# MHA Student Handbook

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**Disclaimer:** The information contained in this handbook is as up-to-date as possible. However, since requirements and procedures may change over time, students must check with their advisor regarding any questions or clarification. Further, students should regularly check the Graduate College website for updated information.
Welcome from the Dean

The mission of the School of Community Health Sciences (SCHS) is to advance the science of public health, improve the health and quality of life of people in our communities, and work to eliminate health disparities in Nevada, the nation, and the world by providing leadership in quality education, research, and service. This mission statement also serves as the mission for the MPH and other SCHS degree programs.

Our vision is to be a vibrant center of excellence for public health teaching, research, and community action and to be a magnet for state, national, and international students.

Shawn L. Gerstenberger, Ph.D
Dean, UNLV School of Community Health Sciences

Message from the Chair:

Welcome to the Master of Health Care Administration program in the Department of Health Care Administration and Policy. The MHA program is designed to provide students with valuable tools necessary to be a leader in the health care industry. Our graduates work in hospitals, large group physician practices, Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs), managed care companies, health insurance providers, long-term care, government agencies and other organizations in the health care delivery system. Many of our students currently work in the health care industry and hope to use their degree for advancement. Others are new to the health care arena and desire to attain the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the health care industry. Our program utilizes a variety of instructional formats for instruction including in-class settings, online instruction, and hybrid courses. In addition, students will complete an internship to attain experience in the field. As with any discipline, students can expect be challenged in a variety of ways including individual and group projects. Our academic faculty has been trained at some of the best programs around the country and around the world. They are dedicated scholars with successful research experience. You will help us achieve that goal. We partner with the best health care providers around the community and state to provide our students with a real world learning opportunity. As such, we have high expectations for our students. We encourage you to work hard as you tackle this program. If you are dedicated to the program and recognize the sacrifices you may need to take to complete your degree, you will be successful. All of us in the UNLV HCAP department are proud that you are here and we are ready to help. Feel free to call on us at any time.

Chris Cochran, Ph.D.
HCAP Department Chair
ABOUT UNLV

In its 50-year history, UNLV has undergone an amazing transformation from a small branch college into a thriving urban research institution of 28,000 students and 3,300 faculty and staff. Along the way, the urban land-grant university has become a dynamic resource for one of the country's fastest-growing and most enterprising cities. UNLV's 350-acre main campus, located on the Southern tip of Nevada in a desert valley surrounded by mountains, is home to more than 220 undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs, all accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES

The School of Community Health Sciences (SCHS), formerly known as the School of Public Health, was established in 2004 and is dedicated to improving the health and well being of people worldwide. Our departments, programs, and research units work to provide a diverse education, practical training experience and numerous community involvement opportunities to prepare students to become leaders and professionals in the field of public health.

SCHS students and faculty come from diverse backgrounds and represent a broad spectrum of interdisciplinary academic and research interests. We foster a collegial and supportive environment in which students work closely with faculty, staff, practitioners and other students. The quality of our educational programs reflects our deep commitment to our students.

The School of Community Health Sciences is committed to preparing students to meet the critical need for public health professionals in Nevada, the nation, and the world. We provide excellent academic programs with a variety of areas for concentration and the opportunity for applied research. The School of Community Health Sciences has a special interest in community-based participatory research.

Degree Programs

The SCHS offers two undergraduate and four graduate degrees in various disciplines of public health. The graduate degrees offered are Master of Public Health (MPH), the Master of Health Care Administration (MHA) and the Ph.D. in Public Health with concentration in Health Care Administration. The MPH degree includes four concentration options: epidemiology and biostatistics; environmental and occupational health; health care administration and policy; and, health promotion.

Departments, Programs and Research Units

The School of Community Health Sciences houses several departments and programs including: (1) the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health; (2) the Epidemiology and
Biostatistics Program, which is housed in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health; and, (3) the Department of Health Care Administration and Policy.

