

Department of Health Services Management (HSM)  
College of Public Health  
University of Kentucky

## STATEMENT OF MHA COMPETENCIES

### INTRODUCTION

The role of the Department of Health Services Management is to improve the organization and delivery of personal and public health services in Kentucky and beyond. In support of that role, the MHA Program's mission is *"To provide graduates with critical competencies required to succeed in post-graduate positions in hospitals, multi-unit health systems, and other complex health-related organizations and build a solid foundation for their future leadership development."* The MHA Program focuses on preparing students for positions that require management and strategic abilities, and places special emphasis on needs and opportunities in healthcare organizations within Kentucky and contiguous states.

The Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) defines the term "competency" as knowledge, skills, and other attributes that are essential in performing a particular role. Based on our MHA Program's mission; faculty assessment of the healthcare environment; a review of other MHA competency models; and input from stakeholders including MHA alumni and a special University-wide advisory committee, this document presents:

- The current statement of competencies for our MHA curriculum, and
- The courses which have primary (P) and secondary (S) responsibility to address each of the competencies.\*

Appendix A provides definitions and examples of the levels of competency. Appendix B lists courses included in the MHA curriculum.

### MHA COMPETENCIES

Core competencies the faculty expects students to develop by successfully completing the MHA curriculum and six over-arching abilities to which these competencies relate are as follows:

- A. ***Health Services and Health Status - Ability to analyze health services and other factors that impact health status and commitment to improving the health status of individuals, families, and communities.***
1. Analyze the key determinants of population health and health disparities and their relative impact on individuals, communities, and society.
    - HA 601 (S)
    - HA 602 (S)
    - CPH 614 (P)
    - CPH 701 (P)

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\*A course having a primary responsibility for a particular competency will:

- Have one or more educational objectives linked directly to the competency; and
- Devote one unit of the syllabus and one or more full class periods to it.

A course having secondary responsibility for a particular competency will:

- Have at least one educational objective related to that competency; and
- Have specific educational content (e.g., required reading materials, a case study, etc.) related to it.

2. Analyze the incidence and prevalence of injury and disease using epidemiological and statistical methods.
  - CPH 614 (P)
  - HA 621 (P)
  - CPH 701 (S)
3. Analyze and prioritize population health needs.
  - HA 602 (P)
  - HA 621 (S)
  - CHP 701 (S)
4. Apply appropriate quantitative methods for measuring and assessing the services (clinical and non-clinical) provided by healthcare organizations.
  - HA 602 (P)
  - HA 621 (P)
  - HA 623 (P)
  - HA 660 (S)
5. Assess and prioritize market opportunities and alternatives.
  - HA 602 (P)
6. Apply accounting and financial management principles in analyzing financial statements and issues.
  - HA 635 (P)
  - HA 637 (P)
- B. ***Management, Governance, and Leadership - Ability to inspire support for a vision or course of action and successfully direct the teams, processes, and changes required to accomplish it.***
  7. Create strategies for designing healthcare programs that are durable, efficient, and effective.
    - HA 623 (P)
    - HA 637 (S)
    - HA 642 (S)
  8. Apply key concepts, principles, and legal aspects of strategic human resources management in healthcare organizations.
    - HA 603 (S)
    - HA 623 (S)
    - HA 628 (P)
  9. Explain the concepts of mission, vision, values, and policies and the responsibilities for establishing and implementing them in healthcare organizations.
    - HA 601 (P)
    - HA 602 (S)
    - HA 604 (P)
    - HA 642 (S)

10. Explain the respective roles of governance and management in healthcare organizations, including multi-level organizations.
  - HA 602 (P)
  - HA 604 (P)
  - HA 711 (S)
11. Synthesize pertinent information and utilize it in constructing capital budgets, operating budgets, and human resources budgets and in cash management.
  - HA 628 (S)
  - HA 635 (P)
  - HA 637 (P)
12. Create solid strategic and business plans, including methods for evaluating progress in relation to them.
  - HA 602 (P)
  - HA 635 (S)
  - HA 637 (S)
  - HA 660 (S)

C. **Communication and Interpersonal Skills - Ability to communicate effectively and build enduring, trust-based interpersonal relationships.**

13. Work comfortably in multi-disciplinary groups, both large and small.
  - HA 623 (P)
  - HA 628 (S)
  - HA 642 (S)
  - HA 711 (P)
14. Develop effective management skills and the ability to assess their impact on individual behavior, group behavior, and organizational culture and performance.
  - HA 628 (S)
  - HA 642 (P)
  - HA 785 (P)
15. Speak and write in a clear, logical, and grammatical manner in formal and informal situations, including cogent business presentations and use of social media.

This competency is cross-cutting and, to varying degrees, is addressed by virtually all courses in the MHA curriculum. First-year courses that address it include HA 601, HA 603, HA 642, and HA 711; second-year courses include HA 604, HA 628, HA 660, and HA 785.

