

Master of Health Administration (MHA) Program Handbook 2026-2027

School of Health Administration

World Class Research - Expert Faculty - Inclusive Community



We want the information in this document to be clear, purposeful and accessible. Please do not hesitate to contact Mike Moore (mike.moore@dal.ca), MHA Program Coordinator, if you have any suggestions as to how this document could be further developed.

Dalhousie University operates in the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. These sovereign nations hold inherent rights as the original peoples of these lands, and we each carry collective obligations under the Peace and Friendship Treaties. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Canada.

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

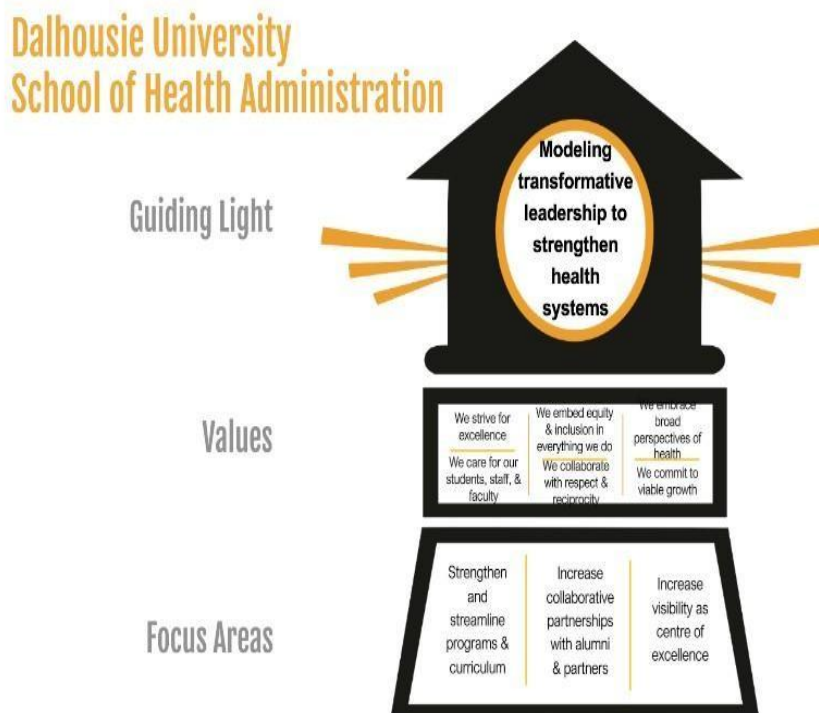
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SCHOOL OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION MISSION, GUIDING LIGHT, VALUES AND FOCUS AREAS

MHA MISSION

The mission of our CAHME accredited MHA program is to prepare transformative health leaders who improve health and strengthen health systems.



[Link of larger format](#)

Our Guiding Light

Modeling transformative leadership to strengthen health systems

Our Values

We strive for excellence / We embed equity and inclusion in everything we do / We embrace broad perspectives of health / We care for our students, staff and faculty / We collaborate with respect and reciprocity / We commit to viable growth

Our Focus Areas

Strengthen and streamline programs and curriculum / Increase collaborative partnerships with alumni and partners / Increase visibility as centre of excellence

INTRODUCTION AND OUR TEAM



Our School's Director, Dr. Lori Weeks, leads a team of outstanding Healthcare professionals and academics, all of whom are both experts in their fields, and are dedicated to instruction of the highest quality. They in turn are supported by a highly experienced, knowledgeable and welcoming administrative staff. You are joining an eclectic, international and inclusive community united by a shared commitment to the research-led, evidence-based transformation of healthcare, whether here in Canada, or around the world.



Mike Moore mike.moore@dal.ca is a University Teaching Fellow and serves as our MHA Program Coordinator. You can find further information about Mike at [this link](#). Administrative support is provided by several staff members in our School who can be reached by contacting healthadmin@dal.ca. To meet the rest of our School's faculty and staff, follow this link: [Our Team](#)

In this handbook, you will find information about key features of our MHA program and various opportunities available to you. We also include an overview of key requirements and policies.

The MHA program has many valuable elements and options including the following that are described in further detail below.

