



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

# Health Administration MHA: Executive Master of Health Administration Track Graduate Program Handbook

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# Health Administration MHA: Executive Master of Health Administration Track

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your graduate program handbook should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements, and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both of these handbooks are wonderful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and the Graduate College.

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves by a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Academic Integrity Training](#) (open to all graduate students at no cost)
- [Plagiarism](#)

## Introduction

### Welcome to the Executive Master of Health Administration Program

The faculty welcomes you to the Executive Master of Health Administration (eMHA) Program. We hope that you will view your time with us as a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

The Student Handbook is designed to serve as a guide to specific information concerning the program and program policies. Under applicable rules of the Administrative Procedures Act, the eMHA program may change any of the announcements, information, policies, rules, regulations, or procedures outlined in this handbook. The handbook is published once a year and cannot always reflect new and modified regulations. Information regarding University rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and requirements are published in the UCF Catalog and The Golden Rule.

Please feel free to discuss any questions you may have with the faculty.

### The Graduate Program in Executive Master of Health Administration

The eMHA graduate degree appeals to professionals in the health field who are seeking to broaden their knowledge of the health industry and advance their careers. Other students enter the program as the first step toward a Ph.D. in Public Affairs or a related discipline. The curriculum provides content on the analysis of issues and trends in the healthcare industry; the study of the structure and leadership of healthcare organizations; strategic planning; financial management; individual and organizational strategies for change; research methods, statistics, policy, and planning issues and information systems to facilitate problem-solving.

The purpose of the Graduate Program in Executive Master of Health Administration is to educate and train students who are preparing to function in a wide variety of managerial and supervisory healthcare environments, ranging from rural to metropolitan, from integrated delivery systems to freestanding clinical organizations, and

from operational activities to educational pursuits. Each faculty member will model the attributes of an administrative scholar with respect to practice, education, research, continuing education, service, and leadership. In support of this aim, the faculty strives to assist in the development of informed and responsive leaders who possess the capacity for critical thinking and creative problem-solving.

## MISSION, VISION & VALUES

The Executive Master of Health Administration program prepares current and future health administrators to make positive contributions to the healthcare industry. Our diverse student population achieves competence in the healthcare environment by:

- Understanding healthcare systems
- Applying business skills
- Communicating and managing relationships
- Demonstrating excellence in leadership
- Exhibiting professionalism and ethical conduct

Our [program competencies](#) are developed through exceptional, media-enhanced instruction, and reinforced through expert faculty who create and disseminate knowledge that improves managerial practice, strengthens health systems worldwide through global partnerships, and significantly contributes to the profession's body of knowledge through applied research, publications and presentations. Program competencies are also applied through service learning, experiential projects and practical internships with community partners.

In addition to the core values of UCF (Integrity, Scholarship, Community, Creativity and Excellence), the program embodies these values:

- *Respect* for the dignity of each individual.
- *Fairness and Equity* in matters of employee relations, resource allocation, and dispute resolution.
- *Accountability* of individual faculty, staff, and students to one another and to society.
- *Continuous Improvement* in the quality of work of faculty, staff, students, and alumni.
- *Teamwork* among student, faculty, staff, and alumni.
- *Opportunity building* for students, faculty, and alumni.
- *Responsiveness* to change and innovation.
- *Diversity* of individual faculty, staff, and students.

## Program Goals

**Goal A.** Prepare students for careers in health services management and policy by imparting the knowledge, values, and skills essential for effective management and leadership of health organizations.

**Goal B.** Conduct high-quality research in the areas of health services management and policy with a metropolitan, community, regional, and national focus.

**Goal C.** Provide services through which the School's faculty, staff, and students apply their management, research knowledge, and skills to issues relevant to various stakeholders in central Florida.

**Goal D.** Actively engage alumni in assisting the program in curricula and development initiatives, student recruitment, career development, and research initiatives.

**Goal E.** Ensure a continual diverse applicant pool of excellent full and part-time students. Diversity refers to ethnicity, age, gender, work experience, and academic background.

The program is designed specifically for self-motivated, mature, and experienced professionals who are seeking advanced preparation in management and administrative roles that ultimately lead to upper-level executive positions in complex health services organizations. The curriculum provides a course of study that includes an analysis of issues and trends in the healthcare industry; a study of the structure and leadership of healthcare organizations; strategic planning; financial management; individual and organizational strategies for change; research methods, statistics, policy and planning issues, and information systems to facilitate problem-solving.