D. **Systems Thinking and Creative Analysis - Ability to identify key issues and problems, analyze them systematically, and reach sound, innovative conclusions.**

16. Demonstrate the ability to analyze organizational issues and discern those which require the advice and assistance of legal counsel.
  - HA 603 (P)
  - HA 628 (S)

17. Synthesize and apply pertinent concepts and principles of leadership in analyzing organizational issues through case studies and projects in healthcare settings.
  - HA 623 (S)
  - HA 660 (S)
  - HA 711 (S)
  - HA 785 (P)
18. Apply statistical principles and methods in analyzing organizational issues and interpreting the results.
  - HA 621 (P)
  - HA 660 (P)
19. Apply economic principles and methods in analyzing organizational and payment issues and interpreting the results.
  - HA 636 (P)
  - HA 637 (S)
  - HA 660 (S)
20. Apply the basic concepts and principles of healthcare ethics in analyzing organizational issues, policy formulation, and decision-making processes.
  - HA 604 (P)
  - HA 623 (S)
  - HA 660 (S)
  - HA 785 (S)
21. Develop and demonstrate the capacity for critical thinking and the ability to employ a systematic, analytical approach to decision making.
  - HA 660 (P)
  - HA 711 (S)
  - HA 785 (P)
22. Ability to look beyond the status quo, envision new directions and approaches, and formulate solutions that are both creative and pragmatic.
  - HA 660 (P)
  - HA 711 (P)
  - HA 785 (P)
- E. ***Organizational and Public Policy - Ability to understand how organizational and public policies are formulated, their impact on healthcare organizations and communities, and how to influence their development.***
23. Explain the structure of the U.S. healthcare system and the processes through which health policies are formulated and implemented at the state and federal levels.
  - HA 601 (P)
  - HA 673 (P)
24. Assess the impact of government policy and regulatory requirements on healthcare organizations.
  - HA 601 (S)
  - HA 628 (S)
  - HA 636 (S)

- HA 673 (P)

25. Demonstrate understanding of the basic concepts of health law and compliance requirements as they affect decision-making in healthcare organizations.

- HA 603 (P)
- HA 624 (S)
- HA 660 (S)

F. ***Continuous Evaluation and Improvement - Commitment to on-going evaluation for continuous organizational and personal improvement.***

26. Apply key concepts and principles of change management in modifying policies, practices, and programs in healthcare organizations.

- HA 602 (P)
- HA 623 (P)
- HA 624 (S)
- HA 628 (S)
- HA 642 (S)

27. Create and apply basic approaches for monitoring the performance of healthcare organizations and programs (e.g., setting standards and targets, benchmarking, balanced scorecards).

- HA 623 (P)
- HA 624 (P)
- HA 635 (S)
- HA 660 (P)

28. Apply basic concepts and principles that affect the selection, implementation, and evaluation of information technology in healthcare organizations.

- HA 623 (S)
- HA 624 (P)

29. Demonstrate commitment to objective self-assessment and on-going development that will lead to personal and professional growth throughout their career.

This final core competency is cross-cutting and, to varying degrees, is addressed by virtually all courses in the MHA curriculum. First-year courses that address it directly include HA 601, HA 642, and HA 711; second-year courses in which this competency is emphasized include HA 604, HA 628, HA 660, and HA 785.

The faculty is committed to modeling this behavior and incorporating it in the curriculum. However, it is the personal responsibility of each student to recognize its importance and work toward developing it during their period of graduate studies.

## Appendix A

### LEVELS OF COMPETENCY

#### **BUILDING A FOUNDATION:**

<b>LEVELS OF COMPETENCY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF LEVEL</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<p>Acquiring and remembering pertinent information including key concepts, principles, and theories.</p> <p>Example: Accurately describing the structure and components of the U.S. health insurance industry.</p>
<b>Understanding</b>	<p>Interpreting and communicating complex information accurately.</p> <p>Example: Explaining the steps that might be involved in conducting a strategic planning process and how these steps could vary in different situations.</p>

#### **DEVELOPING SKILLS:**

<b>LEVELS OF COMPETENCY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF LEVEL</b>
<b>Application</b>	<p>Applying concepts, principles, and methodologies effectively in addressing issues or solving problems in diverse situations.</p> <p>Example: Forecasting cash flow for a new service line with different sets of assumptions.</p>
<b>Analysis</b>	<p>Separating complex concepts or systems into their key components and comprehending their inter-relationships and impact.</p> <p>Example: Identifying the key factors that contribute to hospital-acquired infections, their relative impact on patient care quality and hospital operating expenses, and possible corrective actions.</p>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>Making judgments based on criteria and standards through measuring, checking, and critiquing.</p> <p>Example: Assessing the impact of installing a new, more stringent internal audit program on the incidence of errors in financial statements and reports.</p>
<b>Synthesis</b>	<p>Creating new ideas, models, methods, and systems using input and insights gained from multiple sources.</p> <p>Example: Designing a new pay-for-performance methodology that aligns the incentives for physicians in a multi-specialty group practice to cooperate and collaborate.</p>

#### **REFERENCES:**

- Bloom, B. S., Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals, New York, D. McKay Co. (1956).
- Anderson, L. W. & Krathwohl, D. R. (Eds.), A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Complete edition, New York: Longman (2001).
- Examples of competency levels were adopted from those compiled in FY 2010 by the Department of Health Management and Policy, College of Public Health, The University of Iowa.

## Appendix B

### LISTING OF COURSES IN THE MHA CURRICULUM

#### **FOUNDATION COURSES**

CPH 614 -- Managerial Epidemiology  
CPH 701 -- Introduction to Public Health  
HA 601 -- Overview of U.S. Healthcare  
HA 621 -- Quantitative Methods for Healthcare Management  
HA 635 -- Management Accounting for Healthcare Organizations

#### **CORE COURSES**

HA 602 -- Strategic Planning and Marketing in Healthcare  
HA 603 -- Legal Aspects of Healthcare Management  
HA 604 -- Healthcare Ethics and Governance  
HA 623 -- Healthcare Operations Analysis and Management  
HA 624 -- Information Systems in Healthcare  
HA 628 -- Human Resources Management in Healthcare  
HA 636 -- Health Economics  
HA 637 -- Health Finance  
HA 642 -- Organization Theory and Behavior  
HA 673 -- Health Policy

#### **APPLICATION COURSES**

HA 660 -- Decision Making in Healthcare Organizations  
HA 711 -- Practicum in Healthcare Management  
HA 785 -- Independent Study (Capstone Project)