



COPC Summer Public Health Research Program

Community-Oriented Primary Care Program

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Community Oriented Primary Care (COPC) Summer Public Health Research Program

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Overview

The **COPC Summer Public Health Research Program** offers medical school students a unique opportunity to engage in research that addresses health disparities. Established in 2012, this program is supported by the National Institutes of Health Community-Oriented Primary Care Endowment (5S21MD001102-03) and is designed to foster student involvement in Community-Oriented Primary Care (COPC) research.

Each summer, three students are selected to participate in an eighth-week research projects focused on improving health outcomes for medically underserved populations in Nebraska and Iowa, across the United States or globally. Through this experience, students gain exposure to public health research methods, data analysis, and community-based approaches to care. Projects emphasize real-world application and aim to reduce disparities in areas such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, mental health, diabetes, and other priority health issues emphasized in Health People 2030.

Participants work closely with experienced investigators/mentors, receiving mentorship and guidance throughout the eight-week program. This collaboration not only strengthens research skills but also builds professional networks and prepares students for future careers in health equity and public health.

If you are passionate about advancing health equity and eager to develop research expertise, we encourage you to connect with a faculty investigator/mentor and explore how your interests align with the program's mission. Together, we can make a measurable impact on the health of underserved communities.

Program Timeline

- **Application Period:** February through March
- **Application Review:** Begins immediately upon receipt of your application
- **Notification of Acceptance:** Final decisions communicated by April 30
- **Orientation:** Scheduled during the first week of June to prepare participants for research activities and compliance requirements
- **Program Start Date:** On or about June 15 (or a mutually agreed date between the student and mentor)

- **Program Duration:** Eight weeks of immersive research experience

Funding and Stipend Distribution

Each participant receives a stipend of **\$1,500**, paid in two installments:

- **First Installment (\$750):** Issued one month after the project begins
- **Second Installment (\$750):** Issued upon submission and approval of the final written report by the COPC Director

Expectations After Acceptance

- Submit a complete research report formatted for scientific publication, including title, abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, references, tables, and figures
- Participate in mentorship meetings and maintain regular communication with your faculty investigator/mentor
- Complete all compliance requirements, including IRB approval or exemption as applicable
- Present findings at COPC's Common Ground: Interprofessional Forum on Health Disparities (optional but encouraged)
- Complete a program evaluation rating your learning experience in COPC public health research

Research Plan

As part of your application, you will submit a concise description of your proposed project following the format below. Use **single spacing, 12-point font**, and **1-inch margins** on all sides. Please adhere strictly to the page limits indicated for each section.

Hypothesis and Specific Aims

Clearly state your research hypothesis and outline the specific aims that will guide your project. Focus on what you intend to test or explore and why it matters.

Length: *Maximum 1 page*

B. Background and Significance

Provide a brief overview of the context for your proposed research. Summarize existing knowledge, identify gaps, and explain how your project addresses these gaps. Highlight the significance of your work in relation to **Community-Oriented Primary Care (COPC)** and its potential impact on reducing health disparities. Include relevant references and any pilot data from you or your mentor.

Length: *Maximum 1.5 pages*

C. Research Design and Methods

Describe how you will conduct your study. Include:

- **Study Design:** Outline treatments, variables, timelines, and endpoints.
- **Procedures:** Summarize key methods and note if they are currently used in community settings.
- **Challenges and Alternatives:** Discuss potential limitations and strategies to address them.
- **Data Analysis:** Explain how you will analyze data and test your hypothesis.
- **Your Role and Timeline:** Define your responsibilities and provide a clear timeline for completing your specific aims within the eight-week program.

Length: *Maximum 2 pages*

[Research Plan Template](#)

Letter of Support Requirement

A **letter of support** from your research mentor or sponsor is required at the time of application.

This letter should:

- Confirm the mentor's commitment to guide you throughout the eight-week program.
- Describe the relationship of your proposed project to the mentor's current research.
- Specify your role in the project and how much of the work you will complete independently.
- Outline the learning objectives for you as a student and plans for publication or dissemination of results.
- Affirm that the mentor will assist with compliance requirements, including IRB approval or exemption.

