College of Nursing and Health Professions

Master of Health Administration Program

Student Handbook
WELCOME ................................................................. 4
MISSION ........................................................................ 5
VISION ........................................................................ 5
CORE VALUES ............................................................... 5
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ...................... 5
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT ...................... 5
PROGRAM GOAL STATEMENTS ...................................... 6
OUTCOME STATEMENT .................................................. 6
CURRICULUM AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS ..................... 7
TYPICAL COURSE SEQUENCES ....................................... 7
ATTENDANCE ................................................................ 7
   Online MHA Option ...................................................... 7
   Online MHA-Health Informatics Specialty Option ................. 7
   MHA 4+1 Option .......................................................... 7
FOREIGN TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES .................................. 8
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ........................................... 8
MHA ADMISSION POLICIES ........................................... 9
   Online MHA Option ...................................................... 9
      Admission Criteria and Process ......................................... 9
   MHA 4+1 Program .......................................................... 9
      Admission Criteria and Process ......................................... 9
MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION ACADEMIC STANDARDS .... 10
   Graduate Courses Grading Scale ......................................... 10
   Program Continuation .................................................... 10
MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM ACADEMIC POLICIES ... 10
   Academic Dishonesty .................................................... 10
   Online Exams ................................................................ 10
   Plagiarism .................................................................... 10
   Student Assignments ..................................................... 11
   Writing Proficiency ....................................................... 11
   Dismissal Policy ............................................................ 11
ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES .................... 12
   Grade Appeal Policies and Procedures ................................. 12
   Educational Rights and Privacy Act ..................................... 13
FINANCIAL AID AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS ................ 13
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS .......................................... 13
   Appearance ................................................................ 13
   Conduct ..................................................................... 13
CONFIDENTIALITY ......................................................... 14
GENERAL INFORMATION ............................................... 14
   College Offices ............................................................ 14
   Status Changes ............................................................ 14
   Technology Proficiency ................................................ 14
   Email ........................................................................ 14
   Motor Vehicle Policies .................................................. 15
   University Policies ....................................................... 15
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Services</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking Policy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather-Related Class Cancellation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Action Plan</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Organizations</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program, Department and College Committees</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Organizations</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACULTY AND STAFF</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WELCOME

It is a privilege to welcome all students to the graduate health administration programs in the College of Nursing and Health Professions. We are pleased that you have chosen to pursue your health administration degree with us. Faculty members are caring, competent instructors and are dedicated to providing a quality health administration education.

This student handbook is written to present information and policies relevant to our two health administration programs. The intent of this handbook is not to duplicate university policies, so I would encourage you to also be aware of policies listed in the USI Bulletin which may be found online at the USI website. It is your responsibility to be knowledgeable of those policies and how to access them. If you have any questions regarding any policies presented herein or on the USI website, please feel free to ask faculty for clarification.

The student handbook may be found on each Blackboard course site. Faculty reserve the right to amend policies and procedures when appropriate. Any revisions will be communicated to you before implementation.

I hope all of you will have a successful year of learning and collaboration.

Kevin Valadares, PhD
Chair, Master of Health Administration Program
**MISSION**

The mission of the Master of Health Administration program is to equip students with competencies, skills, and knowledge necessary to achieve and sustain leadership roles in the dynamic, growing field of healthcare. The program's curriculum is based on evidence based practice enriched by fully integrated research activities with faculty and community partners.

**VISION**

We strive to become a premiere provider of transformational healthcare leaders who positively impact the organizations they lead and the communities they serve.

**CORE VALUES**

Caring, Excellence, Integrity, Leadership, and Scholarship

**STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Master of Health Administration program (MHA) adheres to the University Bulletin’s Student Rights and Responsibilities. This document should be considered a part of this Student Handbook.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the University of Southern Indiana (USI) to be in full compliance with all federal and state non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws, orders, and regulations relating to race, sex, religion, disability, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer, USI Human Resources Department, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, Indiana 47712.
PROGRAM GOAL STATEMENTS

1. Provide creative and innovative graduate health administration programs that meet professional standards of excellence.

2. Educate leaders with diverse backgrounds to advocate for health and wellness within the context of global health care influences.

3. Support excellence in research and evidence-based practices through collaboration, consultation, and partnerships with faculty, students, and other health care professionals.

4. Enhance the reputation of MHA programs through leadership in university, community, and professional activities.

5. Foster a caring environment in which students, alumni, faculty, staff, and health care professionals collaborate to optimize their personal and professional development.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

The MHA program offers two graduate program options leading to the MHA degree. The Online MHA Option prepares working health care practitioners for advancement in their chosen field or in other health-related specialties. The Online MHA-Health Informatics Specialty Option focuses on the application of information management and leadership principles for the improvement of communications across the health care industry. The MHA 4+1 Option prepares persons new to health care to successfully meet advanced challenges in a variety of health care fields.

