Welcome to Marketing Yourself for Public Health Practicum Opportunities. I'm Denise Pranke, a member of the Walden Career Services advising team and I am going to get us started today.

Joining us today is Dr. Jennifer Perkins, Practicum Coordinator for the School of Health Sciences. Dr. Perkins has over 20 years of experience as a public health practitioner and academician, working with nonprofit organizations at the local and national level, as well as governmental health agencies. She is a certified Health Education Specialist, and remains active in both the American Public Health Association and the Society for the Scientific Study of Human Sexuality. The majority of Dr. Perkins’ practical experience was with Dallas County Health and Human Services where she worked in Public Health Preparedness and Bioterrorism Response. She joined Walden University in 2009, serving as Practicum Coordinator and full-time faculty. Her research interests focus on sexuality and the reproductive health of adolescents and women.

Also joining us is Janine Hradsky, Field Experience Coordinator for the College of Health Sciences. Janine’s background includes more than 20 years of experience in teaching and education outreach. She has worked at Walden University for over eight years as an Academic Advisor and Field Education Coordinator. Currently, she assists students with practicum policies and procedures. Janine has a master's degree in education with coursework in health promotion and health education.

And again, I am Denise Pranke. My background includes over 20 years of experience in higher education, including 11 years with Walden University and seven years in Career Services. My Master's degree is in adult education.

So, next, let’s take a look at what we plan to cover during this session.

Our agenda includes the purpose of the practicum experience; what to consider to design a practicum experience that is a good fit for your skills and interests; ways to
identify appropriate practicum sites; resources to help you become familiar with the Walden practicum requirements and practicum application process; best practices in preparing your résumé, cover letter, and career portfolio; and finally, strategies to network and reach out to potential sites.

SLIDE 4: PURPOSE OF THE MPH PRACTICUM
>> JENNIFER PERKINS: Thank you Denise. The purpose of the Walden MPH practicum experience is designed to provide students with the opportunity to synthesize knowledge, develop competence in professional practice, apply knowledge to solve public health problems, and develop a respect for and commitment to continuous professional development.

SLIDE 5: AUDIENCE FEEDBACK
Let’s take a moment to get some audience feedback. What health issue or population are you most passionate about?

>> DENISE PRANKE: Let's see what you have to say. emergency preparedness, mental health of youth, environmental health, maternal and child health. Injury prevention, public health research, and chronic health issues and prevention.

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: These are all great issues and these are the type of health issues we like to see our students involved in. One recommendation that I would give to students is if this is an area you are passionate about, begin now thinking what agencies in your community address those particular issues. So, if you have a local or state health department that has public health preparedness activities, begin looking at what activities that department is involved in. When it comes to adolescents or mental health, you can approach that type of health issue from a variety of strategies. You might want to work with an agency that specifically addresses mental health and working with adolescents is just a small component of that or you may want to work with an agency that only works with adolescents and mental health is a component of that.
Really the sky is the limit when you know what you are interested in and Janine and I can work with you as you move forward.

SLIDE 6: DESIGN YOUR PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE
>> JENNIFER PERKINS
So, if you could design your perfect practicum experience, what would it look like? You would need to consider what type of work you would be involved in. Are you the type of person who wants to go out and do community outreach or are you more comfortable staying in the office doing biostatistics and crunching numbers. What agency setting is most appealing to you? Are you more interested in working in a formal environment such as a health department with a more structured approach, or do you want more flexibility in your appearance and your strategies? What skills would you gain? If you know that public speaking is an area for improvement then that may be an area that you want to focus on in your Field Experience. And what would your daily responsibilities consist of? Do you want a consistent structured schedule where you know what you are going to do everyday, or are you more interested in having more flexibility and a little public health excitement by not knowing exactly what the day will bring. All of these are things you should consider when you are doing your outreach to these various agencies, and be able to really articulate the type of practicum experience that you are most interested in.

