



VCU

MHA Student Handbook

**2025-2026
Class of 2028**

MHA Program 2025-2026 Student Handbook

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1. Virginia Commonwealth University

1.1 VCU at a Glance

VCU is an urban, public institution enrolling over 28,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students, making it the fastest growing university in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Among VCU's many national rankings are a number of graduate programs in the top tier of the annual U.S. News and World Report review, including the MHA program which is currently ranked seventh.

VCU is composed of 15 schools and one college with more than 200 degree and certificate programs. The offerings include 62 bachelor's degree programs, 72 master's degree programs, 41 doctoral degree programs, three first-professional degree programs, and 47 post-baccalaureate and post-master's certificate programs.

VCU's programs are located on the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) Campus and the Monroe Park Campus. The MCV Campus, which includes the VCU Medical Center, is located in historic Court End, near the government and financial centers of Richmond. The Monroe Park Campus is situated 1.7 miles west in Richmond's Fan District, a large residential neighborhood of Victorian townhouses and many small shops and cafes.

The total workforce of the university and medical center - faculty, physicians, nurses and administrative and support staff - is more than 21,000. More than 2,200 faculty comprise the University's teaching force. VCU faculty attracts more than \$270 million in sponsored research funding, placing it among the top 100 research institutions in the country. Research strengths at VCU include the basic and health sciences, business, behavioral sciences, public affairs and the humanities. The biomedical research strengths of VCU have played a lead role in launching the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park, a public-private partnership of the university, surrounding localities, the state and the business community.

The governance system of the university is headed by the Board of Visitors, a 16-member body appointed by the governor of Virginia. This group has the legal authority and responsibility for Virginia Commonwealth University as established by legislation passed by the General Assembly of Virginia. The president is selected by and responsible to the Board of Visitors, which determines major policies for the university.

For additional information, see <https://www.vcu.edu/about-vcu/facts-and-rankings/>

1.2 History

In 1833, the Medical College of Virginia was founded on what is now VCU's MCV Campus as the medical department of Hampden-Sydney College. In 1854, MCV became an independent medical school; in 1860, it became state-affiliated. In 1917, the Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health opened on what is now VCU's Monroe Park Campus. Before becoming an independent state institution in 1962, the Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health was the Richmond division of the College of William and Mary and the Richmond Professional Institute. MCV and RPI merged in 1968, forming Virginia Commonwealth University.

1.3 Richmond at a Glance

Richmond, capital of Virginia, offers many opportunities in culture, business, and recreation. Geographically, Richmond is located on both sides of the James River at the seven-mile-long fall line between low-lying Tidewater Virginia and the higher elevations of the Piedmont. The James' swift current was instrumental in Richmond's early development as an industrial and transportation center. Today, the river provides a beautiful backdrop to a thriving metropolitan city full of history and entertainment opportunities.

For Health Administration students, Richmond also provides a unique learning environment due to the competitive health care market. Area health systems include:

- Hospital Corporation of America Healthcare (HCA Healthcare) Richmond Division, which includes Henrico Doctors' Hospital, Retreat Hospital, CJW Medical Center, and Tuckahoe Surgery Center
- Bon Secours Richmond Health System, which includes St. Mary's Hospital, Memorial Regional Medical Center, St. Francis Medical Center, John Randolph Medical Center, and Richmond Community Hospital
- VCU Health System, which includes MCV Hospitals, MCV Physicians, and Virginia Premier Health Plan
- Veterans Health Administration, including the Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center

For more information about Richmond and Virginia, visit these web resources:

- *City of Richmond:* www.rva.gov
- *Guide to Historic Virginia:* www.visitrichmondva.com
- *Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau:* www.richmondva.com
- *Richmond Times-Dispatch:* www.richmond.com
- *Style Weekly:* www.styleweekly.com
- *Venture Richmond* www.venturerichmond.com
- *Website of Virginia Tourism:* www.virginia.org
- *Welcome to Virginia:* www.virginia.org/Welcome/

2. VCU College of Health Professions

2.1 Welcome Letter from the Dean

Dear CHP students,

As dean of the VCU College of Health Professions, I am thrilled to welcome you to a new academic year! Whether you're beginning your journey with us or returning to continue it, I want you to know how glad we are to have you here.

For more than five decades, the College of Health Professions has been a leader in health care education — preparing graduates who drive innovation and make meaningful contributions in their respective fields. You are now part of a vibrant academic environment dedicated to excellence, and it is important to recognize the legacy you are continuing.

Stepping into health care today takes incredible courage in the face of significant challenges. The work ahead is demanding, yet profoundly meaningful — from addressing health disparities, advancing equity and meeting the evolving needs of patients. This commitment requires more than just skill — it requires heart, resilience and unwavering dedication.

The College is a place of learning, discovery, connection, and growth. I encourage you to ask meaningful questions, and embrace challenges and opportunities as part of your educational experience.

You're not alone in this journey. Our faculty and staff are here every step of the way. Whether you need guidance, resources, or someone to talk to, we are all committed to helping you succeed.

I know the start of this semester brings a mix of enthusiasm and anticipation as we come together as one UNStoppable College of Health Professions community! Let's make this year one of growth and discovery while supporting one another. I wish everyone the best as we kick off the Fall 2025 semester!

Warmly,

Dr. Amy Darragh,
Dean, VCU College of Health Professions

2.2 Quest 2028 Themes Related to Student Success

VCU's Strategic Plan - Quest 2028 Together We Transform

VCU's new strategic plan, Quest 2028: Together We Transform, charts VCU's course over the next six years for its rise as a pre-eminent urban, public research university committed to equitable access to social, economic and health success. The plan identifies five themes and the second of these is *student success*.

Quest 2028 – *Theme: Student Success* – “Ignite student success through curricular innovation, a holistic culture of care and an engaged and empowered workforce.”

The three specific goals of this theme include to:

- Transform curriculum so that all students engage in inquiry, discovery, innovation, experiential learning, civic engagement and creative expression to prepare them for the future of work.
- Enhance the university culture of care and responsiveness that supports student engagement, success and sense of belonging.
- Retain and attract a diverse community of highly qualified faculty and staff that reflects a culture where everyone matters and belongs, and ensure the culture supports career satisfaction and growth.

The College of Health Professions takes seriously our role in helping VCU achieve Quest 2028. Our faculty, staff, and leadership work diligently to provide you with a world class education, and to ensure that you have the tools and support you need to succeed.

2.3 Student Services and Resources

University Student Health Services

<https://health.students.vcu.edu/>

VMI Building, Room 305, 1000 E. Marshall St.; (804) 828-9220

University Student Health Services is a nationally accredited health care service committed to providing high-quality outpatient care to VCU students. They offer a wide range of primary care services, including care in the following areas: allergy shots, blood and/or body fluid exposures, immunizations, mental health & ADHD, nutrition consults, sexual health & wellness, and travel health care.

University Counseling Services

<https://counseling.vcu.edu/>

VMI Building, Room 412, 1000 E. Marshall St.; (804) 828-3964

UCS provides comprehensive evaluation and consultation for students on the best options for their mental health care. This can include any of the following: case management, referral services to a community provider, brief individual and couples therapy, group therapy, consultation, sexual and intimate partner violence advocacy services and resiliency workshops.

