

Washington State University



Department of Health Policy
and Administration

Policies and Procedures

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The Department of Health Policy and Administration's *Policies and Procedures* are regularly updated.

Please check the department website to confirm that you have the most current version:

[HTTP://SPOKANE.WSU.EDU/ADMISSIONS/HPA/CURRENT-STUDENTS.HTML](http://SPOKANE.WSU.EDU/ADMISSIONS/HPA/CURRENT-STUDENTS.HTML)

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Department overview

History of the Department of Health Policy and Administration (HPA)

The [Washington State University Faculty Senate](#) and [Higher Education Coordinating Board](#) approved the Master of Health Policy and Administration (MHPA) program in 1993. The degree program was **established in 1994** in the [College of Pharmacy](#)¹ at Washington State University in Spokane ([WSUS](#)). In 2000, the program was accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education ([CAHME](#)). Also in 2001, the program was admitted to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education ([WICHE](#)) Western Regional Graduate Program.

In 2001, the [WSU Board of Regents](#) approved the departmental status for the Department of Health Policy and Administration ([HPA](#)). **HPA was the first academic department “established and centered” at a WSU urban campus**, as well as the first new department at Washington State University since 1990. In 2002, Winsor Schmidt, JD was appointed as the founding department chair, followed by Dr. Joseph Coyne (from 2009 to 2014). Dr. Jae Kennedy, an HPA faculty member since 2002, currently serves as chair.

HPA mission

The **mission** of the Department of Health Policy and Administration is: 1) to provide a world-class graduate education to the next generation of leaders in health administration, policy analysis, and health services research; and 2) to engage in innovative research and service activities that improve access, quality, efficiency, and equity of health services in Washington and the US.

HPA vision

The **vision** of the WSU Department of Health Policy and Administration is to have, by 2020: 1) a rank of at least 25 in the US News and World Report list of graduate programs in healthcare management; 2) a three-month postgraduate professional placement rate of at least 80%; 3) extramural research and training revenues equal to at least 25% of faculty and staff salaries; and 4) a ratio of no more than 10 FTE MHPA students per tenured or tenure-track HPA faculty member.

HPA values

Rigor – HPA students, alumni, faculty, and staff will rigorously assess all available evidence and apply appropriate analytic strategies.

Integrity – HPA students, alumni, faculty, and staff will demonstrate integrity, honesty and professionalism in all interactions with peers and with all community stakeholders.

¹ The department left the College of Pharmacy in 2012, and joined the College of Nursing in 2015

Collaboration – HPA students, alumni, faculty, and staff will participate in collaborative efforts of the University and the community to expand the health science programs in Spokane and ensure that quality healthcare providers will be available to serve the Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) region.

Respect, Social Justice and Inclusiveness – HPA students, alumni, faculty, and staff will respect the identity, perspective and experience of all stakeholders, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, disability status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs or political affiliation, and will value human rights, as well as recognizing the dignity of every human being.

Continuous Improvement – HPA students, alumni, faculty, and staff will commit to continually improving the quality of HPA’s teaching, research and service.

CAHME accreditation

The Commission on Accreditation Healthcare Management Education is: “an interdisciplinary group of educational, professional, clinical, and commercial organizations is devoted to accountability and quality improvement of education for healthcare management and administration professionals. CAHME serves the public by promoting, evaluating, and improving the quality of graduate healthcare management education in the United States and Canada.”

The WSU MHPA program has been continuously accredited by CAHME since 2000, with successful reaccreditation awarded in 2005 and 2012. **CAHME accreditation demonstrates completion of a rigorous internal and external review of program quality:** “with a strong partnership between academe and the field of practice, CAHME serves universities and programs in a voluntary peer review process designed to continuously improve academic education.”

WICHE membership

The WSU MHPA Program was required to meet criteria of distinctiveness and demonstrated quality to qualify for admission to Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP). Criteria for WICHE WRGP program selection include:

- Of high quality and demonstrable strength in terms of faculty, curriculum, library or other resources, student enrollments and placements, or other factors.
- Distinctive with respect to total program, specialization, or resources, and fill a need not met by more than three other (four total) programs in the participating states.
- Strongly supported by the institution with the expectation of continued support.

WSU’s MHPA Program is the only health services administration program admitted to WRGP. Admission of the WSU HPA Program to WICHE WRGP increases access to accredited health services administration education for residents of the 16 western states. **For WSU HPA students, admission of the HPA Program to WICHE WRGP means that residents of Alaska, Arizona, California, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming are eligible to enroll at Washington resident rates of tuition.**

MHPA student learning outcomes

HPA’s mission emphasizes “a world-class graduate education” and research and service activities to “improve access, quality, efficiency, and equity of health services.” This broad based mission requires student and faculty competence in six key domains (leadership, communication, management, critical thinking, science/analysis, and political & community development).

As the Department prepares its students to take on roles as health administrators, researchers and policymakers, the curriculum and internship experience requires understanding and applying necessary leadership and management skills. Courses in research methods and statistical analysis, along with the graduate project requirement, are the most obvious means of developing critical thinking and analysis skills, but these competencies are embedded throughout the curriculum. HPA graduates are expected to be more than sophisticated consumers of research, they must be prepared to generate and share new knowledge as they move forward in their careers. This is why a premium is placed on development of writing and speaking skills throughout the curriculum. HPA graduates must also understand the political environment which ultimately dictates how health care services are provided in the community. Finally, we encourage an ethic of public service, and a commitment to healthcare that is timely, of good quality, and accessible.

