

Virginia Commonwealth University

## The Professional MSHA Program-Online Master of Science in Health Administration



Ranked second in the country by *Modern Healthcare*, the Master of Science in Health Administration (MSHA) Program-Online at VCU is specifically designed for self-motivated, mature, and experienced professionals seeking graduate education in health care management for continued career advancement. The Department of Health Administration at VCU has provided high quality graduate health administration education for more than 50 years. Moreover, unlike many distance learning programs, the Department has many years of experience offering the MSHA degree online, having entered the first class in 1988.

### Learn more about our MSHA Program

Web Site:  
[www.had.vcu.edu/programs/msha/](http://www.had.vcu.edu/programs/msha/)

Program Coordinator  
Ms. Carolyn Wells  
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### Program Structure

The Professional MSHA Program-Online is an innovative, fully accredited 22-month course of study leading to a masters degree. The Program combines Internet-based and other distance learning technologies which allow health care professionals working full time and residing anywhere in the U.S. to complete the Program.

### Curriculum

Full time students participate in four semesters of study with six one-week on-campus sessions. Each semester consists of on and off-campus sessions designed to minimize time away from employment and home as well as travel expenses. During the on-campus sessions, students attend classes at the Medical College of Virginia Campus of Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. All courses are three credits unless otherwise noted.

#### *First Semester (Fall)*

Health System Organization, Financing, and Performance (HADE 602)

Health Economics (HADE 624)

Organizational Behavior and Design in Health Care Management (HADE 646)

#### *Second Semester (Spring)*

Health Care Managerial Accounting (HADE 606)

Health Care Management Decision Support Systems (HADE 610)

Management of Health Care Organizations (HADE 647)

#### *Second Semester – Part 2 (Summer)*

Managed Care (HADE 631)

#### *Third Semester (Fall)*

Financial Management in Health Care Organizations (HADE 607)

Managerial Epidemiology (HADE 609, 2 credits)

Health Law and Bioethics (HADE 611)

Health Information Systems and Performance (HADE 612)

#### *Fourth Semester (Spring)*

Health Care Marketing (HADE 614)

Health Care Strategic Management (HADE 648)

Human Resources Management in Health Care (HADE 649)

**Requirements are subject to change for each incoming class, without prior notice to applicants.**

### Appropriate Candidates

Typically, successful applicants demonstrate diversity in their educational, work and life experiences, as well as a capacity to pursue a rigorous course of professional graduate study and assume increasingly responsible positions in the health care industry. Additionally, they have at least five years of professional experience in the health care field. The program is specifically designed to meet the distinctive professional development needs of:

#### *Clinicians/Clinical Managers*

- who want to make a career transition from clinical practice to management.
- who have assumed major administrative responsibilities within their own clinical areas.

#### *Executive-level Managers*

- who lack a graduate degree in health administration and want to expand their knowledge and skills to prepare for further career advancement.

#### *Mid-Career Managers*

- who require advanced training to prepare themselves to assume executive-level management positions.
- who need additional knowledge and skills to fulfill the expanded requirements of their present positions.

### Quality

VCU's Department of Health Administration is one of the oldest providers of health administration education in the nation. For 60 years, the Department has maintained its mission of educating men and women to lead complex health care organizations. Consistently ranked by US News & World Report as one of the nation's top 10 health administration programs, VCU is viewed by education and health care leaders as a leading program in health care administration.

### Accreditation

The MSHA Program maintains full national accreditation status with the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME). Accreditation by CAHME demonstrates that the MSHA Program involves students in appropriate areas of decision making and evaluation, maintains a rigorous and current curriculum, and ensures applied and integrative learning. Currently, the Program has been awarded the maximum seven years of accreditation.

## Admissions

Admission to the Program is competitive and is granted on a rolling basis; therefore, applicants are encouraged to apply prior to March 1. Applications to the MSHA Program are evaluated on the basis of several factors: grade point average (GPA), professional work/life experience, and standardized test scores.

The application process will be supported by interviews with finalist applicants. Direct any questions regarding application status and processing to the Program office at 804.828.7799.

The final application deadline is **March 1**.

## Application Components

1. VCU Graduate School Online Application: The online application can be accessed at [www.graduate.vcu.edu/admission/prospective/domestic/](http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/admission/prospective/domestic/)
2. Official Transcript: Your official transcript must show a conferred baccalaureate degree from a fully accredited college or university. An official transcript is also required for any school where undergraduate or graduate coursework has been completed, even if a degree was not conferred. The transcript request form can be accessed at [www.graduate.vcu.edu/pdfs/transcript.pdf](http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/pdfs/transcript.pdf)
3. GRE or GMAT score: There is no preference for one test over the other. Applicants who have taken the GRE or GMAT in the last five years may submit previous scores.
4. Resume: Your resume should demonstrate evidence of personal achievement, scholarship, intellectual ability and professional promise for a career in health administration.
5. Personal Statement: Your personal statement is your opportunity to highlight your background, interests, plans, and decision to pursue a MSHA degree. Most importantly, this is your opportunity to communicate your passion for the field of health administration and demonstrate your uniqueness. Applicants can also use the personal statement to explain any inconsistencies in other components of the application. There are no specific guidelines or length for the personal statement.
6. Three Letters of Reference: You must submit three letters of recommendation, preferably from academic and/or work supervisors. Each letter must accompany the reference form found at [www.graduate.vcu.edu/pdfs/reference.pdf](http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/pdfs/reference.pdf)

Your resume, personal statement, and letters of reference must be submitted directly to the MSHA Program at the following address:

**VCU Graduate Program in Health Administration**  
**ATTN: Carolyn Wells, MSHA Program Coordinator**  
**1008 East Clay Street**  
**PO Box 980203**  
**Richmond, Virginia 23298-0203**

## Professional Work Experience

Applicants should have at least five years of professional experience in a health care or related organization. Preference in application decisions is given to those with management experience. A professional resume should be submitted along with the other application materials. The resume is an important element of the application materials.

## Graduate Studies Aptitude Tests

The GRE and GMAT are administered on a variety of dates in many locations throughout the country. Applicants should make arrangements to take the examination of their choice no later than the February before the March application deadline. For information about testing dates and registration materials contact:

GRE	GMAT
Educational Testing Services	Educational Testing
Services	
CN 6000	CN 6103
Princeton, NJ 08541	Princeton, NJ 08541
609.771.7670	(609).771.7330
<a href="http://www.gre.org">http://www.gre.org</a>	<a href="http://www.mba.com/mba">http://www.mba.com/mba</a>

Those holding graduate or professional degrees (for example, MD, DDS, PharmD, Ph.D.) may be eligible to have the GRE or GMAT requirement waived. Applicants who wish to waive the GRE or GMAT requirement must submit a written request to the Admissions Committee Chair for consideration by the committee. The request should demonstrate the possession of strong verbal and quantitative abilities, deemed to be comparable to at least the 50th percentile of the standardized tests. The applicant may include material that will permit a judgment to be made regarding verbal and quantitative abilities such as graded course work completed. The MSHA Admissions Committee forwards petitions to the Graduate Dean.

## Prerequisites

No specific previous course work is required for application to the Program. Upon formal acceptance, students complete non-credit independent-study modules prior to the first on-campus session. The modules are in three areas: microeconomics, accounting, and statistics. These modules include books, articles, programmed instruction handbooks, and computer-aided instructional material. A fee is assessed to cover the costs of the materials. Completing these independent study modules precludes the need for taking prerequisite course work before admission. Applicants with acceptable previous course work in accounting, economics, or statistics completed within five years of entering the Program may not be required to complete these independent study modules.

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