- The Interprofessional Health Education (IPHE) Portfolio, developing essential interdisciplinary skills and understanding
- One-to-one academic advising with a dedicated faculty member
- The ELEMENT mentoring program
- A 16-week residency
- A thesis stream option
- The Juris Doctor/Master of Health Administration program
- CAHME Accreditation, LEADS Framework
- Certified Health Executive (CHE) Designation

INTERPROFESSIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION

The Faculty of Health places great emphasis on the importance of interprofessional collaboration and communication within healthcare settings: it is a key feature of all graduate and undergraduate programs within the faculty. This is reflected in your having to register in IPHE 5900, completing at least three approved IPHE experiences during your MHA. IPHE experiences will include large-scale collaborative events and mini-courses created in partnership with students and faculty from other healthcare professions with the specific intent of enhancing your skills in this essential aspect of healthcare.

ACADEMIC ADVISORS

Every MHA student is matched with a faculty advisor for support, academic counselling and career counselling. Your faculty advisor will meet with you at the beginning of the year, and will be accessible as needed via email, telephone or by appointment. You should consult your faculty advisor on a variety of topics, including:

- *competency attainment and evidence*
- *suggestions for mentors/networking*
- *directed studies*
- *teaching/research assistant opportunities*

Throughout your program, you are encouraged to contact your advisor with questions at any time.

THE ELEMENT PROGRAM [Link](#)

The ELEMENT Mentoring Program brings students the opportunity to connect and learn from leaders in the field of health administration. The program is designed to offer experiential learning, advice, and direction from key experts and professionals to prepare mentees for their careers as emerging health leaders. Students are matched with mentors, based on their career goals. They meet with their mentors regularly throughout a 12-month period, continuously reviewing goal achievement, success stories, and challenges. ELEMENT emphasizes a framework that challenges mentees to know their own strengths, values, and abilities, while learning the skills to foster the development of others and to contribute to the creation of healthy and high-quality organizations. [Robert Zed](#), our Executive-in-Residence leads the ELEMENT Program.

MHA RESIDENCY (HESA 6390) [Link](#)

The purpose of the required 16-week full time administrative residency is to provide students with first-hand experience with the administrative operations of a healthcare organization where they are mentored by qualified, practicing senior health administrators. They utilize administrative practices and concepts in practical settings and acquire administrative skills and knowledge through observation and contact with a diversity of programs and managers. Students will:

- Be exposed to administrative problems and health service agency operations
- Receive personal coaching from well qualified and respected practicing health services administrator(s)
- Apply administrative concepts in a practical setting
- Gain insights for application in second year MHA courses, and
- Acquire and develop administrative skills, techniques, and perspectives through observation and contact with a diversity of health services administrators and programs.

THE THESIS STREAM [Link](#)

The [MHA Thesis option](#) is a powerful opportunity to work with School of Health Administration faculty to develop research skills and build a publication record. It's particularly suited for students who intend to pursue a PhD or work in research-related positions. Please contact [Mohammad Hajizadeh](#) for further information about the thesis stream.

THE JURIS DOCTOR/MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

[Our Juris Doctor/ Master of Health Administration](#) program offers an unparalleled opportunity to gain both a law degree and a health administration degree. Over four years of intensive and rewarding study, you will develop into a future lawyer and health executive. For further information, contact [Michael Hadskis](#), who has a joint faculty appointment in the Faculty of Law and the School of Health Administration, and he advises all our JD/MHA students.

CAHME ACCREDITATION, LEADS FRAMEWORK

Our MHA program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME). CAHME actively promotes continuous improvement in the preparation of future healthcare leaders by developing measurable, competency-based criteria for excellence in healthcare management. Additional information about our CAHME accredited program is available at [this link](#).

Our competency-based MHA program is guided by the LEADS Framework (**see Appendix 1**) that is endorsed by the Canadian College of Health Leaders (CCHL). During your orientation you will be introduced to the LEADS Framework, which you will then use to benchmark your progress through your Master's program, and beyond.

Competency orientated education is an educational program orientated around the attainment of competencies is one which focuses primarily on the skills and aptitudes you will develop. This is not at the expense of a more traditional transfer of knowledge: increasing your knowledge base is still an essential part of your Master's program. However, in preparing for a wide range of multi-faceted leadership roles, it is as important to evidence what you can do, as well as what you know. The professional competencies we use to structure the MHA at Dalhousie come from the LEADS Framework, and they form a core part of our accreditation as a CAHME provider.

Your personal competency portfolio: At the very start of the program, you will create a personal portfolio in which you provide evidence of your current level of achievement in each of the skill areas within the LEADS model. As you progress through the program, each course and professional learning experience will help you to add higher quality, targeted evidence to each section of your portfolio, and you will meet regularly with your academic advisor to discuss your progress. In the final stages of the program your portfolio will come to underpin your search for employment in the industry and will most likely also feed directly into the process of performance management and review in the organisation lucky enough to have a new SHA graduate on their team.

