

Milken Institute School of Public Health

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Milken Institute School of Public Health
Department of Health Policy and Management

Program in Health Administration

Master of Health Administration 2025-2026

<http://publichealth.gwu.edu>

Program Director

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Mission

Our mission is to prepare early healthcare careerists and those early in other careers who may wish to transition to healthcare leadership and to competently assume those roles in leadership. We transform our students to prepare for these roles through didactic knowledge transfer, building skills via the classroom and wide-ranging experiential learning opportunities to assure their success in the healthcare field.

We emphasize career planning, professional development, and experiential learning models driven by adult learning methods and focus learning in specific areas of interest to prepare our graduates to effectively transition into entry or mid-level management and leadership positions. Our focus is on our core competencies, and we continue to maintain close contact with alumni so that they may provide meaningful input to the program.

To assure the highest quality of instruction, we invest in our faculty to help them be the best they can be, focusing on strengths and pursuing opportunities for improvement and collaboration amongst leadership and faculty in order to build a well-functioning collegial group, and create an environment and culture where all faculty feel free and safe each day and to lift up the very best in all of us.

Program Values

The Program in Health Services Administration provides a dynamic, student-focused community stimulated by multicultural diversity in all of its forms and is built upon a foundation of:

- Equity
- Integrity
- Creativity
- Courageous Innovation

Overview

The MHA Program was founded in 1959, and since that time The George Washington University has offered education in health administration to help meet the growing need for skilled executives to manage

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health-related organizations and programs. Because it recognizes and responds to the fast-paced, dynamic changes occurring in the industry today, the Program is well-positioned to prepare not only health care managers, but the health care leaders of tomorrow. An MHA degree from the Department of Health Policy and Management incorporates business and medical informatics training, knowledge of health care systems, management theory, ethics, law, policy, current healthcare issues and trends, critical values in decision making, and much more.

The Program's special strengths include an emphasis on experiential learning and community service, distinguished faculty research collaborations and relationships with policymaking and health care organizations in Washington, DC. and the vicinity. We utilize the entirety of Washington, D.C. as our extended "classroom," and take advantage of the proximity of federal policymakers, elected officials, and government agencies to uniquely enrich the educational experience. Active alumni and student associations foster mentoring, networking and other professional development opportunities.

The curriculum focuses on building general healthcare knowledge, leadership and strategic management trends, quality and performance improvement, leadership skills, community health planning and advocacy, organizational behavior, finance, healthcare ethics, human resources management, economics, information systems, quantitative methods, marketing and planning as well as health law. The Program maintains strong relationships with leaders in the healthcare marketplace, fostering the provision of excellent fellowship and residency opportunities that allow students to apply their classroom knowledge in healthcare settings. Numerous seminar, conference, and networking opportunities are made possible through relationships with professional organizations and associations.

Goals

Graduates of the program will be able to:

- Effectively manage organizational change and promote organizational and clinical excellence
- Manage health services organizations under alternative financing mechanisms
- Lead and manage human resources in diverse organizational environments
- Manage information resources to assist in effective administrative decision making and clinical management
- Use statistical, quantitative, and economic analysis tools
- Utilize leadership skills to improve both business and clinical outcomes of health services organizations

Course Requirements

All MHA students must achieve 45 credits: Core Courses (32 credits), Health Policy Selective (2 credits) Electives (8 credits) and an Experiential Learning Residency (3 credits). As the course elective listing demonstrates, MHA students can take PUBH electives, but these courses require the prior approval of the instructor.

Students without a prior degree from a CEPH-accredited program or school of public health will be required to successfully pass the required free, zero-credit, online course, PUBH 6080: Pathways to Public Health, within one year of matriculation.

Prerequisites

The only prerequisite course required for admission into the MHA program includes an introductory course in statistics from an accredited university earning a grade of a B or better in the course. The MHA Program Guide

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introductory statistics course can be successfully completed either online or in-person, so long as it occurs prior to matriculation.

