

# SONHP Program Evaluation Committee 2020-2021 Annual Program Evaluation Report

**SONHP Program:** MPH

**Assessment Champion(s):** Laura Chyu

**Terms Included:** Fall 2020, Spring 2021 and Summer 2021

**Date of Report:** 12/31/2021

## 1. Aggregate Student Outcomes

### a. Retention and Graduation rates

All students in the MPH program are admitted in the Fall. The program requires six semesters to complete. Graduation rate within six semesters (on time in Summer 2021) for the Fall 2019 cohort was 74% (48 students graduated out of a cohort of 65) (Figure 1).

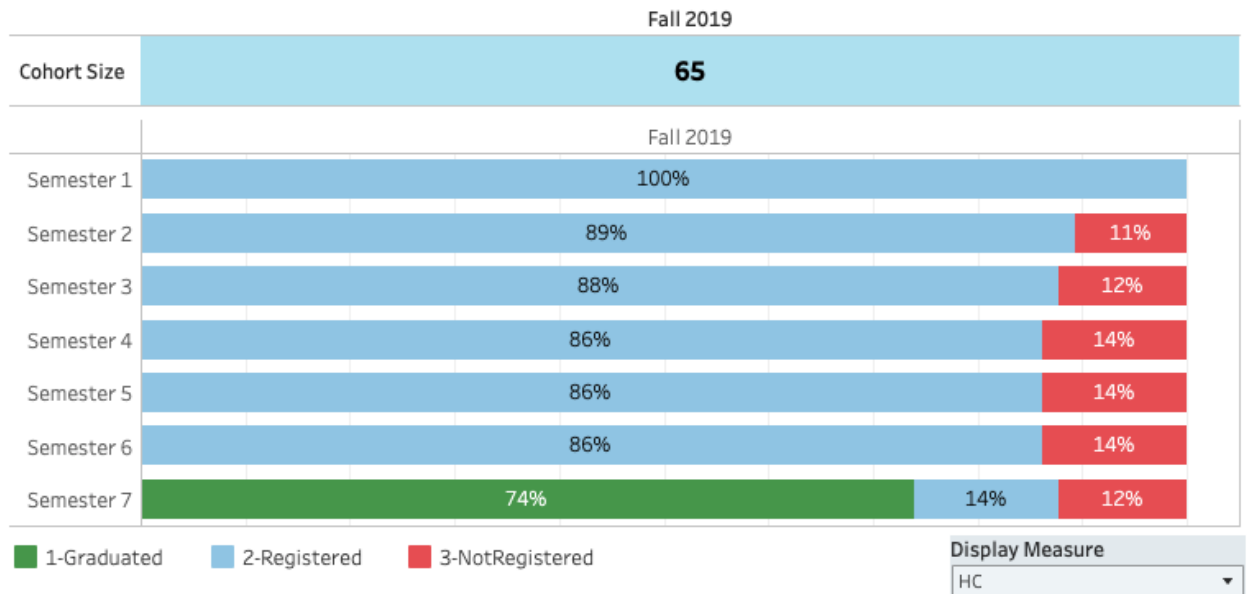


Figure 1. Graduation rate in six semesters for Fall 2019 cohort.

