

APHA Strategic Planning Subcommittee Advocacy Curriculum

Now more than ever, engaging in advocacy is an important way for public health professionals to impact upstream approaches that benefit the health of all communities. In an effort to promote engagement in advocacy among future public health leaders, the American Public Health Association Executive Board’s Strategic Planning Subcommittee developed a menu of course activities that faculty and instructors can use to engage their students. All of these activities utilize APHA’s Speak for Health tools or other advocacy resources available on APHA’s website. Please share this guide with your colleagues who teach in public health schools and programs.

APHA’s current public health advocacy priorities are available at: www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/priorities

How to use this document: Locate the education-level column relevant to your students (undergraduate or graduate) and the duration column relevant to your students (advocacy action takes less than 30 minutes, less than 2 hours, more than 2 hours or more than 1 day). Once you’ve decided on the relevant columns, check for the rows where these columns have Xs. Those rows contain suggested advocacy actions that your students can engage in to learn more about public health advocacy, complete with step-by-step instructions and links to relevant helpful materials.

Curricular activity	Undergraduate level	Graduate level	Duration less than 30 minutes	Duration 2 hours or less	Duration more than 2 hours	More than 1 day
ADVOCACY PREPARATION ACTIVITIES						
Identify your legislator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APHA page: http://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/coming-to-dc • Find your senator and representative in Congress • Know your legislators’ staff 	X	X	X			
Know and have contacts with other stakeholders (particularly those impacted within your issue area) , including leaders and advocacy orgs; community based organizations; chambers of commerce; LGBTQ, senior and women’s advocates; rare disease organizations; reproductive rights groups; religious organizations; philanthropic and charitable organizations; labor, housing and environmental groups, etc.	X	X				X

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<p>Know government regulatory agency staff and leaders with authority over social determinants that impact people’s health, such as education, policing, legal aid, courts, parks and recreation, jail, food banks, consumer protection (debt collectors), public housing, transportation, etc.</p>		X				X
<p>Develop your public health issue “elevator speech”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check APHA’s action alerts to learn about priority issues: http://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/action-alerts • Use the information from the action alert to develop a 30-second speech to describe a public health issue. • Reference issue fact sheets: www.apha.org/Publications/Fact-Sheets 	X	X		X		
<p>Develop your state-specific public health issue “elevator speech”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check APHA’s state fact sheets and find your state: https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/speak-for-health/state-fact-sheets • Use the information from the state fact sheet to develop a 30-second speech to describe your state-specific public health issue. 	X	X		X		
<p>Know and have media contacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know print, TV, radio, blog reporters and commentators covering issue areas of your concern; contact editorial boards and request the media entity take a public position in support or against an issue; use language that evokes the underlying values of the situation and some real-life stories as examples. 		X				X
<p>Know and have contacts for subject-matter specialists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know professors, providers, think tanks, experts who can recommend resources such as one pagers and issue reports. Exerts can also recommend who the relevant decision-makers are. 		X				X

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ADVOCACY AWARENESS ACTIVITIES						
Social media—Contact your neighbors, family and friends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post items on Facebook (https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/advocacy/speak/facebook_guide.ashx) and Twitter (https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/advocacy/speak/twitter_guide.ashx) using APHA’s social media tips • In your posts, you can reference priority health issues (www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/priorities) and relevant points from fact sheets (http://www.apha.org/publications-and-periodicals/fact-sheets) 	x	x		x		
ADVOCACY ACTION ACTIVITIES						
Action alert—Contact your legislator to support/not support a public health issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify your legislator(s): www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/coming-to-dc • Send an action alert: www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/action-alerts 	x	x		x		
Social media—Contact your legislator to support/not support a public health issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify your legislator(s): www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/coming-to-dc • Identify a priority public health issue: www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/priorities • Tweet your legislator and ask them to take action using APHA’s Twitter for advocacy tips: https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/advocacy/speak/twitter_guide.ashx 	x	x		x		

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<p>In person—Visit with your federal legislator to support/not support a public health issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify your legislator(s): www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/coming-to-dc Identify a priority public health issue: www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/priorities Contact your legislator(s). Review information on how to contact a congressional staffer and write an email to request a meeting: www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/priorities Know your legislators’ stance on issues. Review their voting records (https://www.apha.org/Policies-and-Advocacy/Advocacy-for-Public-Health/vote-record) and websites: www.congress.gov Download fact sheets to provide to your legislator(s): www.apha.org/publications-and-periodicals/fact-sheets Visit your legislator(s). Review tips for meeting with your members of Congress, Dos and Don’ts, and top 10 rules of advocacy: www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/coming-to-dc 	X	X				X
<p>In-person—Attend a town hall meeting with your legislator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a legislator is hosting a town hall meeting, inform your students. Review tips for speaking at a town hall or public meeting: www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/advocacy/town_hall_or_public_meeting.ashx Review sample questions for public forums: https://apha.org/Policies-and-Advocacy/Advocacy-for-Public-Health/Speak-For-Health/public-forum-questions Attend the meeting and make a point of asking questions. 	X	X				X
<p>Submit an op-ed to your local paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a priority public health issue: www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/priorities Review tips for writing op-eds: https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/advocacy/speak/oped_tips.ashx 	X	X		X		