

Public Health in Action through Community-Academic Partnerships

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Background

The Office of Public Health Practice aims to enhance public health capacity through partnership, student engagement, workforce development, and technical assistance. We offer Public Health in Action courses through our longstanding relationships with domestic and international community partners. These two-credit, seven-week intensive courses culminate in a week-long practice-based field experience to existing and emerging public health issues.

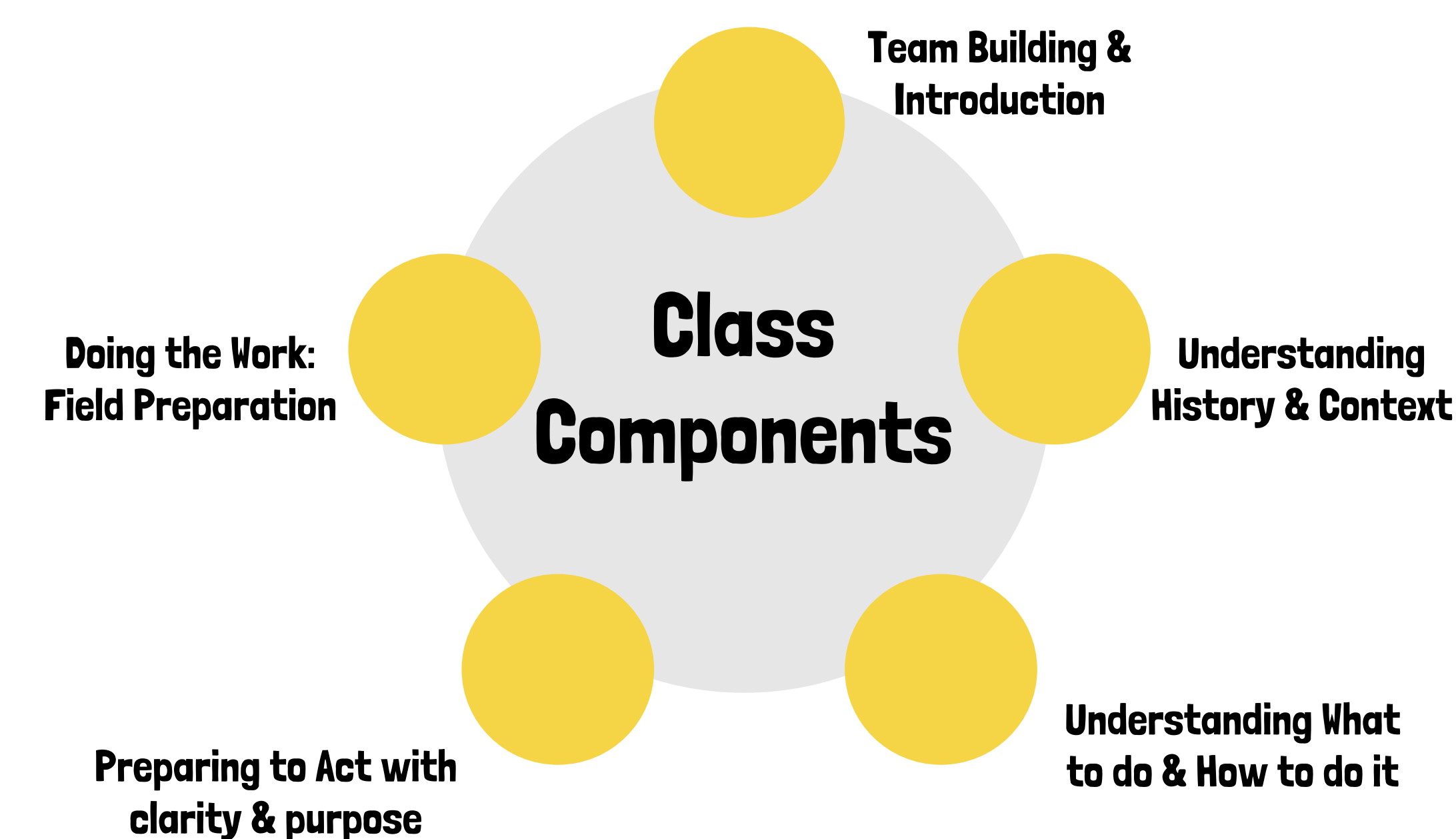
- The Public Health in Action Courses are a series of credit-based courses designed to provide students with hands-on applied learning through direct involvement in population health research, translation, and development.
- The community partners choose the course projects.
- The course follows a shared learning model where students learn through individual and collective discourse.
- Small groups of 12/13 students go to Grenada, Texas, or Mississippi through these courses.
- The field experience is full-time, approximately 50-60 hours during the deployment week.
- The course follows a shared learning model where students learn through individual and collective discourse.