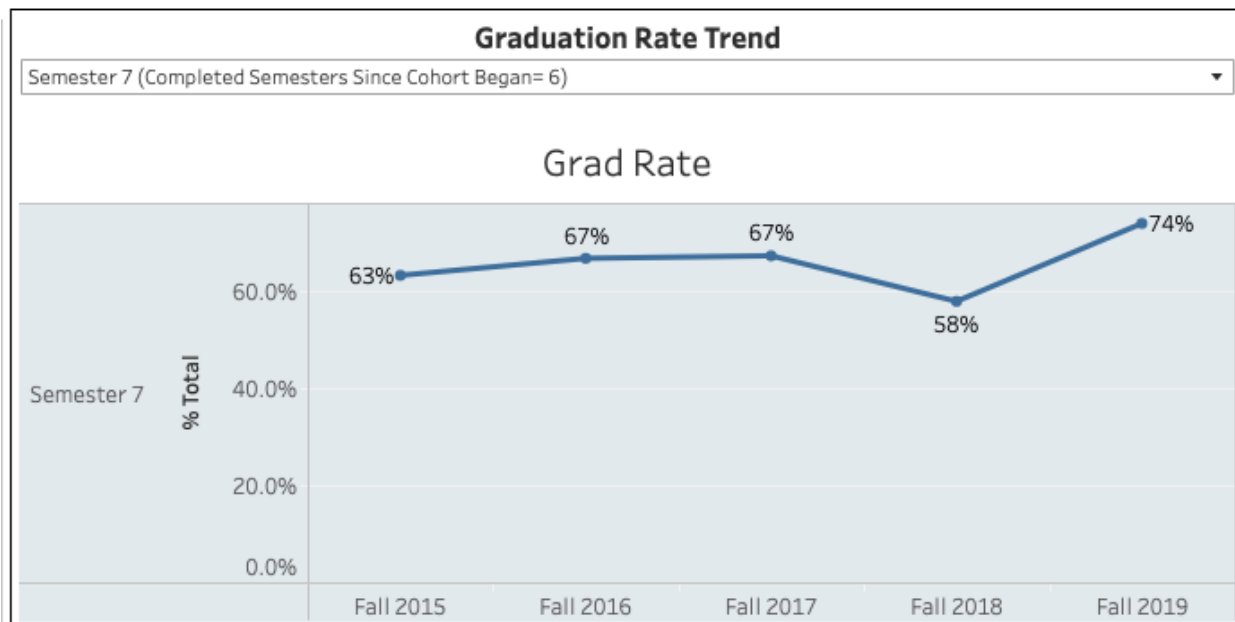


Figure 2. Graduation rate in six semesters for Fall 2015 – Fall 2019 cohorts.

On-time graduation rate for cohorts entering from 2015 to 2019 is 66%. The graduation rate in six semesters for the Fall 2019 cohort (74%) was higher than that of the Fall 2018 cohort (58%). This increase in graduation rate could reflect more faculty advising and support provided to our students to maintain academic progress and graduate in a timely manner.

#### b. Time to Degree

Average time to degree for the Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Summer 2021 exit cohort is 6.5 semesters (Table 1).

Table 1. Average time to degree for Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Summer 2021 exit cohort

Entry Major Group	Admit Term	Academic Year of Graduation (Fall-Summer)	
		2020-21	
MPH - Public Health	201730	<b>11.0 Sem.</b>	Yrs:3.7 - HC: 1
	201740	<b>10.0 Sem.</b>	Yrs:3.3 - HC: 1
	201820	<b>9.0 Sem.</b>	Yrs:3.0 - HC: 1
	201840	<b>7.8 Sem.</b>	Yrs:2.6 - HC: 14
	201930	<b>6.0 Sem.</b>	Yrs:2.0 - HC: 1
	201940	<b>6.0 Sem.</b>	Yrs:2.0 - HC: 48
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>6.5 Sem.</b>	Yrs:2.2 - HC: 66

**c. Academic Progression Requirements**

Not applicable to the MPH Program

**d. Licensure and Certification Rates**

Not applicable to the MPH Program

**2. Assessment of Student Learning**

**a. What aspect of student learning in your program did you assess?**

In Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021, we assessed graduating students' perceptions of their competency in eight public health competencies.

**b. How did you measure it?**

We administered the Graduating Student Survey on Qualtrics to students in their capstone or Integrated Learning Experience (ILEX) class at the end of their final semester. The survey asked about eight areas: evidence-based approaches to public health; structural biases, inequity and racism; planning and management; health policy; leadership; communication; interprofessional practice; and systems thinking. See Appendix A for survey.

**c. What were the results?**

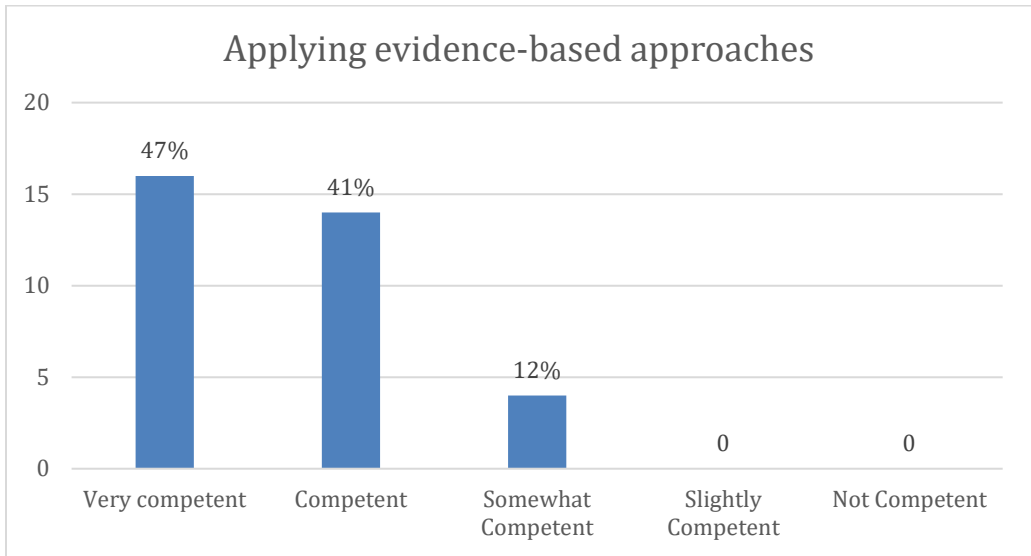
We received 34 responses from 65 graduating students during the course of 3 semesters--Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021. The 52.3% response rate may reflect some instructors not effectively communicating to students the importance of completing the survey and/or students not completing the survey due to competing deadlines and tasks in their last semester of the program.