Table 1. MHPA student competencies

Leadership	
Articulate, demonstrate & evaluate professional values & ethics	Identify the bases of power & the political implications & effects of decisions
Describe & demonstrate stewardship of community resources	Identify, explain & utilize effective motivational strategies
Identify, demonstrate & evaluate cultural sensitivity & competence	Work effectively with other professionals
Identify & articulate community values and needs	Identify, value & use team development methods
Use system models and methods to make decisions and solve problems	Demonstrate effective listening and communication skills
Facilitate and influence development, implementation & ownership of mission & strategic objectives	Identify effective techniques for working with community leaders through governance structures
Describe & apply models & methods of change & innovation	Demonstrate the ability to make choices
Use creative flexible problem- solving methods	Commit to the execution of organizational strategy
Select & use competitive & collaborative strategies appropriately	Selects the organizational structure that is appropriate for system functions
Identify, explain, & resolve critical tension	
Communication	
Develop, organize, synthesize & articulate ideas & information	Write clearly & effectively
Listen, hear, & respond effectively to the ideas & thoughts of others	Identify & use appropriate communication strategies based on audience characteristics & communication goals
Speak clearly & effectively before individuals & group, in formal & informal settings	Recognize & use non-verbal forms of communication

Management	
Identify, describe & apply general management concepts	Identify, monitor & interpret the impacts of legal, regulatory & political environments
Work with & through people to achieve organizational goals	Evaluate & modify appropriate governance structures & processes
Identify & apply basic concepts & tools that are integral to strategic thinking, planning & management	Identify & address needs of major stakeholders
Describe & apply the basic principles & tools of effective HR management, change mgmt & org dev	Provide effective communication linkages within an organization and its external environments
Describe & apply the basic principles & tools of CQIs & skills to improve work processes	Measure, track, & respond to the changing needs of the users of policy analysis
Design & implement business plans for health programs & services	Understand & apply the basic aspects of management engineering & design & process
Critical Thinking	
Able to identify & implement systems	Evaluate issues from different perspectives
Identify the subsystems of the health system broadly defined; their relationship & interactions	Create innovative strategies
Describe the roles, functions & responsibilities of system components	Have confidence in the ability to make decisions in the presence of uncertainty
Identify system structures & social, cultural, economic, financial & political issues/factors	Identify & prioritize managerial alternatives
Apply models to develop structures & systems to support team functions	Able to learn from mistakes
Asks the right questions when making decisions	Project future scenarios
Comprehend cause-and-effect relationships	
Science/Analysis	
Identify the scientific method and how to apply it to managerial decisions and problems	Monitor data & identify deviations, whether for internal processes & procedures or for external trends
Identify & describe the structure & conduct of quantitative analytical methods	Use & manage relevant computer technologies
Identify & describe the structure & conduct of selected qualitative methods	Be an educated consumer of more complex analytical methods
Examine data both qualitatively & quantitatively to determine patterns & trends	Identify & describe information systems & knowledge management
Evaluate testable hypotheses commonly arising in a management setting	
Political and community development	
Identify the major stakeholders of an organization & their specific interests & historical relationships	Use negotiation, consensus, & conflict resolution methods to assist community development & evaluation
Effectively solicit & use input from the community in policy & program development & evaluation	Demonstrate "emotional intelligence" needed to address the diverse needs of stakeholders
Build appropriate strategic collaborations at the local, state and national level	

HPA research

WSU is designated by the Carnegie Foundation as a Research University (very high research activity). It consists of ten colleges and a graduate school, with 300 undergraduate and graduate fields of study including more than 150 majors, more than 100 masters and doctoral degrees, and 1,300 instructional faculty. In 2010, the WSU Board of Regents designated **Spokane as the University's Health Science Campus**. WSUS houses the Colleges of Nursing, Pharmacy, and Medical Sciences. WSUS faculty and staff conduct original research in neuroscience, human behavior, sleep and performance, childhood health, addictions/substance abuse, disease management, health policy and other critical areas, bringing approximately \$16 million per year into the Spokane economy.

The Department of Health Policy and Administration plays an active role in WSU Spokane's research programs. HPA tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to allocate at least half of their time to research activities, and they typically exceed this target. Current HPA faculty have received research funding from the World Bank, the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research, the WA Life Sciences Discovery Fund, the Empire Health Foundation and the WA Attorney General's Office. They regularly publish their research in top tier academic journals, serve on editorial and advisory boards, and present their findings annually at international scientific meetings.

This research program complements the department's teaching mission. Because our faculty members are actively engaged in cutting-edge research and development, they understand and can articulate the current controversies and challenges in health policy, health systems management, and health services research. This translates into real competitive advantage for our students in the residential MHPA and online professional programs. **MHPA students are expected to become fluent in research methods and analytic techniques**, and apply these methods in completing their graduate project or thesis. All graduate students must complete the "Responsible Conduct of Research Education" web-based training at myResearch.wsu.edu.

Research, teaching and program assistantships

The **department** consistently offers and recruits several students each academic year as **research, teaching, or program assistants** on an hourly, or "time slip", basis. The current wage rate for these positions is **\$15 per hour**, for **10 or 20 hours per week**. HPA faculty or staff submits job descriptions to the Chair for approval and funding, and decisions are made on the basis of available revenue and strategic priorities. Job listings are typically disseminated to all currently enrolled students in the first week of fall or spring semester, and hiring decisions are made by the second week. **WSU faculty may also hire graduate research assistants with extramural funds**. HPA faculty may hire graduate students from within or outside the MHPA program, on a salaried or hourly basis, with or without tuition assistance, as the aims of the project and the approved grant budgets dictate. The department provides faculty support for administering these assistantships, but solely the principal investigator and the funding agency determine the use of these funds.

