

**2.7 Assessment Procedures.** There shall be procedures for assessing and documenting the extent to which each professional public health, other professional and academic degree student has demonstrated achievement of the competencies defined for his or her degree program and area of concentration.

#### **Required Documentation \***

**2.7.a Description of the procedures used for monitoring and evaluating student progress in achieving the expected competencies, including procedures for identifying competency attainment in practice or research, as applicable, and in culminating experiences.**

#### **MPH**

**Course tests and examinations.** All courses in the MPH program utilize stringent assessment methods, including quizzes, tests, in-depth papers, oral presentations and examinations to assess students' mastery of course material. Letter grades are assigned for all classroom-based courses. Students must achieve a 3.0 grade point average in order to graduate from the MPH program.

**MPH Portfolio.** During a special seminar in each MPH student's first semester, the MPH core and concentration-specific competencies are introduced. Also in this session, the MPH Portfolio is described. The portfolio serves two purposes: 1) a guide to self-assessment of achievement of the MPH and concentration-specific competencies, and 2) a compendium of documents that demonstrate accomplishments during the MPH program. Students collect the documents and maintain self-assessment forms throughout their courses of study. At a minimum, documents include a resume, writing samples and copies of the student's final written report and presentation. As a student nears completion of the MPH program, s/he is expected to have an informative and complete competency-based dossier. The MPH Portfolio was transformed to an electronic portfolio for use by students who entered the program in or after fall 2012. This version will be available to students after they graduate. The E-Portfolio and guidance on its use are located at: <http://mph.ufl.edu/students/mph-portfolio/>.

**Applying MPH and concentration-specific competencies to student advisement.** Within the first few months of the MPH program, individual plans of study are developed for each student according to the student's concentration competencies and course requirements. The initial draft of the plan of study is developed collaboratively by the student and the associate director of the MPH program. These individual advising sessions provide an opportunity for the associate director to reinforce the role and importance of our competence-driven curriculum. The student then meets with his/her faculty advisor to review the proposed plan of study, again in relationship to the competencies. This discussion may lead to changes in the student's plan of study. Students continue to meet with staff and faculty advisors throughout the course of the MPH program. For each meeting, they are expected to bring their portfolios and discuss progress towards achievement of competencies. These discussions lead to changes in elective courses in the plan of study and to selecting an internship opportunity that allows the student to gain experience in one or more competency they do not feel they have achieved as well as others.

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\* Other professional degrees are not included in the following responses to this criterion: description of assessment methods in courses, practice experience, job placement rates, pass rates on certifications, employer and alumni surveys. Graduation rates include other professional degrees.

Faculty are supported in their advisory roles by the MPH associate director and internship coordinator, both of whom provide first line advice and guidance to students. In addition, MPH program staff meet individually with new faculty members and during departmental faculty meetings to review the MPH advising role, as well as the tools and staff support available to faculty.

**Preceptor assessments.** Upon completion of PHC 6946 Public Health Internship, students are evaluated by their preceptors. The evaluation covers a number of aspects of professional behavior and preceptor assessments of the competence of individual students as they complete the MPH program. A copy of the Internship Evaluation Form, which requests an assessment of the student's ability to perform the MPH core and concentration-specific competencies, is in the *MPH Student Handbook* and in the *MPH Preceptor Handbook*.

**Final written and oral/poster presentations.** As described in section 2.5.a, each MPH student is required to deliver a written and oral or poster presentation, based on one major project conducted during the internship experience. These presentations allow faculty the opportunity to assess depth of competence within the concentration through an evaluation of the project itself. Students are also required to demonstrate breadth and integration of public health core knowledge by relating their specific projects to the larger field of public health and to one or more MPH and concentration core competency. In addition, they are expected to apply methods from other concentrations appropriately. Students work on their presentations with their preceptors and faculty advisors throughout the internship experience. Both written and oral/poster presentations are required for completion of PHC 6601 Seminar in Contemporary Public Health Issues. A syllabus for the course is in the *MPH Student Handbook* and in the syllabus folder of the Resource File.

**Exit surveys.** Graduating students are asked to complete an evaluation of the quality of the MPH program and the extent to which they have achieved the competencies. Students are also requested to make suggestions for improvements in the program. On the days when final presentations are scheduled, laptops are available for students to complete the survey. Response rates are always close to 100%. Summaries of exit surveys for the past two years are in the Resource File.