Quantitative results are shown in the graphs below, followed by selected responses to open-ended questions. Students felt "very competent" or "competent" in the areas of performing effectively on interprofessional teams (100%), and discussing structural bias, social inequities and racism (94%). They felt least competent in their skills discussing and evaluating policies, and systems thinking (both 82%).

Students were also asked to comment on any specific competency areas and assess their personal progress. We asked them to share any achievements that made them feel particularly proud. If they felt they had not gained enough skill in a competency area, we asked them to comment on that, too. Student comments are presented below by topic.

*Evidence-Based Approaches to Public Health*

1. How competent do you feel applying evidence-based approaches to various settings and situations in public health practice?



About 88% of students felt competent or very competent in applying evidence-based approaches in 2021.

Selected open-ended student comments on evidenced-based approaches (including data analysis, research, and writing):

*"I think Biostatistics and learning Stata made me particularly proud. I am really glad I had the opportunity to take the advanced data analysis class as well."*

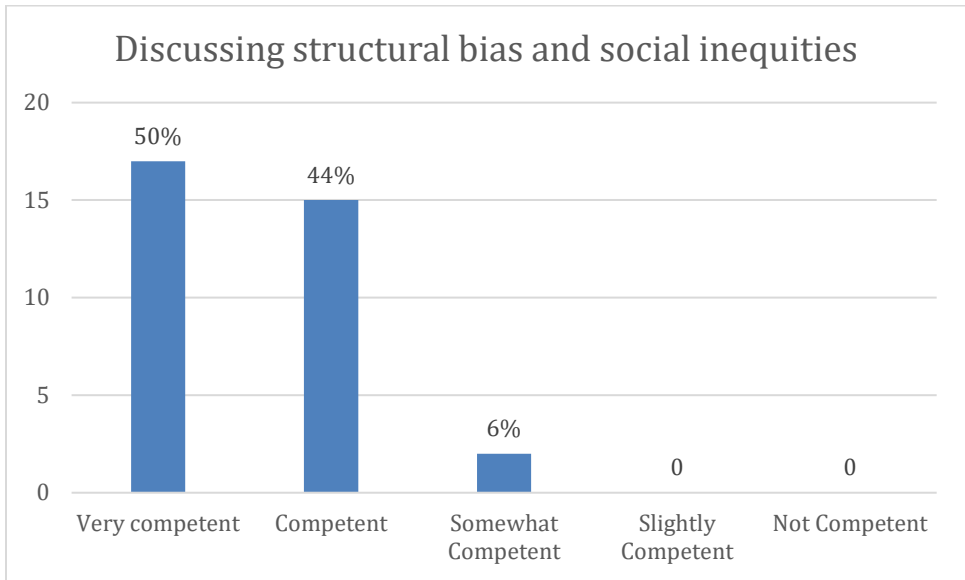
*"Going into the program, I did not know what was entailed in program implementation, evaluation. I also did not know anything about Biostats and Epidemiology. I feel competent that I have the basics to conduct research and apply evidence-based approaches in programs."*

*"I feel that my ability to write research papers has improved greatly throughout this program. I have gained confidence in my writing through the papers written in class and in my APEX internship."*

*"I was able to apply what I've learned through this program and help my APEX [partner organization] to write grants and do research."*

*Public Health and Healthcare System*

2. How competent do you feel discussing how structural bias, social inequities, and racism create challenges in public health at the organizational, community and society levels?



94% of students felt competent or very competent in discussing structural bias and social inequities.

Selected open-ended student comments on structural bias, equity, and racism:

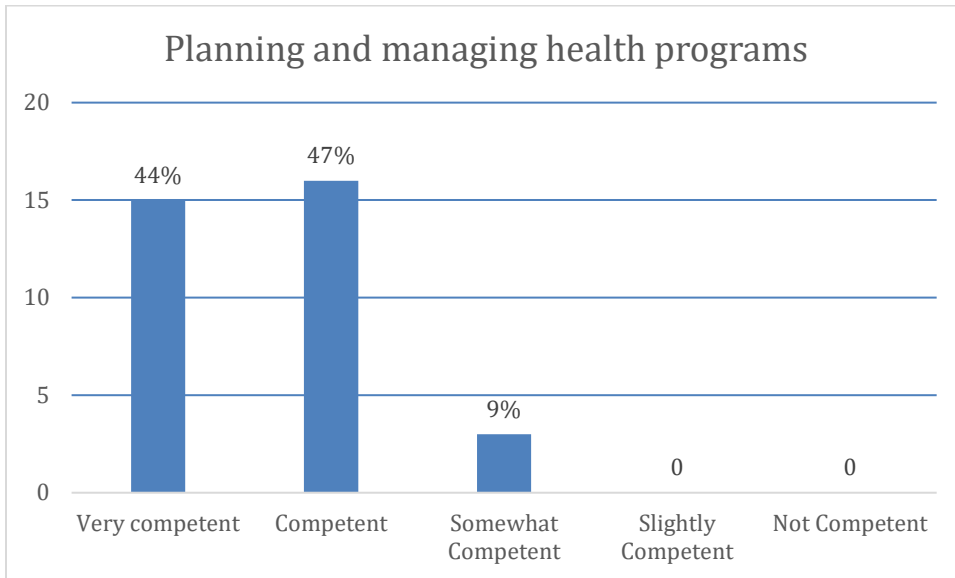
*“There were many opportunities in the courses to collectively speak about structural bias, racism, practice leadership through working in teams, and publicly speak on public health-related topics.”*

*“I think that the courses have prepared me well in the competencies listed above, particularly when it comes to serving vulnerable populations. This is important to me, as I plan a career serving those in marginalized populations and need to ensure that I'm approaching everything I do with equity and social justice lens.”*

*“Before the program, I knew I wanted to create change by addressing health inequities and helping underserved communities access care but I wasn't sure how. This program has not only taught how to address health inequities but has provided me with the necessary tools to go forth and create the change I want to see.”*

### *Planning and Managing Health Programs*

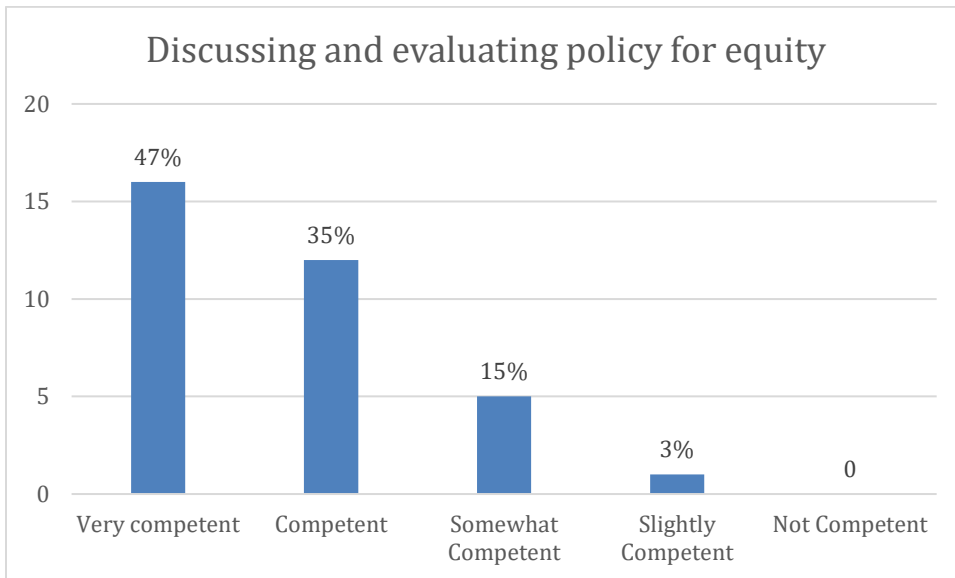
3. How competent do you feel planning public health programs including conducting community needs assessments, demonstrating awareness of cultural values, and evaluating programs?



91% of students felt very competent or competent in planning and managing health programs.

#### *Policy in Public Health*

- How competent do you feel discussing and evaluating policies for their impact on public health and health equity?



82% of students reported feeling very competent or competent in discussing and evaluating public health policy.

Selected open-ended student comments on health policy:

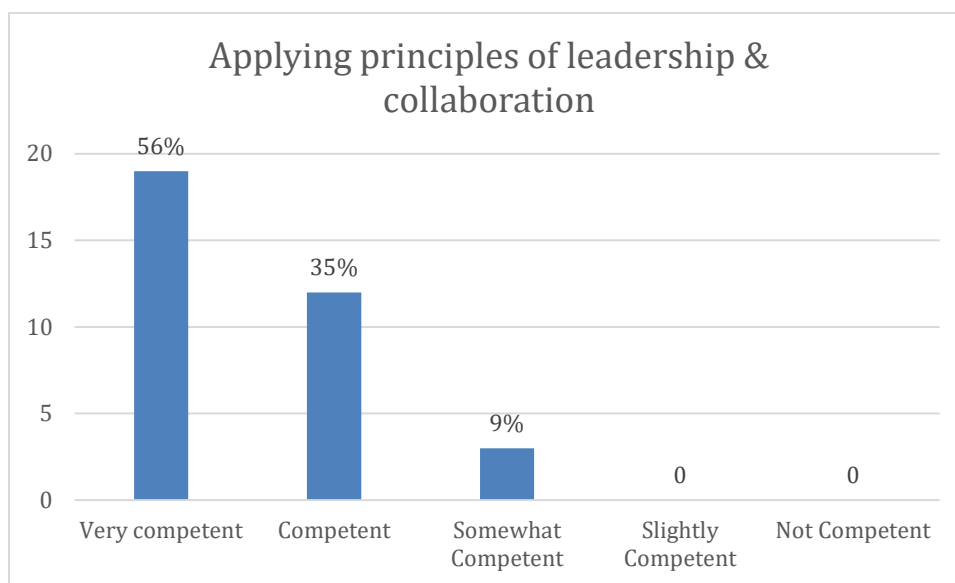
*“Prior to enrolling in the MPH program at USF, I had experience applying and discussing policies for their impact on public health; however, I had not learned about different frameworks and how to structure a policy proposal, prepare a policy brief, or analyze a*

*bill. These are all skills that I learned during this program. As a result of my policy analysis work during my APEX [applied practice experience], I was hired by my fieldwork site as a full-time staff member.”*

*“I feel that I was really able to improve my skills in understanding the impact of policy on public health. In fact, this influenced me so greatly that I ended up seeking out employment that allowed me to successfully move into a health policy-focused role which was something I was really proud of.”*

## Leadership

5. How competent do you feel applying principles of leadership, which includes creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making?



About 91% of graduating students felt very competent or competent in leadership and collaboration.

Selected open-ended student comments on leadership:

*“I think the amount of group work improved my leadership and interprofessional skills ten-fold (although the group projects could be challenging at times, particularly when we were fully remote).”*

*“The leadership skill I gained was the difference in progressing in my career.”*

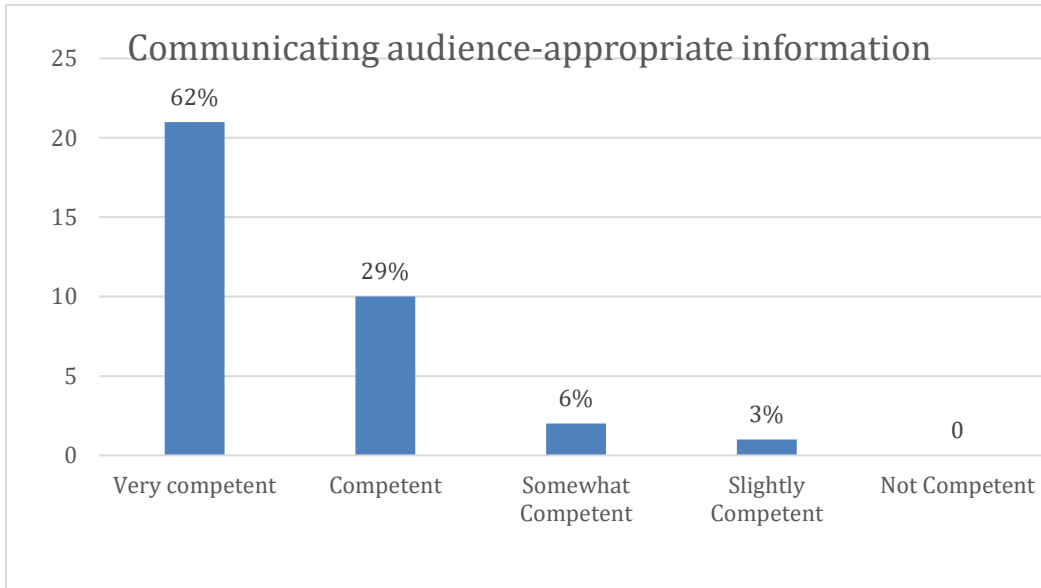
*“I grew up with the idea that I was not a leader and I did not have the qualities of a leader. This program has changed my definition of leadership and has given me multiple opportunities to apply the principles of leadership.”*

*“The lessons that I learned from the USF MPH Leadership class have allowed me to enter a busy work environment with public health and medical professionals of all backgrounds, global experiences and public health work. Without being properly*

*prepared by the university, the work environment alone would have been very challenging. Instead it has been a joy.”*

### Communication

6. How competent do you feel communicating audience-appropriate public health content?



Similar to the leadership competency, 91% of graduating students felt very competent or competent in communication skills.