Division for Academic Success

<https://das.vcu.edu/>

VMI Building, Suite 231, 1000 E. Marshall St.; (804) 828-9782

DAS offers disability and academic support services. Their mission is to assist VCU in creating a learning environment where all students have equal access to every aspect of the University's programs, services and activities. They can assist with academic accommodations, studying and exam strategies, and overall learning skills.

Career Services

<https://careers.vcu.edu/>

Hunton Student Center, Suite 205, 1110 E. Broad St.; (804) 828-1645

Career Services assists students in defining and achieving their career and professional goals. They offer career advising appointments, professional development events, and tools to help students develop awareness of their interests and strengths.

CHP Student Success

<https://chp.vcu.edu/student-success/>

CHP Building, 2nd Floor, Suite 2025

The CHP Student Success team is available to assist students with challenges or difficulties they may be experiencing. Students can access the Student Grievance process or make suggestions about ways to improve the CHP student experience by visiting the Student Success webpage.

Recreation and Wellbeing

<https://recwell.vcu.edu>

815 S. Cathedral Place; (804) 828-9355

Recreation and Wellbeing provides the campus community with judgment-free information, resources and support to be and stay well while at VCU by offering programs like the Resilience Lab and Rams in Recovery. Their goal is to grow a campus community that promotes wellness as the foundation for student success by: empowering students to practice safer and healthy behaviors, fostering inclusive and diverse environments and advocating for systemic change.

Equity and Access Services

<https://equity.vcu.edu/>

1001 Grove Avenue; (804) 828-1347

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law intended to end sex discrimination in all areas of education. Conduct prohibited by Title IX includes sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination and sexual violence. Equity and Access Services is a resource for students who would like to report sexual misconduct or violence, other forms of discrimination or harassment, or to report accessibility concerns.

VCU Card

<https://vcucard.vcu.edu/>

VMI Building 1000 East Marshall Street 3rd Floor, Richmond, VA 23298

Students may obtain a VCU Card beginning two weeks prior to the start of classes for their first semester. Students should bring a copy of their student schedule and a picture ID.

The VCU Card office charges a \$20 fee to replace any cards that are misplaced, lost, intentionally damaged, or stolen. Defective cards will be replaced at no cost.

VCU Cards are required for student access to the College of Health Professions between the hours of 7pm and 7am Monday – Friday and all hours on weekends.

Tompkins-McCaw Library for Health Sciences

<https://library.vcu.edu/spaces-tech/health-sciences-library/> | 804-828-0636

TML Building—509 N. 12th Street

Learning Center at Hunton—1110 E. Broad Street

TML Building Regular Hours

7:30am-12am, Monday – Thursday

7:30am-8pm, Friday

9am-6pm, Saturday

9am-12pm, Sunday

Hunton Regular Hours

8am-10pm, Monday – Friday

12pm-6pm, Saturday

12pm-10pm, Sunday

Other Libraries

Cabell Library (VCU Monroe Park Campus)

www.library.vcu.edu/jbc/

Library of Virginia:

www.lva.lib.va.us

Richmond Public Library:

www.richmondpubliclibrary.org

MCV Campus Parking

<http://www.parking.vcu.edu/parking/>

8th Street Deck, 659 North 8th Street, Richmond, VA 23219

Regular Hours

8:30am-4:30pm, Monday – Friday

Parking Options

MCV Campus Parking Permits: A lot, I lot, D-Deck, C lot, Eighth Street Deck

MCV Campus parking subscribers can park at these locations: F lot, J lot, Q Lot between the hours of 5pm-2am, Monday-Friday. Remember to check signs in each location to determine if any parking restrictions are in place.

After 6pm, street parking is free in designated areas.

Campus Police and Safety

<https://police.vcu.edu/> | 224 E. Broad Street PO Box 842025, Richmond VA, 23284

Main phone numbers:

Emergencies 828-1234 or 828-HELP

Non-emergencies 828-1196

Security Escort 828-7233

Safety tips

- Whenever possible, walk with other people or use the Campus Security Service. If you must walk alone after dark, stay in well-traveled and well-lit parts of campus.
- Avoid working alone in campus buildings at night. If the situation cannot be avoided, phone VCU Police to inform of your location. Do not prop open doors that should be locked.
- Keep your valuables in sight. Never leave belongings unattended or unsecured.
- Report anyone who behaves suspiciously.
- Carry your purse close to your body. Carry only the credit cards and cash you need.
- Remember - safety is everyone's responsibility. Awareness is prevention.

3. Department of Health Administration

ha.chp.vcu.edu | (804) 828-9466

College of Health Administration

900 E. Leigh Street, P.O. Box 980203, Richmond, Virginia 23298

3.1 Mission

Leaders reimagining health care.

The mission of the Department of Health Administration is to create the most innovative, compassionate, and business-savvy leaders to reimagine health care.

Building on our remarkable environment, our extraordinary networks, and our legacy of excellence, we provide the knowledge, skills, and connections for tomorrow's healthcare leaders through our innovative and business-focused approach.

3.2 History

Education in health administration at the university began in 1949 with the establishment of a graduate curriculum in hospital administration. Early graduates received a certificate; the master's degree was awarded beginning in 1955. These early efforts grew and developed into the Department of Health Administration, which was established in 1972 when the School of Hospital Administration was subsumed by the School of Allied Health Professions of Virginia Commonwealth University. The department now includes three major programs: (1) Master of Health Administration, (2) Doctor of Philosophy in Health Services Organization and Research, and (3) Professional Master of Science in Health Administration. The department cooperates with the University of Richmond School of Law, a program established in 1986; and the Washington and Lee School of Law, a program established in 2005, to offer the dual degree MHA/JD program. In 2001, the dual degree MHA/MD program was established with the VCU School of Medicine. In 2013, an MHA/MSIS program was established with the VCU School of Business. Both master's programs are fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME).

3.3 Faculty

Full Faculty Bios can be accessed from the Department Website at

<https://ha.chp.vcu.edu/team/>

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3.4 Adjunct Faculty

Rodney Adams, J.D., LL.M., HADM 611
Christie Hartwell, MHA, HADM 648
Mary Lynn Lunn, PhD, HADM 649
Lindsay Turpin, MHA, HADM 610

3.5 Professional Staff

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Katie McCall, M.Ed, Director of Career and Administrative Services
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Cameron Parkins, M.A., Program Manager
parkinsc@vcu.edu

3.6 Technology

Requirements

Students in the MHA program must have access to technology that meets the VCU Student Computer Initiative standards. In addition to meeting these minimum standards, students must have access to a computer or laptop with a video camera and microphone. Course materials for all MHA courses will be presented via VCU's Canvas Learning Management System.
<https://canvas.vcu.edu>

Printing

A few printers for students are available in the College of Health Professions building. You may add funds to your VCU Pay4Print account here: <https://vcucard.vcu.edu/services/pay4print/>

VCU WiFi

The CHP building is fully integrated with the University's wireless networks. There are two options for connecting to the wireless network: VCU Guest and VCU Safenet. If you will be using the wireless network regularly, the preferred method of connection is through VCUSafenet. This connection provides the VCU community with a safe, encrypted online experience that applies a higher level of security to wireless computing. After the initial setup, you are not required to log back in to the service every time you attach to the VCU SafeNet Wireless network. You will only be asked to sign back into the service if your eID password has changed. To use VCUSafenet, you will need to install a client on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. If you will only periodically be connecting to the wireless network, you can use the VCU Guest wireless. Once you are connected to VCU Guest, open your preferred browser, where you will be asked for an email address to proceed. Enter any valid email address in the box provided. The guest wireless network requires you to follow this login process each time you attach to the network. It is also important to remember that this is an unsecured connection. This service should not be used to send or receive sensitive information.