MHPA program admissions

Requirements for all applicants

The Master of Health Policy and Administration (MHPA) admission standards conform to the requirements of the [WSU Graduate School](#). A **minimum undergraduate grade point average of 3.0** is expected. GRE or GMAT scores are required, except for applicants holding a professional doctoral degree (e.g., MD, JD, DDS, and PharmD) or PhD from an accredited school. The department will not accept any test scores older than five years. A **GRE aptitude** (verbal and quantitative combined) score of **at least 300** (1000 if taken before summer 2011), **or a GMAT aptitude score of at least 500, is preferred**. However, the admissions committee will also consider other indications of academic ability, including significant improvement in grade point average during the final semesters of study, and substantial professional or clinical experience.

A **letter of intent** should be submitted to the department chair with the application forms. The letter of intent is considered as evidence of the applicant's writing ability, as well as an explanation as to why the applicant is interested in pursuing an MHPA degree. It should include a discussion of the applicant's educational background, personal and professional experience in the health care system, and long-term career goals. A **one-page résumé** is required of all applicants. This single page should include any information regarding relevant work or volunteer experience. **Three original letters of recommendation** must also be submitted to assess the quality of the student's academic and work experiences. These letters should be written primarily or exclusively by former instructors, advisors, or supervisors.

Requirements for international applicants

International students are a vital part of the HPA department, and bring a global perspective to our campus. Many of our WSU MHPA alumni come from abroad (e.g., India, China, Taiwan, Korea, Holland, Israel and Gaza), and we welcome applications from all countries. In addition to documents required for admission to the Graduate School described above, all **international applicants are required to submit** the following:

- Official TOEFL, IELTS, or MELAB scores,
- Transcripts or other grade reports and official translations of these documents from all previous degree-granting universities and/or institutions,
- Evidence of financial support,
- Immigration documents (F-1 or J-1)

MHPA students must be fluent in written and spoken English. English skills testing scores must be less than two years old, and be sent directly to the WSU Graduate School from the testing service. Photocopies and student-reported scores will not be used. For the **TOEFL**, the **minimum acceptable score is 550** (paper), **213** (computer), **or 80** (internet). The **minimum acceptable IELTS score is 7**. The minimum acceptable MELAB score is 86. The **Educational Testing Service reporting code** for Washington State University is **4705** (for the TOEFL only). International students should work closely with the Graduate School in order to assure they have all required application materials.

Financial aid

Qualified domestic and international students are encouraged to apply for financial assistance in the form of scholarships, fellowships, and loans from the University and other public or other private sources. MHPA applicants are provided with a "[Fellowship and/or Assistantship](#)" application with their admission packet and are encouraged to apply. Over half of WSU MHPA students typically receive some financial aid (e.g. a WICHE WRGP non-resident tuition waiver, Fulbright scholarship, and/or hourly assistantship).

Nondiscrimination policy

Washington State University [policy prohibits discrimination](#) on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, religion, age, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, physical, mental or sensory disability, marital status, genetic information, and/or veteran status in the recruitment and admission of students, and the operation of all University programs, activities, and services. Evidence of practices, which are inconsistent with this policy, is reported to the Director of the Center for Human Rights. WSU Spokane operates [active programs](#) for the recruitment of students who are members of underrepresented groups. Special programs of financial aid, academic advising, and tutorial services are available for [students with disabilities](#) who require assistance or accommodations.

MHPA curriculum

The MHPA is a non-thesis degree program that requires coursework, an internship experience, a final graduate project, and a graduate portfolio. WSU MHPA students must complete **a total of 56 semester hours**. This includes:

• Introductory courses	20
• Core courses	18
• Electives	6
• Capstone course (HPA 590)	3
• Internship (HPA 597)	3
• Graduate project (HPA 702)	6
Total Minimum Credits Required	56

Courses are organized into four areas (introductory, core, elective and capstone). Introductory courses equip students with the basic knowledge and skills needed to successfully complete their more advanced coursework. Core courses provide basic understanding and experience in managing health care systems in the context of enhancing community health status. Elective courses complement the core coursework. The capstone course integrates principles and practices of health management and policy.

Introductory courses (20 credit hours required)

HPA 500	3 credits	Introduction to the health care system
HPA 502	3 credits	Health care law
HPA 510	3 credits	Health care cost accounting
HPA 515	3 credits	Health care management
NSG 554	3 credits	Epidemiology and biostatistics for health professions
HPA 570	3 credits	Marketing for health care organizations
HPA 599-03	1 credit	Professional skills development
HPA 599-04	1 credit	Health services statistics lab

Core courses (18 credit hours required)

HPA 501	3 credits	Health care policy and politics
HPA 509	3 credits	Health care economics
HPA 511	3 credits	Health care finance
HPA 517	3 credits	Health care human resources management
HPA 520	3 credits	Research and evaluation methods
HPA 530	3 credits	Health care information systems

Elective courses (6 credit hours required)

HPA 550	3 credits	Operations management
HPA 599-01	3 credits	Lean/Six Sigma and quality improvement
HPA 599-05	3 credits	Health payment reform

Capstone and other required courses (12 credit hours required)

HPA 590	3 credits	Strategic management and marketing
HPA 597	3 credits	Internship
HPA 702	6 credits	Graduate project

Time to completion

In accordance with CAHME guidelines, the WSU MHPA program requires *“the equivalent of full-time study beyond the baccalaureate level of not less than two academic years,”* but the curriculum is designed to facilitate both full-time and part-time participation. Students may start the program in the fall or spring semester. The **average time for completion** of the MHPA program **for a full-time student is two years**. Part-time students will obviously require additional time, depending upon the intensity of study, but according to Graduate School rules, **“The time limit for use of graduate credit toward a master’s degree is six years** from the beginning date of the earliest course applied toward the degree.”