Selected open-ended student comments on communication:

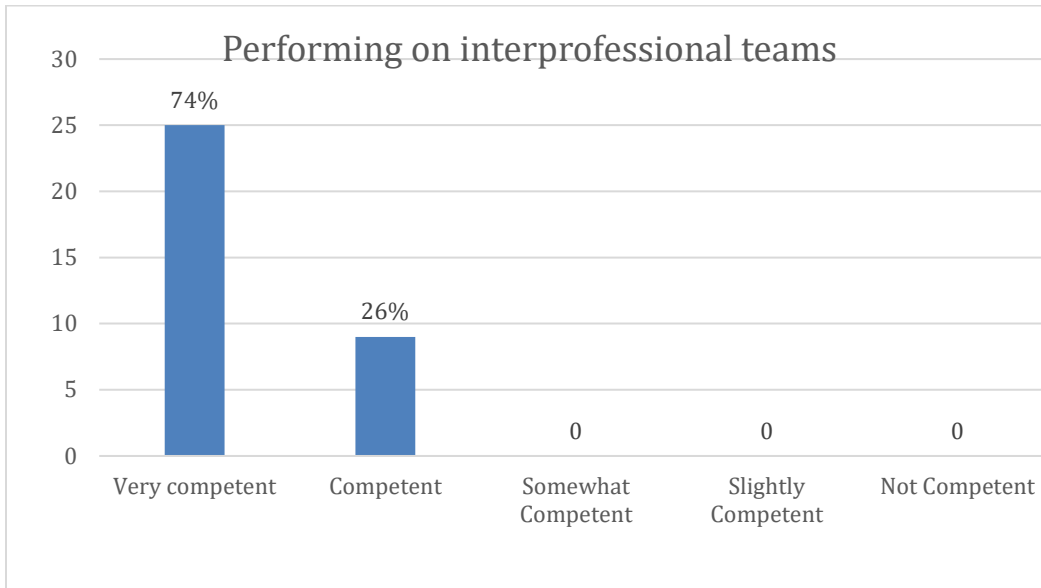
*“There was a substantial amount of group work in each course. This allowed me to hone in on my communication skills and grow as a professional and leader.”*

*“Communicating audience-appropriate public health content is an area that I could directly use my skillsets as a paraprofessional in a school setting. It is an important skillset for getting your message across and understood. “*

### Interprofessional Practice

7. How competent do you feel performing effectively on interprofessional teams?





100% of graduating students who responded to the survey felt very competent or competent performing on interprofessional teams.

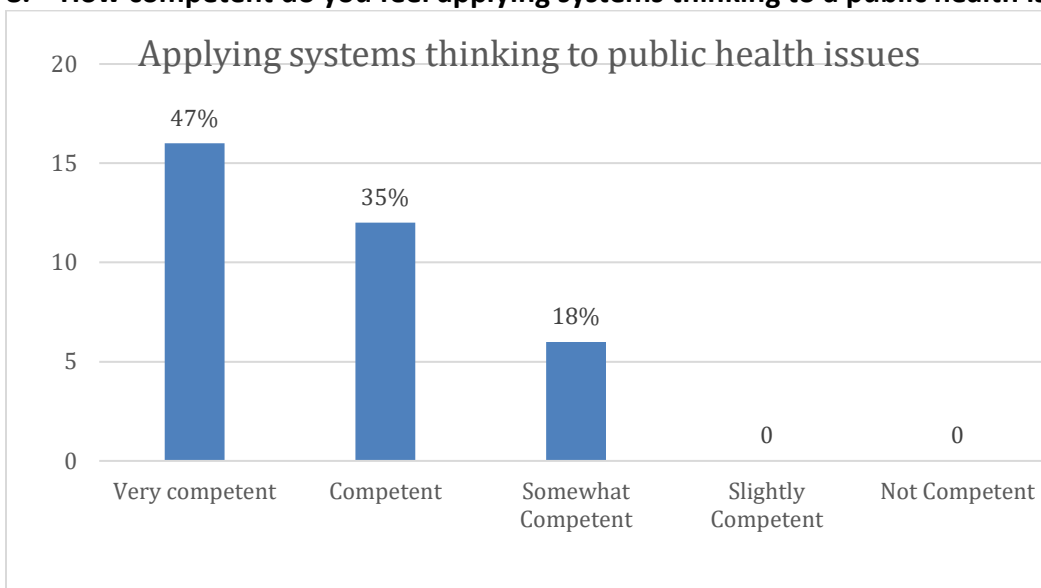
Selected open-ended student comments on interprofessional practice:

*“I am really proud of the skills I have gained for interprofessional practice and communication. During my APEX experience I was able to work with people in different fields (doctors, public health, community health worker, nurse). This experience will help me when I am working with other people. It helped improve my communication skills to be able to communicate my message effectively.”*

*“I think the amount of group work improved my leadership and interprofessional skills ten-fold (although the group projects could be challenging at times, particularly when we were fully remote).”*

### Systems Thinking

#### 8. How competent do you feel applying systems thinking to a public health issue?



82% of students felt very competent or competent in applying systems thinking to public health issues.

