

Scaffolding Community-Engaged Learning Experiences in a Graduate Public Health Program

Sarah Thach & Ameena Batada
UNC Asheville - UNC Gillings Master of Public Health
Asheville, NC



Welcome

Introductions

UNC Asheville - UNC Gillings MPH Program in Place-Based Health

Community-Engaged Learning Across the Curriculum

Focus on Place, Practice, People, Partnerships

Possibilities



UNC Asheville - UNC Gillings Master of Public Health Program

Started as a UNC Gillings MPH program in 2018

Located at campus of Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) in Asheville

Engages recent undergraduate and professional students

Part of the Public Health Leadership in Practice (PHLP) Department at UNC Gillings

Place-Based Health Concentration



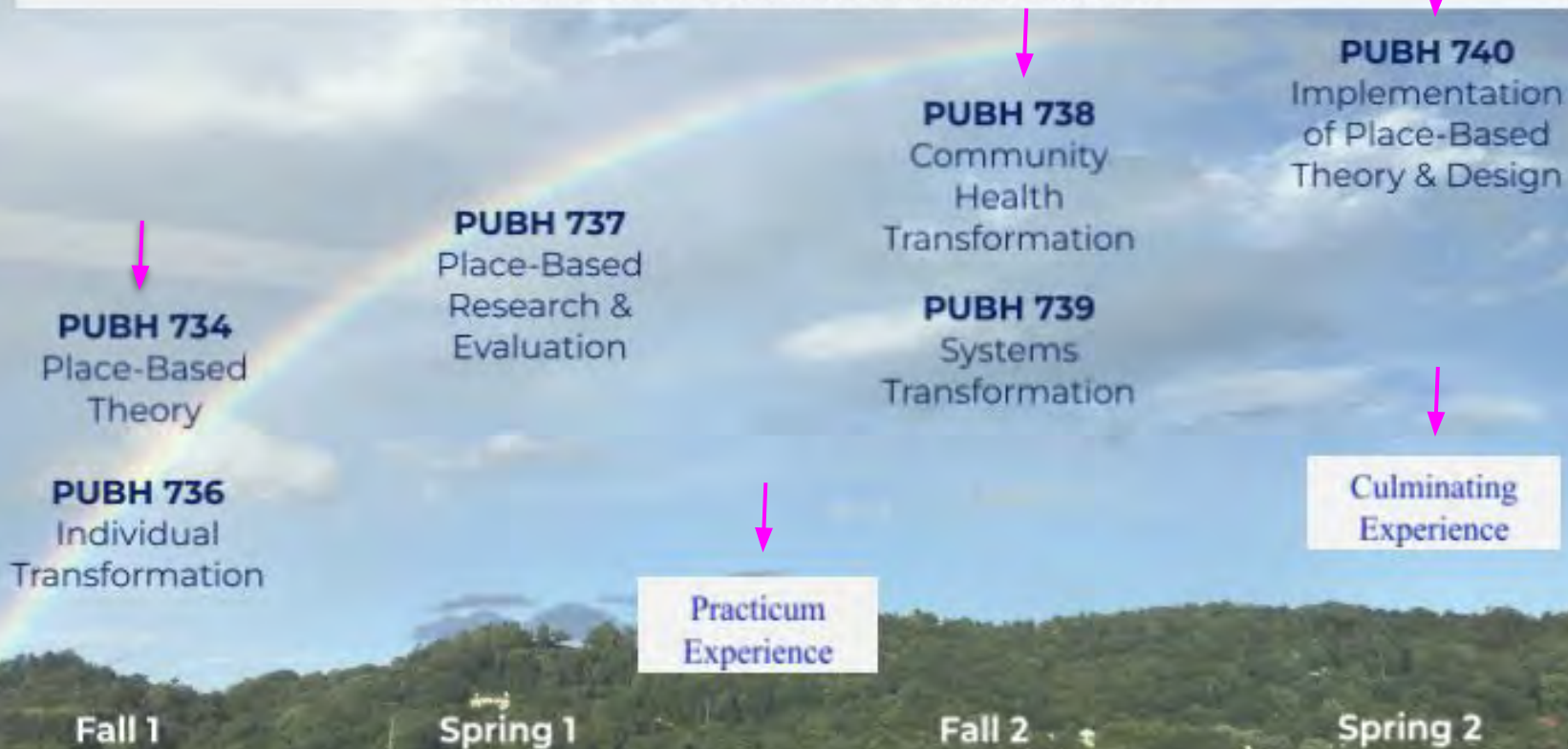
Place-Based Health Concentration



Place-based public health **centers land, people, and communities** as the catalyst for transforming systems to promote wellbeing for all. Local residents, not institutions, are at the center of expertise, as **they hold the history, knowledge, and ways of interacting with a place.** As such, a place's inhabitants and institutions **work in relationship over time, using interdisciplinary and participatory processes,** to create and lead efforts to sustainably improve the social drivers of health and ultimately actualize health equity.

Our Place-Based Health Concentration includes 17 courses over 21 months, including core public health courses, pre-selected electives, and concentration courses.

Place-based health concentration courses include:



Community-Engaged Learning in Public Health Education Programs

Aligned with health equity principles

CEL supports MPH competency development (Meredith, Patchman, and Baker, 2020)

Perceived benefits to community partners:

- quality data and reports
- increased capacity and skills to conduct community assessments
- prestige of sustained relationships with an academic partner (Comeau et al, 2019)

PLACE

PRACTICE

PEOPLE

PARTNERSHIPS

Meredith, Patchman, and Baker. (2020). Community-Engaged Teaching and Practice: A Catalyst for Public Health Improvement. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*.