4. MHA Information

4.1 Code of Ethics

PREAMBLE

The purpose of the MHA Program Code of Ethics is to serve as a standard and guide for all students enrolled in the program. It contains standards by which all students are expected to act while affiliated with this program.

As students, all have the responsibility to represent themselves and the program in a professional and intellectual manner. As future health care

executives, it is paramount that all students begin to adopt a basic set of moral and ethical criteria to guide their personal and professional lives.

Students are reminded that their profession requires that many people easily trust them. Superiors, subordinates, colleagues, physicians, patients, and other members of the community will look to them as a stable and honest representation of the organization of which they are affiliated.

1. THE MHA STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENT

The MHA student shall:

- A. Uphold the Code of Ethics of the MHA Program in the Department of Health Administration at Virginia Commonwealth University;
- B. Abide always by the VCU Honor Code on any assignment, quiz, or examination;
- C. Protect the integrity of the department by holding classmates accountable to the VCU Honor Code and MHA Program Code of Ethics;
- D. Ensure the learning environment allows and promotes individuals to freely express ethical concerns, ideas, and other free thought;
- E. Respect all educators and staff members with the greatest respect, regardless of authority, tenure, or classification;
- F. Respect guest speakers as distinguished members of the health care management profession and respect confidential materials and ideas obtained through the learning process;
- G. Treat the facilities and equipment of the Department with care; and
- H. Refrain from engaging in any activity that demeans the credibility and dignity of the Department and Program.

2. THE MHA STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO FELLOW STUDENTS AND PEERS

The MHA student shall:

- A. Contribute to others' education by sharing experiences and offering assistance when possible;
- B. Respect all students as colleagues and treat them with dignity;
- C. Respect personal confidences; and
- D. Serve as an effective mentor for upcoming students.

3. THE MHA STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT PROFESSION AND THE COMMUNITY

The MHA student shall, within the scope of his or her ability:

- A. Conduct all personal and professional activities with honesty, integrity, respect, fairness, and good faith in a manner that will reflect well upon the profession;
- B. Commit to lifelong learning in order to better serve those in one's care;
- C. Challenge him/herself to address the issues of the underserved populations;
- D. Where possible, attempt to better the community through service;
- E. Encourage and participate in the exchange of ideas on health care policy issues, and advocate solutions that will improve health status and promote quality health care; and
- F. Actively seek opportunities to enhance the education of him/herself and his/her classmates concerning the health care field.

4.2 Curriculum

MHA courses are designed to build foundational, analytical, and integrated knowledge of the healthcare industry. Woven throughout the curriculum is the application of the concepts of managed care and information technology. Field assignments are used to enhance learning in the classroom. A total of 59 credit hours is required for graduation. Please see <https://ha.chp.vcu.edu/programs/mha-program/> for the curriculum plan and all course descriptions.

The following competencies, developed in and out of the classroom throughout the students' tenure in the program, cut across five domains:

Communication and Relationship Management

- Interpersonal Communication
- Presentation Skills
- Writing Skills

Leadership

- Leading and Managing Others
- Change Management
- Ability for Honest Self-assessment
- Systems Thinking
- Problem-solving and Decision-making

Professionalism

- Personal and Professional Ethics
- Professional & Community Contribution
- Working in Teams

Knowledge of the Healthcare Environment

- Health Care Issues and Trends
- Healthcare Legal Principles
- Populations' Health and Status Assessment
- Health Policy

Business Knowledge and Skills

- Economic Analysis and Application
- Organizational Dynamics and Governance
- Financial Management
- Strategic Planning
- Information Management/Understanding and Using Technology Skills
- Quantitative Skills
- Marketing
- Quality Improvement/ Performance Improvement
- Planning and Managing Projects
- Human Resources

Coursework prepares students to meet the challenges of the constantly changing healthcare marketplace while providing a solid foundation for life-long professional development. Faculty members have in-depth academic preparation in their disciplines and extensive professional experience. All courses are three credits unless otherwise noted.

4.3 Course Registration and Materials

Course Registration

The Graduate Program Manager distributes course schedules to students in a timely manner prior to the semester in question. Students must register themselves for classes using VCU eServices (www.eservices.vcu.edu)

Course Materials

Students can purchase required texts at the MCV Campus Bookstore (601 N. 10th Street) or online (e.g., www.barnesandnoble.com or www.amazon.com). Many electronic versions of textbooks are available via the VCU library.

4.4 Elective Options

During the MHA program, students have one 3-credit elective. Options may include:

- Graduate-level course in Health Administration or another department. The course must be approved by the Program Director and must be related to health care and/or management.
- Independent Study in Health Administration. Designed to allow students to explore areas of special interest. The study must be approved by the Program Director and be conducted under the guidance of a faculty sponsor.

4.5 Administrative Residency

Students will receive a separate handbook pertaining to the Administrative Residency. The purpose of this section is to provide a brief overview of the experience by answering frequently asked questions. Note: MHA/MD and MHA/JD students complete a semester-long Administrative Internship instead of the one-year Administrative Residency.

Why is the Administrative Residency required?

Administrative residencies were normal requirements in the early history of health administration programs. However, in the 1970s, programs began dropping the required residency in exchange for an optional post-graduate fellowship or summer internship. VCU feels strongly that the practical experience gained during the residency is necessary for an entry-level job in health administration and that the residency sets its students apart from those of other top-ranked programs.

What do Administrative Residents do?

The residency year is the culmination of the VCU MHA student experience. Residencies include opportunities for three key pillar experiences over the course of the year-long placement: to lead and support meaningful project work for the precepting organization, to receive support in the form of regular mentorship from the primary preceptor and other members of the executive team, and finally, to shadow various roles, departments, locations, and leadership styles across the organization.

When the student begins the full-time residency, they will also enroll as a part-time MHA student to complete the coursework required for graduation from our program. This enrollment enables students to continue receiving support from MHA program faculty and staff through the course of the year, including executive coaching. Additionally, the course requires a written portfolio of residency project work and a final presentation to program faculty and alumni to demonstrate competency attainment.

Students work with preceptors to create a plan to ensure development of leadership competencies and to monitor progress toward the goals defined in that plan according to the preceptor's expectations throughout the year.

What type of organizations are residency sites?

Administrative residencies are usually completed in a hospital or integrated delivery system. Other types of organizations offering residencies include physician practice management, managed care, consulting, and long-term care settings.

How are residency sites chosen?