SLIDE 7: POTENTIAL PRACTICUM ACTIVITIES
So, when we talk about potential practicum activities, we have students that have completed a variety of projects. Students that have assessed community needs, facilitating presentations, developing educational materials for distribution within the agency or community setting, conducting community outreach. Students that are really interested in epidemiology, go out and investigate diseases, or participate in planning meetings. And I am going to stop here for a second because you may think, oh what type of planning meetings? It could be something as simple as a townhall, or health fair, or be a more large-scale event that your agency is planning particularly for some large community based organizations that may be involved with a community health summit
with many partners involved. So, you really want to think about the type of activities that you enjoy as well as those type of activities that may challenge you a little bit professionally that are areas for improvement.

**SLIDE 8: IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE FIELD SITES**

What makes a potential site a good fit? When you are identifying an appropriate field site, you want to think again, is the agency actively involved in public health activities? Can the agency accommodate your personal schedule, and they are willing to agree to Walden's requirements. So, when I talk about your personal schedule and you work full-time and you are going to need an agency that has a flexible schedule with evening and weekend hours you want to be upfront with the agency when you are considering having a meeting with them. You don't really want any surprises that you go in and have a great interview and they offer you a placement and then you realize that their agency hours are the standard 8 to 5 or 9 to 6 and those are your same working hours so you want to make sure that they can accommodate your personal schedule. If there is going to be travel involved and you know that you need to be in town always, you want to consider that as well.

And you also want to consider both traditional and nontraditional agencies. What we identify as a traditional agency would be a community based health organization, nonprofit organization, health department whether that’s at the local, state, or national level, a federal organization, and those would be more traditional.

When we talk about nontraditional agencies, those would be where health isn't the focus of the agency but public health and health promotion are a component of what the agency does so this could be a regular corporation such as 3M, Home Depot, Target, that is not really focused on public health but they may have work site promotional or occupational health programs that they offer to their employees. So, when we talk about nontraditional that gives you a little bit of flexibility in being innovative in how you approach and design your practicum experience.
SLIDE 9: ASSESS YOUR STRENGTHS

And then you want you to assess your strengths, what is unique about you? When you go in to meet with an agency, we want you to be able to articulate and present your best self. What are your interests? What are your skills? Be able to talk about your personality and your values. You may want to focus on some academic achievements that are relevant to the work that you are possibly going to engage in with this particular agency, any related volunteer or work experience, professional contributions to the field of public health or specific to the health issue that that health agency is addressing as part of their mission, any community health involvement or specialized knowledge you know going in such as you are a marketing wiz and they have a new public health program that they need to get out to the community. That specialized knowledge and skill that could be of great benefit to that agency. We want you to go in presenting your best self and presenting your skills and abilities so the agency sees that not only are you coming there to obtain knowledge but you also have something you can offer them and it is a win-win for both the student and the agency.

SLIDE 10: ARE YOU A GOOD MATCH FOR THE SITE?

Are you a good match for the site? Let me pause here for a second. What values and contributions can you bring to the site? So, we ask students to do a self-assessment based on the agency that you are reaching out to. Each agency is going to have different needs, each agency is going to have different desires for their student workers so you know you want to be able to articulate that. What knowledge and skills will be most useful for that specific agency. Do your qualifications match their needs? I always use the example, it they have an opportunity advertised and it says they require a bilingual person, while yes you can still explore other opportunities, but know for that specific role you do not necessarily meet the qualifications they are looking for. Don’t get discouraged, they may have other opportunities that you are unaware of, but also keep in mind that you don’t want to waste the agencies time only to find out that you don’t meet the needs that they are looking for as well as does the site afford you the opportunities you need to the complete the program? We want to make sure that you can complete all 200 hours at one agency. We don’t like to see students
get into a situation where they are unable to complete the 200 hours on site and then they are looking for other opportunities. Also, make sure that the proposed preceptor that you have identified meets the preceptor requirements that we have being a master’s prepared individual. We want to make sure that what we are asking and what the agency is asking for is really meshing together well with what your needs are.

SLIDE 11: AUDIENCE FEEDBACK
Ok, time for some audience feedback again. What are some ways to identify a potential practicum site?

>> DENISE PRANKE: Okay, we’ll give everyone a couple of seconds. Agency websites, yes definitely, review local public health organizations, connect with local chapters of national organizations like the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the Society of Public Health Education website. Ask community representatives about community needs. Contact co-workers or friends.