## Program Structure

The Executive Master of Health Administration Program is administratively located in the School of Global Health Management and Informatics, College of Community Innovation and Education. Dr. Grant Hayes is the Dean of the College of Community Innovation and Education. Dr. Su-I Hou is the School Director.

The faculty who teaches in the program can be found on the School of Global Health Management and Informatics website found here: [ccie.ucf.edu/hmi/faculty-staff/](http://ccie.ucf.edu/hmi/faculty-staff/). On that same page, you can also find their CVs and research interest.

Below list the names of the faculty who currently teach in the program:

- Dr. Yara Asi, Ph.D.
- Dr. Bradley Beauvais, Ph.D. (adjunct faculty)
- Dr. Michelle Chandler, Ph.D.
- Dr. John Gaze, Ph.D. (adjunct faculty)
- Dr. Jillian Harrington, Ph.D. (adjunct faculty)
- Dr. Reid Oetjen, Ph.D., MSHSA
- Dr. Phil Putnam, JD, MHA
- Dr. Bernardo Ramirez, MD, MBA
- Dr. Dianne Ross, Ph.D., MSHSA (adjunct faculty)
- Mr. Phil Wessel, MHA

## Nondiscrimination Statement

The Executive Master of Health Administration Program supports the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Programs of the University of Central Florida in both student selection and faculty recruitment.

The program fully supports the Florida One policy of the University. In evaluating the effectiveness of our recruitment procedures, the Program generates a significant number of minority applicants and accepts a majority of those applicants. In addition, females make up a majority of students in the Program. Therefore, it is evident that the Program is committed to giving full opportunity for admission regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender.

In reference to affirmative action, specific measures are taken so that applicant pools and the Program's workforce composition reflect the demographic characteristics of the professional community and service area. Affirmative Action employment efforts include advertisements in media-oriented to underrepresented groups and the solicitation of candidates who could contribute a different perspective or background to the Program and serve as role models and mentors to our diverse student body.

## What to Know About the Program

The Executive Master of Health Administration Appeals to professionals in the health field who are interested in broadening their knowledge of the business aspect of the health industry and advancing their careers. Still, other students enter the program as the first step toward a Ph.D. in Public Affairs or a related field. This program is completely online which provides convenience and accessibility to working professionals. Although you are enrolled as an online student, you are welcome and encouraged to access the resources at the UCF Main and UCF Downtown Orlando campuses as well as the regional campuses in the Central Florida region. For a listing of all UCF campuses, please visit this link: [connect.ucf.edu/](http://connect.ucf.edu/)

The program utilizes an engaging and interactive multi-media environment that requires students to have a reliable internet connection, and a computer that can support the current software such as Microsoft Office Suite and other audio and visual capabilities. Also, students should have access to a microphone and web camera to participate in webinars, consultations, and other academic activities. We recommend the use of headsets to improve the quality of communication. Some activities in the program such as consultations and webinars may be synchronous to facilitate the interaction between the faculty and students.

Although the program is online, we highly encourage all students to participate in local activities to further their continuing education, professional networking, and application of their course learning to the practicing work environment. The program also encourages students to join the local chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and/or other relevant professional associations to maintain their professional development.

Students will be advised on how to keep a portfolio throughout the program where they can record their academic achievements and use examples to further their professional advancement that highlights their competencies developed in their academic and professional path.

*“University policy dictates that students enrolled in “market-based” or “cost recovery” programs are not allowed to enroll in traditional state-funded (E&G) classes or those outside of their specific program of study until they either complete or withdraw from their specific program. These programs have a unique funding model that are outside of traditional academic programming making them self-supporting entities. Thus students, student credit hours, generated resources, and program expenditures may not be intermingled with state-funded academic resources.”*

## **Transfer of Credit**

At the discretion of the Executive Master of Health Administration Program Director transfer credit will be considered and may be permitted on a case-by-case basis. For transfer credit consideration all courses must be accompanied by the official catalog descriptions and official transcripts noting the course in question. A maximum of 9 credit hours can be transferred in upon approval. For the university's regulations concerning the transfer of credits for master's programs, refer to the current [Graduate Catalog](#).

## **Enrollment**

The program follows a cohort model, which means that each group of students admitted during the fall admissions cycle will progress through the program of study together. The advantages of this model include:

- An increased sense of community
- Enhanced opportunities for networking and collaboration
- Faculty can cover topics in more depth

A graduate student may not enroll in more than 12 credit hours for fall, spring, and summer semesters.