Rotation of required courses

FALL SEMESTER		COURSE TITLE	INSTRUCTOR
HPA 500	3 credits	Introduction to the Health Care System	Jae Kennedy
HPA 501	3 credits	Health Care Policy and Politics	Jae Kennedy
HPA 509	3 credits	Health Care Economics	Sean Murphy
HPA 510	3 credits	Health Care Cost Accounting	Joseph Coyne
HPA 515	3 credits	Health Care Management	Gary Smith
HPA 517	3 credits	Health Care Human Resources Management	Gary Smith
HPA 520	3 credits	Research and Evaluation Methods	Sean Murphy
NSG 554	3 credits	Epidemiology and Biostatistics	Denise Smart
HPA 599-04	1 credit	Health Services Statistics Lab	Mason Burley
HPA 597	3 credits	Internship	Staff
HPA 702	2-4 credits	Graduate Project	Staff

SPRING SEMESTER		COURSE TITLE	INSTRUCTOR
HPA 502	3 credits	Health Care Law	Gerald Kobluk
HPA 511	3 credits	Health Care Finance	Joseph Coyne
HPA 530	3 credits	Health Care Information Systems	Dan Simonson
HPA 550	3 credits	Operations Management	Gary Smith
HPA 570	3 credits	Marketing for Health Care Organizations	Sean Murphy
HPA 590	3 credits	Strategic Management and Marketing	Gary Smith
HPA 597	3 credits	Internship	Staff
HPA 599-01	3 credits	Lean/Six Sigma and Quality Improvement	Anna Franklin
HPA 599-03	1 credit	Professional Skills Development	Jae Kennedy
HPA 702	2-4 credits	Graduate Project	Staff

Description of courses

HPA 500 – Introduction to the health care system (3 credits)

Orientation to delivery, financing, and organization of the health care system

HPA 501 – Health care policy and politics (3 credits)

History, methods, results, and evaluation of health care policy and politics

HPA 502 – Law and ethics of health management (3 credits)

Private health law and ethics, including professional liability, relationship of physician and patient, malpractice reform, health institutions, and health access

HPA 509 – Health care economics (3 credits)

Allocating, financing, and delivering medical care services (**No prerequisite:** Mankiw's *Principles of Microeconomics* is a recommended self-study guide)

HPA 510 – Health care cost accounting (3 credits)

Basic cost accounting concepts, principles, and applications in the health care setting (**No prerequisite:** Anthony & Breitner's *Essentials of Accounting* is a recommended self-study guide)

HPA 511 – Health care finance (3 credits)

Health care financial management tools and techniques for strategic financial management (**Prerequisite:** HPA 510)

HPA 515 – Health care management (3 credits)

Introduction to the knowledge, skills and values associated with the practice of health management

HPA 517 – Health care human resources management (3 credits)

Application of human resource management principles (e.g., recruitment, selection, performance appraisal, compensation, benefits, retention, and termination) in health care

HPA 520 – Research and evaluation methods (3 credits)

Basic research and evaluation methods for health care professionals (**Prerequisite:** statistics or HPA 519)

HPA 530 – Health care information systems (3 credits)

Key attributes of health care information systems and their evolution in the health care environment

HPA 550 – Operations management (3 credits)

Commonly used concepts and tools for managing operations and producing value for customers

NSG 554 – Epidemiology and biostatistics for health professions (3 credits)

Introduction to epidemiology: principles and methods of epidemiologic investigation including analysis of key elements of investigation of high risk populations

HPA 570 – Marketing for health care organizations (3 credits)

Basic marketing concepts, principles, and issues related to marketing public and private health care

HPA 590 – Strategic management and marketing (3 credits)

Key components and processes in strategic planning (**Prerequisites:** HPA 511, 515)

HPA 597 – Internship (3 credits, S/F grading)

Student experience in professional work settings

HPA 599-01 – Lean/Six Sigma & quality improvement (3 credits)

An introduction to concepts and tools for quality improvement through lean/six sigma

HPA 599-03 – Professional skills development (1 credit)

Hands-on training of business standards, norms and etiquette for interviews, resumes, presentations, and other professional communication skills

HPA 599-04 – Health services statistics lab (1 credit)

Practical guidance in statistics applications for health services research

HPA 599-05 – Health payment reform (3 credits)

Practical guidance in statistics applications for health services research

HPA 600 – Special projects or independent study (3 credits)

HPA 702 – Master’s special problems, directed study, and/or examination (6 credits, S/F grading)

Academic advising

The department chair will select a core HPA faculty member to serve as an incoming student’s advisor and project committee chair. Students may change their advisor at any time for any reason. The academic coordinator, in consultation with the advisor, completes an [annual review of all full and part-time students](#). Because most HPA faculty have 9-month appointments, academic advising is not available during summer break, and urgent questions should be directed to the department chair or academic coordinator.

