



Department of Healthcare Leadership  
& Management

## **MHA Student Handbook**

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# **DIVISION INFORMATION**

## **MHA Mission Statement**

The Master of Health Administration (MHA) Program within the Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management strives to improve the management of the healthcare delivery system by educating current and future health care leaders in an interprofessional environment, engaging in excellence in scholarly activities, and providing service to the university, the region, and the professional community. The MHA Program serves the citizens of South Carolina and beyond in meeting healthcare management needs by preparing students for careers in healthcare management and leadership positions in health services organizations.

The Residential MHA Program prepares students who have limited knowledge of healthcare with the required knowledge and skills to enter and ultimately advance in health care management positions. Concepts presented in class are reinforced and applied in practice settings throughout the students' program of study. Students take classes during the day as full-time students. Upon completion of program requirements, they are prepared to compete for administrative fellowships or employment.

The Executive MHA Program develops working health care professionals by providing the needed knowledge and skills for advancement in the health care industry. Classes are offered in a format conducive for the working student, including using weekend offerings and distance education technologies.

## **MHA Vision and Value Statements**

The Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management is striving to achieve national distinction in education, scholarship, and service by offering a Residential and Executive MHA program of choice. To accomplish this goal, the division is committed to:

- Providing an environment in which freedom of inquiry and debate is valued and protected
- Creating an open, collaborative environment that encourages team work and promotes professional development
- Offering a strong MHA educational program with high academic standards that accommodate the needs of traditional and non-traditional students
- Treating students with respect and dignity
- Achieving diversity of students and faculty
- Maintaining strong alumni and employer relations
- Maintaining effective mechanisms for curriculum review and development
- Ensuring that students are equipped with the competencies they need to be successful
- Using technology to provide innovative forums and enhancement of the educational environment
- Providing students experiential, integrative and interprofessional learning opportunities in a variety of appropriate settings
- Collaborating with other institutions to provide health care education
- Contributing to the improvement of health care educational services through engagement in scholarship
- Informing policy-makers at local, state, and national levels

- Maintaining financial stability
- Improving the delivery of healthcare services through the provision of consulting and community services

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Philosophy**

The Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management is committed to maintaining high academic standards. The following policies are intended to provide clear guidance for both faculty and students when a student is performing below current academic expectations and when a student requests a withdrawal from a course.

A student is considered to be in “good” academic standing when he/she maintains a 3.0 grade point average for each semester of enrollment and he/she maintains a 3.0 cumulative grade point average during the course of study.

It is important for all MHA students to recognize that they are responsible for their academic performance and that they must arrange their study habits and personal affairs in such a way as to maximize it. The faculty recognizes that there may be extenuating circumstances that will impact a student’s academic performance. However, these circumstances do not eliminate the student’s responsibility. We encourage any student with personal circumstances that could impact academic performance to seek counsel from his/her academic advisor or the program director. Hopefully, this consultation will occur early enough to allow the student and advisor to work together to form a plan of action to protect the student’s academic standing. If the circumstances are such that a student is unable to focus on his or her studies and academic requirements, she or he should consider a leave of absence or withdrawal from the program.

### **Application Requirements and Admission Criteria**

#### **Residential MHA Format**

Applicants for the Residential MHA format must complete the GRE or GMAT exam prior to application review. Applicants must complete the online application forms, submit all transcripts, complete an essay describing the applicant’s professional goals, reason for seeking admission to the MHA program and summary of professional accomplishments and three references from former professors or people who know the student’s work ethic. Applicants are asked to participate in a faculty/student interview prior to application decision.

In general, applicants must have completed a Bachelor’s degree\* with an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (on a 4 point scale) or better, achieved a competitive score on the GRE exam or GMAT exam, and obtained satisfactory references attesting to their ability to be successful in the program. Prerequisite courses in basic statistics and microeconomics are required.

\*with the exception of students in the Clemson University Accelerated Pathway program.

## **Executive MHA Format**

Applicants for the Executive MHA format must complete the GRE or GMAT exam prior to application review unless they have been approved for a waiver of the exam. Waivers are granted when students can demonstrate that they have achieved high academic performance in their undergraduate work. Applicants must complete the online application forms; submit all transcripts; complete an essay describing the applicant's professional goals, reason for seeking admission to the MHA program, and summary of professional accomplishments; and three references from former professors or people who know the student's work output and ethic. EMHA students must have at least one year, and preferably two years working in a healthcare environment or a healthcare-related industry (insurance, pharmaceutical firm, medical equipment, etc.). Prerequisite courses in basic statistics and microeconomics are required.

In general, applicants must have completed a Bachelor's degree with an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (on a 4-point scale) or better, a competitive score on the GRE exam or GMAT exam, and obtained satisfactory references attesting to their ability to be successful in the program. Applicants with a GPA of 3.0 or higher can have the GRE requirement waived.

## **PROBATION AND DISMISSAL FOR FAILURE TO MEET ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

### **Standards for Automatic Dismissal for Failure to Meet Academic Requirements**

An MHA student will be dismissed from his/her program of study if he/she meets the conditions for placement on academic probation two times while enrolled as a student in the MHA program.