The Program has devoted resources to ensure students are placed in positions that reflect their interests and professional development needs. The Program maintains an extensive list of affiliated organizations and affiliate faculty who are committed to serving as preceptors and mentors. Students who are interested in pursuing a residency outside of the current network of preceptors and sites must discuss this option with the Director of Professional Development during the second semester.

Are residency positions paid?

Yes, students are expected to complete a minimum of 10 months in a **paid administrative residency**. These positions typically include benefits; in some cases, a higher salary may be offered in lieu of benefits.

If a student is dismissed from a residency site, it is the student's responsibility to secure an alternative placement. This may include obtaining another paid residency or completing the remaining requirements through an **unpaid volunteer experience** with an approved organization.

4.6 Dual Degree Programs

MHA/JD

For information on the MHA/JD dual degree, please visit <https://ha.chp.vcu.edu/programs/mha-program/>

MHA/MD

For information on the MHA/MD dual degree, please visit <https://ha.chp.vcu.edu/programs/mha-program/>

4.7 Certificate Programs

Take your leadership to the next level with a graduate certificate from VCU Health Administration! Explore the certificate programs:

<https://ha.chp.vcu.edu/programs/graduate-certificates-in-health-administration/>

Certificate in Aging and Health Administration

Advanced study in health administration and aging studies is available through a dual degree and certificate program co-sponsored by the Department of Health Administration and the Department of Gerontology in the College of Health Professions.

The program allows students to earn a Master of Health Administration and Certificate in Aging Studies with a minimum of 71 credits rather than the 74 credits necessary if the two degrees were pursued separately. This efficiency lowers the overall cost of tuition while also reducing the time to earn both degrees.

Certificate in Health Equity

The VCU Certificate Program in Health Equity is a four-course program designed to prepare you to become a healthcare leader who is equipped to advance health equity, including social determinants of health that contribute to health disparities in the U.S., and help you identify and advocate for strategies to reduce these disparities. This program is designed for practicing healthcare leaders, clinicians, non-profit professionals, and others who hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a relevant area, as well as current graduate students.

You will be prepared to lead with an ethical framework to advance health equity. You will learn how health care organizations and public entities are funding efforts to address unconscious bias, patient-centered care, and the social determinants of health, such as housing, food insecurity, and environmental conditions, as well as increased access to health care as a means to reduce health disparities. You will be prepared to critically analyze, design and implement strategies to enhance health equity. Courses are taught by an interdisciplinary team of VCU faculty.

Certificate in Health Care Financial Management

The Certificate in Health Care Financial Management is a five-course program designed to help you apply financial concepts to your work in health care organizations. This program is designed for clinicians, practicing health care leaders, MHA and MSHA students, and others who hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a relevant area. Some courses can be applied towards both the MHA/MSHA degrees and the certificate.

Certificate in Sustainability, Health & Healthcare

The Graduate Certificate in Sustainability, Health, and Health Care is a program that provides students with foundational knowledge about the interplay between climate change, human health, and the healthcare industry. Students will learn how the consequences of climate change and the diverse ways in which healthcare facilities contribute to carbon emissions, waste, and air pollution, as well as steps public and private organizations are taking to mitigate these effects. Students will be prepared to contribute to actions that respond to the impact of climate change on patients and communities, increase the resilience of health care facilities, and mitigate the impact of the industry on climate change. Graduates will be able to analyze specific problems, propose solutions, and outline implementation strategies that influence sustainable practices within healthcare organizations.

4.8 Program Awards

Dolores G. Clement Award

The MHA Class of 1998 established this award in Dr. Clement's name, for her years of devotion to the Department of Health Administration. The award recognizes a faculty member for counsel and support outside of the classroom. More specifically, the award is in recognition of faculty who have demonstrated extraordinary dedication to the academic, professional, and personal growth of students. This award is given at the end of the second year, and the recipient is chosen by the class completing didactic coursework.

Donald J. Romano Prize

This award was endowed by Donald J. Romano (MHA '73) to acknowledge the MHA student with the strongest academic record at the end of the second year of didactic studies.

Jerry L. Norville Award

This award is in recognition of special education and given to a faculty member chosen by the graduating MHA class. The recipient of the Norville Award should, through example, have demonstrated exceptional dedication and genuine concern for the welfare of the MHA students. This award is given at the end of the second year and is determined by the students.

Thomas C. Barker Award

The MHA Class of 1996 created this award in recognition of the first Dean of the School of Allied Health Professionals, who also had been a Program Director and is an emeritus faculty member of the Department of Health Administration. The graduating class chooses to recognize an outstanding preceptor who exemplifies the mentorship and qualities needed to develop residents entering the profession. The first award was made at the retirement of Dr. Barker in June 1996. The award recipient is selected by third-year students at Spring Seminars and announced at graduation.

5. Tuition, Fees, Financial Aid, and Scholarships

Tuition and Fees

Students may access their financial records using VCU eServices (www.eservices.vcu.edu). Tuition and fee information can be found using the VCU Tuition calculator (<https://accounting.vcu.edu/tuition/calculator/>)

Financial Aid**FAFSA**

To be eligible for financial aid, students must complete a FAFSA form to indicate their financial need. The form, which is available at www.fafsa.ed.gov, must be completed each year.

VCU Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid offers many services, including:

- Grants
- Scholarships
- Employment (i.e., Graduate Assistantships, Federal Work-Study Program, etc.)
- Loans (i.e., Federal Direct, Subsidized v. Unsubsidized, PLUS, Perkins, etc.)
- Veteran's Benefits
- Installment Payment Plan
- eServices (www.eservices.vcu.edu)

To learn more about VCU Financial Aid, please visit the website <https://sfs.vcu.edu/financial-aid/>

Alternative Loans

Students may also apply for alternative loans from private banks, educational organizations, or other sources.

Program Scholarships

All MHA students are eligible for departmental scholarships after they have been accepted into the program. All are awarded according to specified endowments by various committees responsible.

External Scholarships

MHA students are often eligible for many external scholarships. Students who are eligible need to apply for these. A sampling of external scholarships is provided below:

Available to 1st Year Students

- ACHE Albert W. Dent Graduate Student Scholarship - www.ache.org
- ACMPE Scholarship Fund Program, sponsored by MGMA - www.mgma.com
- Tylenol Scholarship - www.tylenol.com
- Other funding opportunities - www.fastweb.com, www.exporehealthcareers.org

Available to 2nd Year Students

- ACHE Essay Competition - www.ache.org
- ACHE Minority Internship - www.ache.org
- ACHE Foster G. McGaw Graduate Student Scholarship - www.ache.org
- HIMSS Foundation scholarship for a Masters student - www.himss.org

Working Outside of the Program

We encourage students to pursue part-time internships or employment opportunities—especially in health care—alongside their studies. However, we strongly advise against full-time employment during the didactic phase of the program, as it can significantly interfere with academic success.

Introduction to Academic Policies and Procedures: Sections 6 – 8

The following sections present departmental policies pertaining to students in the Professional Graduate Programs in Health Administration at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). They are intended to provide guidelines for student performance and achievement during enrollment. Both faculty and students are responsible for becoming familiar with University documents that establish expectations and guidelines for graduate students at VCU.