Program-Specific Competencies

Broadly defined, the goal of health services management and leadership is to provide health care delivery organizations with talented graduates who possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to deliver health services in the most effective and efficient manner possible. The Master of Health Administration degree is designed to provide students with the ability to develop and demonstrate leadership in the four (4) CAHME identified Domains of (1) Management and Leadership; (2) Communication and Interpersonal Effectiveness; (3) Critical Thinking, Analysis and Problem Solving; and (4) Professionalism and Ethics. Within these four Domains are 29 specific competencies. The list below reflects each Domain, the specific competencies, and the series of courses in which these competencies are taught.

Domain: Management and Leadership

COMP NUMBER	COMPETENCY NAME AND DESCRIPTION	COURSES IN WHICH THESE COMPETENCIES TAUGHT
1	Leadership-leading and managing others	6208, 6212, 6216, 6218, 6271
2	Change and Innovation-Planning and implementing change	6207, 6208, 6212, 6216, 6218, 6271
3	Individual Behavior-Ability for honest self-assessment	6203, 6212, 6216, 6271
27	Healthcare Issues-Healthcare issues and trends	6202, 6206, 6207, 6208, 6209, 6210, 6211, 6212, 6213, 6215, 6271
28	Healthcare issues-Healthcare issues, personnel	6202, 6203, 6218, 6271
15	Human Resources Mgt-human resources	6216, 6218, 6271
22	Organizational Dynamics & Governance-Org behavior	6203, 6213, 6215, 6216, 6218

Domain: Communications and Interpersonal Effectiveness

4	Communication-Interpersonal communication	6207, 6212, 6216, 6218, 6271
5	Communication-Writing skills	6202, 6208, 6207, 6208, 6212, 6213, 6215, 6216, 6218, 6254, 6271
7	Communication-Presentation skills	6202, 6203, 6207, 6208, 6210, 6212, 6218, 6254, 6271
8	Communication-Working in teams	6202, 6203, 6204, 6206, 6207, 6208, 6210, 6212, 6213, 6215, 6216, 6218, 6254, 6271

Domain: Critical Thinking, Analysis, and Problem Solving

9	Decision Making-Solving business problems and making decisions	6203, 6206, 6207, 6208, 6209, 6210, 6211, 6212, 6213, 6215, 6271
10	Project Mgt-Planning and Managing Projects	6206, 6207, 6208, 6210, 6212, 6218, 6271

11	Systems Thinking	6202, 6204, 6207, 6208, 6254, 6271
12	Financial Mgt	6209, 6210, 6218, 6271
13	Quantitative Analysis-Quantitative skills	6204, 6206, 6207, 6208, 6210, 6218, 6271
14	Information Mgt-Information and technology management	6207, 6208, 6271
16	Legal Principles	6207, 6208, 6215, 6216, 6271
17	Clinical Performance Improvement, Risk mgt	6215, 6218, 6271
18	Strategic Planning	6207, 6208, 6213, 6271
19	Public and Media Relations-Marketing	6213, 6218, 6271
20	Quality Mgt-Quality & performance improvement	6204, 6207, 6208, 6218, 6271
21	Financial Mgt-Economic analysis	6211, 6271
29	Regulations-Standards and regulations	6202, 6207, 6208, 6209, 6212, 6216, 6254, 6271
30	Epi Methods-Pop health and status assessment	6206, 6212, 6080
31	Health Policy-Policy formulation, implementation, & eval	6202, 6212, 6215, 6271, 6080

Domain: Professionalism and Ethics

23	Personal & Professional Ethics-Professional and managerial ethics	6203, 6254, 6271
24	Self Development-Continuing education and life-long learning	6202, 6208, 6209, 6210, 6216, 6271
25	Improving Community Health-Community Contribution	6212, 6215, 6218, 6271, 6080

Tailoring Electives

The GWSPH and residential MHA program faculty strive to provide our students with choices that will guide them to productive careers in any number of health care related fields. To that end, there are opportunities to tailor electives, typically in the third and fourth semesters. Students can tailor their elective choices to build knowledge across numerous areas including, for example: Post Acute-Care, Senior Care and Aging Services; Health Care Consultancy; Acute Care, Hospitals, Health Systems and Ambulatory Care Services; Health Policy and Government Services; and Health Information Technology. Students should talk with their advisor to help determine appropriate electives.