### **Academic Probation**

A MHA student will be placed on academic probation for any one of the following three reasons:

1. Earning a failing grade (under 2.0) in any academic course during the semester,
2. Earning a grade point average below a 3.0 for the semester, or
3. Failure to earn cumulative grade point average of 3.0.

Placement on academic probation is an indication that the student's performance in the previous semester was not acceptable. All students' academic records will be evaluated at the end of each semester to determine whether or not they meet any of the conditions to be placed on academic probation for the next semester. It is the student's responsibility to be cognizant of his or her academic status at the end of each semester. A student will be asked to withdraw or will be dismissed from his/her program of study if he/she meets the conditions to be placed on academic probation two times while a MHA student. Students will be asked to withdraw or will be dismissed regardless of whether the two semesters in question run consecutively or not. This policy applies to both full-time and part-time students.

Any student who is dismissed from his/her program due to academic difficulties may write a letter of appeal within seven calendar days to the Dean in the College of Health Professions. During the appeal process, a student is considered to be maintaining academic activity and interacting with faculty, even if not physically present in a classroom.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE

MUSC Enrollment Services records the following grades on a student's transcript to indicate a withdrawal from a course.

**WD:** indicates the student withdrew from course after the drop/add period but before the end of the first third of the course. This requires prior approval of the dean upon recommendation of the instructor. There is no academic impact on the grade point average, but the student's progress may be affected.

**WP:** indicates the student withdrew from a course, for reasons beyond his/her control, after the first third of the course was completed. The student was performing at a satisfactory level. This requires prior approval of the dean upon recommendation of the instructor. There is no academic impact on the grade point average, but the student's progress may be affected.

**WF:** indicates the student withdrew from a course after the first third of the course was completed. The student was performing at an unsatisfactory level. This requires prior approval of the dean upon recommendation of the instructor. There is no academic impact on the grade point average, but the student's progress may be affected.

**WR:** indicates the student withdrew after the drop/add period from all courses at the University with permission to take a leave of absence. This requires the prior approval of the dean and may result in dismissal if the terms of the leave of absence are not met.

The Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management will award these withdrawal grades according the following criteria.

If the student requests a withdrawal from a course:

- **before the published MUSC drop/add period deadline**, no grade is required from the instructor. The course will not be recorded in the student's permanent record.
- **after the published MUSC drop/add deadline, but before one third of the course is completed**, the instructor will record a grade of WD on the drop/add form.
- **after the first third of the course is completed, but before two thirds of the course is completed**, the instructor will record a grade WP or WF on the drop/add form. Students must have at least a 2.0 average in the course to receive the WP grade. WR is recorded only after verification that the student has completed the necessary paperwork to take a leave of absence from the program.
- **after two thirds of the course is completed, the student will not be permitted to withdraw from a course.** WR may be recorded only after verification that the student has completed the necessary paperwork to take a leave of absence from the program.

It is the student's responsibility to acquire, complete and file a Request for Add and/or Drop form when he/she wants to request permission to withdrawal from a course. These forms are available from the DHLM Student Services Coordinator. *No withdrawal, other than one prior to the drop/add date, is automatic.* A withdrawal from a course requires the permission of the instructor and the approval of the dean. Failure to submit properly completed and approved forms could result in a 0.0 grade.

# DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

## Academic Performance

The student must complete all course requirements and earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in order to graduate and be awarded the MHA degree. If a student withdraws from a course or earns a failing grade in a course (under a 2.0), the student must retake the same course at MUSC in order to graduate.

## Competency Model

The Faculty of the MHA Program has adopted a competency model to guide the curriculum development. The model was developed with input from alumni, faculty and health administration practitioners.

	Competency	Description
<b><i>I. Communication and Relationship Management</i></b>		
	1. Interpersonal Communication	Build collaborative relationships and negotiation skills
	2. Writing Skills	Prepare business communications
	3. Presentation Skills	Demonstrate effective oral communication and presentation skills
<b><i>II. Leadership</i></b>		
	4. Leading and Managing Others	Hold self and others accountable for organizational goal attainment
	5. Change Management	Promote and manage change
	6. Ability for Honest Self-assessment	Demonstrate reflection through self-assessment
	7. Systems Thinking	Be able to assess the potential impacts and consequences of decisions in a broad variety of situations
	8. Problem-solving and Decision-making	Apply evidence-based decision making techniques to healthcare questions
<b><i>III. Professionalism</i></b>		
	9. Personal and Professional Ethics	Adhere to ethical business principles; exhibit ethical behaviors; responding in timely manner and fulfilling one's commitments
	10. Professional and Community Contribution	Participate in community service; balance professional and personal pursuits
	11. Working in Teams	Create, participate in, and lead teams, including inter-professionalism

