GUIDELINES FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY MODULE (ISM)

The Independent Study Module (ISM) is designed to provide opportunities for students to pursue interests and areas of study not addressed in existing modules. Students may elect to focus on any one of the pre-approved areas of study. Specific learning objectives will be defined by the student in consultation with a supervisor, who should be an NUS academic staff member. Modes of learning may include content-based/ didactic activities, practical work related to health program development or evaluation, or research in an area relevant to the chosen specialisation. The overall objective is to allow candidates to further tailor their learning experience according to their needs.

The following areas of study, and their corresponding codes, are offered:

- SPH5890A Epidemiology and Disease Control
- SPH5890B Quantitative Methods
- SPH5890C Environmental / Occupational Health
- SPH5890D Health Policy and Systems
- SPH5890E Health Services Research
- SPH5890F Health Promotion
- SPH5890G Global Health

APPLYING FOR AN ISM

Duration

It is envisaged that learning will take place via tutorials, discussions, practical work, fieldwork, preparation of reports or written assignments. The workload (including self-study and preparation) should justify the number of credits to be earned (4MCs = 10 hours/week over one semester).

ISM proposal (mandatory) (Maximum 5,000 words)

The student must have a well-defined area of interest to pursue within the framework of the ISM and submit a detailed ISM proposal with the following sections:

a) Details of the faculty member supervising the student;

b) Overall learning objective(s) of the ISM [specify relevance to the core competencies of the MPH programme (ref Table 1) and the area of study identified under ISM]

c) Specific area of study and/or project to be undertaken during ISM

i) ISM title

ii) Background summary of the issue/topics that are the focus of the course, including their importance within the context of public health

iii) ISM objectives – objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART), and should link to the learning objective(s)

iv) Description of the final product envisioned for the independent study
v) If the independent study involves research, provide a description of the hypotheses to be evaluated and an overview of the methods.

d) Detailed description of the work plan to achieve objectives identified in (b.)
   i) specify frequency/duration of face-to-face contact with faculty;
   ii) specify total effort in hours;
   iii) include bibliography – annotated.

Final report (Maximum 5,000 words, excluding references)

This is to be based on mutual agreement between supervisor and student, depending on the nature and topic of study. Typically, ISM final products are similar in format to the final practicum report. Report submission date will be assigned when application is approved.

Modes of Learning

It is envisaged that learning will take place via discussions, practical work, fieldwork, preparation of reports or written assignments. The workload (including self-study and preparation) should justify the number of credits to be earned (4MCs = 10 hours/week over one semester).

Assessment

The final report will be graded by the academic supervisor as well as the MPH Programme Director.

Table 1. Core competencies for the MPH programme

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<th>Plan, conduct and analyse epidemiologic studies to assess and monitor the health of communities and populations at risk, and to identify health problems and priorities</th>
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<td>Review, appraise and disseminate health information in the practice of evidence-based health care</td>
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<td>Investigate and control occurrences, including outbreaks, of infectious and non-communicable diseases, using relevant approaches and technologies</td>
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<td>Identify and control factors in the natural and man-made environment (air, water, land, housing, workplaces) which affect health</td>
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<td>Apply concepts and methods in social and behavioural sciences to formulate, implement and evaluate health promotion programmes</td>
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<td>Analyse policies and strategies for effectiveness in the organisation and delivery of health care</td>
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<td>Plan, organise and manage public health programmes and examine their use, cost, quality, accessibility, and outcomes</td>
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<td>Advocate for public health programmes and resources; communicate effectively on relevant matters in professional and public settings</td>
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<td>Work effectively in a public health team</td>
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