3.4 Internship/Field Placement. An internship consisting of 240 contact hours is required of all students. The field experience or internship offers students the opportunity to integrate and demonstrate the application of academic knowledge with learned public health core competencies in a professional setting through exposure to one or more core functions of essential public health services.

Each semester, the Director of Field Placement, Dr. Ruth Little, will offer at least two meetings to discuss internship interests. MPH 6903 (Comprehensive Field Placement), MPH 6904 (Introduction to Field Placement), and MPH 6905 (Applied Field Placement) are offered each semester including summers. The internship can be completed during any semester including but not limited to summers. Students should complete their core requirements or the majority of their core requirements before beginning their internships. Most students enroll in MPH 6904 followed by MPH 6905 with MPH 6903 utilized by medical students on an expedited track.

Students who recently completed an undergraduate degree without substantial working experience enroll in MPH 6904, Introduction to Field Placement (1 c.h.) in the spring of year 1 if they will have completed the majority of the core requirements, so that the internship can be completed during the summer between first and second year for students on the 2-year full-time track schedule.

Students are not limited to summer internships; many students enroll during the fall and/or spring semester. In order to register for MPH 6904 after initial meeting, you should email Dr. Ruth Little with the following information:

- A statement of purpose stating completion of core requirements, or in some cases, the majority of the core requirements
- Your academic advisor should be copied on this email that validates their support of enrollment
- The Director of Field Placement will respond to your email with copy to the Student Services Coordinator and academic advisor on the email so you can be registered

After completion of MPH 6904 (1 c.h.) and establishment of the internship preceptor, students may enroll in MPH 6905, Applied Field Placement (2 c.h.). In some cases, students with previous experience in a public health field may want to enroll in MPH 6903, Comprehensive Field Placement (3 c.h.). The Director of Field Placement will work with you in selecting the best option for you.

Field placement is one of the capstone experiences whereby the student and preceptor agency work together within the course structure on a project that is mutually beneficial to the agency and the student. The preceptor is required to have substantial experience in public health leadership. Preceptor availability often varies by time of year. The ECU MPH program has affiliation agreements with many agencies. Students may suggest an agency but a University Affiliation Agreement (UAA) is required with the agency and may take two or more months to establish between the agency and the University. For more information on field placement see: http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/publichealth/fieldplacement.cfm.