<b><i>IV. Knowledge of the Healthcare Environment</i></b>		
	12. Healthcare Issues and Trends	Understand circumstances causing major changes and reform in U.S. health care delivery
	13. Healthcare Legal Principles	Discuss and critically analyze health-related legal principles including standards, regulations, and risk management.
	14. Health Policy	Articulate the impact of select health policies on the delivery of health services
	15. Population Health and Status Assessment	Understand and explain the major factors in health status
<b><i>V. Business and Analytical Skills</i></b>		
	16. Financial Management	Ability to compile and analyze financial data; develop capital, operating and cash flow budgets; analyze investment data; pro forma development
	17. Human Resources	Apply methods and techniques related to the management of health care organization employees and professional staff
	18. Organizational Dynamics and Governance	Understand the roles, responsibilities, structures, and influence governing bodies hold in health care organizations
	19. Strategic Planning	Ability to perform environmental analysis and develop strategic alternatives; discern competitive strategy; formulate business strategy based on evidence
	20. Marketing	Analysis and assessment of markets, market segmentation, strategy, change and innovation
	21. Information Management/ Understanding and Using Technology Skills	Apply techniques and methods to plan, design, implement and assess information flow and communication
	22. Quality Improvement/ Performance Improvement	Identify relevant problems and apply concepts of process improvement and patient safety
	23. Quantitative Skills	Analyze data and interpret quantitative information
	24. Planning and Managing Projects	Able to design, plan, implement and assess projects and develop appropriate time lines related to performance, structure and outcomes of health services
	25. Economic Analysis and Application	Analysis and application of economic theory and concepts to business decisions

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## **Community Service Experience**

All students are expected to perform meaningful community service as part of the degree requirements for graduation. Community service is broadly defined to include service to formally chartered and recognized community social and/or health services organizations without pay or equivalent compensation. The requirements and procedures are as follows:

- (1) A minimum total of twenty (20) hours of community service is required for the master's programs. This minimum may be met by serving in one or more voluntary, community organizations as long as the total combined meets the requirement.
- (2) Community service must be performed between the official date of admission (start date) and the date of graduation.
- (3) Individual community service must be documented on the web form at MUSC Gives Back at <https://education.musc.edu/students/spsd/musc-gives-back>.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Students in general are expected to attend all class sessions scheduled by the instructors. Class sessions include in-class meetings, online chats, and other arranged sessions. Failure to attend classes may adversely affect course grades at the discretion of the instructor.

## **EMHA On-Campus Sessions**

On campus session attendance is mandatory, every semester, for EMHA students. On-campus sessions are of particular importance to the design and value of the EMHA format. These sessions are mandatory for accreditation purposes, and are integral to professional collaboration and learning. If a situation arises in which attendance will not be possible, notification to the course instructor and Program Director should be made immediately. In this situation, students are advised to take a Leave of Absence (LOA) from the program unless approval from both the instructor and Program Director is obtained in advance. Exceptions to this rule will be made for exceptionally extenuating circumstances only. For a LOA, the Student Services Coordinator and Program Director will work in collaboration with the student to develop a plan to complete the required coursework, however this will lengthen the duration of the program and is highly discouraged.

## **EXEMPTION AND COURSE TRANSFER CREDIT**

Exemption of MHA courses may be granted by transfer of credit for courses attended at other institutions. The student must make exemption requests in writing to the program director by midterm preceding the academic semester in which the course is offered. For new students, the division may approve exemptions after review of the student's previous graduate level work. The basis of the request should be specific, i.e., course name, number, credit, date and institution, course description or syllabus. University policy states that course credit can only be given during a semester when that particular course was offered and the student was registered for at least one hour

of course credit. It is recognized that academic institutions vary in the designation of graduate level course work. Generally, the transferred course should be equal or greater in credit hours and academic level. A minimum grade of B (3.0) is required for transfer credit. Content area faculty and the program director must approve any requests for transfer of course credit.

## **Irregular Curriculum Completion**

With prior approval of the program director, students may complete their course work at another approved health administration program and transfer credits for such work towards the granting of the MHA degree from MUSC. Petitions for such credit are granted only where

- (1) There is good cause as determined by the program director;
- (2) There is appropriate review by MHA faculty;
- (3) The proposed course work is deemed substantially equivalent to course work at MUSC;
- (4) Credits earned are subject to the 12 semester-hour limitation on transfer and exemption by examination credit.

To receive credit for work done in another program, the student must have an official transcript from that school sent to the Office of Enrollment Management at MUSC.

## **STUDENT PETITION**

### **Leave of Absence**

After the completion of the first semester, any student in good academic standing may elect to take a leave of absence for no longer than one year, provided that the program director is notified in writing. Such a student shall be automatically entitled to register for the semester immediately following the leave of absence. The student must complete and file the necessary paperwork with the Office of Enrollment Management. If a student is not in good academic standing and wishes to request a leave of absence, s/he must obtain approval from the Division Director.

### **Withdrawal from the Program**

A petition for withdrawal shall contain the following:

- (1) The reasons the student wishes to withdraw. If the withdrawal is sought because of medical reasons, the student should be prepared to present documentation of the medical problem upon request of the program director.
- (2) A statement of when the student would like to return to the program if the student intends to do so.
- (3) Completion of the University's Withdrawal form.

