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
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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 Pharmacy1 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.
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 |


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify, describe &amp; apply general management concepts</td>
<td>Identify, monitor &amp; interpret the impacts of legal, regulatory &amp; political environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with &amp; through people to achieve organizational goals</td>
<td>Evaluate &amp; modify appropriate governance structures &amp; processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify &amp; apply basic concepts &amp; tools that are integral to strategic thinking, planning &amp; management</td>
<td>Identify &amp; address needs of major stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe &amp; apply the basic principles &amp; tools of effective HR management, change mgmt &amp; org dev &amp; skills to improve work processes</td>
<td>Provide effective communication linkages within an organization and its external environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe &amp; apply the basic principles &amp; tools of CQIs &amp; skills to improve work processes</td>
<td>Measure, track, &amp; respond to the changing needs of the users of policy analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design &amp; implement business plans for health programs &amp; services</td>
<td>Understand &amp; apply the basic aspects of management engineering &amp; design &amp; process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to identify &amp; implement systems</td>
<td>Evaluate issues from different perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the subsystems of the health system broadly defined; their relationship &amp; interactions</td>
<td>Create innovative strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the roles, functions &amp; responsibilities of system components</td>
<td>Have confidence in the ability to make decisions in the presence of uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify system structures &amp; social, cultural, economic, financial &amp; political issues/factors</td>
<td>Identify &amp; prioritize managerial alternatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply models to develop structures &amp; systems to support team functions</td>
<td>Able to learn from mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asks the right questions when making decisions</td>
<td>Project future scenarios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend cause-and-effect relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science/Analysis</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify the scientific method and how to apply it to managerial decisions and problems</td>
<td>Monitor data &amp; identify deviations, whether for internal processes &amp; procedures or for external trends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify &amp; describe the structure &amp; conduct of quantitative analytical methods</td>
<td>Use &amp; manage relevant computer technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify &amp; describe the structure &amp; conduct of selected qualitative methods</td>
<td>Be an educated consumer of more complex analytical methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine data both qualitatively &amp; quantitatively to determine patterns &amp; trends</td>
<td>Identify &amp; describe information systems &amp; knowledge management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate testable hypotheses commonly arising in a management setting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political and community development</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify the major stakeholders of an organization &amp; their specific interests &amp; historical relationships</td>
<td>Use negotiation, consensus, &amp; conflict resolution methods to assist community development &amp; evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively solicit &amp; use input from the community in policy &amp; program development &amp; evaluation</td>
<td>Demonstrate &quot;emotional intelligence&quot; needed to address the diverse needs of stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build appropriate strategic collaborations at the local, state and national level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPA 500</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Introduction to the health care system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 502</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health care law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 510</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health care cost accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 515</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health care management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 554</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Epidemiology and biostatistics for health professions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 570</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Marketing for health care organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 599-03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Professional skills development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 599-04</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Health services statistics lab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Core courses (18 credit hours required)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPA 501</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health care policy and politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 509</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health care economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 511</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health care finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 517</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health care human resources management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 520</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Research and evaluation methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 530</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health care information systems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Elective courses (6 credit hours required)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPA 550</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Operations management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 599-01</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lean/Six Sigma and quality improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 599-05</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health payment reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Capstone and other required courses (12 credit hours required)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPA 590</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Strategic management and marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 597</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 702</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Graduate project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL SEMESTER</th>
<th>COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPA 500</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Introduction to the Health Care System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 501</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Health Care Policy and Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 509</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Health Care Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 510</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Health Care Cost Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 515</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Health Care Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 517</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Health Care Human Resources Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 520</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Research and Evaluation Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 554</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Epidemiology and Biostatistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 599-04</td>
<td>1 credit</td>
<td>Health Services Statistics Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 597</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 702</td>
<td>2-4 credits</td>
<td>Graduate Project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPRING SEMESTER</th>
<th>COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPA 502</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Health Care Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 511</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Health Care Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 530</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Health Care Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 550</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Operations Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 570</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Marketing for Health Care Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 590</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Strategic Management and Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 597</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 599-01</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Lean/Six Sigma and Quality Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 599-03</td>
<td>1 credit</td>
<td>Professional Skills Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA 702</td>
<td>2-4 credits</td>
<td>Graduate Project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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

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

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**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Examiners Qualified to Vote</th>
<th>Minimum Number of Examiners Voting to Pass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

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

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
BS, University of Montana
MHS, Whitworth College
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
BS and MPH, University of New Mexico
PhD, University of Michigan
Research Interests: diabetes management, health disparities, and American Indian and Hawaiian Native health services

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
HPA instructors

Mason Burley  
BA, Western Washington University  
MPA, Evergreen State College

Anna M. Franklin, Online and Professional Lean Healthcare Certification  
BA, Eastern Washington University

Gerald Kobluk  
BA, University of Washington  
JD, Gonzaga University of Law

Dan Simonson  
BSN, Arizona State University  
MHPA, Washington State University

WSU faculty affiliates

Chris Blodgett, PhD  
Director, Family and Child Research Unit (CAFRU)

Dennis Dyck, PhD  
Vice Chancellor of Research & Associate Vice Provost for Research, WSU Spokane

Mel Haberman, PhD  
Professor, College of Nursing

Donelle Howell, PhD  
Assistant Professor, College of Nursing

Sterling McPherson, PhD  
Assistant Professor, College of Nursing

Robbie Paul, PhD  
Director of Native American Health Studies, College of Nursing

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE #</th>
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**Courses listed in full-time, two-year sequence.**

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**Total Semester Credits** 13

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**Total Semester Credits** 3

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**Total Semester Credits** 14-17

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**Total Semester Credits** 10-13

**Total Program Credits** 56