The purposes of the MPH internship and special project for social and behavioral sciences (SBS) students are: (1) to apply the skills learned across the MPH curriculum and within SBS specifically; (2) to advance the student’s understanding of SBS theories, methods, and approaches in a real-world application and setting; and (3) to promote within students an appreciation for how public health professionals interact with and affect the well-being of individuals and communities. Typically, SBS MPH students should seek an internship that will provide a foundation for future educational endeavors (e.g., PhD, MD) or employment within national and international organizations including government, non-profit foundations and companies, and for-profit companies. Based on students’ goals, the internship will be in a setting (e.g., public health agency, community based organization, federal agency, international organizations working in public health) and focus on a specific content area (e.g., chronic disease, infectious disease, health behavior) that will prepare them for the next step in their careers.

This document is intended as an overall guide to what our program expectations are for these internships and special projects for SBS. The intent is for SBS concentration students to experience and accomplish activities that are considered competencies for SBS at the national level. No one student will perform all activities on this list. Consult with your advisor/Chair and with the Associate Director about these requirements when selecting your project and completing your goals/plan.

A. SBS Planning Activities
   1. Identification of community priority concerns (e.g., negotiating with stakeholders and community participants)
      1. Literature reviews of relevant studies on theory, methods, and content issues
      2. Study, intervention, and evaluation design review and selection
      3. Grant writing
      4. IRB preparation and submission

B. Conducting Research, Community Assessments, and Evaluations
   1. Designing, testing, and adapting data collection methods
   2. Data collection (e.g., observation, interviews, surveys, records)
   3. Working with data entry systems
   4. Developing and sustaining communication with stakeholder groups
   5. Working productively as a member of a team (e.g., research group, community partners, health organizations)

C. Data Management, Analysis, and Interpretation
   1. Designing data entry systems
2. Database tasks such as data cleaning, programming, variable classification and coding, designing and updating coding manuals, codebooks, etc.
3. Data analysis (qualitative and/or quantitative)
4. Creating tables, graphs, charts of analyses
5. Writing data methods

D. Communication
1. Routine professional communication with team members and stakeholders
2. Written reports and findings for different stakeholders
3. Graphics, slides, or the aids in communicating results
4. Oral presentations
5. Disseminating results, e.g., community feedback, newsletters, reports to participants