The acquisition of approval from the Division for withdrawal is considered when the student's departure is in good standing and would weigh substantially in re-admission consideration.

## **Re-admission after Withdrawal from the Program**

A petition for re-admission after withdrawal shall contain an explanation by the student of how the circumstances that led to the student's withdrawal have changed.

Petitions for re-admission after withdrawal shall be granted if the program director finds that the circumstances leading to withdrawal have been alleviated so that the student's education can continue.

## **HONOR CODE**

All new students will receive a copy of MUSC's Honor Code at the time of orientation and entry into the program. Students at MUSC are expected to achieve and display high standards of character. The health care professions require men and women of impeccable character who can live private and professional lives that exemplify high standards of moral conduct. The Honor Code helps ensure an atmosphere in which the individual can adequately develop professional skills and moral standards. All students are expected to abide by MUSC's Honor Code. A breach of the Honor Code is a serious offense.

All performances and materials submitted for grading are to be those of the student submitting them or must be properly credited otherwise. In the event that a faculty member or a student has good reason to suspect that another student has engaged in unethical behavior or has breached the Honor Code, that individual is expected to follow the Honor Code and make a formal charge so that the Honor Council can begin to do its work. Please see description of Honor Code at the following website: <https://education.musc.edu/students/enrollment/bulletin/honor-code>.

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCES**

For the purpose of handling all student complaints and grievances of an academic nature, including course grades, the following procedures have been established by the faculty of the Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management.

Any student having a complaint shall in the first instance attempt to resolve this complaint by discussing it with the faculty member or other parties against whom the complaint lies. If the complaint is not resolved to the student's satisfaction by these means, the student shall, within thirty days of the occurrence of events leading to the complaint, present the complaint in writing to the program director. Such complaint shall include a description of the attempted resolution with the faculty member or members in question. The program director shall investigate the allegations made in the complaint, take whatever actions s/he deemed appropriate, and notify the parties of that action.

If the actions taken by the program director do not resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties, such dissatisfied party or parties shall, within 15 days of receipt of notification from the program director, file a written grievance with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs of the College.

## ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

Each student is assigned to a faculty member who serves as the student's academic advisor and mentor. Students are encouraged to meet regularly with their advisors (at least once a semester) to discuss their academic progress and their career goals.

## TEST TAKING POLICY

In an effort to limit distractions and promote a fair, consistent, and optimal environment for student exams, the Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management restricts the following during test taking days:

- Hats
- Ear phones or other music
- Any cell phone use whatsoever. Cell phones must remain out of sight
- Accessing any browsers or files on a computer other than those specifically allowed by the faculty
- Leaving the classroom for any reason, including restroom unless faculty member administering test provides permission

## PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

MHA students are expected to adhere to the MUSC Professionalism and Standards of Conduct for Students. A link to the MUSC Standards of Conduct may be found in the CHP Student Policy and Procedures manual. It may be found at <https://education.musc.edu/colleges/health-professions/current-students/program-handbooks>. The MUSC Honor Council handles suspected violations of the MUSC Honor Code. <https://education.musc.edu/students/enrollment/bulletin/honor-code>. MHA student behavior must be consistent with the [Code of Ethics of the American College of Healthcare Executives](#) and the Medical University of South Carolina Professionalism and Standards of Conduct for Students listed in the MHA handbook. Any function where the student is attending with approved time off from class is considered University time.

### Professional Expectations:

1. Students may dress comfortably for classes; however, casual wear including, but not limited to, t-shirts, ripped jeans, shorts, flip flops, etc. is not appropriate. Business professional attire is expected when making field visits to health care organizations, guest speakers are addressing class, and making class presentations. If you have questions regarding what constitutes appropriate attire, please see a member of the faculty.
2. An MUSC Student Identification (ID) badge provided at orientation must be available at all times when on University property. Students should wear their ID on shirt/dress collar or at eye level so it is easily seen.
3. MHA students are expected to adhere to the Technical Standards for [Graduation](#).
4. MHA students are expected to attend class on a regular basis and to arrive to class on time. Three or more unexcused absences in any one class will lead to a referral to the Department

of Healthcare Leadership & Management's Professionalism Committee who may recommend the student is placed on professionalism probation per CHP policy. Arriving to class more than five minutes late will typically count as an unexcused absence for each event.

5. Students who fail to demonstrate professionalism in class, at program events, or in internships may be counseled by the faculty advisor or program director. Such counseling may include being placed on professionalism probation with a plan for improvement.
6. Professionalism also means that you will have a stake in and concern for the success of your course projects and other class assignments or teamwork. You should approach these assignments with the same level commitment and seriousness as you would a project from the CEO for whom you will one day work in the not-too-distant future. Certain behaviors are unacceptable in a graduate class and can result in an unprofessional conduct evaluation or probation. Examples of unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to:
  - a. Failing to attend class without informing the professor and having a legitimate reason. Note: Having to work on another professor's class work or prepare for another professor's examination never constitutes a legitimate excuse.
  - b. Leaving class during the lecture/discussion sessions. Leaving class should be a rare event.
  - c. Leaving class at break without informing the professor. Note: Having to work on another professor's assignments or prepare for another professor's examination never constitutes a legitimate excuse for leaving class.
  - d. Failure to turn in assignments on time. Assignments will be due at the stated time. There will be penalties for work submitted after the deadline.
  - e. Sending or reading text messages, answering cell phone calls, or surfing the Internet is never acceptable professional behavior in class.
  - f. Having private conversations while the professor or classmates are presenting information. This behavior is certainly not acceptable in a business meeting and should not occur during an academic session.

