contracts, and scroll down to subpages to complete online forms.

---

\* CEPH is the nationally recognized accrediting body for both schools of public health and public health programs

---

**FURTHER INFO**

---

**I haven't completed my practicum yet. Can I still do an Option 1 Policy Analysis?**

Yes. Most students write their CE about a topic related to their practicum experience, but this is not a requirement. You may complete a CE before your practicum. If you have already completed your practicum and want to write your CE on an unrelated topic, be sure to talk to your CE advisor and get their input.

**Do I have to complete my CE for credit?**

You may complete your CE for 0, 1, or 2 credits. The exception to this is Option 2 (Journal Article); if you choose option 2, you will need to register for a 2 credit directed study. This is because Option 2 CEs typically require a significant investment of time for both you and your CE advisor, and it is important that your transcript reflect this.

**What's the difference between the practicum trip report and the CE policy analysis (Option 1)?**

See handouts provided by the IH Practicum Office explaining the trip report. The trip report is the document where you describe and reflect on various experiences and lessons learned during your practicum. Whereas the Policy Analysis is an analysis of one aspect of the work you were doing during your practicum and will be based on a specific policy or programmatic question. The policy analysis will:

1. Frame a particular question or problem;
2. Provide relevant background on the scope of the problem, the context, and the organization;
3. Analyze the evidence base and current policies and interventions;
4. Make 1-3 focused recommendations that take cost and feasibility into consideration.

**What is the difference between a CE advisor and my IH academic advisor?**

Your CE advisor is an IH faculty member who agrees to work with you on your CE throughout the semester. In most cases, your IH academic advisor will also be your CE advisor. Here are a couple of reasons why your CE advisor might be different from your IH academic advisor:

1. Your faculty advisor is out of the country or too busy to devote the necessary time to working with you this semester. They may suggest another faculty member with whom you might work.
2. Your topic is not an area of expertise for your advisor, and they suggest you work with a faculty member who knows more about it.
3. You have begun collaborating with another IH faculty member, and they think you could work on an Option 2 or 3 CE as a result of this collaboration.

In all of these cases (and many more), be sure to communicate with both your academic advisor and your CE advisor so everyone is clear on who does what.

**Does my CE advisor have to be an IH faculty member?**

Yes. Because the requirements for the CE are unique to each Department, it is necessary that your CE advisor also be an IH faculty member. IH faculty members are aware of the specific requirements for the CE in our department, while a faculty member in another department may not be. In order to ensure that all students are evaluated fairly and completely on their final CE, you must work with an IH faculty member.

**Who should take IH777?**

Anyone doing Option 1 can take IH777. The course provides students with a structured environment and supportive community in which to write their papers. Drafts have hard deadlines. Sessions focus on topic development, desktop research, bibliographic software, citation formatting, writing process, etc. The course also provides you with a community of peers who are working on a similar project. The sessions provide a structured atmosphere for brainstorming, troubleshooting, peer support, and peer review. If you are a procrastinator or have a hard time setting your own deadlines and sticking to them, consider taking IH777.

---

**SPECIAL CASES & TROUBLESHOOTING**

---

**The submission deadline is —, but I can't reach my advisor. What should I do?**

Call or email the Academic Coordinator, Emily Jump, to discuss it. Please keep in mind that IH faculty members are generally a pretty busy bunch and tend to travel a lot, so it is important to begin communicating about your CE well in advance of deadlines. If you are emailing in a panic on the due date, there's probably not much that can be done at that point.

**I started a large project over the summer and now I've decided that I would like to use this work as my CE project (option 3). Is this possible?**

In general, IH faculty will only agree to advise you on Option 3 projects that they know about in advance. Their role is to advise you on formulating a research question, study, or intervention design, etc. The best course is to be planning your CE in advance and to talk to your CE advisor as soon as you come up with your idea. Your CE advisor will give you guidance on what sorts of projects are potentially suitable for Option 3 and what the final deliverables should be. Word of warning, most faculty will be reluctant to get involved with a project that is already half-way completed.

**I am done with all of my course work, but still need to do my practicum and CE. Is it possible to finish both in the same semester?**

If you are planning to do Option 1 based on your practicum experience, you will likely not finish the required multiple drafts of the policy analysis by the end of the same semester. The policy analysis should be something you write once you know your practicum organization well, and have been there long enough to understand some of the key policy or programmatic issues they may be grappling with. The best case scenario is to start planning your policy analysis (with input from the organization staff and your faculty advisor) toward the end of your practicum, and to write it once you have finished. If it is possible to get an earlier start drafting the analysis then you should do so, but be sure to get approval from your CE advisor before you start.