In addition to a world class education, the School includes a number of research centers and laboratories: American Indian Research and Education Center; Center for Health Disparities Research; Nevada Center for Environmental and Health Surveillance; Nevada Institute for Children’s Research and Policy; Environmental and Occupational Health Laboratory; and Emerging Diseases Research Laboratory. These centers and laboratories within the school offer students specialized research and real-world training opportunities.

**Accreditation**

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) Board of Councilors acted at its June 6–8, 2013 meeting to accredit the Master of Public Health Program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, School of Community Health Sciences for a five-year term, extending to July 1, 2018. This accreditation encompasses all of the core public health areas of emphasis, including environmental and occupational health, health care administration and policy, social and behavioral health, and biostatistics and epidemiology. MHA program is currently pursuing an accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation Healthcare Management Education (CAHME).

**WEBSITES YOU SHOULD BE VERY FAMILIAR WITH**

The Master of Health Care Administration (MHA)
http://www.unlv.edu/hca

The Graduate College website:
http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/

The Health Care Administration Student Association (HCASA)
http://hcasaunlv.wix.com/hcasa

The Nevada Chapter ACHE
http://nevada.ache.org/
PROGRAM INFORMATION

THE MASTER OF HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM (MHA)

The Master of Health Care Administration degree program is the only graduate health care administration program in the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). The MHA will prepare students to assume leadership roles in health care organizations. The degree is recognized in the health care field as an important credential that allows graduates to assume health care management positions. The curriculum is developed to include all the critical competencies for health care leadership, including issues of health care delivery, health care finance, ethical and legal issues in health care administration and management topics. Students and faculty will contribute through research and service to the knowledge and applications of management in health care; and they will use their education and expertise to help meet the health care management needs of the State of Nevada and beyond.

Sub-Plans:

Students have two options for completing the MHA program:

1. **Subplan 1: Non-Thesis Track**
2. **Subplan 2: Thesis Track**

Contact Information

MHA Degree Program Contact information:
A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found here: [http://www.unlv.edu/hca/directory](http://www.unlv.edu/hca/directory)

**HCAP Department Chair**
Dr. Chris Cochran  
4505 Maryland Parkway Box 453023  
Las Vegas Nevada, 89154-3023  
Email: chris.Cochran@unlv.edu  
Phone: 702-895-1400  
Fax: 702-895-5573

**MHA Graduate Coordinator:**
Dr. Jay Shen  
4505 Maryland Parkway Box 453023  
Las Vegas Nevada, 89154-3023  
Email: jay.shen@unlv.edu  
Phone: 702-895-5830  
Fax: 702-895-5573

**Program Requirements**

**Admissions**
Detailed information about admission to the MHA Degree Program is located in the [graduate college website](http://www.unlv.edu/hca/directory).
Orientation
Every semester a student orientation session is held to introduce students to the program and to meet the faculty. Students are encouraged to attend this important event in their first semester. If unable to attend, students are required to obtain the information covered in the orientation from their Graduate Advisor. Check the School website for orientation dates.

Advising
Each student will be assigned to an academic faculty member for advising. MHA students are required to obtain advising by the end of their first semester in the program. Advising allows students to understand the course sequencing requirements and plan out their academic schedule in advance. Students must complete the required advising forms and submit these forms to the graduate college at this time. Failure to complete this during the first semester may result in delays in student registration for subsequent semesters. Advising plans can be changed, but students should meet with their advisor if they cannot meet their course of study schedule to plan out the remaining courses.

Student contact hours
The HCAP program uses several class setting approaches to providing the student the curricula needed to complete their degree. These include fully in-class courses, fully online courses, and “hybrid” courses (combination of in-class and online instruction). For accreditation purposes, the MHA program requires students to attain at least 150 contact hours (typically through in-class instruction). Thus, MHA students are required to be enroll and complete a minimum of the equivalent of 4 in-class courses. These courses cannot include the internship (HCA 794) or the capstone course (HCA 779). This requirement may be met in a variety of options including fully in-class courses or a combination or in-class courses or “hybrid” courses (in-class and online) courses. Students should contact their faculty advisor in their first semester to find out which courses are available in an in-class setting only, hybrid setting, and online setting only.