In addition to specific competency areas, students also shared their achievements related to personal and professional growth and confidence in open-ended comments.

Selected open-ended student comments on personal and professional growth and confidence:

*"I feel like I grew more into a public health professional with this program. I previously received my undergraduate degree in Health Sciences so I definitely feel like this degree helped contribute to my previous learning and has also made me want to do more in this field as well."*

*"I can definitely say with all personal and professional confidence, that I am not the same person who entered this university's great and inspiring walls three years ago. I am changed. I am professionally hopeful that I will go forward in my life and accomplish the many exciting things that have been birthed in my heart. I look forward to serving within the field of public health, with grace, with compassion for others, with gratitude for my educational preparation, and with joyous expectations of what the future will unfold. Thank you, University of San Francisco, for believing in me!"*

*"When I had the opportunity to demonstrate my ability to plan a public health program during my internship, I realized how many skills I've gained during the program. It gave me the confidence I needed in my education."*

*"The program has allowed for me to build on the experiences I had in the field and have a better understanding of how the competencies work individually and cohesively. I have been able to directly use assignments in class with my work. My program manager and deputy director have witnessed my growth over the program and I have been able to become an asset to our team during COVID response due to the strong foundational understanding I gained while in the program."*

Overall, students rated themselves highly across most public health competencies. In six out of eight public health competencies, at least 88% of students rated themselves as competent or very competent. The two highest rated competencies were in the areas of performing effectively on interprofessional teams (100%), and discussing structural bias, social inequities and racism (94%). Student felt least competent in their skills discussing and evaluating policies, and systems thinking (both 82%). These ratings are consistent with results from the 2019-2020 survey and suggest, based on student self-report, that our curriculum has been consistently successful in training our students in these public health competencies. Open-ended comments were overall aligned with high quantitative ratings of competencies and indicated positive student learning and personal and professional growth. More attention on the lowest rated competency areas (policy and systems thinking) is needed.

- d. What changes to the assessment methodology will you make if/when you evaluate this aspect of student learning again in the future?**

The MPH Program will assess competencies based on faculty ratings of redacted student work rather than by student self-report of learning. Students' assignments will be randomly sampled for each competency and evaluated by faculty members who will determine if they demonstrate meeting the competency. In particular we will focus on public health policy, one of the lowest rated competencies, and have faculty assess a discussion post or policy analysis in MPH 635 Health Policy and Ethics.

**e. What changes to curriculum or programming did you make (or are you planning to make) in light of these results?**

In response to the two lowest rated competency areas, we plan to make changes to how our curriculum addresses systems thinking and public health policy. A new elective on Health Systems Strengthening will be offered in Fall 2022 that will include application of systems thinking to understanding the relationship between health system components at local, regional, and international levels, as well as systems thinking frameworks and tools. Students will thus have additional exposure and opportunities to strengthen their skills in systems thinking during the program.

Instructors of MPH 635 Health Policy and Ethics course will discuss course curriculum and alignment of content with CEPH health policy competencies, with attention to students' ability to discuss and evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity. Specifically, students conduct a policy analysis using the Eightfold Path for analysis, which includes defining a problem, explaining goals, examining arguments, analyzing implementation, and using set criteria to assess whether the policy will be successful. Peer review and feedback on this policy analysis assignment would encourage further development of this competency.

## Appendix A: MPH Graduating Student Survey 2020-2021

The purpose of this survey is multifold. We are interested in your personal progress towards public health competencies. We are also interested in your experiences as a student in the MPH program and areas where we can improve. Your input is important to us and will be used to monitor achievements of our program's educational goals and to strengthen the program. **All responses will be kept anonymous. Thank you for your time and feedback.**

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Q2

### Perceived Competency

We invite you to take stock of your personal progress in the program towards several competency areas. In this section, you will also have an opportunity to provide feedback on how effective the MPH program has been in your progress towards these competencies and to identify areas for improvement. Because you may not be able to fully assess yourself in these competencies until you have had a chance to apply these skills in the workplace. We will be sending you a follow-up survey in the next year asking similar questions. *Your responses to the questions below will be separated from your contact information; all responses will be aggregated and no identifying information will be attached to your responses.*

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Q3 **Evidence-Based Approaches to Public Health** 1. How competent do you feel applying evidence-based approaches to various settings and situations in public health practice?

- Very Competent (1)
  - Competent (2)
  - Somewhat Competent (3)
  - Slightly Competent (4)
  - Not Competent (5)
-

**Q4 Public Health and Health Care Systems** 2. How competent do you feel discussing how structural bias, social inequities, and racism create challenges in public health at the organizational, community and society levels?