Breaches of the Professionalism Policy may be reported either anonymously (phone call or letter addressed to the division director) or non-anonymously (phone call, letter, email, or in-person meeting with the division director). The division director will be responsible for documenting, tracking, and investigating violations of the professionalism policy. Professionalism violations may be investigated concurrent with other performance issues as well as prior violations of professionalism or performance.

If a violation is reported, the division director will follow this procedure:

1. The student will receive a written notice of the alleged violation and the requirement to meet with the Department of Healthcare Leadership & Management Professionalism Committee;
2. The student will have access to any materials that will be considered in relation to the alleged violation and may have a MHA advisor present at the Professionalism Committee meeting;
3. The student will have the opportunity to meet with the division director and clarify any questions regarding the alleged violation and the composition of the Department of Healthcare Leadership & Management Professionalism Committee;
4. The student will meet with the Department of Healthcare Leadership & Management Professionalism Committee;
5. The Department of Healthcare Leadership & Management Professionalism Committee will make a recommendation to the Division Director, who will make a decision on the outcome;

6. The student will receive notification of the outcome within 7 business days following the meeting with the Department of Healthcare Leadership & Management Professionalism Committee;
7. Standard of proof will be a preponderance of evidence;
8. Per university policy, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean any decisions of the Division Director.

## **Technical Standards for Admission and Graduation: Professional Graduate Programs in Health Administration (MHA)**

The MUSC Department of Health Care Leadership and Management is responsible for providing education without regard to disability while assuring that academic and technical standards are met. Academic standards are met by successfully completing the curriculum for the Professional Graduate Programs in Health Administration. Technical standards represent the essential non-academic requirements that a student must demonstrate to participate successfully in the Professional Graduate Programs in Health Administration.

An applicant, student, and candidate for the Master of Health Administration (MHA) degree must have demonstrated aptitude, abilities and skills in the following categories: sensory, motor, intellectual, behavioral, communication, and social. The technical standards for each category identified below are consistent with the expectations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Individuals interested in learning more about ADA and special accommodations, please click <https://education.musc.edu/leadership/diversity/ada>.

### **Sensory**

- Ability to communicate verbal in the English language to elicit information from and provide information to faculty and health care professionals.
- Ability to communicate in written English with faculty and health care professionals.
- Ability to comprehend written communications (i.e., read, understand and follow directions in the English language) to fulfill the usual tasks and duties of a health care manager in training.
- Ability to hear with or without assistive devices to elicit information from faculty and health care professionals.
- Ability to listen and send clear and convincing messages.

### **Motor**

- Ability to coordinate gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and the functional use of the senses of touch and vision reasonably required to operate a computer keyboard and to read a computer screen or have the appropriate accommodation.
- Ability to maneuver in the health care organization (hospital, physician practice, outpatient clinic).
- Ability to operate an automobile or acquire transportation for on-campus classes, meetings outside of MUSC, or for an internship site.

### **Intellectual – Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities**

- Ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize to solve problems.
- Ability to use basic tools and methods of the management disciplines (i.e., economics, accounting, finance, organizational behavior, marketing, decision support, operations, technology, et cetera) for the cognitive application of information.
- Ability to integrate didactic and experiential learning to solve problems with critical judgment and analysis.

## **Behavioral**

- Ability to tolerate and function effectively under stress.
- Ability to concentrate in the presence of distracting conditions.
- Ability to concentrate for prolonged periods.
- Ability to relate in a professional manner to faculty, patients, families and other health care professionals.
- Ability to accept criticism and to respond by appropriate modification of behavior.
- Ability to read and regulate emotions as well as to recognize their impact on work performance and relationships, especially in the face of angry or emotionally-charged people.
- Ability to adapt and be flexible when confronted with changing environments, uncertainty, and ambiguity.
- Ability to show compassion, empathy, integrity, concern and interest for others, interpersonal skills, and motivation.
- Ability to display values of honesty and integrity consistently.

## **Social**

- Ability to develop and sustain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with a web of faculty, colleagues, and other health care professionals.
- Ability to network with other health care professionals and to have the ability to engage in conversation with appropriate nonverbal (i.e., eye contact, cues, posture) and verbal communication.
- Ability to de-escalate disagreements and orchestrate resolutions.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Grading System and Reports**

All courses, except those dropped during the drop/add period, are recorded on the student's permanent record. When a student is required to repeat a course, the computation of his/her overall grade point average includes each grade earned.