CERTIFIED HEALTH EXECUTIVE (CHE DESIGNATION)

Dalhousie's Master of Health Administration (MHA) program has developed a strategic partnership with the Canadian College of Health Leaders (CCHL) to increase the leadership capabilities of health care managers in Canada.

The strategic partnership agreement serves as an avenue to promote excellence in the health leadership field and provide graduates of the Master of Health Administration program immediate approval to becoming a Certified Health Executive (CHE).

Through this agreement, participants in the MHA program will receive full equivalence to the Certified Health Executive (CHE) designation, the only certification program for

Canadian health leaders. This program offers individual leaders several benefits including:

- Support for lifelong learning in health services leadership
- Assistance with career advancement
- Peer recognition
- An essential career designation

Note: Students are required to be an active Canadian College of Health Leaders member when submitting their proof of MHA graduation from Dalhousie University for the CHE designation.

PHD IN HEALTH PROGRAM

[The PhD in Health](#) program is offered in the Faculty of Health at Dalhousie University and is a full-time 4-5 year program preparing students to answer questions critical to improving health and social wellbeing locally, nationally and internationally. It is a focussed, research intensive program of study within the broader health perspective. Several MHA graduates have continued their graduate education through the PhD in Health program at Dalhousie. For further information, e-mail phdhealth@dal.ca

YOUR FULL-TIME PROGRAM OF STUDY [Link](#)

The Master of Health Administration (MHA) is a 16-month full-time program. Other options that require a longer period of time include part-time study, completing the thesis stream, and the JD/MHA.

In Year 1 you will experience:

- For the Fall and winter terms, 5 courses per term of preparatory education, plus an interprofessional health education experience.
- A 4-month summer residency.

In Year 2 you will experience:

- In the Fall term: 5 courses to integrate and expand your skills, and further interprofessional health education experience.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Year 1 Fall Term

- [HESA 5330: Management & Design of Healthcare Organizations](#)
- [HESA 5345: Accounting and Financial Management in Healthcare](#)
- [HESA 6360: Healthcare Law](#)
- [HESA 6370: Canadian and International Health Systems](#)
- [HESA 6505: Statistics for Health Administration](#)
- [IPHE 5900: Interprofessional Health Education](#)

Year 1 Winter Term

- [HESA 5320: Epidemiology and Population Health](#)
- [HESA 5335: Information Systems and Project Management for Health Administration](#)
- [HESA 5341: Healthcare Economics Evaluation and Policy](#)
- [HESA 5350: Management Control and Funding Systems in Healthcare](#)
- [HESA 5505: Strategy and Change Leadership in Health Systems](#)
- [IPHE 5900: Interprofessional Health Education](#)

Year 1 Summer Term

- [HESA 6390: Health Administration Residency](#)

Year 2 Fall

- [HESA 6100: Ethical Decisions in Health Administration](#)
- [HESA 6305: Analyzing the Outcomes of Healthcare](#)
- [HESA 6310: Health Policy](#)
- [HESA 6340: Human Resources in Healthcare](#)
- [HESA 6365: Quality Management in Healthcare](#)
- [IPHE 5900: Interprofessional Health Education](#)

PART-TIME STUDY

*The program is also available to students on a **part-time basis**. A part-time student may take 1-2 courses per term, which should be less than nine credit hours, with parttime studies normally completed within five years. MHA students may switch between part-and full-time status, e.g., if employment situation changes.*

IMPORTANT DATES

2026/2027 Academic Year Important dates at Dalhousie University [Link](#)

PUNCTUALITY, PROFESSIONALISM AND CONDUCT

The MHA program is a professional degree program. The overwhelming majority of MHA students are preparing for a professional career as a healthcare administrator, overseeing such professional activities as the design, delivery, funding, management, and evaluation of healthcare services and policy. As such, the number and type of courses, professional development seminars, and inter-professional mentoring exercises that characterize the MHA curriculum are designed to ensure the MHA graduate has the requisite professional competencies to effectively influence and lead in a public, private or nonprofit healthcare organization. This is why many of your courses incorporate explicit assessment of your participation in discussion.

The essential dynamic of the MHA curriculum is founded on the principles of didactic, interactive learning. Such principles are substantially challenged, however, when there is absenteeism. Absenteeism compromises the didactic nature of the curriculum and therefore, compromises the learning experience of those students in attendance. These courses are as much about developing effective and efficient time management and leadership skills and enhancing one's personal and professional skills in dealing with people, as they are about acquiring specific content knowledge [e.g., finance, accounting, project evaluation].