And another comment is, "My selected agency is UNICEF in Zimbabwe. They're interested to host me for my practicum under the health and nutrition section working with their team and that is starting to work on school-based child and adolescent nutrition. I'm great at networking, designing materials and doing a lot of advocacy work. And this is more of a question. However, there may have been delays in getting the field site affiliation issues."

Janine will be going over some of those process types of questions during this session. So, with that I am going to turn it back over to Dr. Perkins.

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: Okay, those are great suggestions on identifying potential practicum sites. One thing that I do want to encourage students is that identifying and securing a practicum placement is a lot like finding a job. So, if you find yourself networking which is great, outreaching to different community forums which is great, but you also want to use your immediate resources. So, if there is a particular agency that you are really interested in working with, see how they are involved with the community.
See how you can become involved with that particular agency early on. Also, when you are doing your internet searches for particular agencies search by health concern. If you are interested in suicide prevention, if you are interested in asthma, if you are interested in reproductive health, so look at the agencies that are providing those services in your community as well as look at agencies that have job postings in a particular area that you are interested in and then reach out the agency to see if they have any volunteer or student opportunities for internships and Field Experience as well. So, you really want to attack if from both ways. You definitely want to network, but you want to use the resources in your community as well.

Did we have any other audience feedback. We can go to the next slide.

SLIDE 12: FIELD EXPERIENCE WEBSITE

>> JANINE HRADSKY: This is Janine Hradsky. I am very happy to be here with you today. The best way to find out about the requirements for the MPH practicum is to review our School of Health Sciences Field Experience website. You can find the Field Experience website on your student portal on the Academic Resources Page and then under departments towards the bottom of the page you will see a link for Field Experience and when you click on that it will bring you to the page shown here.

Now this is a page for all of the Field Experience programs at Walden. So, once you click in there, you will simply identify School of Health Sciences and it will bring you to your specific information. On this page you will be able to click on a tab for manuals and guides. You will be able to open up a student field manual and a guide to field sites.

There is a section for forms and for Frequently Asked Questions, and contact information for me and Dr. Perkins, and also Career Services where you will find information and how to get assistance from the Career Services Center and Denise will be talking more about that in a moment. You'll want to visit this site early and often in your program. And begin your search for a site half-way through your program. It can take 1 –2 quarters or sometimes even longer to find a site and finalize the placement.
You might find a site quickly, but then all of the finalization of the placement takes time. So, it’s important to start early. I can’t tell you how many students have come back to me and said, “I wish I had started my search earlier.” On the next slide, we will see our practicum manual.

SLIDE 13: MPH FIELD EXPERIENCE MANUAL AND GUIDES
Here we’ll see the Student Practicum Manual. The manual will answer most of your questions and also questions that will be asked by your site. It includes information that will help you before you begin your search for a site, it will help you prepare for your interview, and also once you are in your practicum course and doing your hours at your site.

I just want to clarify what we mean by ‘Requirements.’ By requirements, we man your own student requirements and also what is needed from the site. Student requirements include what type of activities can you do; when can you start your practicum; what is needed from you so you can answer your sites questions when you apply there, and also so you know what to do when it is time to apply with us for your Walden practicum application. The Walden application deadlines are there so your application can be reviewed and approved in time for your practicum course registration and when your hours can begin. And then for sites, before we go to the next slide, you will find in the manual what type of site qualifies, what documents are needed from the site. One of the most important documents is the Field Site Affiliation Agreement and I will help with this document and also the credentials needed from your preceptor, how many hours are needed, and how much supervision required and so forth. So, on the next slide.

SLIDE 14: FIELD EXPERIENCE: SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES
Here we’ll see our website. It’s the Field Experience School of Health Science website. You will be able to find information here that you can provide to your site to make it easier for them and for you. It is very important for you to review the "Information for Students" and also the "Information for Field Sites."
This is the best way to be able to provide your site the information they will need. You can go directly to this page by using the link at the bottom of the slide or you can navigate into it from your student portal, just know if you go in through your portal you will need to some navigating. If you have any difficulty, you can call me and I will help you.

