HEALTH ADMINISTRATION, MASTER OF SCIENCE IN (M.S.H.A.)

Program accreditation
Commission on Accreditation of Health Management Education

Program goal
The Master of Science in Health Administration program mission is to prepare practicing professionals for management and leadership positions within complex health care organizations.

The overall purpose of the Department of Health Administration in which the M.S.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 healthcare 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.

The M.S.H.A. program is designed for self-motivated, mature and experienced professionals who are seeking advanced preparation in management and administrative roles that ultimately lead to executive positions in complex health services organizations. The curriculum emphasizes leadership in career progression as well as strategic and operational management of health care organizations. The program is nationally accredited and taught by faculty shared with the department’s nationally ranked M.H.A. program.

Student learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal/domain</th>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Description/learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication and relationship management:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal communication</td>
<td>Build collaborative relationships and negotiation skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>Prepare business communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Presentation skills</td>
<td>Demonstrate effective oral communication and presentation skills</td>
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<tr>
<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 selfassessment</td>
<td>Demonstrate reflection through self-assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<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></td>
<td>Problem-solving and decision-making</td>
<td>Apply evidence-based decision-making techniques to health care questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>Personal and professional ethics</td>
<td>Adhere to ethical business principles; exhibit ethical behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional and community contribution</td>
<td>Participate in community service; balance professional and personal pursuits</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working in teams</td>
<td>Create, participate in and lead teams, including interprofessionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the health care environment</td>
<td>Health care issues and trends</td>
<td>Demonstrate knowledge of circumstances causing major changes and reform in U.S. health care delivery</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health care legal principles</td>
<td>Discuss and critically analyze health-related legal principles including standards, regulations and risk management</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health policy</td>
<td>Articulate the impact of select health policies on the delivery of health services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population health and status assessment</td>
<td>Understand and explain the major factors in health status to health care professionals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Business and analytical skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial management</td>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to compile and analyze financial data; develop capital, operating and cash flow budgets; analyze investment data; pro forma development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resources</td>
<td>Apply methods and techniques related to the management of health care organization employees and professional staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational dynamics and governance</td>
<td>Understand and be able to explain the roles, responsibilities, structures and influence governing bodies hold in health care organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning</td>
<td>Ability to perform environmental analysis; discern competitive strategy; formulate business strategy based on evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Analyze and assess markets, market segmentation, strategy, change and innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information management/understanding and using technology skills</td>
<td>Apply techniques and methods to plan, design, implement and assess information flow and communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality improvement/performance improvement</td>
<td>Apply concepts of process improvement and patient safety to relevant problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative skills</td>
<td>Analyze data and interpret quantitative information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and managing projects</td>
<td>Design, plan, implement and assess projects related to performance, structure and outcomes of health services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic analysis and application</td>
<td>Analyze and apply economic theory and concepts to business decisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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.garduate.vcu.edu](http://www.garduate.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-regs)

### 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-regs/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-regs/grad/graduation-info)

### Other information

All enrolled students will receive a student handbook at orientation.

Apply online at [graduate.admissions.vcu.edu](http://graduate.admissions.vcu.edu)
In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School, applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education with a 2.75 GPA for all undergraduate work completed
2. Transcripts and VCU application forms
3. Five years of professional/managerial/health care experience
4. Employed in the health care field
5. Professional resume
6. Three letters of reference
7. Interview with M.S.H.A. admissions committee

Applicants with less than a 2.75 undergraduate GPA who have exceptional professional experience will be considered for admission on provisional status. If the applicant has completed any graduate studies (even if a degree was not awarded), performance in such course work will be considered in the admission decision.

Prerequisites: No specific previous course work is required for application. Upon formal acceptance, students will be provided, at cost, independent-study modules in three areas (microeconomics, accounting and statistics) to be completed prior to beginning the program. Applicants having acceptable previous course work in microeconomics, accounting and statistics may not be required to complete these modules. Generally, courses must be completed within five years of starting the program. The M.S.H.A. program begins in July for the fall semester.

Degree requirements

The M.S.H.A. program is designed to meet the distinctive needs of the experienced health care professional. Courses develop business skills for the unique health care environment so that students are prepared to meet the challenges of the health care marketplace. Classes draw upon the knowledge of the faculty and the diverse group of experienced professionals enrolled.