Students are encouraged to work with the academic coordinator and their advisor to design individualized programs suitable to a variety of career goals and future employment opportunities. **At the beginning of their third semester**, in consultation with the academic coordinator, all students should submit a program of study for approval by the department chair and Graduate School.

Minimum GPA

[The WSU Graduate School has established a minimum 3.0 program GPA in order for a graduate student to be considered in good academic standing](#). All grades earned by a graduate student in courses listed on the program of study, except for the first grade for a repeated course, will be averaged into the student’s GPA. No graded courses of “B-” or below may be dropped from a program of study for an advanced degree nor can a course be repeated for a higher grade if the final grade is “C” or higher. Any course listed on the program of study for which a grade of “C-” or below is earned must be repeated for a letter grade, not on a Pass/Fail basis. The student is expected to earn an S grade for all research credits (702).

Probationary continuing enrollment

A graduate student who has completed his/her first semester of graduate study and earns a GPA between 2.75 and 2.99 is eligible for one additional semester of continued enrollment on a probationary status. Upon completion of the probationary semester, and thereafter until graduation, a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative GPA is required to continue in Graduate School. Probationary status is only available to students immediately following their first semester of graduate study.

Termination of enrollment

The enrollment of a graduate student will be terminated under any one of the following conditions:

- If s/he has a cumulative GPA below 2.75 at the end of the first semester of study.
- If s/he fails to establish and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above after more than one semester of study.
- If s/he has earned a U grade for research credits (702, 700, 800) for two semesters (including the summer term).
- If s/he has failed a preliminary or final exam for a second time.

Other reasons for termination might include failure to make normal progress toward degree completion (such as failure to complete coursework on time or multiple incompletes), failure to maintain continuous enrollment, issues related to academic integrity or student conduct, etc.

Reinstatement

Reinstatement of a graduate student who falls below 2.75 GPA following completion of one semester or one summer session will be considered only through a petition from the graduate student to the program chair. Following a meeting between the graduate student and the program chair, the chair may formally recommend reinstatement for that student to the Dean of the Graduate School. (Note: This reinstatement policy also applies to students admitted on a provisional basis, who fall below a 3.0 GPA following the completion of one semester or one summer session.)

Academic integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited in the Department of Health Policy and Administration; includes cheating, falsification, fabrication, multiple submission, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, complicity, or misconduct in research. As defined in the *Student Handbook*:

Cheating is the intentional use of, or attempt to use, unauthorized material, information, or study aids in any academic activity to gain advantage. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, communicating improperly with others, especially other students, during tests or the preparation of assignments for class.

Multiple submission includes, but is not limited to, submitting the same paper or oral report for credit in two courses without the responsible instructor's permission; making minor revisions in a paper or report for which credit has already been received and submitting it again as a new piece of work.

Plagiarism is knowingly representing the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment of the source. The only exceptions to the requirement that sources be acknowledged occur when the information, ideas, etc., are common knowledge. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting as one's own work the work of a

'ghost writer' or work obtained from a commercial writing service; quoting directly or paraphrasing closely from a source without giving proper credit; using figures, graphs, charts, or other such material without identifying the sources.

*A student is guilty of **complicity** in academic dishonesty if he or she intentionally or knowingly helps or attempts to help another or others to commit an act of academic dishonesty of any of the types defined herein.*

Just as you are taught that ignorance of the law is not a defense, so is ignorance of the academic integrity standards not a defense. "A student's mental state . . . that may have influenced a student's behavior will generally not limit the responsibility of the student for his or her action."

Ensuring academic integrity requires the active participation of all students, faculty and staff. **If students observe or suspect a possible violation of integrity standards, they must immediately report these concerns to the department chair, academic coordinator, and/or course instructor.**

MHPA internship requirement

The purpose of the required three-credit internship is to ensure that all students graduating from the MHPA program have substantive first-hand experience in an administrative setting within one or more health care organizations. It gives students the opportunity to better organize, understand, and retain classroom learning and assists them in career planning. **Sixty-four hours of contact are required to fulfill one credit hour of internship. Student internships should therefore equal 3 credit hours or 192 contact hours.** Students should enroll in HPA 597 at the time of their internship, typically in the summer semester after their first year of study.

Prior to beginning the internship, all internships must be reviewed and approved by the HPA internship faculty advisor. The following guidelines establish the parameters for such experiences and comprise the evaluation criteria to determine what constitutes a satisfactory internship:

1. The experience must involve:
 - A meaningful administrative role. "Meaningful" is defined as responsibility for completion of one or more projects of importance to the institution or organization in which the experience takes place.
 - Independent responsibilities, under the supervision of an experienced health administrator, called the community preceptor.
 - Participation in administrative planning and project implementation meetings of the sponsoring organization.
 - Involvement in teams, ideally in both supportive and leadership roles.
 - Exposure to multiple administrative experiences, including upper management.
2. **Preparation by the student of a formal internship proposal is due to the HPA internship faculty advisor, one week after the start of the internship.** The proposal should articulate the proposed activity, the setting, the specific objectives and expected outcomes, and the

timeline for completing the project (number of hours per week committed to the organization and the project).