In the section called "Information for Field Sites", where the red arrow is pointing on the slide, this site will provide not only information about your practicum, but also information about Walden. This is a great way for you to help be an ambassador for Walden. We get so much feedback from sites after the fact saying, “I am so impressed with Walden. I am so impressed with your program.” So, it is really helpful if you share this information.

Also at this location there is a ‘Guide for Preceptors and Site Administrators’. Depending on what your site prefers, you can download this guide and provide it to them or you can provide them with the link so they can see the guide on the website.

Or you can provide them with the link, you will need to select the tab that says "Information for field sites" - see the red arrow on this slide - and then you will need to copy/paste the link from your browser into an email and send it to your site so they can go directly to this page.

Sites really differ. Some sites want a lot of information and some sites only want bullet points or questions asked of you, so it is very important that you are familiar with this information as well.

The section called "Information for Students", above the red arrow, there are tabs that you can click on for more information. There is a tab or practicum requirements, a tab called finding a site, and this is where you can find a list of field sites already on file, and there are tabs for the practicum application process, and the documents for you and documents your preceptor will need. So, this is very important information for you.
This site also explains the Walden practicum application process for you, so you can be approved to be registered on time to start your practicum course and your practicum hours once your course is in session. We know that this is a lot of information.

After you review the information on the website and in the manual and guide, if you have any questions, you can call me or send an email and I'll be glad to answer your questions. My contact information will be provided at the end of this webinar. For now let's transition to Denise to talk about marketing yourself to potential sites.

SLIDE 15: PREPARE TO APPLY TO A SITE
>> DENISE PRANKE: Thanks, Janine. In addition to the Walden specific information that was just provided by Janine, you'll need a resume, cover letter, references and letters of recommendation. Be sure to ask your references for their permission to use them as a reference before providing their names to potential sites. You may also want to have samples of academic work and combine these documents in a career portfolio.

Next, we are going to take a look at some best practices for creating your resume.

SLIDE 16: RESUME: MAIN SECTIONS
Here is an overview of the sections often included on a resume. Your contact information with your name, phone number, address and professional email address. A summary of qualifications which highlight your [indiscernible] strengths and achievements. Education section, relevant coursework, volunteer experience related to public health, professional experience, honors and awards and affiliations through professional associations.

In addition, sections can be added based on your individual skills and activities. If you speak more than one language, be sure to include that, as well. To give your document a professional, polished look, use consistent formatting and fonts and keep you resume to no longer than two pages.
Next, let's take a closer look at our sample.
SLIDE 17: RESUME

Here you can see the header with the name is bolded and slightly larger than the other text. Include, again, your address, phone number and professional email address. Again, include a brief summary where you highlight your relevant skills related to public health. If you are making a career transition with your degree, think of transferable skills from your past experience, volunteer work and your academic programs to highlight in this section.

Jonathan states that he is a Master of Public Health candidate seeking an internship program and that he is a dedicated and engaged professional, volunteer and community member working on the West Nile virus and HIV prevention task force. He delivered weekly workshop to 10 to 30 at risk youth on STDs and he has a proven record of collaborating with community agencies. He has a brief summary to engage the reader.

Next, Jonathan decided to list his education before his experience because he is making a career transition and he wants the reader to see that he is working on his MPH degree right away. He also includes a section of relevant coursework. This section is optional and may not be needed by someone who has years of experience in the field of public health.

SLIDE 18: RESUME (Continued)

Jonathan decided to highlight his volunteer experience as a West Nile virus task force volunteer. He put this first before his other experience because this is something that he wants to draw the reader's attention to. He included bullet points to describe what he accomplished in this volunteer position. He starts the bullet points with action verbs such as deliver, facilitate and collaborate. When he describes his work as a fitness trainer, he focuses on the health benefits of his work and quantifies his accomplishments when possible. If you’re making a career transition, include transferable skills such as organization, collaboration and listening skills. This example is in the OptimalResume system on the Career Services website.
Next, let's take a look at what to include in the cover letter.

SLIDE 19: COVER LETTER
You want to use business format for your letter. Keep it to less than one page, include four short paragraphs: an introductory paragraph, a paragraph about your education, a paragraph about your work experience, and then a short closing.