Merit grades are assigned on a continuous scale ranging from 0.0 to 4.0 (see below).

<b><u>% Equivalent</u></b>	<b><u>Merit Grade</u></b>	<b><u>% Equivalent</u></b>	<b><u>Merit Grade</u></b>
<b>95 and above</b>	<b>4.0</b>	81	2.6
94	3.9	<b>80</b>	<b>2.5</b>
93	3.8	79	2.4
92	3.7	78	2.3
91	3.6	77	2.2
<b>90</b>	<b>3.5</b>	76	2.1
89	3.4	<b>75</b>	<b>2.0</b>
88	3.3	74	1.8
87	3.2	73	1.6
86	3.1	72	1.4
<b>85</b>	<b>3.0</b>	71	1.2
84	2.9	<b>70</b>	<b>1.0</b>
83	2.8	69	0.0
82	2.7		

## **Incomplete**

A grade of incomplete or in progress (IP) may be awarded to allow students to complete coursework one semester beyond the regular grading period as a result of circumstances beyond the student's control. An incomplete is not calculated in the grade point average. If the student fails to remove the incomplete within one semester, it will be converted to a merit grade of 0.0. All incomplete grades must have the prior approval of the instructor. The removal of incomplete grades is the responsibility of the student and should be directly handled between student and instructor.

## **Grade Reports**

The Office of Enrollment Management (843-792-5396) posts all official grades on a secured Website through an interface known as the Life@MUSC student portal. Students can retrieve their grades by visiting the portal on the Office of Enrollment Management's website at <https://lifeprod.musc.edu> and logging in using their MUSC Net ID in order to access their grades. Please note that the University does not mail paper copies of grades. Furthermore, no staff member of the Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management will give out information about grades over the phone or in person. Should students require grades prior to receiving them electronically from Enrollment Services, they will need to make arrangements with their course instructor.

## **Honors and Awards**

### **First and Second Honor Graduates**

First and Second Honor graduates at graduation will be determined by the following criteria:

- MHA First Honor Graduates
  - 2 MHA residential graduates with the highest GPA
  - 2 MHA executive graduates with the highest GPA
  - If tie, faculty within program vote using criteria below.
  
- MHA Second Honor Graduates
  - 2 MHA residential graduates with the highest or second highest GPA
  - 2 MHA executive graduates with the highest GPA or second highest GPA
  - If tie, faculty within program vote using criteria below.

### Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management Criteria for First and Second Honor Graduates

- Workload During Program
- Additional Coursework
- Leadership Role
- Academic Center Organizations (IPC, presidential scholars, honor council, class president, etc.)
- Professional Organizations
- Professional Awards
- Volunteer Work
- Publications/Presentations



## **The Dean's Award**

Graduate students who have achieved the highest academic record at the end of the curriculum with a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.8 or above, will be nominated for a College of Health Professions Dean's Award. Recipients are recognized at the Division's Hooding Ceremony.

## **EMHA Outstanding Student Award**

The Executive Master of Health Administration Outstanding Student Award recognizes an EMHA student who has demonstrated professionalism, academic excellence, leadership and service to the profession, and has promoted a sense of community among the EMHA students. Recipients are nominated by graduating EMHA students and/or faculty and are recognized at the Division's Hooding Ceremony.

## **Alpha Eta National Honor Society**

Membership in the Alpha Eta Society is awarded to graduate degree recipients who rank in the top 20% of their graduating class and have at least a 3.90 cumulative grade point average, or to graduate degree recipients who have a 3.95 cumulative grade point average or better. Members of the Alpha Eta Society have the privilege of wearing the green honor cords and insignia pins with their academic regalia. Recipients are recognized at the Division's Hooding Ceremony.

## **Upsilon Phi Delta Honor Society**

Members in the Upsilon Phi Delta Honor Society are selected based on academic achievements, service to the community, and contributions to the healthcare management profession. Recipients must earn a grade point average of 3.9 or higher and have the privilege of wearing the official crimson red and cobalt blue honor cords with their academic regalia. Recipients are recognized at the Division's Hooding Ceremony.

## **Registration and Course Sequencing**

### **Residential MHA Program Format**

Students enrolled in the Residential MHA Program Format begin classes in the fall semester and complete the program in two years on a full-time basis. Part-time options are not available (unless a student is transferring in hours or has previously completed required course work). The Student Services Coordinator will pre-register residential students approximately 4-6 weeks prior to the start of the semester using the prescribed lock-step program of study. Students will be notified via MUSC email of the courses they are to take. Should a student's schedule deviate from the prescribed lock-step curriculum, it is the student's responsibility to notify his/her advisor and the Student Services Coordinator of the change. All pre-registration should be finalized 4 weeks prior to the start of the new semester.