Each section is designed to be congruent with full University policies and regulations as set forth in the VCU Graduate Bulletin. In the case of a conflict between these policies and the VCU Graduate Bulletin, the VCU policies apply. See: <http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/>

The MHA Program is designed primarily for full-time students, and the MSHA Program admits both part-time and full-time students. Although the language in Sections 6 through 8 of this document reflects that most students are enrolled full-time, except where noted, all of the general policies and regulations apply equally to both MHA and MSHA full-time and part-time students.

6. Academic Policies

6.1 Admission Requirements

To be considered for admission to the graduate program in health administration in full status, the applicant must complete all prerequisite course requirements and meet the minimum qualifications as specified in the graduate bulletin:

<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>

6.2 Transfer Credit & Course Load

Detailed information on these topics can be found through the Graduate Student bulletin:

<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/transfer-credit/>

<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/registration-policies/#text>

Full-Time Enrollment

Students classified as full-time candidates for the MHA must enroll full-time each fall and spring semester during the on-campus phase of their program unless this requirement is waived by the Program Director for extenuating circumstances. A student cannot enroll for more than 15 semester hours in any semester unless approval is received from the Program Director. An overload fee will be assessed to students enrolling in more than 15 semester hours.

6.3 Plan of Study

The academic requirements that the student must fulfill are those that are in effect when the plan of study is approved by the Program Director. If curricular changes approved by the University occur, the student and Program Director will determine any needed changes in the plan of study.

6.4 Waiver of Courses

In general, those admitted to the MHA Program are expected to complete all courses as listed in the formal curriculum at the time of admission. However, students may petition the Program Director to waive selected courses prior to beginning the program. No waivers will be considered once a student has commenced coursework. The decision of the Program Director on such matters is final, although advice will be sought from the faculty member teaching the course for which the waiver is sought.

6.5 General Academic Requirements

1. Students in the MHA Program must achieve an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 (4.0 scale) for all coursework. The program will recommend any student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.00 at the end of a given semester for academic probation to the faculty. Students in the MHA Program must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher to enter into their residency.
2. Regardless of GPA, a student who receives a "C" in a required course will receive a warning letter.
3. Students in the MHA Program who earn more than one "C" or less than a "C" in any course of the

curriculum will be placed on academic probation. Students cannot be on probation for more than one semester.

4. The academic standing of any graduate student who receives multiple grades of C or a grade of D or F may be reviewed for dismissal from their programs, even if the students' overall GPA is 3.00 or better.
 - a. Students in the MHA Program must not have more than two required courses with a grade of C, regardless of the student's overall GPA.
 - b. Students who receive a D or F in a required course and are not dismissed from the program must retake and pass the course with a C or better (unless the C would count as a third C earned in the program). Pending approval by the Program Director, options may include either the MHA or MSHA equivalent or taking an equivalent course at VCU.
5. Students will be notified by the department that they are going to be reviewed for dismissal, and they will be given the opportunity to submit supporting documentation (10 business days) to faculty to be considered in this decision.
6. Students on academic probation are not eligible for department-funded travel, such as student case competitions.
7. Students on academic probation are not eligible to hold class office.
8. MHA Students who have not satisfactorily completed the required 51 semester hours of coursework on campus are not eligible to enter the administrative residency. This includes students with outstanding Incomplete (I) grades.
9. MHA Students must complete a minimum of 59 semester hours of coursework and meet the following requirements in order to qualify for the MHA degree:
 - Meet all grade point requirements noted above.
 - Satisfactorily complete all requirements of the administrative residency, including both professional development objectives and required academic coursework.
 - Pass a comprehensive oral seminar administered near the end of the program of studies.
10. JD/MHA Dual degree students must complete a minimum of 49 semester hours of coursework and a minimum of 400 hours, equivalent to a 10-week summer internship approved by the MHA Program Director.
11. MD/MHA Dual degree students must complete a minimum of 43 semester hours of coursework and a 10-week summer internship approved by the MHA Program Director.

6.6 Academic Probation

Students who a) do not achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 in their coursework, or b) receive a grade of C in two or more required courses or a D or F in one course, may be recommended for academic probation to the faculty body. Any students who earn multiple grades below a B in one semester may be recommended for academic probation or dismissal.

Based on their assessment, the faculty will select from the following courses of action:

- Place the student on academic probation, specify requirements, and permit the student to continue in the program.
- Recommend dismissal to the Dean of the College of Health Professions to terminate the student from the MHA Program on the basis of academic deficiencies.

Students placed on academic probation must arrange a meeting with their faculty advisor at approximately mid-semester to discuss academic progress during that period. The faculty advisor will keep the faculty informed of the student's progress.

At the end of each semester, the faculty will review the performance of each student who has been on academic probation during that semester and select from the following courses of action:

- Remove the student from academic probation if the student's GPA during that semester and the overall GPA are both above 3.00 and if no other deficiencies exist.
- Recommend dismissal to the Dean of the College of Health Professions to terminate the student from the MHA Program on the basis of academic deficiencies after faculty review, if the student failed to achieve a GPA of 3.00 or has other deficiencies justifying dismissal.

In no case will students be granted academic probation for more than one semester.

MHA students on academic probation are not eligible to enter the administrative residency.

MHA students on academic probation may lose any scholarship funding.

6.7 Requirements of the Administrative Residency

Non-dual degree MHA Students are required to complete the administrative residency to meet the requirements of the MHA degree program in order to qualify for graduation.

In order for a residency to be considered complete, students must fulfill a minimum of 1600 hours of work for the residency organization.

Students may petition the Program Director for a waiver of the 1600-hour residency requirement if s/he is being offered a full-time position in the residency organization before the required 1600 hours are completed.

All residency positions must be approved by the MHA Program faculty. Any preceptor brought to the residency placement process by MHA Program faculty will be considered approved. Students are allowed to seek non-competitive residency placements outside of the traditional placement process if they so choose; those roles must be approved by the Director of Professional Development in writing before the traditional residency placement process begins in order to be approved by the MHA Program faculty.

Students are expected to follow the residency preparation process as outlined in the Executive Skills course sequence and over the summer between the 1st and 2nd years of the MHA Program.

The Department is committed to making reasonable efforts to provide a variety of residency opportunities that align with student preferences based on location, organizations, and healthcare industry sectors, but does not guarantee that students will be placed according to these preferences. The Program encourages students to pursue additional opportunities that align with their individual preferences through fellowship programs and non-competitive opportunities.

Residency offers are fully made at the discretion of the preceptor organizations and are based on student preparation/performance and organizational fit. Students are not assigned to organizations at any point. Students who do not receive an initial offer through the standard placement process will receive individual support from the Program faculty on identifying a placement based on the organizations available.

The MHA Program and faculty are committed to ensuring that each non-dual degree MHA student receives at least one residency offer. Should the student decline that offer, or should a student be dismissed from their residency placement by the precepting organization, the student will be responsible for procuring and ensuring an alternative placement is approved by the Director of Professional Development and completing the new placement according to Program expectations in order to meet the degree requirements for graduation.