**I am enrolled in the Kenya Course, is it possible to complete the CE in time to graduate in September?**

It is highly unlikely. See previous answer for more details.

**I am a dual degree student enrolled in both the MPH and GMS, MSW, MBA, or MD program. Do all of the rules regarding the CE apply to me?**

Yes. You are responsible for completing the curriculum of each program. Be sure to maintain regular contact with your advisors in both programs to make sure that you are on track. The MBA culminating experience must be taken for 2 credits and has different requirements. See the MBA/MPH Faculty Director, Taryn Vian (tvian@bu.edu) for more details.

**I just found out that I have been accepted to medical school (or another academic program). It's May and the new program starts in August, but I still haven't completed my CE. What are my options?**

If you are applying to medical school for August admission, be sure to plan your Spring semester in the MPH program accordingly. Even if you are still waiting to hear from schools about your acceptance, you should be in regular contact with your CE advisor, planning and working on your CE during the Spring semester. We strongly encourage you to sign up for IH777. Please do not approach your advisor in a panic in May or June to make last minute plans to begin and finish the CE by mid-August. This will not work.

**I'm leaving for the Peace Corps in 6 months. When should I complete my CE? Which option is best for me?**

Finish the CE before you leave for the Peace Corps! Unless you have a clear plan and approval to do Options 2 or 3, your best bet will be to register for IH777 and do Option 1 the semester prior to your departure. The IH777 instructors will help you come up with a topic based on your interests that will, ideally, also help you educate yourself about public health in the region where you will be working.



**I am working on an article manuscript (Option 2) for my CE. I have spent the whole semester analyzing my data and now it's December and I still haven't started writing. Can I still graduate in January?**

No. The paper must be refined enough to be submitted to the journal you have chosen. This means that you will need to have gone through a multiple draft process in close consultation with your CE advisor, and she/he must agree that the manuscript is ready to be sent out.

**Section****4****Checklist for Final CEs**

Please use this list to determine if your CE is formatted correctly. All CEs must have the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ CE cover page with abstract, key words, student name, and CE advisor(s) names.

The cover page should be the first page of your document. Do not submit it as a separate document.

\_\_\_\_\_ PDF file format

\_\_\_\_\_ Page numbers

\_\_\_\_\_ 12 point type

\_\_\_\_\_ Times New Roman font

\_\_\_\_\_ No typos or grammatical errors

\_\_\_\_\_ No evidence of track changes

\_\_\_\_\_ Section titles and sub-titles

\_\_\_\_\_ Correct use of in-text citations (using APA or Vancouver style)

\_\_\_\_\_ Correct formatting, complete works cited list at the end of the paper

\_\_\_\_\_ Should be no longer than 20 double-spaced pages (not including tables, graphs, works cited, or appendices).

## Section

## 5

## Rubric for Assessing Culminating Experience Papers and Projects

### An *"Exceeds Expectations"* CE Paper/Project will...

- Satisfy all requirements in CE Checklist (page 15)
- Consistently demonstrates clear, accurate, detailed and comprehensive understanding of the relevant facts / data / theories / terms as well as the ability to organize the information for presentation, documentation, and further examination by identified decision-maker(s).
- Demonstrates confident ability to work with the key concepts / information / process / theory by applying them to a problem or context, making predictions, drawing inferences, analyzing patterns and component parts, communicating insightful contrasts and comparisons.
- Demonstrates clear logical arguments related to stated thesis.
- Demonstrates clear linear progression between thesis and recommendations.
- Demonstrates insightful ability to take ideas / theories / processes / principles further by making generalizations and describing implications (including cost and feasibility) as well as to assess the value, credibility and power of well-considered choices or options.