As such, the MHA student should view classes as management meetings. You should approach the MHA program as though you had just been hired for a 16-month term by a healthcare organization. As a manager in a healthcare organization, you would be expected to attend and substantially contribute to regularly scheduled meetings. The student should attend each meeting and approach each meeting as a collegial exercise with others within the healthcare organization. The individual would be expected to arrive to the meeting on time, fully prepared to contribute, and submit all agreed upon deliverables at the stated date and time.

In the working world, arriving at meetings late, attending without preparation or submitting deliverables below standard or late would be unacceptable. Skipping management meetings to complete work for another management project would be unacceptable. It is also unacceptable in the MHA program. The effective and efficient healthcare leader must exhibit exceptional time-management skills and an exemplary standard of professionalism, not only to ensure completion of one's own work, but to provide the standard of performance upon transitioning to the working world.

In the event of a planned absence, students should advise faculty of their absence through the Student Declaration of Absence [form](#).

LATE SUBMISSION OF WORK

Your Master's program is a preparation for a leadership role in Health Administration: the ability to work to Deadlines is a critical competency within such roles. Therefore, within your program, late submission of any piece of work has a direct consequence in your grading:

Late submissions will incur a 10% penalty for each 24-hour period beyond the published deadline, up to and including a third day (72 hours). Failure to submit your work within 72 hours of a published deadline will result in your work remaining ungraded.

As soon as you suspect you may have any reason to miss a deadline, you should alert your course instructor, clearly communicating when they might expect late work. This will not prevent the reduction of the grade in line with the school's policy, but it allows your instructor to plan for your late submission in their marking schedule.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

Please note that your Master's program is designed as a preparation for career success: grades matter, but these must be seen in the wider context of your professional development. The feedback you receive from faculty members throughout each course should be used to guide your next stage of development. It is of considerably more valuable than a grade, be it an A+ or B-. In each syllabus, under the assessment overview, you should find a summary of how you will be assessed. You should also be able to see the details of each assignment.

MHA students are required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies to achieve a grade of B- or better in all classes taken. If a student receives an F grade in a class, the student (full time or part time) is withdrawn from the program for academic reasons.

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	GPA
A+	90-100	4.3
A	85-89	4.0
A-	80-84	3.7
B+	77-79	3.3
B	73-76	3.0
B-	70-72	2.7
Fail	<70	

In line with the Faculty of Graduate Studies [Grading Policy](#), students should expect their assignments to adhere to the following SHA policies.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS

Academic integrity within the MHA should be considered in the context of the University's policies and procedures. You will have an optional workshop early in the orientation process which will expand upon academic writing including issues related to academic integrity and accurate citation. You can also review the University's guidance for students by following this link: [Link to Student Academic Integrity Resources](#).

You will also need to check individual course syllabi for any specific requirements your instructors require related to academic writing.

Recently, Large Language Models (LLMs) and various forms of Artificial Intelligence (AI) have entered mainstream workplace and academic practice. Dalhousie, and so the MHA, is in the process of adapting procedures to capture the benefits of the technology, whilst still ensuring fairness in grading practices.

Each course instructor will have a different approach to the use of AI/LLMs, ranging from promoting use within learning activities and assessments, to use just within assessments, to much more controlled use. You must ensure that you are always operating within their guidelines, and if in doubt, engage in conversation with your instructor about their own approach.

Where the use of LLM/AI is allowed, be clear and consistent in your citation of sources.

STUDENT GRIEVANCES & APPEAL PROCEDURES

Before a formal process is undertaken, students who wish to raise questions or register concerns about matters of academic standing are encouraged and strongly advised to first communicate informally with their course instructor. If this issue was not resolved, then the issue should be raised with the MHA Program Coordinator, and then with the Director of the School of Health Administration.

Formal complaints can be made against the Program by filing an appeal with the [Faculty of Health Student Appeals Committee](#). The purpose of the Student Appeals Committee is to hear appeals from students regarding academic matters in accordance with the jurisdictions and procedures approved by the Faculty of Health.

[The Faculty of Graduate Studies Academic Appeals Committee Procedures](#) provide for the fair, orderly and expeditious resolution of student appeals relating to academic matters within the jurisdiction of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

A Student may appeal the decision of the Hearing Panel (Faculty of Health or Faculty of Graduate Studies) to the [Senate Appeals Committee](#).

[Appeal of a Grade](#): Students who wish to have their grade reassessed can begin the formal reassessment process by filling out a Request for a [Reassessment of a Final Grade](#) with the Registrar's Office and pay a \$50 fee, which is refundable if the grade is changed.