Graduates of each option are prepared to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding and synthesis of management principles in health care delivery.
2. Exhibit mature practical interpersonal and group leadership skills, and interact cooperatively with other health care professionals in a spirit of teamwork.
3. Apply strong critical thinking and problem solving skills that reflect the ability to synthesize logical common sense with a rigorous academic foundation.
4. Establish a broad organizational vision that reflects an understanding of the trends and issues in health care.
5. Participate in and contribute to organizational and outcomes research in health care.
6. Communicate effectively through clear and concise writing and speaking.
7. Demonstrate an ethical value system and socially responsible leadership.
8. Intelligently plan career objectives and successfully pursue relevant opportunities in the health care field.
CURRICULUM AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The MHA options are each designed as a cohort model, meaning matriculated students will take all courses together toward graduation. The sequence of courses is based on the option in which the student is admitted and when the student enters the Program. The Online MHA option and the MHA 4+1 option courses are essentially the same, but are delivered differently. The Online MHA option and the Online MHA-Health Informatics specialty option are delivered online, with three two-day on-campus intensives during each academic year.

The options all require 39 hours of credit. Included in these hours, the Online MHA option and the Online MHA-Health Informatics option require each student to complete a culminating project in the last year, consisting of three one-hour Capstone courses. MHA 4+1 students will complete three one-hour Practicums throughout their experience that will achieve the same objective.

Information on the online options, including curricula and course descriptions can be found here. General information on the MHA 4+1 option can be found here.

TYPICAL COURSE SEQUENCES

Course Sequences for MHA Online, MHA Online – Health Informatics Specialty, and MHA 4+1

ATTENDANCE

Online MHA Option

While these Options are conducted primarily as internet courses, at the beginning of each semester or summer session, there is a two-day Intensive, where course materials are introduced and discussed in detail. In addition, guest speaker presentations and interactive work sessions are also conducted. Many times, alumni of the Program will also attend.

Attendance for Intensives is required. Points are awarded for attendance. While at the discretion of the individual instructor, these points often comprise up to 10% of the overall grade. Except in the most unusual of circumstances, if the student misses an Intensive, the points are forfeited.

MHA 4+1 Option

Attendance policy is set by course faculty. Read each course syllabus carefully to determine expectations. Given that many classes involve group activities and assignments, experiential learning, and other practical demonstrations, students should anticipate that full attendance will be the normal expectation for all classes. If a student cannot make a scheduled class or event, he or she should, as a courtesy to the faculty member, communicate this to the instructor as soon as possible – preferably in advance of the absence. Extended absences will be communicated to the Program Director.
FOREIGN TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

The Program maintains an ongoing exchange of students with Osnabrueck University in Germany. Many students have availed themselves of this opportunity. If you are interested, contact the Program Director. Find more information regarding foreign travel here.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

University Graduate Studies Information and Policies can be found here and should be considered a part of this Student Handbook. Information includes advising, registration, grievances, repeating courses, withdrawal, readmission, and standards of progress.
MHA ADMISSION POLICIES

Online MHA Option

Admission Criteria

- Baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
- Undergraduate GPA of 3.00 or greater on a 4 point scale.
- Two years of work experience in the health care field highly recommended.
- A demonstrable knowledge of fundamental principles of economics, statistics, and accounting is highly recommended.
- Students from non-English speaking countries need a satisfactory TOEFL score of 550 for non-computerized tests and 213 for computerized tests.
- Completion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and one focused essay (from the Essay list) OR three focused essays (from the Essay list). For USI to receive your GRE score you need to designate your score to be sent to USI Graduate Studies Office, our university code is 1335.

Admission Process

See Admissions Process for Online Options

MHA 4+1 Program

Admission Criteria

- Undergraduate status
- Transcript indicating completion of at least 75 credit hours
- GPA of 3.5 or greater
- Curriculum Vitae
- Two page letter of intent describing a clear rationale for pursuing the MHA 4+1 program which ideally would include previous leadership experience in work or volunteer settings.
- Two letters of recommendation: One letter from a USI faculty member and one letter providing a general character reference. Both should be signed and sealed by the writer.

Admission Process

See Admission Process for MHA 4+1 Option
MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Graduate Courses Grading Scale

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 74%</td>
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Program Continuation

In order to remain in any of the Options, the student must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0. No grade below a C is acceptable for graduate credit.

MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Dishonesty

Academic honesty is an expected behavior of all students. Academic dishonesty may include, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and knowingly assisting others in an act of academic dishonesty. Students who engage in academic dishonesty in any form, even as a first offense, place themselves in jeopardy of receiving a failing grade for the assignment or course, as well as dismissal from the Program and University. In accordance with University policy, no penalty shall be imposed until the student has been informed of the charge, has been informed of the evidence on which it is based, and has been given an opportunity to respond. Policies and procedures governing academic dishonesty can be found in the Student Rights and Responsibilities section of the University Bulletin. Cheating on an examination, quiz, or any other assignment will be a basis for dismissal from the program.

Online Exams

Dates and times for online exams have been clearly identified in the course syllabus and calendar. Students must take the exam at the designated time. All online exams are intended for individual test taking unless otherwise designated. Downloading, copying, or printing any exam or part of an exam is considered academic dishonesty and will result in disciplinary action. Online exams will not be returned for review, but a test review may be offered for frequently missed concepts with the exception of final semester exams. Faculty may require proctoring for exams.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, as defined in the University Bulletin, is the intentional reproduction of another person’s ideas, words, or statements without acknowledgment. Students must give credit when using the works of others and are expected to properly reference the use of: 1) direct quotes; 2) another person’s ideas or opinions; or 3) any borrowed statistics, facts, or other materials. Failure to properly give credit to others’ work is a form of academic dishonesty (University Bulletin, Student Rights and Responsibilities).
Student Assignments

Student papers/assignments may be displayed as student examples for course files and accreditation purposes. Student work used for any other purpose will require permission from the student(s) prior to faculty use.

Writing Proficiency

The minimum expectation for written academic assignments includes use of the sixth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) style format, expression of a logical flow of ideas, and proper grammar, spelling and sentence structure (APA, 2009). The APA manual has information regarding content and organization of a manuscript, expression of ideas, as well as information about editorial style and manuscript preparation. All written academic assignments must be typed and properly referenced. The APA publication guidelines are used in the MHA program. The manual is available for purchase at the USI Bookstore.

Assignments such as case studies and health assessments may have a specialized format specified by the instructor. Handwritten assignments may also be specified by the instructor.

Dismissal Policy

A student may be dismissed from any program option for the following reasons:

- Achieves an overall average GPA of less than 3.0 or fails to complete their option within five years
- Exhibits a material breach of University and/or program policies regarding cheating, confidentiality and so on, as expressed in the USI Bulletin and/or this program’s Student Handbook
- Exhibits professional conduct that reflects unfavorably upon the University, the program, the faculty and/or the student
ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This Handbook is published annually. It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the contents. In addition, students are specifically requested to read the following at minimum:

- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Graduate Academic Information and Policies

Grade Appeal Policies and Procedures

The academic grievance process shall provide an opportunity for the student who believes an academic decision has been prejudiced or capricious to appeal that decision.

a. A student who believes that an academic decision has been prejudiced or capricious shall confer promptly with the faculty member involved.

b. If the action outlined above does not produce mutually satisfactory results, the student shall in writing notify the Program Chair. This should be done within five days of the meeting with faculty. A summary of the basis for a potential appeal shall accompany the notice. The Program Chair will meet with parties involved in the student appeal and attempt to resolve the problem. The Program Chair’s decision will be communicated to the student either by meeting with the student or informing the student in writing within five days of receiving a summary of the facts related to the appeal.

c. If the action outlined above does not produce mutually satisfactory results, the student shall in writing notify the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Professions. A summary of the basis for a potential appeal shall accompany the notice. The Dean will meet with parties involved in the student appeal and attempt to resolve the problem. The Dean’s decision will be communicated to the student either by meeting with the student or informing the student in writing within five days of receiving a summary of the facts related to the appeal.

d. If the previous actions outlined above do not produce mutually satisfactory results, the student may initiate the formal academic grievance procedure. Information is available from the Office of Student Affairs.
Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The University of Southern Indiana College of Nursing and Health Professions adheres to standards set forth in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. A copy of the Act is available from the College Office. Any personal data/information about students or graduates of the University of Southern Indiana College of Nursing and Health Professions will be protected under the tenets of this Act. Students may request review of their academic file. Students usually provide permission for the College to provide information to employers and other educational institutions when they are admitted to a College Program by signing the "Permission to Disclose Personal/Confidential Information" form.

FINANCIAL AID AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Students should contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance to obtain information about available financial assistance opportunities. From time to time, Program faculty members may need research or other assistance from graduate students. Students will be made aware of these opportunities when available.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Appearance

When at health facilities, teaching and/or research sites, unless otherwise notified, students will wear professional attire appropriate for the site. Unless otherwise notified, each student must follow all identification requirements and work schedules of the host institution. Appropriate professional appearance is also required for all work experiences as specified by the sponsor or employer. At minimum, a clean and neat appearance is expected at all times in the professional environment.