SLIDE 20: COVER LETTER (Continued)
Before we go over the sample in more detail I want to stress that If you use a template be sure to change it to reflect your qualifications and writing style, and I strongly encourage you to run it through Grammarly on the Writing Center website to check spelling and grammar.
Let's take a closer look at this sample.

SLIDE 21: COVER LETTER (Continued)
Notice that Jonathan uses a business letter format. He researched this target organization so he can address the letter to the correct person. In his introduction he clearly states that his purpose is seeking a practicum experience for his MPH academic program and he gives the reason why he is interested in this site.

In the second paragraph, he provides information about his academic program.

SLIDE 22: COVER LETTER (Continued)
Then in the third paragraph, he describes his volunteer work on the West Nile task force and his professional work as a fitness instructor.

In a closing paragraph he states his enthusiasm for starting his practicum and he provides a link to more information about his Walden program. He also asks for an opportunity to discuss his qualifications.
You can find this and other examples of cover letters on the OptimalResume system on the Career Services website.

**SLIDE 23: WHY A CAREER PORTFOLIO?**
You may also want to consider creating a career portfolio to leave a lasting impression and set you apart from other applicants. For the purpose of your practicum search, we generally recommend creating a tactile career portfolio that you can bring to informational informal interviews.

**SLIDE 24: CAREER PORTFOLIO COMPONENTS**
What should you include in a career portfolio? Include Walden specific items such as Walden University information, MPH program information, maybe a writing sample if applicable, a cover letter, resume, letters of recommendation, and any other materials you think might be appropriate such as a copy of awards you have received that might be relevant, articles you have written, maybe work or volunteer projects.

Now that your documents are in order, it's time to consider networking and reaching out to sites.

**SLIDE 25: NETWORKING STRATEGIES**
Make sure that you are networking throughout your MPH program. I can't overemphasize the importance of networking and meeting other professionals in the field of public health.

There are many ways to do this. You can join and become active in professional associations such as the American Public Health Association. If you belong to a national or international chapter of a professional association, look to see if they have a regional or state chapter so you can engage in face-to-face networking if possible.

Establish a profile on LinkedIn and join groups related to public health. Start volunteering at public health or nonprofit health related organizations and reach out to
conduct informational interviews. You may gain valuable information and possible leads for your field experience search. Your contact may be aware of some you haven’t considered. I worked with a student who found her practicum site by reaching out to a public health professional on LinkedIn. She introduced herself, described what she was interested in doing and commented on how he had experience in the area she was interested in learning more about. She asked for his advice and the connection led to her obtaining a site at her state’s Department of Health. So, networking, again, is really a primary activity that you want to think about, again, throughout your MPH program and really, beyond.

SLIDE 26: APPROACHING POTENTIAL SITES
Let's look at several ways to reach out to potential field sites.
When searching for field sites, one of the most common ways to begin is by making phone inquiries. To prepare for the call, make sure that you have reviewed their website, what you want to say to communicate who you are, and what you are looking for. This could be a request for a meeting or additional contact information about where you can send your resume or portfolio. There is a good chance that you may have to leave a message, so make sure that you leave contact information and speak clearly and slowly. If you were referred to the site, mention the name of the person who referred you.

You can also reach out to potential field sites via email. Whenever possible, it's best to be able to address your inquiry to a specific person rather than just having a generic greeting. You may be able to locate the name of a potential field site supervisor on the organization website, on LinkedIn, or by making an inquiry by phone. Make sure you use formal language and proof for typos and grammatical errors before you send an email. You may want to look at inquiry examples in the OptimalResume system and run your email through Grammarly before you hit send.
Be brief and concise. Most people are busy so you want to be clear about what you’re looking for and be sure you attach a PDF of your resume and cover letter so that potential field site supervisor would easily be able to establish if you are a good fit.

SLIDE 27: APPROACHING POTENTIAL SITES (Continued)
You may also choose to stop by an organization or agency in person. Make sure you dress appropriately for your visit and bring a notebook, pen, and copy of your resume and cover letter if you have one. Exhibit a friendly, professional demeanor if you visit. If your visit is unscheduled, be prepared to leave your documents if there is no one available to speak with at the time you are there. Remember to follow up within a few days.