### A *"Meets Expectations"* CE Paper/Project will...

- Satisfy all requirements in CE Checklist (page 15)
- Demonstrates an adequate understanding of the relevant facts / data / theories / terms as well as the ability to organize the information for presentation, documentation, and further examination by identified decision-maker(s).
- Demonstrates adequate ability to work with the key concepts / information / process / theory -- applying them to a problem or context, making predictions, drawing inferences, analyzing patterns and component parts, communicating insightful contrasts and comparisons.
- Demonstrates clear logical arguments related to stated thesis.
- Demonstrates clear linear progression between thesis and recommendations.
- Demonstrates adequate ability to take ideas / theories / processes / principles further by making generalizations and describing implications (including cost and feasibility) as well as to assess the value, credibility and power of well-considered choices and opinions.

### A *"Needs Improvement to Pass"* CE Paper/Project is flawed and cannot pass unrevised.

Papers not yet passable are characterized by

- Uneven or inadequate understanding of the relevant facts / data / theories / terms as well as a limited ability to organize the information for application, presentation, documentation, and/or further examination by decision-makers who are not clearly identified.
- Uneven or very limited ability to work with the key concepts / information / process / theory -- applying or extending them with mixed or limited success to a new problem or context, making predictions, drawing inferences, analyzing patterns and component parts, communicating insightful contrasts and comparisons.
- Demonstrate uneven and superficial ability to take ideas / theories / processes / principles further by making generalizations and identifying implications (including cost and feasibility) as well as a limited and superficial ability to assess the value, credibility and power of well-considered choices and opinions.
- Gaps in logic
- Extraneous facts and recommendations

**Section****6****Structuring Your Policy Analysis**

There are many ways to write a policy analysis. This is one possible format. If another format will work better for your audience, consult with your CE advisor to discuss a more appropriate structure.

**Set your paper up in policy analysis format:**

Use subheadings, tables, and other formatting to improve readability and emphasize key points. You can use a Word template, but this is not necessary.

**Note:** Please use 12 pt. font. Papers should be 12 and 20 pages double-spaced. You may use strategically placed tables or other graphics to summarize indicators/data or bullets for points that you want to highlight.

**Articulate and frame your question (1<sup>st</sup> paragraph):**

Articulate both the question you are answering and a succinct version of your recommendation.

**Note:** This is your opportunity to grab the reader's attention. Try to create a sense of urgency without being sensational.

**Define the issue and present basic background facts (1 page):**

Address basic epidemiology; provide the reader with a sense of the scope and nature of the problem. (Who is the problem effecting? To what extent? How does the problem impact health outcomes?)

**Present a critique of the evidence base and current policy options (2 pages):**

This will be based on the course readings and any other relevant literature. Identify alternative approaches and gaps in the existing knowledge base about effective strategies.

**Remember:** You are building a case for the strategy YOU will be recommending. So in this section you are guiding the audience to agree with the strategy you have selected as most promising, based on the evaluation of evidence. **Do not** ignore evidence that does not support your proposal. It is important to acknowledge contradictory information as you articulate the reasoning behind your recommendation.

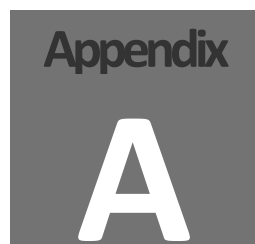
**Propose a single programmatic or policy recommendation to address the problem****(1-2 pages):**

Describe the target population, components/intervention, and outcomes in enough detail that your audience can get a coherent sense of the program or policy. Identify who (personnel, administrative responsibility) will be involved in implementing this program or policy. Another important detail is when and how the program will be evaluated. Don't spend a lot of time on this, but do try to work in a short explanation in a sentence or two.

**Discuss the major constituencies who will be affected by any change in programs or policies (1-2 pages):**

This is your opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of the political nuances that impinge on any policy or programmatic decision. Think carefully about the constituencies who have a stake in your recommended approach and what their perspectives will be. What arguments can you anticipate that will be brought for and against your recommendation? Be sure to address cost and feasibility.

**Conclude with a summary paragraph in which you remind readers of the urgency and significance of the issue. (1 paragraph)**



## CE Forms

---

## CE Completion Contract FALL 2012

Boston University School of Public Health

Department of International Health

Culminating Experience (CE) Completion Contract Fall 2012

Must Be Submitted with Problem Purpose Statement no later than 5:00pm on

September 6 (Option #2 & 3) or September 14, 2012 (Option #1, IH777 may have different deadline)

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

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

CE Option: ☐ Option 1: Policy Analysis ☐ Option 2: Publishable Paper ☐ Option 3: Independent Project

CE Credits : ☐ 0 credits ☐ 1 credit IH941 ☐ 2 credits IH941 ☐ 2 credits IH777

### FINAL DEADLINE FOR CULMINATING EXPERIENCE:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that in order to graduate in January 2013, my Culminating Experience paper or project must be completed and have final approval from my advisor, \_\_\_\_\_ before **December 19, 2012 (5:00 pm)**.