- The proposal is to be developed in consultation with the internship faculty advisor and community preceptor, and must be formally approved and signed by both.
 - The proposal will serve as the basis for evaluation of the internship experience by the community preceptor and faculty advisor.
3. The student must prepare a report on the internship experience. The report should include a portfolio of products from the experience to be shared and discussed with the community preceptor and internship faculty advisor as part of the evaluation process.
 4. The student is supervised on-site by an experienced health administrator, called the internship community preceptor.
 5. The student must work closely with the HPA internship faculty advisor.
 6. Basis for evaluation
 - Performance of the administrative role(s) undertaken during the internship, including attention to completing tasks and initiative in securing meaningful administrative experience. The community preceptor has primary responsibility for the evaluation.
 - Quality of the portfolio and report completed by the student. The HPA internship faculty advisor has primary responsibility for the evaluation.

Table 2. Internship roles and responsibilities

<i>Community preceptor role</i>	<i>Internship faculty advisor role</i>	<i>Academic coordinator role</i>
Guidance to the student in planning the internship project.	Guidance to student in planning the internship project.	Guidance to student in developing and planning the internship site.
Signed approval of the internship proposal.	Signed approval of the internship proposal.	Signed approval of the internship proposal.
Primary contact and on-site supervision in the internship setting.	Off-site supervision of the student, in consultation with the academic coordinator.	Off-site supervision of the student, in consultation with the faculty advisor.
Evaluation of student's performance in the administrative role(s) undertaken during the internship.	Evaluation of the student's written products, in consultation with the academic coordinator.	In consultation with the HPA internship faculty advisor, the student's evaluation of the internship experience is reviewed.
Review of student's written products in consultation with the faculty advisor.	Review of the student's on-site performance in the administrative role(s) undertaken during the internship, in consultation with the community preceptor.	Coordination of completed evaluations prepared by the student and community preceptor.

MHPA individual graduate project requirement

The individual graduate project is an integrative experience that requires application of concepts and tools mastered throughout the MHPA program to address important real-world problems in a specific organizational context. Each project requires significant and sustained effort on the part of each MHPA candidate, including:

- developing and adhering to a detailed work plan, with regular milestones and due dates;
- defining a discrete research question or project objective;
- reviewing the relevant published literature;
- choosing an appropriate data collection and analysis strategy, with reference to the research literature;
- collecting primary data or acquiring secondary data in accordance with WSU IRB guidelines and/or appropriate organizational policies and procedures;
- identifying and using appropriate statistical methods or other analytic techniques to answer the research question or address the project objective;
- presenting findings using appropriate and accurate tables, figures, and graphs;
- drawing clear and logical conclusions about the research question or project objective;
- making specific recommendations for additional research or administrative action.

MHPA Graduate Projects

MHPA Candidate

The MHPA candidate is ultimately responsible for completion of all graduate project requirements. This requires organization, hard work and humility. Specific requirements include:

- Maintaining a professional and collegial relationship with the Advisor, Defense Committee, and HPA and other WSU staff throughout the graduate project.
- Meeting all program deadlines, including selection of an Advisor, identification of a project format, topic and methodology by the end of the 3rd semester, and submission of a complete and fully edited draft of the poster, grant proposal or journal manuscript by the 11th week of the 4th semester.
- Scheduling regular meetings with the Advisor, with an agenda and review materials submitted at least three working days prior to the meeting.
- Regularly updating the Advisor by e-mail (copying the Academic Coordinator) regarding progress toward completion of the project, including any obstacles encountered and strategies for overcoming these obstacles.
- Soliciting and responding promptly to project feedback from HPA faculty, instructors, classmates, preceptors and staff.
- Reviewing, formatting, copy editing, spellchecking and reading aloud all written project materials, including PowerPoint slides, and the abstract, project objective(s), methodology, findings and conclusions.
- Practicing and timing all oral presentations.

Project Advisor

The Advisor meets with the candidate at least 3 times in both the 3rd and 4th semesters. He or she is responsible for approving the project format, topic and methodology in the 3rd semester, and determining readiness for the oral defense in the 12th week of the 4th semester by reviewing and approving the complete and fully edited draft of the poster, grant proposal or journal manuscript. The Advisor manages the oral defense, and serves as the primary reviewer in Committee deliberations.

Note that the HPA Project Advisors typically chair 2-5 committees per semester, on top of their significant teaching, research and university and professional service activities. Consequently, their time for individual advisees is limited, and should be used wisely. Use e-mail to regularly update the Advisor on project progress, and face-to-face meetings to make decisions about the structure and content of the project materials.

If the candidate has difficulty scheduling meetings or receiving reasonably prompt responses to specific e-mail queries, he or she should first raise these concerns with the Project Advisor and, if these difficulties continue, meet with the Academic Coordinator to discuss resolution strategies.

Defense Committee

The Defense Committee only convenes in the 12th week of the semester for the oral defenses and deliberation meeting. It is comprised of all core HPA faculty and one affiliate faculty member. Each committee member takes notes and completes a preliminary scoring rubric during the defense, and votes to pass or fail each candidate during the deliberation meeting.

Academic Coordinator

The Academic Coordinator tracks progress for all candidates, and confirms timely submission of the plan of study, committee form, scheduling forms, progress reports, and 702 grades. He or she may also serve as an advocate or mediator for the student.

Department Secretary

The Department Secretary is responsible for scheduling all student meetings with the Project Advisor and Academic Coordinator. He or she also schedules defense times during the 12th week, pending Advisor approval, on a first come, first served basis.