6.8 Grading Policies

The final grade in courses in the MHA Program ordinarily will include consideration of the student's performance on at least two examinations or assignments.

Academic grades are to be based primarily upon individual performance and accomplishment, although team assignments and projects may be used in computing the individual student's course grade.

The grading symbols used within the Department's MHA Program and their definitions are as follows:

A = Superior. Indicates that the student has demonstrated outstanding performance in accomplishing the requirements of the course.

B = Very Good. Indicates that the student has accomplished course requirements at a fully acceptable graduate level of performance.

C = Acceptable, but substandard performance. Indicates that the student has not adequately accomplished course requirements.

D = Unacceptable. Indicates that the student has not accomplished course requirements at an acceptable level.

F = Failure. Indicates that the student's performance was far below the acceptable level. Credits with a grade of "F" cannot be applied toward fulfillment of degree requirements.

P = Pass. The student's work has met graduate school and department standards.

S = Satisfactory. Indicates the student completes all assignments on time, and they are approved by the course instructor and other applicable parties.

U = Unsatisfactory. Indicates the student has not adequately accomplished course requirements. Although not included in the computation of the overall GPA, a grade of “U” will be addressed like a “C”.

I = Incomplete. Indicates that the course requirements were not fulfilled within the specified time period due to circumstances beyond the control of the student, and that the instructor has given the student some additional time to meet these requirements.

All requirements must be fulfilled no later than the last day of classes of the semester (or Summer semester) following the semester in which the “Incomplete” has occurred, or the mark will automatically be changed to “Failure.” It is the student’s responsibility to complete the required paperwork for approval of the “I” grade. Forms may be obtained in the Program offices.

Other grade symbols and meanings are listed in the VCU Graduate Bulletin.

Each instructor will explain the particular application of the grading policies and indicate the way that final course grades will be determined in the particular course.

MHA Practicum courses (HADM 693, 694, and 695) are graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. In all other courses of the MHA Program, regular letter grades are to be assigned.

6.9 Grade Appeals

The VCU and College of Health Professions grade appeals policies and procedures guide the Department’s grade appeal procedure. <https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/grade-review/>

6.10 Termination Process and Appeals

Termination is initiated by the Program Director after recommendation by a majority of the full-time faculty of the Department.

The Admissions and Academic Standards Committee has set forth procedures by which students may appeal termination from graduate programs at VCU. Current procedures can be found posted in the CHP [Student Academic Appeal Policy and Procedures](#).

7.11 Schedule Changes

As specified in the [Graduate Bulletin](#), students may make changes in their schedule of elective courses within the university add/drop period. However, they must comply with departmental workload standards and curriculum requirements in order to remain in good academic standing within the program. In all cases, the Program Director must be consulted and must approve any change in the student’s curriculum plan.

7. Student Responsibility Policies

7.1 Professional Conduct

Students at VCU are obligated to conform to the honor system and to conduct themselves with the appropriate learning behavior as set forth in the Constitution and Honor System: <http://www.students.vcu.edu/studentconduct/vcu-honor-system/rights-and-responsibilities/> as well as VCU Rules and Procedures. Students are individually responsible for becoming thoroughly familiar with these documents. Students will sign a document indicating they have been informed and they agree to comply with all VCU and Department of Health Administration policies.

Students should also be aware of the university's Academic Code of Conduct related to the Honor System and Standards of Academic Conduct.

<https://conduct.students.vcu.edu/vcu-honor-system/academic-misconduct/>

Relatedly, artificial intelligence (A.I.) continues to evolve and impact the ways in which we teach and learn. Please assume that the use of chatGPT or other A.I. programs for completing coursework and assignments is not appropriate unless authorized by the instructor.

Violation of University Policies

Students charged with violating the University's policies for Student Conduct and/or Academic Integrity will be reviewed and sanctioned through the University's officials, channels, and processes. Students can generally expect this process to include:

1. Faculty who have a reason to suspect that a student has violated the University policies has a duty to report that suspected violation. The faculty member will make a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity and provide documentation supporting the charge.
2. The reported student will be notified that a charge has been filed by the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity by either the reporting faculty member or the Program Director.
3. The student is assumed to be not responsible for the violation until a thorough investigation is completed. This process may take several weeks. The student should expect to receive updates on the charges, investigation, findings, and sanctions directly from the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. Those same updates are also provided to the College of Health Professions Dean and his/her designees, who then forward them to the Department Chair and Program Director.
4. If a student is found to be responsible for the charges reported, that student will have the right to appeal the sanctions and/or the decision.

It's important to know that investigations, findings of responsibility, sanctions, and appeals are managed by the University through the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity and their designees, not through the Department of Health Administration or MHA Program.

Students who are found to be responsible for a first offense of violating these policies should expect to receive sanctions from the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, which may include a grade reduction or grade of zero on the assignment, a grade of "F" for the course, and/or probation (students will be on probation for some designated period of time during which, if they are found responsible for additional charges of policy violations, the penalties may be more severe).

Students who are found to be responsible for a second offense of violating these policies should expect to receive sanctions from the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, which may include a grade of “F” for the assignment or course, probation (see definition above), and suspension (not allowed to continue in the MHA program for a designated period of time), dismissal (not allowed to continue in the MHA program), or other sanctions as deemed appropriate by the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

Students who receive a sanction from the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity that results in failure of a course will therefore be in violation of the MHA Program’s academic standing policy and may be dismissed from the program (removed from the program and not allowed to return), even if dismissal is not expressly recommended by the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

Violations of University and/or Department Policies

Students who are found to be responsible for violating the University’s policies for Student Conduct and/or Academic Integrity, on a first or subsequent charge, and/or students who violate the MHA Program’s Technical Standards and/or the MHA Code of Ethics, can also expect to be reviewed by the faculty for program-specific disciplinary sanctions.

Based on its assessment of the situation, the faculty may assign the following sanctions:

- revoke the student's scholarship support or graduate assistantship tuition and stipend
- prohibit the student from representing the Program or Department at conferences, competitions, or other external events
- limit student access to the alumni network
- prohibit students from holding elected student positions
- prohibit or terminate students from employment as a graduate assistant, program assistant, or research assistant
- other prohibitions as approved by the faculty, up to dismissal from the program

Dress Code

Students may dress comfortably for classes in business casual; however, casual wear is not appropriate. Business dress is expected when making field visits to healthcare organizations, guest speakers are addressing class, making class presentations, and other occasions as advised by the Program Director or course instructors.

RAM Card (ID Card)

A VCU identification card provided to students as part of the registration process must be available at all times when on University property.

7.2 Honor Code

All students are subject to the VCU student Honor Code. For more information, see: <https://conduct.students.vcu.edu/student-code-of-conduct/>. The highest level of personal/professional integrity is required for continued participation in the MHA Program.

The Honor Code applies to all work assigned during the MHA Program, including work done in class and outside of class. In submitting assignments, students testify that the work is their own.

7.3 Students with an Identified Disability

Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to providing students with disabilities equal opportunities to benefit from all programs, services, and activities offered. For more information, see: <https://das.vcu.edu/students/disability-support/>

Students with an identified disability should inform the individual course instructor so that appropriate accommodations can be made. Students with disabilities are responsible for self-identification prior to requesting services and may do so at any time by presenting documentation to their campus coordinator.

