HEALTH ADMINISTRATION, MASTER OF (M.H.A.)

Overview and philosophy
The Master of Health Administration program is designed to prepare persons for administrative roles ultimately leading to top-level executive positions in complex health services organizations. The curriculum emphasizes strategic and operational management, thus orienting students toward the broad spectrum of managerial problems and functions likely to be encountered by health services organizations.

The program’s educational objectives and content are based upon the premise that a large number of students who select this curriculum aspire to become senior executives of health care organizations at some point in their careers. The graduate M.H.A. program is designed for full-time students.

The M.H.A. program was accredited initially in 1968, one of the first programs in the United States to achieve that status. It has continuously maintained its national accreditation status and in 2017 the program was awarded a seven-year accreditation.

The administrative residency/internship is an integral part of VCU’s M.H.A. program. The basic purpose of the residency/internship is to provide students opportunities to apply and further develop their administrative knowledge and skills through a period of applied experience in an operational setting. The administrative residency/internship is supervised directly by experienced executives who serve as the students’ preceptors.

Through a carefully selected and organized residency/internship experience, students strengthen the foundation of general knowledge and skills gained through the core curriculum and develop further insight and expertise in their selected concentrations. Students serve their residency/internship in the type of health care organization in which they wish to gain specialized knowledge, skills and experience. Overall policies and guidance for the administrative residency/internship are established by the Department of Health Administration and are included in the administrative residency handbook.

Students become eligible for entrance into the administrative residency/internship after completing specified course work and achieving an overall GPA of 3.0. Students on academic probation or with any incomplete grades during their final on-campus semester prior to their residency may be, at the discretion of the faculty, prevented from entering their residency although their overall GPA is 3.0 or higher. In addition to meeting the academic requirements, the student must, in the judgment of the faculty, present evidence of readiness for a clinical experience by demonstrating sufficient academic proficiency in the core areas of the curriculum and by demonstrating professional maturity. The director of the M.H.A. program or designee has the responsibility to coordinate residency placements. In making these assignments, the director will consider the preferences of the students, the preferences of the preceptors and the recommendations of faculty advisers.

Program goal
The specific mission of the Master of Health Administration program is to prepare early careerists for management and leadership positions within complex health care organizations. The program is nationally accredited and has been consistently ranked in the top five programs in the nation by U.S. News and World Report.

The overall purpose of the Department of Health Administration in which the M.H.A. is housed is to provide top quality education, research and service related to the organization and administration of health care services. The department also has a major research program and is involved in a wide range of public service activities, including professional development programs for health services administrators and other health professionals.

The mission of the Department of Health Administration is to prepare, support and connect exceptional leaders who shape the health care industry. This is accomplished through:

1. Educating the next generation of health administrators and enhancing the skills of the present generation
2. Preparing a new generation of health services researchers and educators
3. Creating and disseminating basic and applied knowledge about the management, organization, financing, function and performance of the health care system
4. Serving people in the public and private sectors of the health care system

These activities, when mutually reinforced among all key people — faculty, staff, students, alumni — elevate the department to a premier status in the United States.