Project timeline

Although the oral defense of the graduate project is not scheduled until the final semester of study, work on the project begins early in the program, with regular milestones in the 3rd and 4th semester.

Exploration of project topics (1st and 2nd semesters)

Assignments in the introductory and core coursework (e.g., lectures, readings, class discussions, group projects, and term papers) can be used to identify potential project topics or study sites.

Evaluation of project settings (summer semester)

The summer internship experience forms the basis of many MHPA graduate projects. Some students continue to develop and extend work projects begun during internship, while others investigate operational issues observed at the internship site, or apply skills developed during the internship in another organizational setting.

Development of the project objective and methodology (3rd semester)

Students should register for 2 credits of HPA 702 in their third semester, and schedule at least three meetings with their Advisor to help define their project objective or research question, determine their project format, develop an appropriate analytic strategy, and identify an accessible data source. The advisor will send a progress report to the department chair and Academic Coordinator (copying the student) at the end of the third semester.

Determining readiness for oral defense (1st to 11th week of 4th semester)

In the first week of the final semester, students should schedule a meeting with the Academic Coordinator, Department Chair and Advisor to discuss readiness for proceeding with the graduate project. Candidates should register for 4 credits of HPA 702, and schedule at least three meetings with their advisor to conduct their analyses and prepare all graduate project materials. **The defense will be scheduled only after a complete and fully edited draft of the poster, grant proposal or journal manuscript is approved by the advisor.** HPA faculty will require at least 5 working days to review these project materials.

Oral defense of the graduate project (Monday-Thursday, 12th week of the 4th semester)

The oral defense of the graduate project serves as the final comprehensive examination prior to completion of the MHPA degree. **All defenses will be scheduled in the 12th week of the Fall and Spring semesters. Nonemergency travel for HPA students, faculty and staff will be restricted during these periods.** The oral examination proceeds as follows:

- Final examinations for master's students are open to the public, but only the Defense Committee may ask questions.
- All Committee members must attend the entire defense. If members must leave the room or the online session during the examination or balloting discussion, the examination or discussion is to be recessed until said member returns.
- The oral examination should not exceed 60 minutes, including: introduction and acknowledgements (5 minutes); PowerPoint presentation (20 minutes); faculty questions about the project, related coursework, and the graduate portfolio (30 minutes); closed session for preliminary Defense Committee scoring (5 minutes).

Committee defense deliberations (Friday, 12th week of the 4th semester)

After all 12th week defenses are completed, the **WSU Graduate School will schedule a single Committee meeting to discuss all defenses and vote on each candidate's graduate project.** The faculty advisor will serve as the primary reviewer and Graduate School liaison regarding the final examination process (balloting, etc.). The Graduate School liaison will return all ballots and paperwork to the Graduate School. The candidate shall pass based on the Graduate School's Table of Master Final Exam Votes (see policy at <http://gradschool.wsu.edu/chapter-seven-c/>):

Table 3. Number of votes needed to pass the oral exam.

Number of Examiners Qualified to Vote	Minimum Number of Examiners Voting to Pass
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	4
7	5
8	6

The voting options are as follows:

- **Pass:** good performance in all or most areas of the graduate project and satisfactory performance throughout the program.
- **Fail:** significant deficiencies in multiple areas, requires significant additional work (candidates must register for at least 4 credits of 702 in the semester in which they retake the oral exam).

Project format

There are three acceptable formats for the final written product of the MHPA graduate project: 1) a conference poster, 2) a grant proposal, or 3) a journal manuscript. Students are strongly encouraged, but not required, to submit their graduate project to a conference, funding agency, or journal.

Conference poster option

The poster option requires students to prepare and print a poster which is suitable for presentation at a scientific or professional conference. The poster typically includes these sections:

- **Project objective:** sentence describing the intended outcome or purpose of the project.
- **Background or context:** description of organizational, research or policy issues that make the project relevant to the study organization(s) and a broader audience.
- **Analytic approach or methods:** summary of how the project was conducted (including descriptions of the project setting or study subjects, intervention or variable specification, data collection methods and analytic strategies).

- **Findings or results:** summary of main project results, with reference to 2-4 tables, graphs and figures.
- **Implications or recommendations:** discussion of administrative or policy actions that should be considered based on project findings.
- **References:** 2-4 key citations that provide context for project objective and recommendations.
- **Acknowledgements:** optional statement noting project contributions of key individuals.

Students must also prepare a one-page **project abstract** or a 2-5 page **executive summary, and a separate bibliography** (inclusive of at least 16-20 book or article citations) used to inform the design and execution of the graduate project. The project committee may ask specific questions about any of these citations during the oral defense.

Grant proposal option

The proposal option requires students to partner with a health care or social service provider to write a proposal for submission to an internal or external funding source, to establish, maintain, or enhance service provision to a specific target population. The format of the proposal will vary according to funder application guidelines (these guidelines should be shared with the committee at the start of the project), but proposals typically include:

- **Abstract or executive summary:** short, structured summary of the proposal.
- **Aims or objectives:** intended outcomes of the funded activities.
- **Target population:** description of the size, composition and needs of the target population.
- **Rationale or program theory:** explanation of why the intervention(s) should result in the intended outcomes, with reference to the scientific and professional literature.
- **Evaluation strategy:** operational definitions of process and outcome measures, and information on when and how this data will be collected.
- **Timeline:** key milestones and specific dates for program implementation and evaluation.
- **Budget and personnel:** justification of program costs, including personnel, equipment, space rental, travel, and other relevant program expenditures.
- **References:** a minimum of 16 citations, which may include books, journal articles, reports, and other relevant documents.