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements, students are required to complete 14 courses, a total of 41 credit hours (including transfer credit hours, if any), to qualify for the Master of Science in Health Administration degree. Each semester is composed of both on-campus and off-campus sessions. During the six, approximately week-long, on-campus sessions, students attend professional program classes on the MCV Campus. During off-campus sessions, students continue studies at their homes or work sites, employing a variety of online technologies. Students must successfully complete an integrative capstone case to complete the degree. The competency model utilized by the M.S.H.A. program is operationalized in curricular offerings in the development of learning objectives for individual courses.

Curriculum requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HADE 602</td>
<td>Health Systems Organization, Financing and Performance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 606</td>
<td>Health Care Managerial Accounting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 607</td>
<td>Financial Management in Health Organizations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 609</td>
<td>Managerial Epidemiology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 610</td>
<td>Health Analytics and Decision Support</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 611</td>
<td>Health Care Law and Bioethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 612</td>
<td>Information Systems for Health Care Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 614</td>
<td>Health Care Marketing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 615</td>
<td>Health Care Politics and Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 624</td>
<td>Health Economics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 646</td>
<td>Health Care Organization and Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 647</td>
<td>Management of Health Care Organizations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 648</td>
<td>Strategic Management in Health Care Organizations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 649</td>
<td>Human Resources Management in Health Care</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Hours: 41
Total graduate credit hours required (minimum) 41

Sample plan of study

Full-time enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 602</td>
<td>Health Systems Organization, Financing and Performance 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 624</td>
<td>Health Economics 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 646</td>
<td>Health Care Organization and Leadership 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Term Hours: 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Semester 2 |       |
| Spring     |       |
| HADE 606   | Health Care Managerial Accounting 3 |
| HADE 610   | Health Analytics and Decision Support 3 |
| HADE 615   | Health Care Politics and Policy 3 |
| HADE 647   | Management of Health Care Organizations 3 |
|           | Term Hours: 12 |

| Semester 3 |       |
| Fall       |       |
| HADE 607   | Financial Management in Health Organizations 3 |
| HADE 609   | Managerial Epidemiology 2 |
| HADE 611   | Health Care Law and Bioethics 3 |
| HADE 612   | Information Systems for Health Care Management 3 |
|           | Term Hours: 8 |

| Semester 4 |       |
| Spring     |       |
| HADE 614   | Health Care Marketing 3 |
| HADE 648   | Strategic Management in Health Care Organizations 3 |
| HADE 649   | Human Resources Management in Health Care 3 |
|           | Term Hours: 6 |
|           | Total Hours: 41 |

Part-time enrollment

Recognizing the challenge that full-time enrollment brings to busy careers and personal lives, the department offers a part-time enrollment option in the M.S.H.A. program. Part-time students generally enroll in six or eight credit hours per semester and spend an additional 10 months in classes in the program. The recommended part-time schedule is shown below.

Year one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HADE 602</td>
<td>Health Systems Organization, Financing and Performance 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADE 624</td>
<td>Health Economics 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Term Hours: 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Spring     |       |
| HADE 606   | Health Care Managerial Accounting 3 |
| HADE 615   | Health Care Politics and Policy 3 |
| HADE 647   | Management of Health Care Organizations 3 |
|           | Term Hours: 9 |

| Year two   |       |
| Fall       |       |
| HADE 607   | Financial Management in Health Organizations 3 |
| HADE 646   | Health Care Organization and Leadership 3 |
|           | Term Hours: 6 |

| Spring     |       |
| HADE 610   | Health Analytics and Decision Support 3 |
| HADE 614   | Health Care Marketing 3 |
|           | Term Hours: 6 |

| Year three |       |
| Fall       |       |
| HADE 609   | Managerial Epidemiology 2 |
| HADE 611   | Health Care Law and Bioethics 3 |
| HADE 612   | Information Systems for Health Care Management 3 |
|           | Term Hours: 8 |

| Spring     |       |
| HADE 648   | Strategic Management in Health Care Organizations 3 |
| HADE 649   | Human Resources Management in Health Care 3 |
|           | Term Hours: 6 |
|           | Total Hours: 41 |

Graduate program director
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Email: clthornbrugh@vcu.edu (ckspivey@vcu.edu)
Phone: (804) 828-0719

Program website: had.vcu.edu/prospective/msha