### **Executive MHA Program Format**

Students enrolled in the Executive MHA Program Format begin in the summer session and may complete the curriculum on a full-or part-time basis. At the time of entry into the program, each student will be given a prescribed program of study based upon the enrollment status (full- or part-time). The Student Services Coordinator will initially pre-register Executive MHA students

approximately 4-6 weeks prior to the start of the semester using the prescribed lock-step program of study. After the first semester in the program, the Student Services Coordinator will communicate with the students via email informing them which courses they are expected to take and ask them to register themselves using WebAdvisor. Should a student's schedule deviate from the prescribed lock-step curriculum, it is the student's responsibility to notify his/her advisor and the Student Services Coordinator of the change. All pre-registration should be finalized 4 weeks prior to the start of the new semester.

## **Communication, Internet and E-Mail Requirements**

It must be emphasized that in all aspects of a student's program of study, the student is responsible for maintaining ongoing communication with the Program and its course instructors. This includes regularly checking communications media (regular, mail, phone messages, regular e-mail and Moodle course bulletin board postings), and promptly responding to communications from the Program and/or any of its course instructors. If a student is unavailable for and/or inadequately responsive to communications, he/she must understand it may have a significantly adverse impact on her/his course grades and/or standing in the Program.

All students in the MHA program will frequently need to work through the Internet to complete coursework. Consequently, it is essential that all students have unrestricted access to an Internet service provider. The Division strongly recommends that this Internet service be broad-band and high-speed (cable rather than dial-up service), since high speed service is often essential for utilizing large files, graphics programs, and other interactive resources required for coursework.

All matriculated students will receive a Net ID at the time of initial registration to the University. The Net ID includes a login and password that is unique to each student and should not be shared with others. The student's Net ID provides access to MUSC's email system, library resources, Moodle, WebAdvisor, and a host of other student resources. It is important that the student knows and maintains an active Net ID at all times.

**Email:** MUSC provides every student with an e-mail account free of charge. Students are expected to use e-mail as the major form of communication for program business, and each student will be responsible for seeking out the necessary training to use e-mail properly. Every student should be able to access e-mail on a regular basis. Students are to check their e-mail account several times per week, if not daily. The student services coordinator, support staff, and faculty in the Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management will frequently use e-mail to communicate with the student body.

To access your MUSC e-mail account via the Internet access, open Firefox and enter the following Web address: <http://exchange.musc.edu>. You will then be prompted to enter your Net ID and password.

**Moodle:** The University uses a web course tools program known as Moodle. This program is widely used by many universities through the world to deliver courses on-line as well as a supplement to traditional on-campus courses. All students are expected to know how to use Moodle, and to check it regularly (e.g., several times per week). A student guide of Moodle is available on the new student orientation website or ask for a copy from your Student Services Coordinator.

**Social Media & FERPA:** Please be aware that protected confidential student and/or patient information may not be shared or posted. All comments, photos, or other information shared via this social media platform should remain appropriate and professional and should in no way infringe upon regulations as stated in FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. To read more about FERPA, please visit this site:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.

## **Tuition and Fees**

The tuition and fee rates for the MHA program are set by the State of South Carolina, and are subject to change. Current tuition and fees are listed online under the Office of Enrollment Management website. Students who fall behind in their payments will not be permitted to register for additional classes, and grades will be frozen until payments are up to date. Any student missing a course because of his/her failure to make tuition payments will be required to repeat that course.

## **Health Documentation Policy**

Before students are allowed to begin initial classes, they will be required to provide documentation for, and/or obtain immunizations as specified by MUSC's Student Health Services. A PPD skin test is required yearly, and proof of health insurance is required each semester. Students should comply promptly with any other requirements or documents requested by Student Health Services

## **Mandatory Training**

MyQuest is MUSC's learning and compliance management system. Annual training modules are required for all students each academic year to comply with and promote understanding of federal and state laws, key policies, and regulations. Due to the severe consequences applied to the enterprise for violations related to the material covered, students who do not complete the mandatory training by the deadline **will not be permitted to attend class or access courses via Moodle**. Information about MyQuest training can be found at the following website:  
<http://myquest.musc.edu>

## **Other University Policies**

Students should refer to the following link for the MUSC international travel policy:  
<http://globalhealth.musc.edu/international-travel-0>

Students should refer to the *Bulletin of the Medical University of South Carolina*  
<https://www.musc.edu/bulletin>,

and *The College of Health Professions Policies and Procedures Manual*:

<https://education.musc.edu/colleges/health-professions/current-students/program-handbooks>

for additional policies not covered in this manual. All the above policies fall within the limits set by College and University guidelines, and will therefore be correspondingly modified by any changes in those guidelines.

## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Abraham Flexner defined the criteria for consideration as a profession back in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and since then others have added to his work. According to the criteria, a profession:

- Draws on a well-defined body of intellectual knowledge.
- Uses the scientific methods to enlarge that body of knowledge, improving education and service.
- Educates its practitioners in institutions of higher learning.
- Functions autonomously in control of professional policy and activity and functions within a code of ethics.
- Is composed of individuals who consider this occupation as their lifework, contributing to the good of society through service to others.
- Requires continuous professional development.