Additionally, the Department of Health Policy and Management (HPM) maintains a list of pre-approved courses at the GWU Business School from which a student may choose as electives. Residential students may also choose electives from among the MHA@GW in-person program immersions that take place throughout the year, provided that space is available in the immersion after the MHA@GW students register. If a student wishes to pursue either of these two options they should discuss their choices with their faculty advisor.

General Structure and Flow of the Program Curriculum

The residential MHA program is structured so that students successfully complete most of the required core courses during their first two semesters, the required Residency during the Summer between their first and second year, and then the rest of the core requirements plus their chosen electives during the final two semesters. The MHA degree is then conferred at the conclusion of the fourth (and final) semester.

Students may then choose to pursue post-degree Fellowships in healthcare systems, hospitals, senior-care or aging services community/skilled nursing or hospice facilities, medical office practices or ambulatory care settings, healthcare consulting firms, Veterans Administration-affiliated facilities, the National Institute of Health, or other organizations coinciding with their particular area of interest.

HPM maintains membership in the National Administrative Fellowship Centralized Application Service (NAFCAS) to assist students wishing to find Fellowship opportunities and faculty can support students if the students choose to engage in Fellowship searches. Since students will have already received their MHA degrees after the conclusion of their fourth semester, any Fellowships are considered “post-degree” Fellowships.

Please see curriculum sheets that follow.

CORE COURSES

All 32 credits are required

<i>Course #</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Semesters offered</i>	<i>Grade</i>
HSML 6202	Introduction to the US Health Services Delivery	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6203	Introduction to Health Management	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6204	Quality and Performance Improvement	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6206	Quantitative Methods and Epidemiology in Health Services	3	Fall and Spring	letter
HSML 6207	Health Services Information Applications	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6208	Medical Informatics	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6209	Health Services Accounting and Financial Theory	3	Fall	letter
HSML 6210	Health Services Financial Applications	2	Fall and Spring	letter
HSML 6211	Health Economics	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6212	Community Health Management and Advocacy	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6213	Health Services Marketing and Planning	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6215	Health Law for Managers	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6216	Human Resources Management and Organizational Behavior	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6218	Seminar in Health Services Management and Leadership (taken final semester of course work)	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6254	Ethics in Health Services Management	2	Fall	letter
PUBH 6080	Pathways to Public Health	0	Fall, Spring, Summer	letter

HEALTH POLICY SELECTIVE

2 credits required. MHA students must take one of the following Health Policy courses. (*Note: HSML 6202 can be substituted for PUBH 6012 prerequisite)

<i>Course #</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Semesters offered</i>	<i>Grade</i>
PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy	2	Fall	letter
PUBH 6325	Federal Policymaking and Policy Advocacy	2	Fall, Spring, Summer	letter
PUBH 6367	Population Health and Public Health Care Reform	2	Fall	letter
PUBH 6354	Substance Use Disorder Policy	2	Spring	letter
PUBH 6356	State Health Policy	2	Varies	letter
PUBH 6399	Cost-Benefit Analysis in Health Care	2	Spring	letter
PUBH 6399 or PUBH	Maternal and Child Health Policy	2	Spring	letter

6561				
PUBH 6370	Medicare/Medicaid Law and Policy	2	Spring	letter
PUBH 6374	Pharmaceutical Policy	2	Online, varies	letter
PUBH 6378	HIV Policy in the U.S.	2	Summer	letter

ELECTIVES

8 credits required. Not all courses offered every year and courses alternate over time. MHA students must take eight credits chosen from the following options.