SLIDE 28: INITIATE AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW
We mentioned initiating informational interviews as part of a networking strategy. It's also an effective approach to directly contacting potential sites. So, research the agency you’re calling, ask to speak with a supervisor. When you have him or her on the phone, then articulate your purpose and ask to schedule an informational interview.

Here is an example of what you might want to say to set up an informational interview when you have been referred. If you are making a cold call, remove the information about the referral. Bring a notebook to take notes and a copy of your resume, as well, to the informational interview.

Asking for an informational interview is a very friendly, open ended approach. During my career, I have been asked a number of times for informational interviews and I am always happy to do it. But keep in mind, if you don't receive a response, don't be discouraged. Follow-up. And if still no response, just move on.

Next, we're going to look at a few steps to prepare for an interview.

SLIDE 29: PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW
Your marketing efforts have been successful and now you have an interview, so what do you do to prepare? Again, you want to research the organization, note essential qualifications, develop relevant examples of how you are a good fit, and your interest and commitment to the field of public health. Prepare for common questions, and prepare to talk about your Walden program and practicum requirements. And, practice!

Dr. Perkins, can you share some additional interview tips based on your prior experience?

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: Definitely. So, when you are going into your formal interview, be prepared to demonstrate whatever skills that the position may call for. So, if you are interviewing for a position that has a strong epidemiology focus, you may be asked to complete an epidemiology curve. If you are going into a position where you would have to do a lot of presentations or a lot of marketing materials, you may be asked to do a small 5 to 7-minute presentation on a topic of your choice. Particularly, if you are asked to do a panel interview, the individuals who sit on that panel may require or request different things of you so they may want to see how you interact doing some role play if you are going to be talking about HIV and you indicated that you have specific training in that area. They may want to see how you do a one-on-one role play with someone on risk reduction or harm reduction. So, when you are going in you make sure that you are prepared for that specific role as you can be. So, you are the subject matter expert on yourself and your work experiences and your collective education. When you get in the interview, you want to make sure that you are able to communicate that in an effective manner; that you are able to articulate what the role requires and how your knowledge and abilities kind of coincide with what the agency is looking for.

>> DENISE PRANKE: Thank you, Dr. Perkins, that is great information. I will quickly share that I also worked with a student and just as you said, when she went in for the interview, they asked her to create a quick PowerPoint and a brochure on the spot. And
she said her academic experience was so helpful, she was able to do it in the time they gave her and they were impressed and she got the position.

SLIDE 30: FOLLOW UP
Next, you want to be sure to follow-up. So, if potential field site supervisors or other professionals have taken the time to speak with you, be sure to follow-up by sending thank you notes. If you have sent emails and followed up, but have not heard back, do not be afraid to be politely and diplomatically persistent. But at some point, you just move on. And of course, no matter how promising a site seems, don't put all your eggs in one basket. Don't stop your search until you have a solid offer.

SLIDE 31: CAREER SERVICES RESOURCES ON THE FIELD EXPERIENCE WEBSITE
Next, I am going to go over some career services resources that will be helpful for you. As Janine mentioned, we now have a link to relevant career services resources directly on the Field Experience website for you. Or, if you go to the career services website, which you can access from your My Walden portal.

SLIDE 32: CAREER SERVICES WEBSITE
We have a number of resources on the Career Services website. I am going to point out a few here with the red arrows.

We have archived webinars, where you will find this webinar archived. On the job and Internship page you will find some job and internship postings. Then, in OptimalResume, you will find a number of sample resumes. I am going to talk about that briefly in a little more depth in a minute. Then on the Resources tab, we have resources by college, which includes sites to search for nonprofit organizations and professional associations. Under the resumes and CV's tab we have more information on crafting a resume and we have interviewing information on the interviewing tab.

SLIDE 33: CAREER SERVICES RESOURCES TAB
A little more detail about the resources tab, here you will find resources on professional associations volunteer opportunities related to public health. And, information for students with a field experience requirement is listed here as well.

SLIDE 34: OPTIMARESUME SYSTEM
On the OptimalResume system tab, which is a great tool that I strongly encourage everyone to take a look at, you will find Field experience specific sample resumes and cover letters and an interview prep tool that you can use to practice interviewing. You can set up a free account and use one of the sample resumes or cover letters as a template, but remember to change it to make it your own, as we mentioned earlier. When setting up your free account, use your Walden email address as your email address when you're putting in your information.