Student learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal/domain</th>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Description/learning outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Interpersonal communication</td>
<td>Build collaborative relationships and negotiation skills</td>
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<td>Leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>Prepare business communications</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Presentation skills</td>
<td>Demonstrate effective oral communication and presentation skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Leading and managing others</td>
<td>Hold self and others accountable for organizational goal attainment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Change management</td>
<td>Promote and manage change</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ability for honest self-assessment</td>
<td>Demonstrate reflection through self-assessment</td>
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<td>Systems thinking</td>
<td>Be able to assess the potential impacts and consequences of decisions in a broad variety of situations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Problem-solving and decision-making</strong></td>
<td><strong>Organizational dynamics and governance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Apply evidence-based decision-making techniques to health care questions</td>
<td>Understand and be able to explain the roles, responsibilities, structures and influence governing bodies hold in health care organizations</td>
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**Professionalism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Personal and professional ethics</strong></th>
<th><strong>Strategic planning</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adhere to ethical business principles; exhibit ethical behaviors</td>
<td>Ability to perform environmental analysis; discern competitive strategy; formulate business strategy based on evidence</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Professional and community contribution</strong></th>
<th><strong>Marketing</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participate in community service; balance professional and personal pursuits</td>
<td>Analyze and assess markets, market segmentation, strategy, change and innovation</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Working in teams</strong></th>
<th><strong>Information management and understanding and using technology skills</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create, participate in and lead teams, including interprofessionalism</td>
<td>Apply techniques and methods to plan, design, implement and assess information flow and communication</td>
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**Knowledge of the health care environment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Health care issues and trends</strong></th>
<th><strong>Quality improvement/ performance improvement</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate knowledge of circumstances causing major changes and reform in U.S. health care delivery</td>
<td>Apply concepts of process improvement and patient safety to relevant problems</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Health care legal principles</strong></th>
<th><strong>Quantitative skills</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss and critically analyze health-related legal principles including standards, regulations and risk management.</td>
<td>Analyze data and interpret quantitative information</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Health policy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Planning and managing projects</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articulate the impact of select health policies on the delivery of health services</td>
<td>Design, plan, implement and assess projects related to performance, structure and outcomes of health services</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Population health and status assessment</strong></th>
<th><strong>Economic analysis and application</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand and explain the major factors in health status to health care professionals</td>
<td>Analyze and apply economic theory and concepts to business decisions</td>
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**Business and analytical skills**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Financial management</strong></th>
<th><strong>Human resources</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to compile and analyze financial data; develop capital, operating and cash flow budgets; analyze investment data; pro forma development</td>
<td>Apply methods and techniques related to the management of health care organization employees and professional staff</td>
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**VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs**

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (http://www.graduate.vcu.edu) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.
Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regps)

Degree candidacy requirements
A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master’s or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student’s graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student’s faculty regarding the student’s academic achievements and the student’s readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regps/grad/candidacy)

Graduation requirements
As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regps/grad/graduation-info)

Other information
All enrolled students will be provided a handbook at orientation.

Apply online at graduate.admissions.vcu.edu (http://www.graudeadmissions.vcu.edu).

Admission requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree:</th>
<th>Semester(s) of entry:</th>
<th>Deadline dates:</th>
<th>Test requirements:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.H.A.</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>GRE/GMAT scores on verbal and quantitative at or above the 50th percentile</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Applications received by Dec 1 are given priority for funding. For international students: a TOEFL score of 600 (paper-based), 250 (computer-based) minimum.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements), applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution with a 3.0 GPA for all undergraduate work completed
2. Prerequisite course work in microeconomics, financial accounting and business statistics
3. A working knowledge of college-level algebra
4. Transcripts and VCU application forms
5. GRE/GMAT scores on verbal and quantitative at or above the 50th percentile
6. TOEFL scores required for international students
7. Professional resume
8. Three letters of reference
9. Present evidence of personal achievement, scholarship, intellectual ability and professional promise (personal statement)
10. Invited interview with M.H.A. admissions committee

The prerequisite requirements may be met by completing specified courses with a minimum grade of C within the past five years at any accredited college or university.

International applicants must submit evidence of a preapproved residency site in the home country and evidence of financial responsibility.

VCU Honors students are eligible to apply for admission to the M.H.A. program during the junior or senior year of undergraduate study. The application process is the same as for other applicants with the following exceptions: (1) requirements for the GRE or GMAT are waived, (2) application fee is waived and (3) official transcript is not needed (as grades can be accessed in the VCU system). The admission decision will be made by the M.H.A. admissions committee, at which time a place will be reserved for the student, provided the student graduates with honors and completes the prerequisite course work.

Candidates with one to two years of experience are preferred.