<i>Course #</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Semesters offered</i>	<i>Grade</i>
HSML 6231	Management of the Acute Care Hospital	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6236	Aging, Disability and Post-Acute Care	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6247	Consulting in Health Care	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6263	Advanced Financial Management	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6238	Ambulatory Care Management	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6299	Innovation in Healthcare	2	Fall	letter
HSML 6299	Health Systems Emergency Management	2	Spring	letter
HSML 6299	Lean Six Sigma	1	Fall	letter
HSML 6270	Research in Health Services Management (Independent Study)	2-3	Fall, Spring	letter
HSML 6285-6286	Readings in Health Services Administration	3	Fall, Spring	letter
PUBH 6399	Healthcare in Retail Settings	1	Spring	letter
PUBH 6399	Community Health Center Practice and Policy	2	Fall	letter
PUBH 6703	Health Care Delivery and Health IT	2	Online, varies	letter
PUBH 6706	Population Health Analytics	3	Online, varies	letter
PUBH 6717	Predictive Analytics	3	Online, varies	letter
PUBH 6894	Research Analytics	3	Online, varies	letter

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

3 credits required

<i>Course #</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Semesters offered</i>	<i>Grade</i>
HSML 6271	Residency	3	Summer between the 1 st and 2 nd year	CR or NC

SUMMARY OF TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED BY CATEGORY

<i>Category</i>	<i>Credits</i>
Core Required Course Credits	32
Health Policy Selective Requirement	2
Electives	8
Experiential Learning Residency	3
Total Credits	45

Not every course is offered every year. Course descriptions and registration information can be found on the website: <http://publichealth.gwu.edu/academics/>.

Graduation Requirements for MHA

1. Graduate Credit Requirement. 45 graduate credits are required.
2. Pathways to Public Health. This zero credit online course (PUBH 6080) must be completed prior to beginning the Residency. This requirement is waived for students who already possess a prior degree from a CEPH-accredited school or program of public health.
3. Course Requirements. Successful completion of all core courses is required.
4. Grade Point Requirement. A 3.0 grade point (B average) out of 4.0 overall grade point average is required. (Please refer to the School's policy on academic performance/probation information.)
5. Time Limit Requirement. The degree must be completed within five years.
6. Transfer Credit Policy: Up to 12 graduate credits that have not been applied to a previous graduate degree may be transferred to the Master of Health Administration program. External credits must have been earned from a CAHME accredited institution in the last 3 years with a grade of 3.0 (B) or better. SPH Graduate Certificate students can transfer as many credits as meet program requirements, up to 12 credits, to the MHA. Graduate Certificate students wishing to transfer to a degree program may apply to do so via the online change of concentration petition after completion of 3 or more courses and a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.0. A grade of B or better is required for a course to be eligible for transfer.
7. Residency Requirement. Successful completion of a three-credit Residency during the Summer between the 1st and 2nd year is required. The student must register for HSML 6271 (Residency) before the Summer Residency starts.

SAMPLE OUTLINE FOR COMPLETING MHA COURSEWORK		
<i>1st Semester (e.g., Fall)</i>		
<i>Course #</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>
HSML 6202	Intro to the US Healthcare System	2
HSML 6203	Intro to Health Management	2
HSML 6206	Quantitative Methods in Health Services*	3
HSML 6207	Health Services Information Applications	2
HSML 6209	Health Services Accounting and Financial Theory	3
PUBH 6080	Pathways to Public Health (non-tuition, no assigned credit course)	0
	Semester Credits	12
<i>2nd Semester (e.g., Spring)</i>		
<i>Course #</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>
HSML 6204	Quality and Performance Improvement	2
HSML 6208	Medical Informatics	2
HSML 6210	Health Services Financial Applications*	2
HSML 6213	Health Services Marketing and Planning	2
HSML 6215	Health Law for Managers	2
	Semester Credits	10
<i>3rd Semester (e.g., Summer)</i>		
<i>Course #</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>
HSML 6211	Health Economics	2
HSML 6216	HR Management and Organizational Behavior	2
HSML 6254	Ethics in Health Services Management	2
	(S)Elective	2
	Elective	2
HSML 6271	Residency	3
	Semester Credits	13
<i>4th Semester (e.g., Fall)</i>		
<i>Course #</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>
HSML 6218	Seminar in HSML (Capstone)	2
HSML 6212	Community Health and Advocacy	2
	(S)Elective	2
	Elective	2
	Elective	2
	Semester Credits	10
MHA CURRICULUM TOTAL CREDITS		45

There is a cap of 20 students in HSML 6206 Quantitative Methods in Health Services due to the nature of the didactic material in this three-credit course. If the course is already full when you register, then register for HSML 6210 Health Services Financial Applications instead. It is acceptable to be enrolled in both HSML 6209 and HSML 6210 at the same time, and then enroll for HSML 6206 in the second semester. You will remain on schedule toward your MHA degree.