The OptimalResume system can also be used to create an online career portfolio to share with potential field site supervisors. You can also print out your career portfolio documents, collect them into a professional-looking binder to create a tactile career portfolio that you can bring with you to potential field sites during an interview.

Keep in mind, that it is never too early to start working with Career Services to help you prepare your resume and cover letter and explore strategies to help you find your site.

SLIDE 35: QUESTIONS
Now we are going to go over questions that have been coming in.
This question is for you, Dr. Perkins. What should a student do if they can't find a practicum site or if they find one and the site doesn't want to complete the paperwork?

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: Okay, If you are having challenges with identifying and securing a site, your stop would be to reach out to Janine and she will direct you to some of the resources that we have on our website. If you have already spoken with her and you are still facing challenges, then simply give me an email, send me an email and include
the agencies that you have reached out to, what their response has been, a copy of your resume, the geographical region that you are limiting your search to and I will schedule an opportunity for us chat over the telephone one-on-one just to give you some more direct pointers and identify new agencies for you to reach out to.

In the event that the agency does not want to sign our Affiliation Agreement, and their legal team has talked with our legal team, at that point we encourage students to move forward with identification of a new site. Once our legal people say no and their legal people say no and we can’t come to a happy median there is nothing more we can do about it.

>> DENISE PRANKE: Thank you. Another question, "I am working in a healthcare department. In the case that I want to get involved in research work, I need an ethical approval. What would you recommend?"

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: I'm going to assume that you mean an IRB of some sort. We really try to discourage students taking this on as part of their practicum because it can be time intensive to get the necessary approvals prior to logging any hours toward the Field Experience requirement. But if you really are interested, we recommend contacting Walden’s internal IRB office and schedule a time to chat with them to see if it is something you need IRB approval for or is it something that can be done without that approval and you can still do something in the line of research, but not be dealing with human subjects and things that would cause you to need a full IRB approval.

>> DENISE PRANKE: Thank you. And another question, how can we get an agreement from the agency?

>> JANINE HRADSKY: When you talk with your site, you will be discussing with them a Field Site Agreement. As soon as you submit your application and provide the name of the administrator who can talk about that with me, I tend to take it right from your application, but if they ask you ahead of your application, I am more than happy to talk
with them and to you as well. I would basically provide them with a Walden University Affiliation Agreement otherwise known as a WUAA. I would ask them if they can sign it as is, or if they would like to make changes, or if they have an agreement template that they would like us to review. At that point, I then obtain the information and submit it to our Central Office of Field Experience. The Contract Administrator will then take over to discuss and continue the negotiation with your site. Many sites with sign our WUAA as is, but any time they need to make changes they are welcome to do so for review.

>> DENISE PRANKE: Thank you. Here is another question that is asking about what if there is travel required.

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: Okay, so in the event that your agency requires you to travel, you need to first be open is it local travel, just driving around the service area, or are they going to require you to fly different places? We typically don’t see a lot of travel required outside of the general area. If they expect you to drive around in your own vehicle, be sure to have the appropriate insurance and determine if you are comfortable with the requirement. Try to find out if there is travel involved during your interview process.

>> DENISE PRANKE: What should I do if a Walden MOU is in place relative to the MPH program and yet, not be honored by the participating organization?

>> JANINE HRADSKY: An MOU is a Memorandum of Understanding sometimes even if one is in place, changes could have occurred since it was finalized. Our list of sites on file go back years and even if it was one year ago or two months ago, the site always has the right to make any changes. Sometimes new administration comes in or their site has new requirements so in that case it is just a matter of letting me know and I will follow-up to get the information that’s needed, and then I will get that information to the our contract administrator and the contract administrator will work directly with the legal team of the site. So, that isn’t unusual. Just because it is on file doesn’t mean that it is necessarily current or still honored by the site.
DENISE PRANKE: Thanks, Janine. I will add that we will have Janine’s contact information here. I am going to forward to that slide. We will continue with the questions, but I going to go to the slide with the contact information for Janine so you can see that contact information.