**Alumni survey.** A survey of MPH alumni who graduated between spring 2010 and spring 2012 was conducted in April 2013. A major focus of the survey was to determine the extent to which these graduates felt they were prepared to function in their jobs. Specifically, they were asked to assess the extent to which they could perform the MPH core competencies. The results of this survey are discussed in 2.7.e.

**Employer assessments.** In March-April 2013, interviews with seven employers, who had hired more than one MPH graduate, were conducted. Since the program is relatively new, the number of employers who could comment on the MPH program, in contrast to a single MPH graduate they employed, has been limited. These interviews produced very useful results, which are summarized in 2.7.e

**Academic Assessment Plan and Student Learning Outcomes.** In response to accreditation criteria of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the MPH program tracks Student Learning Outcomes as part of its Academic Assessment Plan. Two of the outcomes are measures of MPH core competencies. The MPH Program Academic Assessment Plan is in the Resource File.

### **Other Programs**

PhD programs in the College follow requirements of the University of Florida Graduate School for assessment of acquisition of the knowledge and skills required to conduct independent research and application of the knowledge and skills to a doctoral dissertation. Students must pass qualifying examinations and be admitted to candidacy. The qualifying exams include both written and oral components. To be admitted to candidacy, students must pass both parts of the qualifying examination and have an approved dissertation topic. The final examination for the PhD is an oral defense of a written dissertation. Each student has a supervisory committee of faculty approved by the Graduate School that reviews and approves the dissertation in written form as well as the oral defense. Detailed guidelines for doctoral programs are posted in the Graduate Catalog at [http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=905#Requirements for Doctoral Degrees](http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=905#Requirements_for_Doctoral_Degrees)

The MS in Biostatistics requires a comprehensive examination after the first year of coursework and a master's report and oral presentation near completion of the program. The master's report is based on a significant and independent analysis. This is considered the culminating experience for the program.

The culminating experience of the MS in Epidemiology is a thesis that demonstrates independence and a high level of skill in epidemiologic research. The thesis, in form and content, must be acceptable to each student's supervisory committee and to the Graduate School.

Competencies for both MS and PhD programs are closely aligned with the requirements of the graduate school, such as *conducting independent research*, and expectations of a given discipline, such as *applying epidemiological methods to address critical and/or emerging public health and clinical research issues through the use of appropriate epidemiological research designs*. The competencies for each program are used to guide development of the students' research and serve as standards on which it is judged.

Students in all programs are assessed via written examinations, tests, and quizzes, graded course projects and graded research papers. PhD programs also assess students' teaching skills. MS and PhD programs have also developed Student Learning Outcomes and Academic Assessment Plans that describe the measures used to monitor outcomes, the tools used to create the measures, and plans for regular assessments each year. The Academic Assessment Plans for all programs in the College are in the Resource File.

**2.7.b Identification of outcomes that serve as measures by which the school will evaluate student achievement in each program, and presentation of data assessing the school's performance against those measures for each of the last three years. Outcome measures must include degree completion and job placement rates for all degrees (including bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees) for each of the last three years. See CEPH Data Templates 2.7.1 and 2.7.2. If degree completion rates in the maximum time period allowed for degree completion are less than the thresholds defined in this criterion's interpretive language, an explanation must be provided. If job placement (including pursuit of additional education), within 12 months following award of the degree, includes fewer than 80% of the graduates at any level who can be located, an explanation must be provided.**

### Degree Completion Rates

Graduation rates, summarized in Table 2.7.b.1, are high. Only one rate falls at the minimum standard of 70% for baccalaureate and master's degrees and 60% for doctoral degrees. The Health Services Research PhD program shows completion rates at 60% for 2010-2011. Degree completion rates for more recent cohorts are higher, achieving 100% for the cohort that entered the program in 2007-2008 (See Table 2.7.b.16 in the Resource File). All cohorts are small; as a result one student withdrawal has a large effect on the completion rate.