## **Graduation Requirements**

According to the graduate catalog, students must maintain a grade point average of at least a 3.0 ("B") for graduation. Additionally, a student may earn no more than two grades of "C" to graduate. A student who earns a third grade of "C" may be disqualified from further Executive Master of Health Administration studies. A final decision on disqualification will be made by a majority vote of the eMHA faculty. A student must earn a grade of "B" or better in any course repeated. A student who earns a grade of "D" or below will be disqualified from further Health Administration graduate studies. The following is an excerpt from the [catalog](#).

There is a minimum of 44 semester hours required for graduation. Students must file their "Intent to Graduate" through [myUCF](#) the semester before their graduating semester. Students are also encouraged to check their Graduate Plan of Study regularly through [myUCF](#) to ensure they are on track for graduation from the program.

## **Incomplete Grades**

Students who earn an incomplete grade in a course will have until the end of the semester immediately following the semester in which the incomplete grade was earned to make up the course requirements. Should the course work not be completed in this time frame, the incomplete grade will be changed to an F and the student will be disqualified from further Health Administration graduate studies. To be eligible to receive a grade of "I", the student must complete at least 60 percent of the required coursework.

## **Grading Policy**

The grading policies of the Executive Health Administration Program are as follows:

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60 - 69 = D

60 and below = F

However, this policy may be changed at the discretion of each faculty member. Therefore, it is important to review the syllabi for each of your courses to ensure that you are familiar with the policy being used.

## **Academic Progress**

You are encouraged to make an appointment to meet the faculty at any time and especially if you are having difficulty with any course. To demonstrate satisfactory academic progress, you must maintain an overall GPA of 3.00, satisfactorily complete the professional course requirements, and satisfy the Capstone final course described in this Handbook. Any deviation from the sequence of courses identified in the program of study must be approved by your Academic Support Coordinator.

If you fail to meet the requirements for satisfactory academic progress, you will receive written notification of your status from the Program Director. In response to this notification, you may submit a written petition to the Program Director requesting continuation in the professional program of study. The petition must describe the reasons for your unsatisfactory progress and the strategies you propose to improve future performance. Failure to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress will result in dismissal from the Executive Master of Health Administration Program unless a petition for continuation is approved. If you are dismissed from the Program, you may apply for readmission. Readmission to the Executive Master of Health Administration Program will be based on a review of the circumstances of your dismissal and any additional information regarding changes in your status.

## **Course Planning**

Students should become familiar with the courses they need to obtain their degree. Student files are reviewed each semester by the Academic Support Coordinator to determine courses needed toward graduation. Students are encouraged to follow the graduate plan of study as provided by the Academic Support Coordinator. Good planning could save time and eliminate unnecessary heavy schedules and delays in graduating

## Advising

It is the student's responsibility to satisfy all requirements for graduation. Executive Master of Health Administration students should be advised by the Academic Support Coordinator and if needed by the Program Director. It is in the student's best interest to be advised each semester.

## Faculty Office Hours

It is the responsibility of the student to constantly interact with their course professors to ensure that they are on track. At any time, they can request a virtual or, if appropriate, a face-to-face office appointment to meet with them and discuss any academic or professional development concerns. Faculty maintains office hours, but if needed, they can make an effort to accommodate the student's schedule to meet with them. After contacting the faculty, if a student still has concerns, they should contact the Academic Support Coordinator and if needed, the Program Director.

## Vacation Policy

The Executive Master of Health Administration Program at the University of Central Florida makes no provision for any vacation, other than semester breaks, spring holidays, and other designated holidays scheduled according to the university calendar.

## The Golden Rule Student Handbook

The University of Central Florida is a community brought together by the tenets of the UCF Creed: Integrity, Scholarship, Community, Creativity, and Excellence. These are the values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions. To be successful at UCF, there is an expectation that we embrace and promote these core values in everything we do as a sign of our membership in the UCF community.

Whether you are a new or continuing undergraduate, graduate or professional student at UCF, there are certain responsibilities that students must uphold as members of our community. The [Golden Rule](#) is a compilation of policies and procedures from different university areas intended to define the rights and responsibilities afforded to students and provide a better understanding of each student's role as a member of the UCF community.