Conduct

Students are advised to maintain a professional demeanor (i.e., be prepared, be responsible, and be courteous) in actions within courses and in the community. Remember, you will have the opportunity to form a career network from your interactions with students, faculty and professionals in the field. Respectful and caring behavior is always appreciated, especially in the highly professional area of study you have chosen. Protect your reputation and integrity. It will follow you throughout your career.
CONFIDENTIALITY

At times, students may have access to confidential medical/personal client and family information, and to sensitive agency information as part of the learning experience. It is of utmost importance that client/agency confidentiality is observed. Information concerning a client/family or agency is not to be discussed after leaving the clinical unit, agency, or classroom. Violation of this policy may result in dismissal from any of the MHA options. University and College policies for social media apply to the Options as well.

GENERAL INFORMATION

College Offices

The offices of the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Professions, the Program Chair, and the Faculty are located on the second floor of the Health Professions Center. In locating a specific office, inquire at the Receptionist's Desk or consult the directory board outside of Room 2068.

Status Changes

Changes in local and/or permanent addresses, telephone number, and name are to be reported immediately to both the University Registrar's Office and the MHA program. A Change of Name form (paper or Internet) must also be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

Technology Proficiency

Competency in the use of the computer to access information, communicate by E-mail, use Excel, Microsoft Word, and Power Point is a requirement of the MHA. It is to your advantage to have your own computer, modem, and access to the Internet. All Program courses have distance education components which require reliable Internet communication. Specific information regarding operating systems and software can be accessed here: Distance Learning System Requirements.

Email

The USI Computer Center assigns an email account to every newly enrolled student which is maintained throughout your time as a student. You can get your USI email address through MyUSI. If you have any questions about your USI email account, contact the Computer Center Help Desk at 812-465-1080.

Other email accounts can be obtained either through your own personal on-line service or from free Internet e-mail services (e.g., hotmail.com, yahoo.com, gmail.com, excite.com). If you choose to use another e-mail account for your course work, you will need to set-up your MyUSI e-mail so that all e-mail will be forwarded to your preferred account. There are times when only your university email address can be used to gain access to some University services.
such as MyUSI, Blackboard, and library databases from off campus locations. You must have an established an e-mail account before your first class meeting.

Motor Vehicle Policies

Please refer to the USI Public Safety website (Traffic and Parking Regulations) for vehicle regulations. Information concerning off-site parking and registration of your car will be provided by course instructors.

University Policies

All university policies, as published in the USI Bulletin, extend to all sites where the student is engaged in the role of a graduate health administration student.

Library Services

Extensive library services are available to students at the David L. Rice Library. Services include interlibrary loans, distance education services, on-line computer searches, personal computers, CD-ROMS, and photocopiers. Students should contact the library (812-465-7127 or through the Library’s homepage) for a current listing of library hours.

Smoking Policy

Smoking and electronic cigarettes are prohibited on USI campus grounds and in buildings.

Weather-Related Class Cancellation

Faculty will follow the University policy for cancellation of classes due to inclement weather. Students will be notified of university class cancellations through the RAVE system. Check your course website for announcements regarding what this will mean for your internet courses. Students may call Security (464-8600) for cancellation information.

If the University cancels 6 PM classes, but conducts day classes, health administration classes that begin at 4:00 PM or later may be canceled. When classes are not canceled, students must use their own judgment about whether they may safely travel to class. Please notify your instructor if you will not be attending class.
Emergency Action Plan

In the case of an on-campus emergency, the Emergency Action Plan should be followed. These protocols may be found in course Blackboard sites.

Student Organizations

Students are encouraged to actively participate in College and University organizations.

Program, Department and College Committees

Students are invited to attend and participate in Program, Department and College committee activities. Information about meetings will be communicated to students when available.

Professional Organizations

Depending upon your area of interest, there are a number of organizations that might pertain to your career. Many of them have free or low cost student memberships available.

- American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE)
- Medical Group Management Association (MGMA)
- Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA)
- Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To be completed at Intensive and 4+1 Orientation. If questions persist, you may contact Kevin Valadares (Department Chair) or Tanner Watkins (Administrative Assistant) by using the table listed on the following page.
## FACULTY AND STAFF

### Administrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>OFFICE ROOM NUMBER</th>
<th>OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBER (AC: 812)</th>
<th>E-MAIL ADDRESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:kvaladar@usi.edu">kvaladar@usi.edu</a></td>
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### Faculty

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Dr. Kevin Valadares</td>
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<td>461-5277</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Jennifer Williams</td>
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<td>465-1177</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jmwilliams7@usi.edu">jmwilliams7@usi.edu</a></td>
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