

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

Goal/domain	Competency	Description/learning outcomes
Communication and relationship management:	Interpersonal communication	Build collaborative relationships and negotiation skills
	Writing skills	Prepare business communications

	Presentation skills	Demonstrate effective oral communication and presentation skills
Leadership	Leading and managing others	Hold self and others accountable for organizational goal attainment
	Change management	Promote and manage change
	Ability for honest selfassessment	Demonstrate reflection through self-assessment
	Systems thinking	Be able to assess the potential impacts and consequences of decisions in a broad variety of situations
	Problem-solving and decision-making	Apply evidence-based decision-making techniques to health care questions
Professionalism	Personal and professional ethics	Adhere to ethical business principles; exhibit ethical behaviors
	Professional and community contribution	Participate in community service; balance professional and personal pursuits
	Working in teams	Create, participate in and lead teams, including interprofessionalism
Knowledge of the health care environment	Health care issues and trends	Demonstrate knowledge of circumstances causing major changes and reform in U.S. health care delivery
	Health care legal principles	Discuss and critically analyze health-related legal principles including standards, regulations and risk management.
	Health policy	Articulate the impact of select health policies on the delivery of health services
	Population health and status assessment	Understand and explain the major factors in health status to health care professionals

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

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. (<https://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. (<https://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. (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>)

Other information

All enrolled students will receive a student handbook at orientation.

Apply online today. (<https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/>)

Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.S.H.A.	Fall	Mar 1	GRE/GMAT scores on verbal and quantitative at or above the 50th percentile
			Applicants who have taken the GRE or GMAT in the past five years may submit previous scores. Those applicants holding certain graduate or professional doctoral degrees (M.D., D.D.S., Pharm.D., Ph.D.) may have the testing requirement waived upon petition.
			English language proficiency scores (for international applicants)

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>), 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. Three to five years of professional/managerial/health care experience
4. Response to a DEI prompt
5. Personal statement
6. Professional resume
7. Three letters of reference
8. Interview with M.S.H.A. admissions committee

Applicants with less than a 2.75 undergraduate GPA are encouraged to apply as the committee uses holistic admissions in its approach to reviewing applicants. 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.

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 (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>), 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

Course	Title	Hours
Courses		
HADE 602	Health Systems Organization, Financing and Performance	3
HADE 606	Health Care Managerial Accounting	3
HADE 607	Financial Management in Health Organizations	3
HADE 609	Population Health Management	2
HADE 610	Health Analytics and Decision Support	3
HADE 611	Health Care Law and Bioethics	3
HADE 612	Information Systems for Health Care Management	3
HADE 614	Health Care Marketing	3
HADE 615	Health Care Politics and Policy	3
HADE 624	Health Economics	3
HADE 646	Health Care Organization and Leadership	3
HADE 647	Management of Health Care Organizations	3
HADE 648	Strategic Management in Health Care Organizations	3
HADE 649	Human Resources Management in Health Care	3
Total Hours		41

The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 41.

Sample plan of study

Full-time enrollment

Semester 1	Hours
Fall	
HADE 602	Health Systems Organization, Financing and Performance
HADE 624	Health Economics
HADE 646	Health Care Organization and Leadership
Term Hours:	9
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	Population Health Management	2
HADE 611	Health Care Law and Bioethics	3
HADE 612	Information Systems for Health Care Management	3

Term Hours: 11

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: 9

Total Hours: 41

The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 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

Fall		Hours
HADE 602	Health Systems Organization, Financing and Performance	3
HADE 624	Health Economics	3
Term Hours:		6

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	Population Health Management	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

The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 41.

Contact

Paige Powell, Ph.D.
Program director
powellm9@vcu.edu

Additional contact

Cameron Parkins
Program manager
parkinsc@vcu.edu (rchaga@vcu.edu)

Program website: ha.chp.vcu.edu/programs/msha-program/