MHA Program Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Tell me about the MHA Program.
A: 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. Some may choose to become health care entrepreneurs. 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.

Q: How is the MHA Program different from the EMHA Program?
A: The MHA offers on-ground and online courses, and requires a total of 45-48 credit hours for graduation. It is intended for students with an approved undergraduate degree with little or no experience. The additional course work required for the MHA that is not part of the EMHA is: Biostatistical Methods in Health Sciences (EAB 703), Health Services Research Methods (HCA 715) and an Internship (HCA 793). Students have the option in the MHA of taking a thesis (48 credits) or non-thesis (45 credits) track.

Q. What courses are required for the MHA curriculum?
Non-Thesis Track (see Graduate Catalogue HCA for detailed information about courses)

Total Credits Required: 45

A:

- 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
Q: What are the Program’s Capstone requirements?
A: 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, including the Internship. 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.

Q: When should I apply?
A: The deadline for Fall 2017 is April 1. The deadline for Spring 2018 is December 1.

Q: How do I access the on-line MHA application?
A: Go to the Graduate College website: http://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege and click on the red “Apply Now” button in the lower left-hand side of the page.

Q: What are the application requirements?
A: 1) Complete the graduate application online and submit application fee.
2) Provide 3-5 letters of recommendation, at least one from your current or most recent employer. (When you go into the online application, be prepared to provide contact information for the 3-5 people who will provide your recommendation letters. A minimum of 3 recommendations are required. We suggest that you request more than 3 because some people do not respond timely, which prevents our processing of your application.) UNLV will email your recommenders a link directly to complete the recommendation. Please advise your references that using Firefox, Safari or Google Chrome yields the best result in submitting these letters. The use of Internet Explorer is not advised.) 3) Provide your under-graduate transcripts and any graduate transcripts, if applicable.
4) Provide a resume and a personal statement (more information below).
4) Participation in a personal interview may be required at the discretion of the department, if you are border-line in meeting program requirements.
5) Schedule your GRE exam as soon as you decide to apply to the MHA Program. (See GRE Tips sheet on Department’s website for further information.)
6) The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) must be taken by international applicants unless they have an undergraduate degree from an accredited U.S. institution. A min. score of 85 is required, but is subject to change. Please contact the Graduate College if you require more information.

Q: Are there minimum GPA requirements for my under-graduate degree to be eligible to apply?
A: A GPA of 3.0 or greater is preferred for applicants applying to the EMHA Program. Students with lower GPAs may be considered if they have substantial work experience and excellent recommendation letters that are believed to compensate for a lower GPA, particularly if the under-graduate degree was taken many years ago.
Q: What should be included in the personal statement?
A: Provide a brief summary of:
- Why you selected your undergraduate major
- Why you want to pursue a graduate health care administration degree
- What you believe you bring to the program and to other students in terms of your experience and unique perspectives
- Why you believe that UNLV is a good fit for you
- What you would like to do from a career perspective once you complete your MHA (ie. What are your career goals?)

Q: If an interview is required for me, how is the interview structured?
A: At least two administrative or faculty members of the HCA Department will meet with you in-person or via Skype. We would like to understand both your personal goals for the program and what your career aspirations are. Consider this an informal career discussion, as we want you to get as much out of the process as we do, and we strive to answer all of your questions.

Q: How much will the program cost?
A: The graduate registration fees are $264 per credit hour. Fees are subject to change, including annual increases, and summer fees are generally about $11 higher per credit hour. Most students cover the costs of this program with a combination of family contributions, employer funds, personal savings, and student loans. Completing an online FASFA application at the time of your graduate application submission will allow you to know early how much you can count on in terms of federal student loan funding. The federal government provides more than $150 billion annually in grants, work-study, and loans to eligible students. Higher income applicants are generally eligible for loans as well, so it is a good idea to complete the free application regardless of income level, which requires your most recent tax return information, and can be done online at: https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa. Check with UNLV financial aid relative to policies around tuition reimbursement paid by employers and payment schedule options for the MHA Program.

Q: If I am applying to the MHA and I have graduate healthcare courses from another institution, will I receive transfer credit?
A: Generally, up to 15 credits can be transferred into UNLV from a comparable program at a regionally accredited university, as long as the credits were not used to qualify for a degree program that you have already graduated from. You must provide course syllabi and an official transcripts that show a grade of B or better (no Pass/Fail courses are eligible). Courses will be reviewed by department faculty to determine if they are directly applicable to the MHA curriculum, prior to transfer credit being granted. You must complete a Transfer Credit form after you are admitted to the Program, and you must include on the Degree Audit Companion form when you submit your Degree Worksheet for graduation review at the end of your first semester, in order to receive credit for these classes.

Q: Are any prerequisites required for MHA classes?
A: Yes. You are required to complete Econ. 102 and Acc. 201 before taking the graduate level related courses (HCA 716, 718, 721).

Q: What are the Program’s Internship requirements? Can the internship be waived?

Each student must participate in the internship site visits and have their internship proposal completed and approved 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 a management position in health care may petition to waive the internship. However, those students would be required to take an additional elective to meet the 45 credit hour requirement. (Students with substantial work experience may wish to enroll in the Executive MHA Program (EMHA) instead of the Traditional MHA Program, and can obtain additional information regarding the EMHA at: https://www.unlv.edu/degree/emha).

Q: How can I continue to gain industry knowledge and develop professional networks while I am in the EMHA Program?
A: The following industry associations offer both professional and student memberships, along with volunteer opportunities. If you are seeking to develop more executive level relationships and continue your industry learning beyond college and your work environment, these association relationships can be powerful.

- **American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE)** – also provides an extensive national job board and offers the Fellow designation (FACHE), which is board certification as a health care executive, and highly regarded for C-Suite executives in healthcare. Learn more at: (http://www.ache.org/faculty_students/students.cfm)
- Health Care Financial Management Association (HFMA). Learn more at: https://www.hfma.org/
- American Health Information Management Association. Learn more at: http://www.ahima.org/
- American Association of Healthcare Administrative Management. Learn more at: http://www.aaham.org/
- Health Care Administrators Association. Learn more at: http://www.hcaa.org/

Q: Is health insurance mandatory for graduate students?
A: Students who are admitted into a graduate program and are enrolled in nine credits or more (regardless of the course level) in a semester, will automatically be billed for student health insurance. It is incumbent upon those students who already have health insurance to complete the UNLV online waiver to waive out of the UNLV student health insurance. Once approved, a health insurance waiver is good for one academic year. Please review information for insurance waiver at: http://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/current/healthinsurance

Q: Are immunizations required?
A: Please visit the Graduate College policy at: https://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/immunizations

General graduate college policies: For any other graduate student policies, please refer to the UNLV 2016-2017 Graduate Catalog at: http://catalog.unlv.edu/index.php?catoid=17

Q. Who should I contact if I have further questions about the program or my candidacy?
A. Please contact Jennifer Bonilla, Graduate Programs Director at Jennifer.bonilla@unlv.edu or at 702-895-4554. Once you are admitted to the MHA Program, you will be assigned an Advisor who you should meet with at least once per semester. Your Advisor will guide you through the program requirements, and answer questions that you may have after matriculation.