Program Competencies Explained

1. Leadership: displays the ability to effectively manage individuals and teams towards achieving the goals associated with organizational excellence.
2. Change and innovation: uses appropriate techniques that will shape the future of the health care management organization through change and innovation.
3. Individual behavior: exhibits the ability to assess their own strengths and weaknesses with the objective of continuously capitalizing on strengths and improving weaknesses
4. Communications: builds effective collaborative relationships with multiple stakeholder groups using verbal and non-verbal communication techniques
5. Communications: prepares clearly written business communications in multiple formats (e.g., emails, social media, letters, memos, etc.)
6. Communications: demonstrates the ability to organize and deliver a professional presentation using the appropriate media in a convincing and persuasive manner.
7. Group dynamics: demonstrates the ability of an individual to contribute ideas and interact with other team members to develop a shared work product and/or problem solution
8. Decision making: possesses the ability to utilize decision making processes that leads to the selection of the most optimal course of action from a group of alternatives
9. Project management: demonstrates the ability to plan, organize, and manage resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives
10. Leadership: demonstrates the ability to employ a systems perspective to envision new directions and approaches and formulate solutions that are both creative and pragmatic
11. Financial management: can effectively use standard methods of financial analysis to assure that adequate resources are available to meet the goals and objectives of the organization
12. Quantitative analysis: demonstrates the ability to effectively use quantitative tools and methods to collect, organize, arrange, analyze, interpret and evaluate data for decision-making
13. Information management: can effectively use information management and technology principles, methods and techniques for collecting, analyzing and delivering information to support business processes and decision-making
14. Human resources management: demonstrate and apply human resource principles and methodologies in the areas of staffing, management, and personnel retention
15. Legal principles: demonstrates an understanding of the basic concepts of health law and compliance requirements as they affect decision-making in healthcare organizations
16. Clinical performance improvement: exhibits ability to pursue opportunities for constant improvement and ongoing assessment of patient care, customer feedback, risk management, and provider qualifications

17. Strategic planning: effectively utilizes the methods of strategic planning and management in order to evaluate the internal and external organizational environments, determine strategic direction and choose the most appropriate strategic alternative in support of mission requirements
18. Public and media relations: displays the ability to utilize marketing principles to promote the organization to internal and external customers in support of the strategic goals and objectives
19. Quality management: demonstrates the ability to use processes that emphasize continuous performance improvement including customer satisfaction, statistical processes and analytical tools designed to organize and interpret data
20. Financial management: apply principles of health economics to analyze and interpret organizational and payment issues
21. Organizational behavior and governance: describes the key elements of governing board structure and function in addition to how organizational environmental factors influence the structural design of health care organizations, including the distribution of authority and relationships among organizational subunits
22. Personal and professional ethics: ability to determine the ethical implications of managerial decisions and evaluate the professional codes of ethics from various professional associations or societies and how they articulate with managerial practice
23. Self-development: pursues long-term professional development and proactively seeks out meaningful personal development
24. Improving community health: addresses population wellness by evaluating and implementing activities designed to improve the health and wellness of both individuals and populations
25. Healthcare issues: demonstrates an understanding of the breadth of healthcare personnel along with demographic, employment and salary implications
26. Regulations: demonstrates the ability to understand and apply healthcare regulations including those from governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations
27. Epidemiological methods: displays the ability to use epidemiological methods to understand the prevalence and incidence of disease in a population
28. Health policy: explains the structure of the U.S. healthcare system and the processes through which health policies are formulated and implemented at the state and federal levels