The PhD in Biostatistics, shown in Table 2.7.b.14 in the Resource File, is currently under revision. Of the cohort of seven students that entered in fall 2012, four were unable to meet the program's standards for first year students. The reasons for this level of attrition are related to academic preparation of the students, incorporation of highly theoretical courses from the Department of Statistics in the curriculum, and insufficient focus on the applied aspects of Biostatistics. The new chair of the department is currently addressing the issues in the following ways:

- Recruitment      New strategy to recruit students with appropriate mathematics and statistics backgrounds  
Modification of application date for fall admissions from March to January  
Increased stability and length of financial support for PhD students
- Curriculum      Development of two new core courses in Biostatistics
- Qualifying examination      Restructuring the qualifying exam to include two parts: theoretical and applied Biostatistics

MPH graduation rates are slightly lower than the rates for all master's programs. The MPH is the only master's program in the College with a significant proportion of part-time students, earning their degrees through the online program or in conjunction with another professional or graduate program at the University. Among students who are full-time on campus, three-year completion rates by spring 2013 were 88% for the cohort that started in 2009-2010, 94% for the cohort starting in 2010-2011, and 72% for the 2011-12 cohort.

Degree completion tables for all instructional programs in the College are in the Resource File (Tables 2.7.b.2 – 2.7.b.22).

**Table 2.7.b.1 Summary of Degree Completion Rates <sup>1</sup>**

Program	Percent Graduated		
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
All undergraduate degrees	97.5	97.5	96.7
All master's degrees	93.9	92.7	93.1
MPH (within 5 years)	85.7	87.6	89.6
Public Health MS <sup>2</sup>		100.0	100.0
All PhD degrees	82.1	74.1	84.2
Public Health PhD degrees <sup>3</sup>	60.0	75.0	62.5
Professional doctoral degrees	96.3	95.6	97.6

<sup>1</sup>Percentages derived from data in the degree completion tables in the Resource File. For each group, the number who enrolled in a given cohort was divided by the number who graduated within the allowable timeframe given at the bottom of the table. For example, the MPH allows five years to accommodate part-time students, mostly in online and collaborative programs. Thus, the calculations for 2012-13 are those of the cohort that started in 2008-09.

<sup>2</sup> Public Health MS programs are in Biostatistics and Epidemiology. The Biostatistics program admitted its first cohort in 2009-2010. The Epidemiology MS admitted its first student in fall 2013. The rates in this row refer to the Biostatics MS only.

<sup>3</sup> PhD programs allow seven years for completion. The Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Public Health PhD programs have graduated students but have not been operating for seven years yet. Thus, the rates in this row refer to Health Services Research only.

### Job Placement Rates

Table 2.7.b.23 shows job placement rates for graduates of the Colleges' programs, with the exception of other professional programs, for the past three years. Graduate programs collect these data via survey or interview at the completion of the semester during which the student graduates, supplemented by surveys during the first post-graduate year. Undergraduate students are surveyed in the spring, prior to spring graduation.

The table shows that 87.1% of MPH graduates were either employed in the first year or continuing their education. During the three year period, the percent employed has been decreasing, while the percent of those continuing their educations has increased from less than 20% to 29%. In contrast, almost 75% of BHS graduates are continuing education while 20% are employed. Among PhD graduates, virtually all are employed. These percentages are consistent with the practice focus of the MPH, the pre-professional focus of the BHS, and the terminal research degree focus of the PhD programs.

**Table 2.7.b.23 Destination of Graduates by Employment Type**

Program and Destination	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
	Number/Percent		
<b>MPH</b>			
Employed	48/71.6	47/68.1	54/58.1
Continuing education/training (not employed)	13/19.4	12/17.4	27/29.0
Actively seeking employment	4/5.9	2/2.9	4/4.3
Not seeking employment (not employed and not continuing education/training)	2/2.9	0/0	1/1.1
Unknown	0/0	8/11.6	7/7.5
Total	67/100.0	69/100.0	93/100.0

Program and Destination	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
	Number/Percent		
<b>MS Biostatistics</b>			
Employed	0/100.0	2/100.0	2/28.6
Continuing education/training (not employed)	1	0	5/71.4
Actively seeking employment	0	0	0
Not seeking employment (not employed and not continuing education/training)	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0
Total	1/100.0	2/100.0	7/100.0
<b>PhD<sup>1</sup></b>			
Employed	26/100.0	23/88.5	33/97.1
Continuing education/training (not employed)	0/0	1/3.8	0/0
Actively seeking employment	0/0	2/7.7	1/2.9
Not seeking employment (not employed and not continuing education/training)	0/0	0/0	0/0
Unknown	0/0	0/0	0/0
Total	26/100.0	26/100.0	34/100.0
<b>BHS</b>			
Employed	38/21.9	46/26.9	33/20.1
Continuing education/training (not employed)	125/71.8	118/69.0	121/73.8
Actively seeking employment	NA	NA	NA
Not seeking employment (not employed and not continuing education/training)	NA	NA	NA
Unknown	11/6.3	7/4.1	10/6.0
Total	173/100.0	171/100.0	164/100.0
<b>Total programs in this table</b>			
Employed	112/41.8	118/44.0	122/40.9
Continuing education/training (not employed)	139/51.9	131/48.9	153/51.3
Actively seeking employment	4/1.5	4/1.5	5/1.7
Not seeking employment (not employed and not continuing education/training)	2/0.7	0/0.0	1/0.3
Unknown	11/4.1	15/5.6	17/5.7
Total	268/100.0	268/100.0	298/100.0