OUR AWARDS

We are pleased to be able to offer many annual awards to our MHA students, and the details of each award can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

ADVANCED STANDING & EXEMPTION

Applicants wishing to receive advanced standing should include course outlines for those classes previously taken which they consider to be equivalent to Dalhousie MHA classes – these must be graduate level classes. Applications will be reviewed by the Graduate Program Coordinator.

EQUITABLE ADMISSIONS POLICY

The School of Health Administration recognizes that deliberate Equitable Admissions processes are required to increase the support and admission, and graduation of students who self-identify as belonging to historically underrepresented groups: persons of Aboriginal/Indigenous ancestry (especially Mi'kmaq), members of racialized groups, persons of African descent (especially African Nova Scotians), Acadians, persons with dis/Abilities, and persons belonging to minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity (SOGI) groups and women.

APPENDIX 1 – LEADS FRAMEWORK



Reference: <https://cchl-ccls.ca/resource/leads-leadership-brochure/>

CCHL, 2023

APPENDIX 2 - OUR AWARDS FOR MHA STUDENTS

Aspiring Health Leaders Entrance Scholarship Award (monetary award)

Sponsored by the School of Health Administration and awarded to students that have achieved exemplar academic standing from previous undergraduate and/or graduate studies. Students with the highest-grade point average entering the Master of Health Administration program will be considered in the selection process. The number of scholarship awards may vary year to year based on operational funding.

CCHL – Nova Scotia & PEI Chapter Award (monetary award)

Sponsored by the local Chapter of the Canadian College of Health Leaders and awarded to the graduating student of Dalhousie University's Master of Health Administration program who exhibits both high academic standing and a high degree of professionalism generally consistent with the standards (e.g. ethical conduct, competencies) endorsed by the College. Activity in the College is considered in the selection process.

Robert Wood Johnson Award (if travel is required to accept the award, these expenses are also covered)

Sponsored by Johnson & Johnson Ltd. honouring excellence in the study of health administration. The award is given to the graduating student who is viewed most likely to contribute valuable service in the career of health services administration.

Dr. David Persaud Award

Awarded to the graduating student who achieves the highest GPA in HESA 5505 Strategy and Change Leadership in Health Systems. This award will be given to the student who demonstrates leadership qualities and a commitment to championing effective change management in their course and program work.

Dr. A. Peter Ruderman Award

Awarded to the graduating student who achieved the highest GPA of the graduates and has demonstrated the most originality and creativity in class, projects and papers in HESA 5320 Epidemiology and HESA 6505.

Northwood's Edward L. Roach Continuing Care Award (monetary award)

Sponsored by the Northwood Foundation and awarded to the graduating student of the MHA program who has achieved high academic performance in Health Administration and has demonstrated particular interest in the field of long-term care.

Glen Moore Memorial Award

Sponsored by the School of Health Administration in memory of Glen Moore, and awarded to the first-year student, selected by her/his peers, faculty and staff, for showing effective leadership, congeniality and deemed most likely to make a noteworthy contribution to the field of health administration.

Association of Health Administration Students (AHAS) Award

Awarded to a graduating student in recognition of fellowship and valuable contribution to student life within the Association of Health Administration Students, the School of Health Administration, and the community at large.

Nestman Prize for Accounting Excellence (monetary award)

Awarded to a student who has achieved academic excellence in HESA 5345 Health Services Accounting and Management Control, and HESA 5350 Health Services Management Accounting and Control. This award was created to honour the contributions of Professor Lawrence Nestman on his retirement. For many years, Professor Nestman was the instructor for these courses.

Dr. Thomas A. Rathwell Award

Awarded to the graduating student who achieves the highest GPA in HESA 6310 Healthcare Policy and HESA 5341 Economics.

Shannex Prize in Innovative Practice for Aging Populations (monetary award)

The Prize was established to recognize outstanding achievement in innovation and optimization of quality care of our aging population. Recipients will be a graduating student in the Master of Health Administration program at Dalhousie. The recipient will have demonstrated outstanding achievement in innovation and/ optimization of quality care for our aging population through course work, residency, a research project and/or volunteer work.

Robert Zed ELEMENTS Mentorship Prize (monetary award)

The recipient will be a graduating student in the Master of Health Administration program at Dalhousie University who completed the ELEMENTS Mentorship Program. The recipient will provide a 400-word essay outlining what the ELEMENTS Mentorship program meant to them and the importance of mentorship in Health Administration.