Writing Style Guide
Students should use APA style in their scientific writing throughout the MHA program.
Program of Study/Coursework

Non-Thesis Track (see Graduate Catalogue HCA for detailed information about courses)
Total Credits Required: 45

Required Courses – Credits: 42
HCA 701 - U.S. Health Care System: Programs and Policies
HCA 702 - Epidemiology in Health Services Management
HCA 703 - Management of Health Service Organizations and Systems
HCA 715 - Health Services Research Methods
HCA 716 - Health Care Accounting and Finance
HCA 717 - Operations and Quality Management of Health Services
HCA 718 - Health Care Economics
HCA 719 - Human Resources Management of Health Care Organizations
HCA 720 - Information Systems in Health Services Management
HCA 721 - Advanced Health Care Finance
HCA 730 - Strategic Management of Health Services
HCA 793 - Internship in Health Care Administration
HCA 761 - Health Care Law and Ethics for Managers
EAB 703 - Biostatistical Methods for the Health Sciences

Capstone Course – Credits: 3 (select one of the two)
HCA 779 - Health Care Administration Capstone Course
HCA 794 – Professional Paper

Suggested Timeline for Key Action Steps

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<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Forms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Semester</td>
<td>• Attend Orientation</td>
<td>Submit the Proposed Masters Degree Program Parts I &amp; II (MHA website)</td>
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<td>• Meet with Advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Semester</td>
<td>• Apply for graduation early in the semester (check dates)</td>
<td>Submit all required forms to the Graduate College</td>
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<td>• Complete the capstone course</td>
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Degree Requirements
Completion of a minimum of 45 credit hours with a minimum GPA of 3.00.

Graduation Requirements
1. The student must submit all required forms to the Graduate College and then apply for graduation from both degrees up to two semesters prior to completing his/her degree requirements.
2. The student must successfully complete the capstone course.

**Thesis Track** (see Graduate Catalogue HCA for detailed information about courses)

Students must have approval from their Graduate Advisor!

Total Credits Required: 48

**Required Courses – Credits: 42**

- HCA 701 - U.S. Health Care System: Programs and Policies
- HCA 702 - Epidemiology in Health Services Management
- HCA 703 - Management of Health Service Organizations and Systems
- HCA 715 - Health Services Research Methods
- HCA 716 - Health Care Accounting and Finance
- HCA 717 - Operations and Quality Management of Health Services
- HCA 718 - Health Care Economics
- HCA 719 - Human Resources Management of Health Care Organizations
- HCA 720 - Information Systems in Health Services Management
- HCA 721 - Advanced Health Care Finance
- HCA 730 - Strategic Management of Health Services
- HCA 793 - Internship in Health Care Administration
- HCA 761 - Health Care Law and Ethics for Managers
- EAB 703 - Biostatistical Methods for the Health Sciences

**Thesis – Credits: 6**

- HCA 799 - Thesis Research

**Graduate Advisors and Committees**

(This information is only relevant for the students who will be completing a Thesis track). Seek additional information on the forms and timeline from Graduate Advisor.

**Degree Requirements**

1. Completion of a minimum of 48 credit hours with a minimum GPA of 3.00.
2. In consultation with his/her advisor, a student will organize a thesis committee of at least three departmental members. In addition, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed. An additional committee member may be added at the student and department’s discretion. Please see Graduate College policy for committee appointment guidelines.