Who can provide this letter?

- A faculty investigator or research mentor affiliated with Creighton University or another approved institution.

Timeline:

- Submit the letter **along with your application during the February–March application period**. Applications without a letter of support will not be considered.

[Sample Letter of Support](#)

Guidelines Award

The **COPC Summer Public Health Research Program** begins on or about **June 15** following acceptance into the program (or on a mutually agreed date between the student and mentor) and runs for **eight weeks**. The accepted student should attend an **online orientation** as scheduled.

Program Requirements:

Each student must submit a **complete written research report** formatted for scientific publication. The report must include:

- Title
 - Author(s)
 - Abstract
 - Introduction
 - Materials and Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion
 - References
 - Tables, Figure Legends, and Figures
- **Note:** An abstract alone is not sufficient and will not be accepted as the final report.
 - The COPC Director will review the report upon submission and determine acceptance.

Stipend and Funding:

- Each participant receives a **\$1,500 stipend**, paid in two installments:
 - **First Installment (\$750):** Issued one month after the project begins.
 - **Second Installment (\$750):** Issued upon submission and approval of the final written report by the COPC Director.

Submission Deadline:

- The final report must be submitted to **Phebe Jungman** at PhebeJungman@creighton.edu **on or before the last day of the eight-week program.**

Student Guidelines

- **Identify a Research Mentor:**

Students must select a research mentor affiliated with Creighton University or another approved institution in the US or worldwide. *All research ideas require prior approval from Dr. Sade Kosoko-Lasaki before submission.*

- **Focus Areas:**

Projects must address one or more priority health disparity areas identified by **Healthy People 2030**, including:

- Cardiovascular disease and its risk factors
- Cancer
- Asthma
- Infant mortality
- Mental health
- HIV/AIDS
- Violence
- Diabetes
- Health policy and ethics
- Cultural competency

Note: Basic science research will not be funded.

- **Research Protocol Requirements:**

The written protocol must include:

- Literature review
- Specific aims
- Methodology
- Data collection and analysis
- Clinical application relevant to public health

- **Final Deliverables:**

- Submit a complete written research report upon project completion.
- Optional: Present findings at **HS-MACA's Common Ground: Interprofessional Forum on Health Disparities**.
- Complete a program evaluation to assess your learning experience in COPC public health research.

Faculty Mentor Guidelines

Students are responsible for obtaining the necessary forms and contacting a mentor to discuss available research opportunities. The proposal must be written by the student with guidance from the mentor and should represent a discrete project or a defined portion of a larger. If the proposed work is part of a broader study, the student's role must be clearly defined, and timelines must be included in the application. The project should be completed within the eight-week summer session, and results will be presented at **Common Ground**, an interprofessional forum on health disparities at Creighton University. Whenever possible, students should also participate in preparing a full manuscript for publication.

Mentor Responsibilities During the Application Process

- Discuss project ideas, experimental plans, and required work with the student.
- Provide key references or papers to guide the student's understanding of project goals and rationale.
- Assist in designing an eight-week research plan.
- Oversee the application process and ensure IRB approvals and compliance training are completed.
- Write a **letter of support** that includes:
 - The relationship of the proposed project to current research.
 - The student's role and the portion of work they will complete independently.
 - Learning objectives for the student and plans for publication or dissemination of results.

Mentor Responsibilities After Funding

- Provide training in research methods and oversee project design and progress.
- Facilitate discussions on relevant scientific data, literature, and ideas.
- Assist with data collection, statistical analysis, and interpretation.
- Support abstract submission and manuscript preparation.
- Email approval to copc@creighton.edu for stipend release.

Compliance Requirements:

- Retrospective studies (chart reviews) must have IRB Exempt status.
- Prospective studies must have full IRB approval.
- COPC will cover the cost of statistical support as needed.

For questions, contact **Ms. Phebe Mercado Jungman** at PhebeJungman@creighton.edu or email copc@creighton.edu.