Journal article option

The manuscript option requires students to prepare a review article or original research article for submission to a specific scientific or professional journal, adhering to submission guidelines specified in that journal (these guidelines should be shared with the committee at the start of the project). The format of the article may vary, according to journal guidelines, but manuscripts typically include:

- **Title page:** title, author name and contact information, word count, and running head.
- **Blinded title page:** title, word count, and running head only.

- **Abstract:** short, structured summary of the study.
- **Introduction:** brief but thorough review of the relevant literature, placing the study in the context of prior research and current policy, ending with a specific research question or directional hypothesis.
- **Methods:** description of the study setting and/or study population, sampling approach, instruments used, variable specification, and statistical or other analytical techniques employed.
- **Results:** summary of research findings, with reference to detailed tables or figures.
- **Discussion:** critical analysis of the study findings with reference to the research question or hypothesis, notes regarding study limitations, discussion of research, policy or administrative implications.
- **References:** list of articles cited (journals often limit the number of references, but citations are drawn from a large set of research articles collected during a comprehensive review of the literature).
- **Tables and/or figures:** accurate, clearly labeled and annotated presentation of study findings.

Discussions of submission and publication plans should take place after the successful defense of the project. If students are unwilling or unable to submit their manuscript to a journal within 3 months of graduation, the faculty advisor may choose to assume the role of first and submitting author, in consultation with the MHPA graduate.

Graduate portfolio requirement

All candidates are required to provide a portfolio to their committee at least 3 days before the oral defense. The format of the portfolio varies according to the preferences and career aspirations of students, but is intended to showcase the skills and experience gained in the MHPA program. All portfolios should include a one-page resume, description of the internship experience, abstract summarizing the graduate project, and writing samples such as individual papers or group project write-ups. Examples of previous student portfolios are available in the department offices.

HPA core faculty, instructors, and affiliates

HPA core faculty

[Joseph S. Coyne](#), Professor of Health Policy and Administration

BBA, University of Notre Dame

MPH and DPH, University of California, Berkeley

Research Interests: international comparative health systems research; health payment reforms; risk and decision analysis; health care finance and accounting

[Jae Kennedy](#), Chair and Professor of Health Policy and Administration

BA, Whitman College

MA, Claremont Graduate School

PhD, University of California, Berkeley

Research Interests: health care reform; disability and aging services; rehabilitation and long term care policy; program evaluation

[Sean M. Murphy](#), Assistant Professor of Health Policy and Administration

BA and MA, University of Montana

PhD, Washington State University

Research Interests: health economics; behavioral-health disorder management; cost-center efficiency; health-labor markets; econometrics

[Gary J. Smith](#), Clinical Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration

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PhD, Gonzaga University

Research Interests: Rural hospital systems, medical home models in the rural health setting, strategic planning in the rural healthcare setting

HPA research faculty

[Ka`imi Alohilani Sinclair](#), Assistant Research Professor

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PhD, University of Michigan

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[Lonnie A. Nelson](#), Assistant Research Professor

BA, MA, and PhD, University of Arizona

Research Interests: traumatic brain injury and stroke rehabilitation, posttraumatic stress disorder, American Indian health services

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[Fred Peterson, PhD](#)

Director of International Academic Affairs, WSU Spokane

[John Roll, PhD](#)

[Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research](#), WSU Spokane

**HPA STUDENT GRADUATE PLAN OF STUDY
FALL 2015 START**

COURSE #	COURSE TITLE	CREDITS	SEMESTER	TERM	YEAR
	<i>Courses listed in full-time, two-year sequence.</i>		<i>1,2,3,4</i>	<i>FA,SP,SU</i>	
HPA 500	Introduction to the Health Care System	3	1	FA	2015
HPA 510	Health Care Cost Accounting	3	1	FA	2015
HPA 515	Health Care Management	3	1	FA	2015
NSG 554	Epidemiology and Biostatistics	3	1	FA	2015
HPA 599-04	Health Services Statistics Lab	1	1	FA	2015
	Total Semester Credits	13			
HPA 502	Health Care Law	3	2	SP	2016
HPA 511	Health Care Finance	3	2	SP	2016
HPA 570	Marketing for Health Care Organizations	3	2	SP	2016
HPA 599-01	Lean/Six Sigma and Quality Improvement- <i>elective</i>	3	2	SP	2016
HPA 599-03	Professional Skills Development	1	2	SP	2016
	Total Semester Credits	10-13			
HPA 597	Internship	3		SU	2016
	Total Semester Credits	3			
HPA 501	Health Care Policy and Politics	3	3	FA	2016
HPA 509	Health Care Economics	3	3	FA	2016
HPA 517	Health Care Human Resources Management	3	3	FA	2016
HPA 520	Research & Evaluation Methods	3	3	FA	2016
HPA 599-05	Health Payment Reform – <i>elective</i>	3	3	FA	2016
HPA 702	Master's Graduate Project	2	3	FA	2016
	Total Semester Credits	14-17			
HPA 530	Health Care Information Systems	3	4	SP	2017
HPA 590	Strategic Management and Marketing	3	4	SP	2017
HPA <u>550</u>	Operations Management – <i>elective</i>	3	4	SP	2017
HPA 702	Master's Graduate Project	4	4	SP	2017
	Total Semester Credits	10-13			
	Total Program Credits	56			