**Graduation Requirements**
1. The student must submit all required forms to the Graduate College and then apply for graduation from both degrees up to two semesters prior to completing his/her degree requirements.
2. The student must submit and successfully defend his/her thesis by the posted deadline. The defense must be advertised and is open to the public.
3. Students must submit his/her approved, properly formatted hard-copy thesis to the Graduate College, and submit the approved electronic version to ProQuest by the posted deadline.

**Suggested Timeline for Key Action Steps**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Forms</th>
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</table>
| First Semester | • Attend Orientation  
• Select Advisor and Committee                                      | Appointment of Advisory Committee form           |
| Second Semester | • Establish and submit proposed Plan of Study to Graduate College – before completion of 16 credit hours | Proposed Masters Degree Program Parts I & II (MHA website) |
| Third Semester | • Present prospectus and submit prospectus approval form to Graduate College | Prospectus Approval form                         |
| Last Semester | • Apply for graduation early in the semester (check dates)  
• Defend capstone and submit completed defense form to Graduate College  
• Submit final copy of thesis to Graduate College  
• BE AWARE OF DEADLINES | Oral Defense Results form  
Graduation Application (see Graduate College website) |
HCA 793 – Internship in Health Care Administration

Each student must participate in the internship site visits and have their internship proposal the semester before they take an internship. Each student must contact the Internship Coordinator at the beginning of the semester preceding their internship semester to schedule site visits. Students who are currently working in the management position in health care may petition to way the internship. However, those students would be required to take an additional elective to meet the 45 credit hour requirement.

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines
Academic Integrity: http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=2524-Academic_Integrity

HCA 779 – Health Care Administration Capstone

In their final semester, students in the non-thesis track MHA program will complete the Health Care Administration Capstone as their culminating experience. Students must be in their final semester and must have completed all other required coursework leading up to the capstone course. The capstone option typically requires the attendance at several class seminars and the completion of group projects/case studies relating to the core course requirements of the program. In order to register for the capstone course, students will need to seek approval from the Graduate Coordinator or Department Chair. For more information regarding the capstone course, students should contact their advisor.

Annual Review and Exit Survey

Each spring term, graduate students are required to complete the Graduate Student Annual Review survey. This survey will be sent by the Graduate College to the student’s Rebelmail account. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress while setting goals for the year ahead.

During the student’s culminating experience (Capstone/Thesis presentation) students will be required to submit an exit survey measuring their experience in the Master of Health Care Administration program. This information is vital to the program to improve the quality of the courses and to determine the student’s perception of the program overall.
University Resources

**Academic Success Center**
The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

**Alumni Association**
With an alumni base 90,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

**Commencement Office**
Located in the UNLV Registrar’s Office, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College.

**Office of Diversity Initiatives**
The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV’s diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**
The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.
Office of International Student and Scholars

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The Jean Nidetch Women’s Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

UNLV Libraries

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV
community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

**Office of Veteran Services**

The UNLV Office of Veteran Services is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

**The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office**

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

**Writing Center**

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.
University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- Academic Integrity
- Activation for Military Service
- Change of Address
- FERPA/Privacy Rights
- Health Insurance - Mandatory
- Jeanne Clery Campus Safety and Security Report
- Proof of Immunization
- Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects
- Rebelmail Policy
- Student Conduct Code
- Student Computer Use Policy
- Title IX

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the Graduate Catalog:

- Academic Calendar
- Academic Policies
- Admission and Registration Information
- Degree Progression Policies & Procedures

In addition, the Graduate College website contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.
MHA HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I, ________________________________ have received and read the MHA Handbook.

✓ I understand that I am responsible for completion of my degree program.

✓ I understand that I am responsible for identifying an advisor early in my program.

✓ I understand that I am responsible for identifying and completing all required forms and paperwork.

✓ I understand that I am responsible for being aware of program policies and deadlines

✓ I understand that the information contained in this guidebook and on the SCHS website are as accurate as possible but that changes may occur.

_________________________________    _____________________________
Signature of Student                  Date

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE
MHA GRADUATE COORDINATOR
## Handbook Information

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