



**XAVIER UNIVERSITY**

**GRADUATE PROGRAM IN HEALTH  
SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Academic Year 2021-2022**

## INTRODUCTION

This handbook gives guidance about various matters and expectations involved in being a Xavier Master of Health Services Administration student.

## SECTION 1: ACADEMICS

### ACCOMMODATIONS

Any participant who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should notify the course facilitator and contact Cassandra Jones in the Learning Assistance Center at 513-745-3280 or e-mail [jonesc20@xavier.edu](mailto:jonesc20@xavier.edu) to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For more information on accommodations, visit <https://www.xavier.edu/disability-services/accommodations/index>.

It is important to note that any disability-related information including accommodations is confidential.

### COURSE REGISTRATION

All students are required to register for courses by end of the 7th calendar day of the semester in accordance with University policies. Students who do not register for courses by the "last day for late registrations" date will not be permitted to attend classes within the Graduate Program without the written consent of the Dean of the Graduate Program and the Dean of the College of Professional Sciences. Late course registration forms must be signed by the student's faculty advisor prior to registration.

### REQUIRED COURSE WAIVER POLICY

A course waiver provides the student with the opportunity to take elective coursework in lieu of required coursework that the student may have already mastered.

Thus, a student may be waived from a course requirement if the student can demonstrate that he/she has mastered the content of the course. This can be accomplished by: (1) sufficient undergraduate coursework with a grade of C or better from an accredited college or university within the past five years; (2) sufficient graduate coursework with a grade of B or better from an accredited college or university within the past five years; (3) appropriate work experience in conjunction with satisfactory performance on a written and/or oral examination of course content; and/or (4) satisfactory performance on a written and/or oral examination of course content. A maximum of six credit hours of required courses can be waived.

**The student is responsible for initiating the request for a waiver at the time of matriculation into the Graduate Program.** The student and the student's faculty advisor must complete a Substitution/Waiver Request form. Upon assessing the student's mastery of the course content, the course instructor signs the form and sends it to the MHSA Program Director, who makes the final waiver decision. A waiver may be granted unconditionally or under the condition that the student complete certain requirements, such as attending certain class sessions and demonstrating mastery of that course content. Requests made after matriculation into the Graduate Program will not be approved.

**In the case of a course waiver, only the course content and not the hours associated with the course are waived. Thus, the number of hours required for the degree is not reduced through a course waiver.**

## CREDIT TRANSFER POLICY

A credit transfer permits a student to use the credit hours associated with previous graduate coursework to reduce the number of credit hours required for the degree.

According to University policy, six semester hours (or the equivalent) of graduate work completed at another accredited graduate school prior to initial admission to Xavier University may be transferred with the permission of the MHPA Program Director and the Dean of the College of Professional Sciences. Coursework that is part of a previously earned graduate degree is not allowed for transfer credit. Only grades of A or B (3.000 or higher) are transferable. **Decisions regarding transfer credit are made at the time of admission** to student degree status. Generally, no graduate credit completed at another university is transferable towards the master's degree at Xavier once the student has begun the Graduate Program. Exceptions to this policy may be made when: (1) a student is permanently transferred to another city; (2) a student is directed by the Dean or MHPA Program Director for a specific purpose to take a course not available at Xavier. Up to six semester hours of graduate coursework obtained in the Greater Cincinnati Consortium of Colleges and Universities may be applied to a master's degree taken at Xavier, with the permission of the MHPA Program Director or College Dean. Graduate level coursework taken to satisfy the credit hour requirements of an undergraduate or a graduate degree will not be accepted for transfer credit.

The student is responsible for requesting the transfer of graduate credit hours at the time of matriculation into the Graduate Program. The student and the student's faculty advisor must complete a Graduate Transfer Credit Request and attach to it the syllabus of the relevant course or the table of contents of the textbook(s) for the relevant course. The form must be signed by the faculty advisor, the appropriate HSA faculty member who teaches the course under consideration, and the MHPA Program Director. If the MHPA Program Director concurs with the request/recommendation, the MHPA Program Director forwards the request to the Dean of the College of Professional Sciences for approval. Requests made after matriculation into the Graduate Program will not be approved.