The [Golden Rule](#) is published online annually but can be revised at any time to reflect new and modified information deemed critical by the university. Changes will be communicated through online resources and by other means, at which time the revisions will supersede previously published information. The Golden Rule Student Handbook provides students with knowledge in the following areas:

- Students Rights and Responsibilities
- Student Conduct
- Academic Integrity
- Rules of Conduct
- Student Conduct Review Process
- Student Conduct Appeals



## Disciplinary Measures

Any infraction of the policies of the Executive Master of Health Administration Program will warrant disciplinary measures taken against the student offender. These measures may involve academic action taken by the faculty, including removal from the Program, and/or judicial action by the University Judicial Officer. The Program upholds the Rules of Conduct stated in The Golden Rule student handbook in addition to the Program. The type of action taken depends upon the seriousness of the infraction, Academic action by the faculty results if the student is cheating in the classroom or during, tests. This action is taken as stated in the Academic Behavior Standards Policy and Procedures section of The Golden Rule.

Judicial action by the University Judicial Officer, as may be referred by the faculty, results if the student possesses or consumes intoxicants or narcotics, steals or related behavior, abuses or neglects equipment or supplies, possesses dangerous weapons, or engages in other conduct determined to violate university rules of conduct. This action is taken as stated in the Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Rules of Conduct, and the Judicial Process sections of The Golden Rule.

## Professionalism

The faculty have the responsibility to plan learning experiences designed to assist the student in becoming a competent Health Care Administrator. In addition to acquiring knowledge and learning analytical skills, students must demonstrate effective (value and attitudinal) behaviors consistent with those required to obtain and maintain employment and function effectively as part of the administrative team.

"Professionalism" is defined as a professional character, spirit, or methods--the standing, practice, or methods of a professional, as distinguished from an amateur. Behaviors and attitudes required of health professionals are expected of Health Administration students, and include:

- Utilizing communication skills that are appropriate and effective in relating to peers and faculty. This includes careful expression of personal opinions and acceptance of constructive criticism, which is intended to promote learning, and confidence.
- Conducting oneself in a manner considered appropriate, legal, and ethical by members of the health profession.
- Assuming responsibility for one's own academic and professional development.
- Participating actively and demonstrating enthusiasm toward classroom activities.
- Demonstrating cooperation and understanding to peers and other members of the health professional team.
- Striving to progress toward competency and demonstrates this with an adequate level of productivity.
- Taking responsibility for punctuality and the ability to follow through with tasks.

## Covid-19 Information

Please see <https://www.ucf.edu/coronavirus/> for updated Covid-19 information and measures taken by UCF.

## Curriculum

Please visit the [Graduate Catalog](#) to see the current curriculum for our program.

## Timeline for Completion

### Fall Cohort

### 1st Year of Graduate Training

**Fall**

- HSA 6766: Health Care Statistics and Research
- HSA 6345: Leadership for Health Care Executives

**Spring**

- HSA 6179: Financial Accounting for Health Care Managers
- HSA 6346: Health Care Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management

**Summer**

- HSA 6178: Financial Management for Health Care Managers
- HSA 6505: Health Care Quality and Risk Management

**2nd Year of Graduate Training****Fall**

- HSA 6156: Health Care Economics and Policy
- HSA 6197: Health Care Informatics for Health Care Leaders

**Spring**

- HSA 6520: Epidemiology and Health Planning
- HSA 6555: Health Care Ethics and Law

**Summer**

- HSA 6188: Health Care Capstone and Strategic Management

**Spring Cohort****1st Year of Graduate Training****Spring**

- HSA 6179: Financial Accounting for Health Care Managers
- HSA 6346: Health Care Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management

**Summer**

- HSA 6505: Health Care Quality and Risk Management
- HSA 6178: Financial Management for Health Care Managers

**Fall**

- HSA 6197: Health Care Informatics for Health Care Leaders
- HSA 6156: Health Care Economics and Policy

**2nd Year of Graduate Training****Spring**

- HSA 6520: Epidemiology and Health Planning
- HSA 6555: Health Care Ethics and Law

**Summer**

- HSA 6766: Health Care Statistics and Research
- HSA 6345: Leadership for Health Care Executives

**Fall**

- HSA 6188: Health Care Capstone and Strategic Management

**Capstone Requirement**

All students are required to successfully complete the capstone course (HSA 6188). To successfully pass this course, students must earn a grade of "A" or "B." There is one exception: If a student has not yet earned a "C" in the program, the student may pass this course with a grade of "C."

Independent learning is demonstrated throughout the curriculum through the process of inquiry and dialogue. Tangible research projects, scholarly papers, internships, or our capstone experience also contribute to the self-

development of our students. The research study and final report will focus on reviewing and analyzing contemporary research in a student's particular specialization within the profession to help students acquire knowledge and skills about research-based best practices in that specialization area.

