

## **Appendix: Role of Content Advisor for Professional Paper**

Professional paper students may choose to have a Content Advisor in addition to the required Primary Advisor. The content advisor does not need to be a faculty member or work in the ECU Department of Public Health but does need to be asked by the student and to agree to be the student's content advisor. The selected content advisor may have expertise in the topic area chosen by the student or in the analytical methods to be used in the project; they may facilitate data collection, provide input on public health implications or assist the student in some other area of their professional paper project.

Early in the MPH 6991 semester, the student and primary advisor should meet in person with the content advisor to define student's professional paper project, including the research question and whether it includes human subjects, data source, methods to be used, extent of data collection, level of data analyses, publication expectations, and the roles and responsibilities of each person. Results of this meeting should be documented in writing. At the end of the MPH 6991 semester, both the primary advisor and the content advisor should approve of the student's proposal and planned activities for the MPH 6992 semester.

If the student's professional paper project includes human subjects research, it is highly recommended that either the primary advisor or the content advisor be the principal investigator, not the student. However, the student should be involved in the IRB submission process. A plan to close out the study in ePirate should be discussed by the primary advisor, content advisor, and student.

The student is responsible for communication with the content advisor, including obtaining content advisor's approval for their proposal, making sure the content advisor is aware of the student's progress and any changes in plan that have occurred, and for providing the content advisor with drafts of the proposal and the paper across the two semesters. The content advisor should provide timely input to drafts of the proposal and professional paper, such as editing and other suggestions that will enhance the final product. The student should implement, or at least respond to, feedback from the content advisor in a timely fashion. The content advisor should also attend the student's final poster presentation, if possible.

The content advisor does not assign the grade, does not participate in grading, and does not make final MPH 6992 decisions such as whether the student can present their poster and whether the professional paper is acceptable for course completion.

If the student, the primary advisor, or the content advisor have expectations that the student's professional paper be submitted for publication, this should be discussed throughout the professional paper process. Authorship order for all planned papers and abstracts should be discussed by the primary advisor, content advisor, and student. The student should have the opportunity to be the first author on such a publication if they would like to do that. If the student does not want to take the lead on a publication or if an unacceptable period has elapsed since the end of MPH 6992 completion, then the student should sign off on the lead and either the primary advisor or the content advisor should take on responsibility of first author. Having a publication-ready manuscript is not a requirement for completion of MPH 6992.