I understand that there will be **no** exceptions to the policy. Students who finalize their Culminating Experience papers or projects after **December 19** will be moved to a May 2013 graduation date.

### Draft due date guidelines:

**The Problem Purpose Statement(PPS)/Proposal and final draft dates are hard deadlines.** You can adapt the due dates for drafts 1-3 in consultation with your advisor. Your work plan must be included in your Problem Purpose Statement/Proposal. Intermediate drafts submitted after the date agreed to in the work plan without prior approval may jeopardize your ability to finish in time for January graduation.

**Option 1 PPS:** September 14 (5:00 pm); **Draft 1:** October 12; **Draft 2:** November 9; **Draft 3:** December 7;  
**Final Draft:** December 19 (5:00 pm)

**Options 2 and 3: Proposal:** September 6 (5:00 pm); **Draft 1:** October 12; **Draft 2:** November 9; **Draft 3:** December 7;  
**Final Draft:** December 19 (5:00 pm)

**Note the December 19 date is firm and is for receipt by Emily of the document and confirmation of its acceptance by the responsible faculty. Students should submit final revisions to the faculty advisor(s) with sufficient time for review, approval, and transmission to Emily by 5:00 PM on December 19. Students submitting an approved document after this time will not graduate until May 2013.**

**Definitions:** For all CE Options, all written work must go through a multi-draft process. A **final culminating paper** has gone through **at least** 3 drafts and has received written approval from your CE advisor (If enrolled in IH777, the paper must receive final approval from teaching faculty). For Option 3, a **final culminating project** has fulfilled the goals established by the advising IH faculty member and the student in the project proposal and has received written faculty approval.

**NOTE:** This contract must be signed and submitted to the Academic Coordinator with your PPS/Proposal in order for you to be eligible to finish your CE in time for January 2013 graduation. If your advisor is unable to sign the contract, you may forward an email indicating their approval to [jump@bu.edu](mailto:jump@bu.edu). Complete your CE Contract and PPS/Proposal and upload copies at the end of the online "Request to complete CE Form" available through the IH Blast website. If you have trouble with the online form, you may email documents or bring in person to the IH office.

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

CE Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## CE Completion Contract Spring 2013

Boston University School of Public Health

Department of International Health

Culminating Experience (CE) Completion Contract Spring 2013

**Must Be Submitted with Problem Purpose Statement no later than 5:00pm on  
Jan 10 (Option #2 & 3) or Jan. 23, 2013 (Option #1, IH777 may have different deadline)**

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

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

CE Option: ☐ Option 1: Policy Analysis ☐ Option 2: Publishable Paper ☐ Option 3: Independent Project

CE Credits : ☐ 0 credits ☐ 1 credit IH941 ☐ 2 credits IH941 ☐ 2 credits IH777

### FINAL DEADLINE FOR CULMINATING EXPERIENCE:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that in order to graduate in May 2013, my Culminating Experience paper or project must be completed and have final approval from my advisor, \_\_\_\_\_ before **April 26, 2013 (5:00 pm)**.

I understand that there will be **no** exceptions to the policy. Students who finalize their Culminating Experience papers or projects after **April 26** will be moved to a September 2013 graduation date.

### Draft due date guidelines:

***The Problem Purpose Statement(PPS)/Proposal and final draft dates are hard deadlines. You can adapt the due dates for drafts 1-3 in consultation with your advisor. Your work plan must be included in your Problem Purpose Statement/Proposal. Intermediate drafts submitted after the date agreed to in the work plan without prior approval may jeopardize your ability to finish in time for May graduation.***

**Option 1 PPS:** January 23 (5:00 pm); **Draft 1:** February 15; **Draft 2:** March 15; **Draft 3:** April 12;  
**Final Draft:** April 26 (5:00 pm)

**Options 2 and 3: Proposal:** January 10 (5:00 pm); **Draft 1:** February 15; **Draft 2:** March 15; **Draft 3:** April 12;  
**Final Draft:** April 26 (5:00 pm)