7.4 Academic Support Services

The Division of Academic Success provides services including counseling for study skill enhancement, time management, or other issues related to academic performance. For more information, see: <https://das.vcu.edu/>

7.5 Class Attendance

Graduate students in health administration are expected to attend classes regularly and arrive on time. It is their responsibility to prepare for class and to abide by attendance requirements specified by each instructor.

Students who miss three class sessions or more in any single course may be recommended for academic review to the faculty body, irrespective of the reason for the absences or the final grade in the course.

When an absence can be anticipated in advance, the student is expected to inform the instructor as a matter of courtesy.

MHA Students who miss two or more consecutive class days due to illness or other extenuating circumstances should notify their advisor, who will assume responsibility for notifying the student's instructors and the Program Director.

Students are required to be on time for classes and events. This means that students must be in their seats and settled by the time class is ready to start. Walking into class at the moment it is scheduled to begin will be considered tardy. We recommend that students plan to arrive 10-15 minutes before class is scheduled to begin. Acceptable reasons for being late include traffic accidents and bus issues. Normal traffic issues, missing the bus, or sleeping late are not considered excused reasons. If an instructor provides a break, you are expected to return within the time allowed by the instructor. Students may be penalized for tardiness and excessive tardiness or absences will result in a warning for professionalism in the student's progress letter.

Attendance at Professional Events/Events Outside of Class

MHA students are required to attend all events held outside of the class unless approved in advance by the Program Director. These include the Paul Gross Landmarks in Leadership lecture series, the Stephen Mick Lecture, tours of local organizations organized by the student association, lunch and learn sessions, and any other events that the department holds outside of normal class times. Students are required to dress in business professional attire and be on time for these events. Failure to attend without approval

from the Program Director will result in a warning for professionalism in the student's progress letter.

Attendance for Conferences and Case Competitions

Students will be excused from attending classes in person while at an approved conference, limited to one conference per semester. Instructors may still hold virtual or in-person classes or require students to submit assignments while attending these conferences, but may not penalize students for missing class. Students are responsible for all content and assignments missed during their absence. Students must communicate with their instructors in advance that they will be absent due to conference attendance.

Students participating in case competitions as representatives of the MHA program are excused from classes while at the competition. Students who participate in these competitions are still responsible for all content and assignments missed during their absence and any assignments due during the competition. Students may not miss class to prepare for the competition.

Travel Support for Conference Attendance

The Health Administration Department offers a one-time scholarship of \$400 for each student during the first two years of the program to attend professional conferences (e.g., ACHE, NAHSE, NAHLE, HIMSS, HFMA, MGMA, etc.). This money is not transferable to other students. If other sources of funding are available (e.g., alumni donations for student travel, reimbursement for case competition participation), these funds cannot be used for the same conference.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Mobile phones and other communication devices should be turned off during class sessions. If the student needs to be contacted in an emergency, such devices should be left on silent mode. Students should refrain from leaving class to respond to calls or texts unless there is a real emergency (e.g., an urgent threat to the safety or well-being of the student or immediate family member).

7.6 Leave of Absence

A student who wishes to obtain University approval for an extended leave of absence (a semester or longer) from the MHA Program should submit a written request with an explanation to the Program Director.

In considering a request for a leave of absence, the Program Director will examine the student's academic status and performance as well as any past or pending disciplinary action. In submitting and acting upon a request for a leave of absence, both the student and the Program Director will consider and comply with all applicable University policies and procedures. In the case of any pending disciplinary action, such processes will continue even if a leave of absence is granted.

7.7 Withdrawal from the Graduate Program

A student who is considering withdrawal from the MHA Program is encouraged to discuss this matter with both the faculty advisor and Program Director.

Students who wish to withdraw from the MHA Program must complete the University's withdrawal form, which can be obtained from the VCU Graduate School Office. Additional University policies and procedures regarding withdrawal are set forth in the VCU Bulletin and the Graduate Bulletin and can be

found at: <http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/program-withdrawal/>

Voluntary withdrawals must be approved in writing by the Program Director, Department Chair, and Dean. Requests should be done in a timely manner abiding by University policy.

7.8 Student-Faculty Communication

It is a policy of this Department to establish and maintain effective, open communications among faculty members and students. Among the mechanisms that have been established to facilitate and encourage such communication are the following:

1. Faculty advisors are appointed for the MHA students by the Program Director prior to orientation. Each student should meet at least once a semester with their faculty advisor.
2. Elected officers, or any group of students the class designates, may serve as an advisory committee to the Program Director and meet whenever desired by the students or the Program Director.
3. The Program Director or Chair may invite students to serve as members of standing and/or ad hoc committees concerned with Departmental affairs.
4. Members of the student body may, individually or as a group, submit items for discussion at regularly scheduled faculty meetings. Such items should be directed to the Department Chair, who is responsible for preparing the agenda for faculty meetings.
5. Information of interest to students is regularly distributed by e-mail and/or posted to the University's Learning Management System (Canvas). Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all materials disseminated.
6. All faculty members are available to meet with students during hours that are "posted" or included in the course outline or, if the faculty member prefers, by appointment.

Communication with instructors, faculty, and staff is a form of business communication, whether in person, via email, or Zoom/phone. Please address your instructor appropriately (salutation, proper title, courtesy). If communication is in writing, use correct grammar and punctuation and more formal language (no text shortcuts). For any questions concerning class materials, assignments, or other requirements, please contact your instructor first. If you still need assistance, please contact the Program Director.

8. Faculty Responsibility Policies

8.1 Shared Faculty-Student Responsibility

Each student is individually responsible for meeting the academic requirements and achieving the educational goals that are specified by the Department and the University. It is the faculty's responsibility to set fair requirements and provide appropriate, effective instruction. Both the students and the faculty contribute toward establishing the teaching-learning environment. In this sense, graduate education is truly a shared responsibility of the faculty and the students.

8.2 Faculty Advisors

1. The MHA Program Director designates a faculty member to serve as advisor for each student. The

- basic role of the faculty advisor is to provide guidance and assistance to the student with respect to academic matters, elective course selection, and career planning.
2. MHA Students should seek a conference with their advisor prior to the beginning of each semester to review their performance to date and discuss academic planning for the upcoming semester.
 3. It is the responsibility of students to understand the nature of their academic status and the implications of their status with respect to their continuation in the MHA Program. The faculty advisor will assist the student and be available to advise the student in developing his or her approach to dealing with academic deficiencies.
 4. The MHA Program Director and Director of Professional Development, with the assistance of the faculty as requested, are responsible for advising MHA Students regarding the Administrative Residency and career planning and placement as follows:
 - Participating with the student and preceptor in the development of the residency plan, and then approving it.
 - Contacting the Resident and Preceptor at the residency site.
 - Monitoring each student's progress throughout the residency period through reviewing reports submitted periodically and on time by the Resident and Preceptor.
 5. If an MHA Student wishes to have a faculty advisor other than the individual assigned, he or she should make a request for a change to the Program Director. The Program Director will consult with the student and the faculty advisor before making such a change.