Another question, does Walden University have some specific sites in the US and overseas for MPH students to complete their practicum?

JENNIFER PERKINS: So, while we do have a list of sites that we’ve had success with in the past, it is not a requirement that you use an agency that a previous student has used. So, the world is your oyster so to speak. We can share previous site information, but we do not share, and I want to be very clear we do not share previous preceptor information with students because as we all know job titles change, roles change, and staff changes so we don’t want to send a student to an agency looking for a specific person who may no longer be there. We do have agencies we have worked with in the past. For example, there is an agency in Atlanta that we work very well and takes our students each term and then there are other areas where we don’t have that relationship. It is going to be a case by case basis.

DENISE PRANKE: So just to clarify, because there is another related question, we are not able to provide specific contact information.

JENNIFER PERKINS: That is correct.

DENISE PRANKE: Similar question, “if we locate a site that is on the list of previously used sites by other Walden students, how do you recommend we begin the introduction process.
>> JENNIFER PERKINS: Right, so, when you are introducing yourself, you can definitely reference that you understand that the agency has worked with Walden before and you know, you want to thank them in advance for taking the time to chat with you given that they have had experience with us before. But each agency deserves their own very formal outreach. You don’t want to go in and say you have already worked with us so are you going to take me too. You still want to be very respectful and very professional like you would with an agency that is completely brand new for us.

>> DENISE PRANKE: Great, thank you. Another question, “any recommendations for full-time employees?”

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: Yes, so If you work full-time outside of health promotion, health education, public health and you work in a nonpublic health related field, you want to find an agency that has extended week hours or weekend hours. A lot of times this will be a community based organization that does a lot of work with the community that needs to be available that needs to available during non-business hours. If you are working close to a health-related industry, you may look internally if the agency is large enough. So, if for example you work full-time for the American Red Cross, then look internally to see if there are opportunities and what their policy is on doing your internship or what we consider the practicum at your place of employment. A lot of times we do see agencies willing to work with students because they have been supportive throughout the students working on completing their MPH so they have something built into their policy so students can get field experience. It that is not a possibility, and you still have questions after those two options just reach out to me directly and I will guide you based on your specific geographic area.

>> DENISE PRANKE: A question, “is it possible to do a research study in my own department with a different preceptor?”

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: It is possible, but let me caution you against using terms like research study because research studies will require IRB approval and that can be time
intensive as well as time exhaustive and you want to have a meaningful 200 hours so you don’t want to spend an entire term trying to get IRB approval and then you have one term remaining to get the 200 hours remaining to complete all of your hours. So, when it comes to research based field experience I caution you to see if that is how you want to spend your time. Reach out to Walden’s internal Institutional Review Board IRB to see if it doable in your timeframe.

>> DENISE PRANKE: Okay." Is there a way to review some of what we have learned in preparation for an interview for a specific practicum opportunity, for example, going over statistics and making charts and graphs for a file statistics interview.”

>> JENNIFER PERKINS: Okay. Really, as you go through the program you should be keeping a record of your assignments and maintaining notes. I am really not sure how far back you can go in your program and once the course is over if you still have access to that information. I am guessing that you don’t. So, you want to make sure that you are maintaining those throughout your program.

>> DENISE PRANKE: You may want to contact your academic advisor, they may know how far back you can go to access your course materials, but it is probably very limited.

SLIDE 36: WALDEN POINTS OF CONTACT FOR MPH PRACTICUM
>> DENISE PRANKE: As Janine mentioned here is the contact information for Janine and Dr. Perkins.

SLIDE 37: CONNECT WITH CAREER SERVICES
With that, I want to invite everyone to connect with Career Services by joining the Career Services LinkedIn group, following us on Twitter, subscribing to our YouTube channel and joining us on Facebook, reading student success stories on our blog, and again, using all the features on the OptimalResume system. You can access all of our student resources on the http://careercenter.WaldenU.edu website listed here. Remember, we are here to support you in your search
SLIDE 38: THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

I would like to wrap up the program and thank you Dr. Jennifer Perkins and Janine Hradsky for your insights into the Public Health practicum process.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]