<sup>1</sup> Includes PhDs in Biostatistics, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Epidemiology, Health Services Research, Psychology, Public Health, and Rehabilitation Sciences

### Other Outcome Measures of Student Achievement

In addition to graduation and job placement rates, the College tracks grade point averages, and, for MPH students, achievement of MPH competencies. Table 2.7.b.24 shows performance for the past three years. GPAs are consistently high. Achievement of MPH core competencies, as assessed by internship preceptors near the end of students' final semesters, ranged from 82% to 94% with a mean score of 4 or better on a 5 point scale (5=excellent).

**Table 2.7.b.24 Additional Outcome Measures of Student Achievement**

Outcome Measures	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Mean GPA of graduates			
MPH	3.7	3.7	3.8
PHHP	3.7	3.7	3.7
Percent of MPH students who achieve adequate preparation to perform the MPH core competencies at an entry level as assessed by their internship preceptors <sup>1</sup>	82%	94%	84%

<sup>1</sup>Refers to students who achieved a preceptor-assessed mean score of 4 or better (on a scale of 1=poor – 5=excellent) on achievement of MPH core competencies. Data collected upon completion of MPH internship during final semester in the program. Assessment is required.

**2.7.c An explanation of the methods used to collect job placement data and of graduates' response rates to these data collection efforts. The school must list the number of graduates from each degree program and the number of respondents to the graduate survey or other means of collecting employment data.**

Job placement data are collected either by survey for the large programs or interview for the small programs at the time of graduation. MPH alumni in the first post-graduate year are also surveyed in the fall of each year for updated information to report to CEPH and ASPH in the annual report.

**Table 2.7.c.1 Job Placement Data Collection and Response Rates<sup>1</sup>**

Degree Program	Data Collection Methods	Response/Number Graduates and Rate		
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
MPH	MPH Exit Survey, supplemented by alumni survey during first post-graduate year	67/67 100.0%	61/69 88.0%	93/93 100.0%
MS Biostatistics	Exit interviews	1/1 100.0%	2/2 100.0%	7/7 100.0%
PhD Biostatistics	Exit interviews	0/0	2/2 100.0%	0/0
PhD Communication Sciences and Disorders	Exit interviews of graduating students, supplemented by email request during first post-graduate year	3/3 100.0%	1/1 100.0%	2/2 100.0%
PhD Epidemiology	Exit interviews	1/1 100.0%	0/0	3/3 100.0%
PhD Health Services Research	Exit interviews	6/6 100.0%	3/3 100.0%	4/4 100.0%
PhD Psychology	Exit interviews	9/9 100.0%	15/15 100.0%	13/13 100.0%
PhD Public Health	Exit Interviews/ Email	0/0	1/1 100.0%	2/2 100.0%
PhD Rehabilitation Sciences	Exit Interviews / Email	7/7 100.0%	4/4 100.0%	6/6 100.0%
BHS Health Science	Graduating student survey	163/174 94.0%	164/171 97.0%	164/175 93.7%

<sup>1</sup> The BHS in Communication Sciences and Disorders has not collected job placement data in the past. This information will be collected beginning with the 2014 graduating class.

**2.7.d In fields for which there is certification of professional competence and data are available from the certifying agency, data on the performance of the school’s graduates on these national examinations for each of the last three years.**

Table 2.7.d.1 shows the pass rate for UF students and graduates who took the certified in Public Health Examination between 2010 and February 2013 in comparison to the national rate. UF rates were above the national average each year and the number of UF test-takers has grown steadily. In October 2013, another eight students and alumni took and passed the exam. The overall pass rate for UF test-takers 2010 – October 2013 is 94%.

Since students have been allowed to take the exam, the College has participated in the opportunity to secure a discount fee by assuring a minimum number of test-takers. Students and alumni are encouraged to take the exam via emails when the exam dates and costs are announced and throughout the year as deadlines for registration approach. The importance of the exam is also covered in a seminar on MPH competencies, which is required of all first year MPH students.