8.3 Faculty Responsibilities as Instructor

Faculty members have the responsibility to provide timely and constructive feedback regarding the academic performance of students on tests, papers, or other academic requirements.

Faculty members have the responsibility to clearly specify course requirements and expectations, including the basis upon which final course grades will be determined.

Faculty members are responsible for specifying the particular guidelines that apply to each examination, case study, or other test of student performance. These guidelines must be consistent with the provisions of the VCU Honor Code and clearly specify whether or not collaborative effort is permitted and whether or not course material may be used during an examination.

9. Departmental and Selected University Policies

9.1.1 Technical Standards for Admission and Graduation Requirements

Recommendation for Graduation

A student is scheduled for graduation after successful completion of all degree requirements and upon recommendation of the faculty for graduation. Normally, the faculty's recommendations occur at the end of the semester during which graduation occurs; for most students, this is the Spring semester.

Technical Standards for Admission and Graduation

The VCU Department of Health Administration 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 of 1990.

Sensory

- Ability to communicate verbally in the English language to elicit information from and provide information to faculty and healthcare professionals.
- Ability to communicate in written English with faculty and healthcare 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 healthcare manager in training.
- Ability to hear with or without assistive devices to elicit information from faculty and healthcare 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 healthcare organization (hospital, physician practice, outpatient clinic).
- Ability to operate an automobile or acquire transportation for on-campus classes, meetings outside of VCU, or for a residency 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 healthcare 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 healthcare professionals.
- Ability to network with other healthcare 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.

9.1.2. Violations of Technical Standards

Students who violate the MHA Program's Technical Standards and/or the MHA Code of Ethics, can also expect to be reviewed by the faculty for program-specific disciplinary sanctions.

Based on its assessment of the situation, the faculty may assign the following sanctions:

- revoke the student's scholarship support or graduate assistantship tuition and stipend
- prohibit the student from representing the Program or Department at conferences, competitions, or other external events
- limit student access to the alumni network
- prohibit students from holding elected student positions
- prohibit or terminate students from employment as a graduate assistant, program assistant, or research assistant
- other prohibitions as approved by the faculty, up to dismissal from the program

If a fellow student, faculty member, or staff member observes students violating technical standards or any honor codes/Codes of Ethics, they must report this to the Program Director. The Program Director will meet with the student and any other involved parties to gather information. After gathering information, if the Program Director believes that a violation has occurred, the Program Director will bring this information to the MHA faculty, who will then discuss and vote on appropriate sanctions.

9.2 Computer and Technology Use Policy

Virginia Commonwealth University provides and maintains computer and network resources to support the education, research, patient care, and work of its faculty, staff, and students. All individuals receiving a University computing account, or using University computer and network resources, are bound by the Computer and Network Resources Use Policy. All users of these resources are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. VCU computer and network resources are conducted in a public forum, and users must respect the rights and privacy of other users, share the resources equitably, and follow VCU policies and local, state, and federal laws relating to copyrights, privacy, security, and other statutes regarding electronic media. The complete Computer and Network Resources Use Policy can be found at the following link: all students are expected to read and be familiar with the contents:

<http://www.ts.vcu.edu/askit/policies-and-publications/technology-policies-guidelines--standards/computer-and-network-resources-use-policy/>. All applicable University technology-related policies apply to technology use in the CHP Building by faculty, staff, and students.

The MHA Program and course web pages are restricted to authorized individuals and are to be used only to conduct Program-related business. Accounts and passwords, when required, are assigned to specific individuals and may not, unless properly authorized by the University, be shared with, or used by, other persons within or outside the University. Students are expected to abide by system rules and procedures in answering questions periodically posed on the class boards. The contents of discussions on the class boards are not to be shared with others. Although course assignments may require using examples from one's own organization, students are cautioned to avoid posting strategically or otherwise sensitive information. Students are encouraged to discuss any concerns they have with course instructors.

9.3 VCU Brand Guidelines

The VCU Brand Guidelines are to be followed for references to Virginia Commonwealth University in all internal and external communications. The complete Nomenclature Guidelines at: <http://brand.vcu.edu>.

9.4 Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Use Policies

Alcohol and Other Drugs

See policy: <https://policy.vcu.edu/doctract/documentportal/08DA32A63EDBC03643AC76578A0275BB>

Smoke and Tobacco-Free Campus

See policy: <https://tobaccofree.vcu.edu/policy/>

9.5 College of Health Professions Food and Drink Policy

Purpose

The College of Health Professions Building is designed specifically for academic learning, research, and study. Great care must be taken with food and drink, which can cause direct damage to property and also result in pest infestation and mold. By complying with this regulation, users will maintain an inviting, comfortable, and clean environment and ensure a pest-free building.

First Floor

No food and only closed-top beverages that cannot spill. Food may be consumed in the multipurpose room and lobby **ONLY** during sponsored events.

First Floor Auditorium

No food and only water.

Classrooms

No food and only closed-top beverages that cannot spill may be brought into any of the classrooms.

Open Study Areas

No food and only closed-top beverages that cannot spill may be brought into any of the open study spaces.

Team Rooms

No food and only closed-top beverages that cannot spill may be brought into any of the team rooms.

Conference Rooms

Food is permissible in conference rooms that have a pantry attached and should be used in conjunction with business meetings by faculty and staff, and not for random individual use. Closed-top beverages that cannot spill are permissible in all other conference rooms. Conference rooms with pantries are located on the first floor, the second floor, and the eighth floor. The second-floor conference room is reserved for the Office of the Dean.

Designated Areas for Eating and Drinking

There are non-carpeted break room spaces on the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th floors at the SW corner of the building. There is also a non-carpeted area on the 2nd floor. Students may also use the outdoor space, the Larrick Student Center located directly across from the CHP building, and the MCV Campus Bookstore next to the N deck.

Catering

Organized groups using designated meeting rooms may have food catered. The group requesting the catering is responsible for cleaning up and removing all remaining food, dishes, and trash.

Refrigerators and Microwaves

Refrigerators in all areas will be cleaned out every Friday. No uncovered food or drinks are allowed to be kept in the refrigerators at any time. This includes styrofoam take-out containers. Any uncovered food or drinks or food in styrofoam take-out containers left in refrigerators will be removed and discarded.

Food warmed in microwaves should be covered. Microwaves should be cleaned at the time of use.

All persons are responsible for cleaning up and removing all remaining food, dishes, and trash. If you spill it, you must clean it, even if the food or drink does not belong to you. Place trash in the landfill or recycle bins located on every floor throughout the building. Any food or drink contaminated trash is to be placed into the landfill bins.

Facility Customer Service

Call (804) 828-9444 for areas needing attention to spills or other housekeeping issues.

Anyone not complying with this policy will be asked to remove his/her food and drink from the area. Food or drink openly unattended in public areas will be removed and discarded.

All faculty, staff, and students are responsible for enforcing this policy.

The Office of the VP Health Sciences has jurisdiction over all spaces on the VCU Health Science campus. Please reference the link below.

<https://healthsciences.vcu.edu/academic-operations/reserve-centrally-managed-classrooms/>

This concludes the MHA Student Guidebook for the 2025-2026 Academic Year.