Comeau et al. (2019). Community-Engaged Learning in Public Health: An Evaluation of Utilization and Value of Student Projects for Community Partners. *Pedagogy in Health Promotion*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2373379918772314>

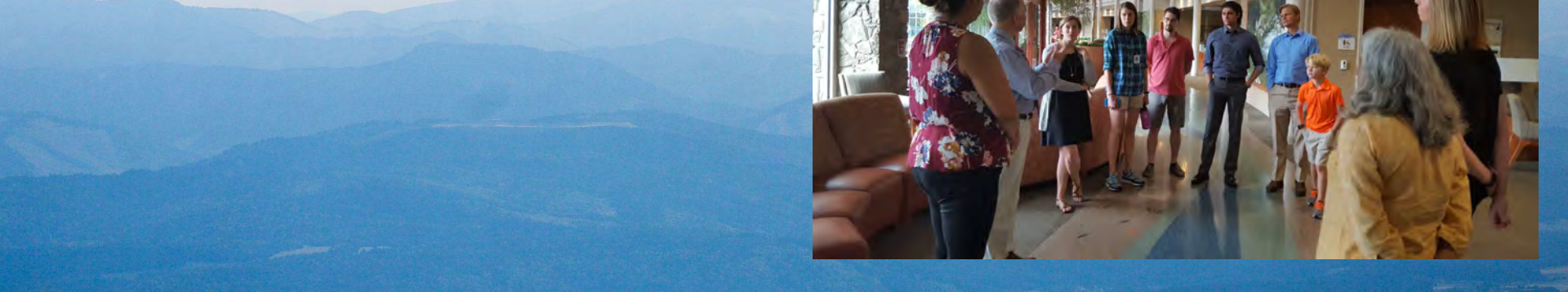
Focus on PLACE



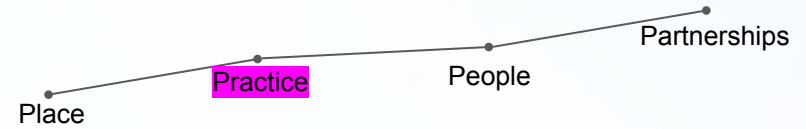
1st semester field trips to:

- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians hospital and public health & human services
- Walking tour of African American history in Asheville
- Rural health partnership and community garden
- Health department and community health center serving farmworkers
- Place-based philanthropy initiative and learn about community forums

Students learn about WNC communities, public health organizations, populations, and compare the theory and practice of place-based health



Focus on PRACTICE



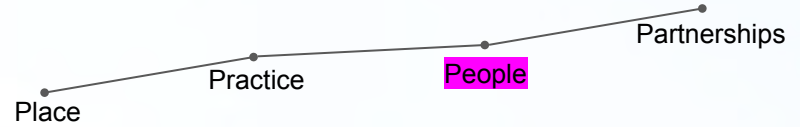
Summer Practicum Project - students work with community organizations or agencies for 200-hour project, honing public health skills and addressing organizations' priorities

2022 examples:

- Older adult fall screening protocol
- Guidelines for evidence-based education for school nurses
- Plan trauma-informed services for children whose parents have cancer
- Study how colleges tell students about wellness services
- Evaluate hotspots provided in farmworker camps
- Assess Cherokee tribal health
- Evaluate Asheville reparations process
- Study ways to enroll more eligible people in safety net clinic
- Listening sessions about BIPOC patients' experience with healthcare
- Assess medical providers' attitudes about transgender health
- Analyze extreme heat's impact on birth outcomes



Focus on PEOPLE



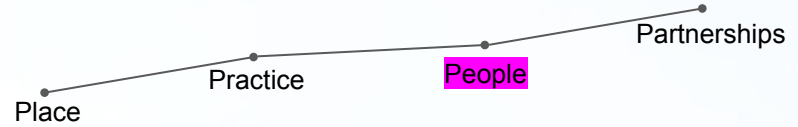
- Fall Semester, 2nd Year
- Full-class initiative with one community, taking on various activities individually or in groups
- Activities are co-determined by the community association members and instructor
- Students interact primarily with community members



Example Activities:

- Working with youth/in the garden
- Planning an historic neighborhood trail
- Developing a resource booklet
- Scanning and organizing archival materials

Focus on PEOPLE

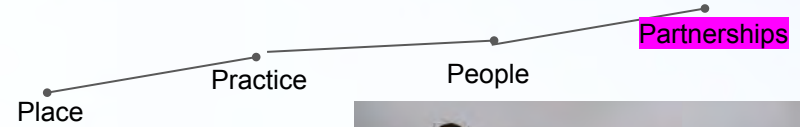


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- Students interact primarily with community members
- Structured reflective writing before and after activities, with discussions throughout
- Same community partners with this class each year, so students build on the work conducted by previous classes

Focus on PARTNERSHIPS

Fourth semester culminating activities:

- Teams work with organizations to develop a place-based health approach addressing an organizational priority
- Individuals write 25-30 page paper addressing organizational need (community assessment, literature review, program plan or evaluation, original research, etc.)



POSSIBILITIES

Curricular:

Greater integration of reflection opportunities in courses

More scaffolding of reflections across curriculum

Community:

More continuity with partner organizations across courses and from cohort to cohort of students

Additional Ideas?

A scenic view of rolling mountains under a cloudy sky. The mountains are layered, creating a sense of depth, and the sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and whites.

Thank You!