- Very Competent (1)
  - Competent (2)
  - Somewhat Competent (3)
  - Slightly Competent (4)
  - Not Competent (5)
- 

**Q6 Planning and Management to Promote Health** 3. How competent do you feel planning public health programs including conducting community needs assessments, demonstrating awareness of cultural values, and evaluating programs?

- Very Competent (1)
  - Competent (2)
  - Somewhat Competent (3)
  - Slightly Competent (4)
  - Not Competent (5)
- 

**Q5 Policy in Public Health** 4. How competent do you feel discussing and evaluating policies for their impact on public health and health equity?

- Very Competent (1)
  - Competent (2)
  - Somewhat Competent (3)
  - Slightly Competent (4)
  - Not Competent (5)
-

**Q7 Leadership** 5. How competent do you feel applying principles of leadership, which includes creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making?

- Very Competent (1)
  - Competent (2)
  - Somewhat Competent (3)
  - Slightly Competent (4)
  - Not Competent (5)
- 

**Q8 Communication** 6. How competent do you feel communicating audience-appropriate public health content?

- Very Competent (1)
  - Competent (2)
  - Somewhat Competent (3)
  - Slightly Competent (4)
  - Not Competent (5)
- 

**Q9 Interprofessional Practice** 7. How competent do you feel performing effectively on interprofessional teams?

- Very Competent (1)
  - Competent (2)
  - Somewhat Competent (3)
  - Slightly Competent (4)
  - Not Competent (5)
-

**Q10 Systems Thinking** 8. How competent do you feel applying systems thinking to a public health issue?

- Very Competent (1)
  - Competent (2)
  - Somewhat Competent (3)
  - Slightly Competent (4)
  - Not Competent (5)
- 

**Q12 Reflection** 9. For any of the competency areas listed above, please write a brief paragraph providing an assessment of your personal progress. If you feel you were unable to gain the respective skill, please explain why. Feel free to share any achievements that made you feel particularly proud.

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**Q13** 10. For any of the competency areas listed above, please provide specific feedback on where the MPH program has particular strengths and how the curriculum, instruction, and advising can be improved to help students make optimal progress during their MPH educational experience.

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**Q14**  
**Program Satisfaction and Diversity & Inclusion**

We are interested in your experiences while in the classroom, with advising, and around diversity, inclusion, and climate in the MPH program. We want to know how we are doing and where we need to improve the student experience.

*Your responses to the questions below will be separated from your contact information; all responses will be aggregated and no identifying information will be attached to your responses.*

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Q15 11. The average size of classes was conducive to my learning.

- Strongly Agree (1)
  - Agree (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Disagree (4)
  - Strongly Disagree (5)
- 

Q16 12. Faculty have been available to meet with me during the program.

- Strongly Agree (1)
  - Agree (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Disagree (4)
  - Strongly Disagree (5)
- 

Q17 13. I am satisfied with the academic advising that I have received during the program.

- Strongly Agree (1)
  - Agree (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Disagree (4)
  - Strongly Disagree (5)
-



Q18 14. I am satisfied with the career advising I have received during the program.

- Strongly Agree (1)
  - Agree (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Disagree (4)
  - Strongly Disagree (5)
- 

Q19 15. Please include any specific suggestions for improving advising during the MPH program.

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Q20 16. The program has representation of people from different backgrounds, populations, and perspectives.

- Strongly Agree (1)
  - Agree (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Disagree (4)
  - Strongly Disagree (5)
- 

Q21 17. I am comfortable with the climate in the program. Climate is defined as "current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning the

access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential.”

- Strongly Agree (1)
  - Agree (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Disagree (4)
  - Strongly Disagree (5)
- 

Q22 18. The program embraces difference and fosters equitable participation regardless of background.

- Strongly Agree (1)
  - Agree (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Disagree (4)
  - Strongly Disagree (5)
- 

Q23 19. In the program courses, issues of diversity and inclusion are adequately addressed.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly disagree (5)
- 

Q24 20. Please include any specific suggestions for improving diversity and inclusion in the MPH program.

Q30 21. How have you applied what you have learned in the MPH program to efforts in health equity and social justice? Please feel free to discuss application in your APEX, workplace, volunteer work, community, or other contexts.

Q25 22. We are interested in your reflections of any personal growth that you may have experienced as a result of attending the MPH program. You may consider our MPH Mission during this reflection: "To improve the health of local and global populations, particularly the underserved and vulnerable, through innovative and inspired research, service, and teaching that is grounded in education of the whole person to be a change agent who strives for excellence in all pursuits." How well do you think we strive toward achieving our mission?

Q26 23. Please include any additional suggestions or feedback about the MPH program.

Q27 Thank you for participating in this important survey and contributing to meeting our MPH program goals to advance public health and promote student success!

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