## Graduate Research

For information regarding research interests, research publications, faculty research interests and research resources for graduate students visit the [Research webpage](#) on the School of Global Health Management and Informatics website.

## Financial Support

Graduate students may receive financial assistance through fellowships, assistantships, tuition support, or loans. For more information, see Financing Grad School on the UCF Graduate Studies website, which describes the types of financial assistance available at UCF and provides general guidance in planning your graduate finances. The Financial Information section of the Graduate Catalog is another key resource.

Key points about financial support:

- If you are interested in financial assistance, you are strongly encouraged to apply for admission early. A complete application for admission, including all supporting documents, must be received by the priority date listed for your program under "Admissions."
- You must be admitted to a graduate program before the university can consider awarding financial assistance to you.
- If you want to be considered for loans and other need-based financial assistance, review the UCF Student Financial Assistance website at <http://finaid.ucf.edu> and complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form, which is available online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. Apply early and allow up to six weeks for the FAFSA form to be processed.
- UCF Graduate Studies awards university graduate fellowships, with most decisions based on nominations from the colleges and programs. To be eligible for a fellowship, students must be accepted as a graduate student in a degree program and be enrolled full-time.
- University graduate fellowships are awarded based on academic merit and therefore are not affected by FAFSA determination of need.
- Please note that select fellowships do require students to fill out a fellowship application (either a university fellowship application, an external fellowship application, or a college or school fellowship application). For university fellowship applications, see Financing Grad School.
- For information on assistantships (including teaching, research, and general graduate assistantships) or tuition support, contact the graduate program director of your major.

## Graduate Student Associations

### The American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) ([ache.org/](http://ache.org/))

This is a national organization open to all healthcare executives. UCF has an ACHE student chapter that meets monthly. Look for information about the next ACHE student chapter meeting in the HSA newsletter. If you are not local to the Central Florida Area, there may be an ACHE chapter near you. Please visit their website ([ache.org/](http://ache.org/)) to find a chapter near you. UCF also has a Registered Student Organization (RSO) affiliated with ACHE. You can learn more on KnightConnect and by emailing [ache.ucf@gmail.com](mailto:ache.ucf@gmail.com).

### Graduate Health Network (GHN)

GHN is an organization that serves the needs of UCF students interested in a career in healthcare management. For more information, contact [graduatehealthnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:graduatehealthnetwork@gmail.com). You can also connect through [KnightConnect](#) to become an official member.

## Professional Development

For information regarding internship and fellowship opportunities offered by the School of Global Health Management and Informatics visit the [Student Experience web page](#) on the school website.

The School offers scholarship opportunities to students in the program. Students will be made aware of these opportunities when they arise throughout the academic year. The ACHE essay contest, McGaw scholarship, and HSA Alumni Scholarship are just a few of the opportunities available to students. The University also offers scholarship opportunities to eligible students. For a listing of scholarship opportunities, please visit the financial aid website found here: [finaid.ucf.edu/](http://finaid.ucf.edu/)

## Job Search

Information regarding career opportunities, including a listing of places of employment, visit the [Career Opportunities webpage](#) on the School of Global Health Management and Informatics website.

## Forms

- [College of Graduate Studies Forms and References](#)  
A complete listing of general forms and references for graduate students, with direct links, may be found here.
- [Graduate Petition Form](#)  
When unusual situations arise, petitions for exceptions to policy may be requested by the student. Depending on the type of appeal, the student should contact his/her program adviser to begin the petition process.
- [Traveling Scholar Form](#)  
If a student would like to take advantage of special resources available on another campus but not available on the home campus; for example, special course offerings, research opportunities, unique laboratories, and library collections, this form must be completed and approved.

## Useful Links

- [Health Administration, MHA](#)
- [College of Community Innovation and Education](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [American College of Healthcare Executives \(ACHE\)](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [School of Global Health Management and Informatics](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Student Center](#)
- [Housing and Residence Life](#)
- [Housing, off-campus](#)

- [Knights Email](#)
- [Library](#)
- [NID Help](#)
- [Pathways to Success](#)
- [Recreation and Wellness Center](#)
- [Shuttles Parking Services](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#)
- [UCF Global](#)
- [University Writing Center](#)

## Contact Info

- **Dawn Oetjen, Ph.D.**  
Professor and Program Director  
DPAC 401  
Phone: 407-823-2359
- **Kristin Della Sala, M. Ed.**  
Academic Support Coordinator II  
DPAC 401  
Phone: 407-823-3267