**Note the April 26 date is firm and is for receipt by Emily of the document and confirmation of its acceptance by the responsible faculty. Students should submit final revisions to the faculty advisor(s) with sufficient time for review, approval, and transmission to Emily by 5:00 PM on April 26. Students submitting an approved document after this time will not graduate until September 2013.**

**Definitions:** For all CE Options, all written work must go through a multi-draft process. A **final culminating paper** has gone through **at least** 3 drafts and has received written approval from your CE advisor (If enrolled in IH777, the paper must receive final approval from teaching faculty). For Option 3, a **final culminating project** has fulfilled the goals established by the advising IH faculty member and the student in the project proposal and has received written faculty approval.

**NOTE:** This contract must be signed and submitted to the Academic Coordinator with your PPS/Proposal in order for you to be eligible to finish your CE in time for May 2013 graduation. If your advisor is unable to sign the contract, you may forward an email indicating their approval to [jump@bu.edu](mailto:jump@bu.edu). Complete your CE Contract and PPS/Proposal and upload copies at the end of the online "Request to complete CE Form" available through the IH Blast website. If you have trouble with the online form, you may email documents or bring in person to the IH office.

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

CE Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## CE Completion Contract Summer 2013

Boston University School of Public Health

Department of International Health

Culminating Experience (CE) Completion Contract Summer 2013

Must Be Submitted with Problem Purpose Statement no later than 5:00pm on

May 8 (Option #2 & 3) or May 17, 2013 (Option #1)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

BUID: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Intended Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CE Option: ☐ Option 1: Policy Analysis ☐ Option 2: Publishable Paper ☐ Option 3: Independent Project

CE Credits : ☐ 0 credits ☐ 1 credit IH941 ☐ 2 credits IH941

### FINAL DEADLINE FOR CULMINATING EXPERIENCE:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that in order to graduate in September 2013, my Culminating Experience paper or project must be completed and have final approval from my advisor, \_\_\_\_\_ before **August 16, 2013 (5:00 pm)**.

I understand that there will be **no** exceptions to the policy. Students who finalize their Culminating Experience papers or projects after **August 16** will be moved to a January 2013 graduation date.

### Draft due date guidelines:

**The Problem Purpose Statement(PPS)/Proposal and final draft dates are hard deadlines.** You can adapt the due dates for drafts 1-3 in consultation with your advisor. Your work plan must be included in your Problem Purpose Statement/Proposal. Intermediate drafts submitted after the date agreed to in the work plan without prior approval may jeopardize your ability to finish in time for September graduation.

**Option 1 PPS:** May 17 (5:00 pm); **Draft 1:** June 7; **Draft 2:** July 5; **Draft 3:** August 2;  
**Final Draft:** August 16 (5:00 pm)

**Options 2 and 3: Proposal:** May 8 (5:00 pm); **Draft 1:** June 7 **Draft 2:** July 5; **Draft 3:** August 2;  
**Final Draft:** August 16 (5:00 pm)

**Note the August 16 date is firm and is for receipt by Emily of the document and confirmation of its acceptance by the responsible faculty. Students should submit final revisions to the faculty advisor(s) with sufficient time for review, approval, and transmission to Emily by 5:00 PM on August 16. Students submitting an approved document after this time will not graduate until January.**

**Definitions:** For all CE Options, all written work must go through a multi-draft process. A **final culminating paper** has gone through **at least** 3 drafts and has received written approval from your CE advisor (If enrolled in IH777, the paper must receive final approval from teaching faculty). For Option 3, a **final culminating project** has fulfilled the goals established by the advising IH faculty member and the student in the project proposal and has received written faculty approval.

**NOTE:** This contract must be signed and submitted to the Academic Coordinator with your PPS/Proposal in order for you to be eligible to finish your CE in time for September 2013 graduation. If your advisor is unable to sign the contract, you may forward an email indicating their approval to [jump@bu.edu](mailto:jump@bu.edu). Complete your CE Contract and PPS/Proposal and upload copies at the end of the online "Request to complete CE Form" available through the IH Blast website. If you have trouble with the online form, you may email documents or bring in person to the IH office.

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

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

CE Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

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



---

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH  
CULMINATING EXPERIENCE COVER PAGE**

Name:

CE Advisor:

Culminating Experience Paper or Project Title:

Abstract (150-300 words)

Key Words:

CE Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_