**2.7.d.1 Pass Rate on Certified in Public Health Examination 2010-2013**

	Pass Rate for CPH Exam (# who took exam)		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
UF Students/graduates <sup>1</sup>	89% (9)	100% (16)	89% (19)
All Test-takers <sup>2</sup>	88%	84%-86%	82%-82%

<sup>1</sup>NBPHE data on UF students/graduates sent to the College

<sup>2</sup>NBPHE Website. Test was offered twice in 2011-12 and 2012-13

**2.7.e Data and analysis regarding the ability of the school’s graduates to perform competencies in an employment setting, including information from periodic assessments of alumni, employers, and other relevant stakeholders. Methods for such assessments may include key informant interviews, surveys, focus groups and documented discussions.**

**MPH Program**

The competence of MPH graduates is assessed via four data sources: graduating students’ self assessments, internship preceptors’ assessments, alumni surveys, and employer interviews. As discussed in Criterion 2.7.a, graduating students complete an exit survey following their final presentations, and preceptors complete assessments of competencies as part of their evaluations of students’ performance during their internships. These data are compiled each semester and summarized over each academic year. In addition, 203 MPH alumni who graduated between fall 2009 and fall 2012 were surveyed in spring 2013 to assess their opinions about their competence as they entered the workforce and their advice regarding the MPH program. Eighty individuals responded for a response rate of 39.4%. Also, in Spring 2013, seven employers of MPH graduates were interviewed. These employers were selected because they have hired more than one graduate of the program. Six of the employers had supervised an average of 11 MPH students or graduates. They represented Area Health Education Centers, WellFlorida Council (Health Planning Agency), the Alachua County Health Department (Gainesville, Florida), the Emerging Pathogens Institute at UF, Southeastern National Tuberculosis Center at UF, and the



Epidemiology Branch at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Full results of the surveys are in the Resource File.

Table 2.7e.1 shows the results of the assessments of competency. While the wording was slightly different for each audience, the request to each group was to assess achievement of each competency on a five point scale with 1= not competent and 5= very competent. Mean scores between 4.0 and 5.0 are considered strong. Scores below 4.0 suggest that further investigation is warranted.

In general, the results suggest high levels of competence, with all means greater than 4.0 for seven of the 10 competencies, as assessed by all four groups. However, the means of three groups were below 4.0 with regard to “use of laws and regulations,” and two groups were below 4.0 on “policy and plan development.” Comments from employers indicated that policy development, rather than planning, is the area in need of strengthening. Further, one respondent suggested that the competency should focus on use of policies and plans to improve health outcomes, rather than community health efforts. The employers also encouraged the program to provide stronger quantitative analysis skills to MPH students in order to meet public health needs of the future. This appears to be the driver for the 3.6 mean score on “conducting research.” In written comments, alumni also requested greater focus on program evaluation and data analysis.

These findings were discussed during the September 6, 2013 meeting of the Public Health Executive Committee. A subcommittee consisting of the core course instructors, the MPH program director, and the associate dean for educational affairs was established to further examine the causes of the lower mean scores and develop recommendations to improve them. The subcommittee met twice in fall 2013, and is planning to collect more detailed data, including a survey of a large group of potential employers regarding needs for specific skills, in spring 2014.

**Table 2.7.e.1 Mean Scores on Achievement of MPH Core Competencies: Graduating Students, Internship Preceptors, Alumni, Employers**

<b>MPH Core Competency</b>	<b>Graduating Students 2012-13 N=85</b>	<b>Internship Preceptors 2012-13 N=32-67<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Alumni 2009- 2012 N=80</b>	<b>Employers N=7</b>
Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.1
Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community using an ecological framework	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.2
Inform, educate and empower people about health issues	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.4
Mobilize community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems	4.3	4.5	4.2	4.7
Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts	4.1	4.6	3.9	3.3
Use laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety	3.9	4.6	3.8	3.0

<b>MPH Core Competency</b>	<b>Graduating Students 2012-13 N=85</b>	<b>Internship Preceptors 2012-13 N=32-67<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Alumni 2009-2012 N=80</b>	<b>Employers N=7</b>
Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable	4.3	4.7	4.2	4.2
Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility and quality of personal and population-based health services	4.3	4.7	4.2	4.6
Conduct research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems	4.6	4.7	4.4	3.6
Communicate effectively with constituencies in oral and written forms	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.3

<sup>1</sup> Internship preceptors are asked to assess students on competencies related to their internship assignments, thus the number of responses varies across competencies.