Degree requirements
In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regps/grad/graduation-info), students are required to complete a total of 59 credit hours (including transfer credit hours, if any) to qualify for the Master of Health Administration degree. This requirement includes 48 credit hours of core course work plus at least three credit hours of elective studies in health administration and related disciplines, such as business administration, urban and regional planning, public health and gerontology. In addition, eight credit hours of practicum course work are required as a part of the administrative residency. The graduate program is designed to provide a balanced combination of academic studies and field experience to enable students to achieve the program’s educational goals and become well-prepared to enter the field of health administration.

Curriculum requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HADM 602</td>
<td>Health System Organization, Financing and Performance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADM 606</td>
<td>Health Care Managerial Accounting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADM 607</td>
<td>Financial Management in Health Organizations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADM 608</td>
<td>Seminar in Health Care Finance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADM 609</td>
<td>Managerial Epidemiology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HADM 610  Health Analytics and Decision Support  3
HADM 611  Health Care Law and Bioethics  3
HADM 612  Information Systems for Health Care Management  3
HADM 614  Health Care Marketing  3
HADM 615  Health Care Politics and Policy  3
HADM/ECON 624  Health Economics  3
HADM 646  Health Care Organization and Leadership  3
HADM 647  Management of Health Care Organizations  3
HADM 648  Strategic Management in Health Care Organizations  3
HADM 649  Human Resources Management in Health Care  3
HADM 681  Clinical Concepts and Relationships  2
HADM 682  Executive Skills I  1
HADM 683  Executive Skills II  1
HADM 694  Practicum in Health Administration I  5
HADM 695  Practicum in Health Administration II  3-5

Electives
Select one of the following:  3
- FIRE 638  Real Property Investment Law
- GRTY 603  Social Gerontology
- HADM 692  Independent Study in Health Administration
- HSEP 601  Emergency Management: Response Planning and Incident Command
- HSEP 650  Public Health Preparedness
- INFO 661  Information Systems for Managers
- MGMT 637  Advanced Human Resource Management
- MGMT 655  Entrepreneurship
- PADM/GVPA 601  Principles of Public Administration
- PADM/GVPA 625  Public Policy Analysis
- PADM 650  Principles of Nonprofit Management
- SCMA 677  Quality Management and Six Sigma

Total Hours: 59

1 The list is suggestive. Other graduate-level courses may be selected by a student, though they should be approved by the program director to ensure they meet requirements.

Total graduate credit hours required (minimum) 59

Sample plan of study

Year one
Fall semester
HADM 602  Health System Organization, Financing and Performance  3
HADM 606  Health Care Managerial Accounting  3
HADM 609  Managerial Epidemiology  2
HADM 646  Health Care Organization and Leadership  3
HADM 681  Clinical Concepts and Relationships  2

Spring semester
HADM 607  Financial Management in Health Organizations  3
HADM 610  Health Analytics and Decision Support  3
HADM 624  Health Economics  3
HADM 647  Management of Health Care Organizations  3

Term Hours: 12

Year two
Fall semester
HADM 608  Seminar in Health Care Finance  3
HADM 612  Information Systems for Health Care Management  3
HADM 615  Health Care Politics and Policy  3
HADM 683  Executive Skills II  1
Elective  3

Term Hours: 13

Spring semester
HADM 611  Health Care Law and Bioethics  3
HADM 614  Health Care Marketing  3
HADM 648  Strategic Management in Health Care Organizations  3
HADM 649  Human Resources Management in Health Care  3

Term Hours: 12

Year three
Fall semester
HADM 694  Practicum in Health Administration I  5

Term Hours: 5

Spring semester
HADM 695  Practicum in Health Administration II  3

Term Hours: 3

Total Hours: 59

Graduate program director
Jonathan DeShazo, M.P.H., Ph.D.
Associate professor
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Phone: (804) 828-5509

Additional contact
Chuky Spivey
Coordinator, M.H.A. program
Email: ckspivey@vcu.edu (shavasy@vcu.edu)
Phone: (804) 828-7799

Program website: had.vcu.edu (http://www.had.vcu.edu)