Toward the embodiment of these criteria, the Department of Healthcare Leadership & Management encourages students to join and participate in professional activities including membership in one or more professional organizations. Following is a list with information about the major opportunities available:

### **American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE)**

The American College of Healthcare Executives has over 30,000 professionals who have made the College the premier international leadership organization for health care executives. Student affiliation is an exciting and inexpensive way to discover, explore, and understand the real world of healthcare management. See [www.ache.org](http://www.ache.org) for more information. Students are encouraged to attend the annual Congress of ACHE members in Chicago in March of each year. Students can apply for program assistantships to offset some of the registration expense.

### **National Association of Health Services Executives (NAHSE)**

Founded in 1968 as a non-profit association of Black health care executives, the National Association of Health Services Executives' purpose is to advance and develop Black health care leaders, and elevate the quality of health care services rendered to minority and underserved communities. This organization provides a vehicle for Blacks to effectively participate in the design, direction and delivery of quality health care to all people. NAHSE sponsors a case competition among student teams in healthcare management programs in fall of each year. It is a wonderful opportunity for minority students to network and meet executives who are in a position to help them progress. See: <https://www.nahse.org/>

### **Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)**

Students interested in health information systems are encouraged to join HIMSS as a student member. HIMSS is a national organization comprised of over 15,000 health information professionals. One of the many benefits of joining HIMSS is the opportunity to participate as a student volunteer at the HIMSS annual meeting. HIMSS also provides opportunities for students to network with colleagues in the field and learn of career opportunities through their job bank. Details regarding how to join the association can be obtained at the HIMSS Website:

[www.himss.org](http://www.himss.org). Further, students who are HIMSS members will automatically become members of the South Carolina Chapter of HIMSS. See [www.himss.org](http://www.himss.org).

## **Medical Group Management Association (MGMA)**

MGMA is the premier membership association for professional administrators and leaders of medical group practices. Since 1926, MGMA has delivered networking, professional education and resources and political advocacy for medical practice management. The mission of MGMA is to continually improve the performance of medical group practice professionals and the organizations they represent. MGMA serves 21,500 members who lead 13,700 organizations nationwide in which some 275,000 physicians provide more than 40 percent of the healthcare services delivered in the United States. Its diverse membership comprises administrators, CEOs, physicians in management, board members, office manager and many other management professionals. They work in medical practices and ambulatory care organizations of all sizes and types, including integrated systems and hospital- and medical school-affiliated practices. See [www.mgma.com](http://www.mgma.com).

## **Healthcare Financial Management Associates (HFMA)**

HFMA is the leading membership organization for healthcare financial management executives and leaders. Its more than 35,000 members value the Association's role as a respected thought leader on top trends and issues facing the healthcare industry. Its purpose is to define, realize, and advance the financial management of health care by helping members and others improve the business performance of organizations operating in or serving the healthcare field. At the chapter, regional, and national level, HFMA helps healthcare finance professionals meet the challenges of the modern healthcare environment by providing education, analysis, and guidance, building and supporting coalitions with other healthcare associations to ensure accurate representation of the healthcare finance profession, educating a broad spectrum of key industry decision makers on the intricacies and realities of maintaining fiscally healthy healthcare organizations, and working with a broad cross-section of stakeholders to improve the healthcare industry by identifying and bridging gaps in knowledge, best practices, and standards. See [www.hfma.org](http://www.hfma.org).

## **MHA Student Government Association (SGA)**

The MHA Student Government Association, with the guidance of a faculty advisor, serves as a communication, support, and networking group. In the past, students have been involved in community service efforts, career planning and development workshops, and social events. Officers have traditionally assumed office in January following elections held in December. Students are strongly urged to join the Student Association as well as join professional associations in their respective area. These associations provide opportunities to learn, to share information and ideas, and to build a network of mentors, friends, and colleagues.

## **Student Government Association (SGA)**

Medical University of SC has a university-wide Student Government Association. The College of Health Professions (CHP) participates in MUSC's SGA through the CHP SGA. MHA students can serve as representatives to the CHP SGA. MUSC SGA and CHP SGA are involved in community projects and social activities that enhance student life.

## **Alumni Association**

The Alumni Association of the Medical University of South Carolina is a general association, the membership of which includes all members in good standing of the six college associations. The Health Professions Alumni Association is the organizational affiliate of the College of Health Professions. Dues paid by alumni association members help support scholarships and activities for current students, subsidize projects that directly benefit CHP members, make alumni eligible

to participate in benefits programs, and fund the cost of reunions which is the annual reception of graduates. The MUSC Alumni Association includes alumni from the MHA and Doctorate of Health Administration (DHA) programs and serves as an essential link between all graduates and the MHA and DHA academic programs. It supports a wide variety of programs and benefits through networking opportunities and continuing education while maintaining a close relationship with the faculty and students of the division.

### **Student Diversity Leadership Council**

The Student Diversity Leadership Council (SDLC) is a student-led organization within the College of Health Professions (CHP) promoting the awareness of diversity related issues and providing service to underserved communities in the Charleston area. Through interdisciplinary awareness, this organization encourages future healthcare professionals to engage in the diverse culture of healthcare today. Meetings are used to discuss upcoming events and activities as well as to serve as a time for engaging presentations and panels related to diversity.