In spring 2013, alumni and employers were also asked how our graduates were prepared for a career in public health. Seventy-one percent of the alumni responded that they were “extremely” or “very” well prepared. Another 27% considered themselves adequately prepared. Six of the employers rated UF MPH graduates as “extremely well prepared” or “very well prepared” for a career in public health

Alumni and employers were also requested to rate levels of competence of UF MPH graduates on four critical cross-cutting competencies. As Table 2.7.e.2 suggests, alumni felt quite comfortable in their skills in these areas at the time of graduation and employers also rated MPH graduates highly. Both groups affirmed high levels of professionalism and ethics.

**Table 2.7.e.2 Mean Scores on Achievement of Cross-Cutting Competencies: MPH Alumni and Employers**

<b>MPH Cross-cutting Competency</b>	<b>Alumni 2009-12 N=80</b>	<b>Employers N=7</b>
Professionalism and ethics	4.7	4.7
Leadership	4.6	4.4
Diversity and cultural proficiency	4.7	4.4
Systems thinking	4.4	4.1

### **PhD Programs**

In 2011, alumni of the College’s PhD programs who graduated within the past five years were surveyed regarding various aspects of their academic programs. Twenty-nine alumni responded of 46 who were contacted for a 63% response rate. Table 2.7.e.3 shows responses to key questions regarding preparation for the workforce.

The majority of respondents were extremely positive about their academic preparation, especially with regard to research, statistics, manuscript preparation and research ethics. They were less positive about their skills in grant writing, preparation of teaching materials and teaching courses.

**Table 2.7.e.3 PhD Programs' Graduates Assessments of Level of Preparation, Spring 2011**

<b>Questions Regarding Preparation for a Career in Research and Academia</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>I obtained strong foundational skills in the following areas:</b>		
Research methods	25%	68%
Statistics	39%	57%
Manuscript writing	46%	39%
Grant writing	54%	14%
Research ethics	39%	50%
Preparation of teaching materials	18%	29%
Teaching courses	14%	32%
<b>During my PhD program, I acquired the skills needed to be competitive for employment after graduation</b>	29%	68%

The results of the survey were discussed during an Executive Leadership Retreat in May 2011, and plans to address the areas in need of improvement were identified. Structured opportunities to acquire skills in grant-writing and teaching have been strengthened in all PhD programs in the past two years. Specifically, PhD students are required to have either a course on teaching in higher education or a mentored teaching experience. With regard to writing grants and manuscripts, two new courses have been developed, PHC 7727 Grant Writing in Epidemiology and Clinical Research and PHC 7902 Epidemiology Writing Circle. These courses are open to all PhD students in the College.

Teaching in higher education is a major focus of the UF Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars. The Academy consists of outstanding faculty members who have been awarded distinction because of their teaching and mentoring accomplishments. In fall 2013, members of the Academy, at the direction of the Provost, are conducting interviews of deans of education throughout the University to identify needs for enrichment of teaching skills for both doctoral students and faculty.

**2.7.f Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met and an analysis of the school's strengths, weaknesses and plans relating to this criterion.**

This criterion is met.

**Strengths:**

1. All programs in the College have procedures for assessing student progress and achievement of competencies.
2. As newer public health programs have matured, graduation rates are above threshold.
3. Job placement and further education rates are consistent with the goals of each program.
4. Students achieve high GPAs.
5. The CPH pass rate for UF students and alumni exceeds the national rate.
6. MPH students develop competence in the MPH core competencies, as assessed by graduating students, internship preceptors, alumni, and employers.
7. PhD students are very positive about their preparation for careers in research and academia.

8. The PhD programs have developed structured opportunities for students to acquire grant-writing and teaching skills.

**Weaknesses:**

1. The attrition rate for the PhD in Biostatistics was high for the cohort that started in fall 2012.
2. While the number is growing, only about 25% of MPH students take the CPH examination each year.
3. Three of the MPH core competencies had mean scores below 4.0 as assessed by students, alumni and/or employers.

**Plans:**

1. Implement revisions to the Biostatistics PhD recruitment, curriculum and qualifying examination.
2. Develop new incentives for taking the CPH Examination, such as a UF certificate of recognition and announcements of those who pass the exam in College newsletters.
3. Examine the reasons for the lower scores on three MPH core competencies and develop strategies for addressing them.