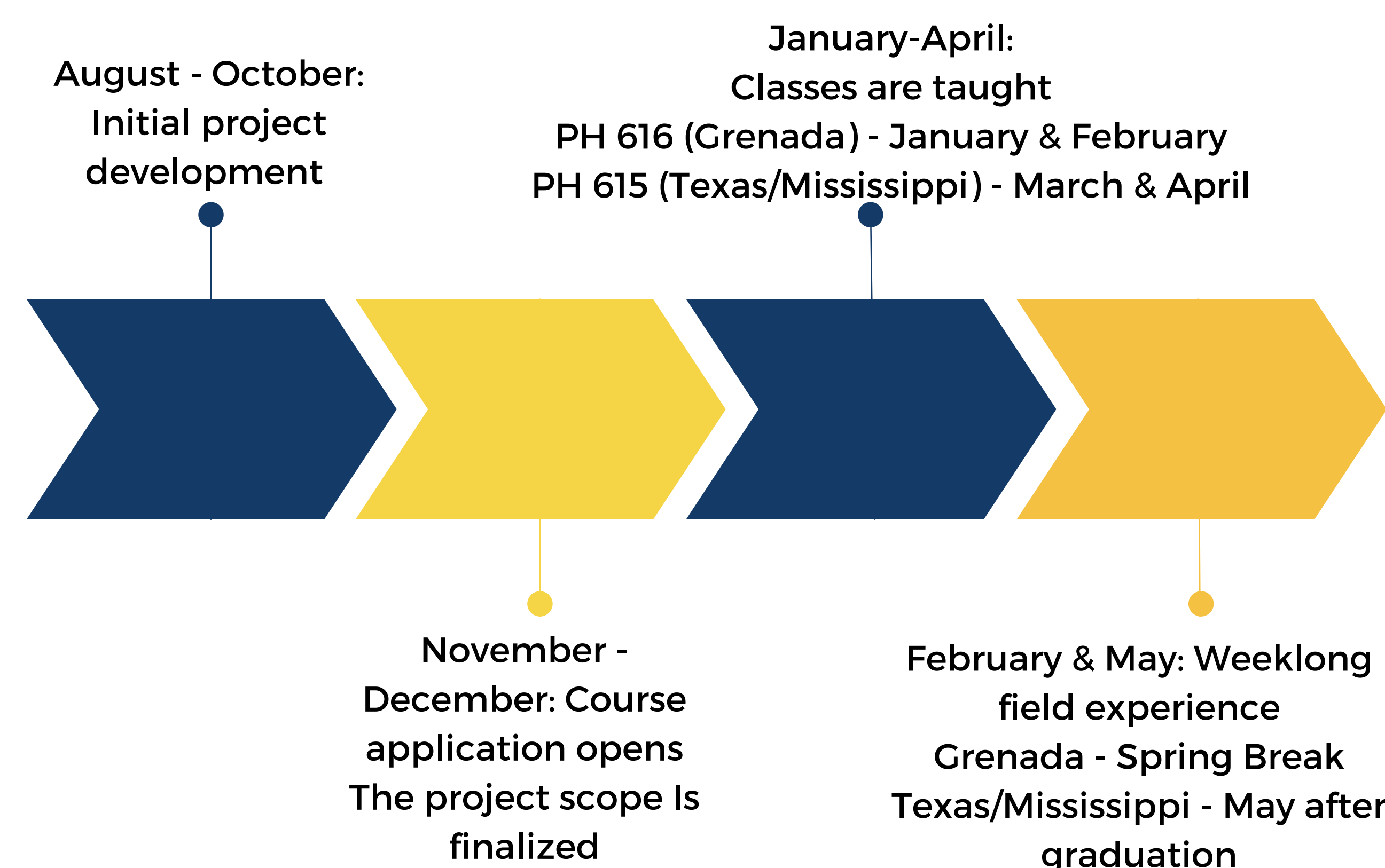
Photo: Students in Mississippi assisting with packing boxes for the Food Is Medicine program.

Structure

The courses follow a similar structure with the understanding that the content will be tailored each year based on the specified project need. Each class session before the trip is designed to help students prepare for the work the students will complete in the field.



General Course Timeline



Learning Outcomes

The goal of these courses is to provide an action-based experience for public health graduate students to address 'real-time' public health issues in vulnerable communities within a global context.

1. Explore the role of culture and political-economic trends that shape the health of communities.
2. Apply public health theories and constructs to advance organizations and programs.
3. Describe two emerging public health trends facing the Caribbean region.
4. Assess information to select appropriate level data and resources to address questions.
5. Contribute to building community and organizational capacity to address emerging/pressing health concerns.
6. Assess findings to create culturally appropriate recommendations for organizational and/or public health improvement.

Lessons Learned

- Partnerships are essential to the success of this course.
- Be open to change and adapt the course as needed.
- Class sessions may need to be tailored to student needs.
- Cultural awareness and humility are essential aspects when introducing students to new environments.
- Preparing for these projects is a year-long commitment.

Acknowledgements

These courses would not be possible without the support of our community partners in Grenada, Mississippi, and Texas.