If approved by the Dean, the number of credit hours required for the master's degree will be reduced by the number of credit hours accepted for transfer into the Graduate Program.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Graduate Program in Health Services Administration prepares its students for professional careers. On campus class attendance (for full-time MHPA students) or online synchronous calls attendance (for part-time Executive MHPA students) is a professional commitment. Students are expected to attend all classes and to be on time. If a student cannot attend class or anticipates being late, the Graduate Program expects the student to call the class instructor before class to inform the instructor. In addition, class instructors may impose additional requirements in regard to assignment deadlines and attendance. See faculty approved attendance guidelines below:

Acceptable reasons to request a class absence from a faculty member—be courteous and request such absences in advance:

1. Legitimate sickness (email as early as you can)
2. Residency interview (for full-time MHPA students only)
3. Unavoidable family situation (someone in the hospital, sibling wedding, funeral, etc.)
4. Case competition
5. A true emergency situation
6. Work conflict (for part-time Executive MHPA students only)

Unacceptable reasons to miss an MHSA class:

1. Social situations, such as a friend's wedding, parties, outside social events, etc.
2. Events related to outside employment, such as job training, orientation, business travel, etc. (for full-time MHSA students only)
3. Personal travel, such as leaving campus early or coming back late from a holiday break
4. Problems due to poor planning on your part, such as missing class due to oversleeping or exhaustion due to staying up all night to complete an assignment, etc.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

The pursuit of truth demands high standards of personal honesty. Academic and professional life requires a trust based upon integrity of the written and spoken word. Accordingly, violations of certain standards of ethical behavior will not be tolerated at Xavier University. These include theft, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance in assignments and tests, unauthorized copying of computer software, the falsification of results and material submitted in reports or admission documents, and the falsification of any academic record including letters of recommendation. All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student's own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another's efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one's own. Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an "F" in the course, and expulsion from the University. The dean of the college in which the student is enrolled is to be informed in writing of all such incidents, though the teacher has full authority to assign the grade for the assignment, test, or course. If disputes of interpretation arise, the student, faculty member, and chair should attempt to resolve the difficulty. If this is unsatisfactory, the dean will rule in the matter. As a final appeal, the academic vice president will call a committee of tenured faculty for the purpose of making a final determination.

## ACADEMIC STANDING

MHSA students are held to high academic and personal standards. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 in the MHSA curriculum is required for residency (full-time MHSA students only) and graduation. No credit is granted for courses in which a student receives a grade of "F". If the course in question is a required MHSA course, it must be repeated.

**Expectation to Achieve Minimum Grades of "B":** Because a grade of "B-" is not a full B to achieve the expected 3.0 GPA, any student who earns one grade of "B-" in any semester must submit a corrective action plan to the MHSA Program Director (copying their Faculty Advisor) indicating: a) Why did this low grade occur? and b) What will be done differently in future courses in order to earn grades of B or higher? This is a master's degree and students must master the MHSA coursework.

**Academic Warning:** Students who have a cumulative graduate grade point average less than 3.0 at the end of any semester will be placed on academic warning. Students on academic warning must present a measurable corrective action plan to the MHSA Program Director (copying their Faculty Advisor). Academic warning is noted in a student's permanent record and extends for the duration of the following semester.

**Dismissal from the Program:**

1. MHSA students receiving two failing grades "F" at any time in the academic work will be dismissed from the program. This may or may not apply if the student receives two

grades of “VF” (failing because of non-attendance), that is left to the discretion of the MHSAs Program Director and faculty.

2. MHSAs students on academic warning who do not achieve the measurable corrective actions and/or receive one additional grade of B- or less may be dismissed from the program at the discretion of the MHSAs Program Director.
3. MHSAs students receiving two course grades of “B-“or below at any time in the academic work may be dismissed from the program based on faculty decision. Instead of dismissal, faculty reserves the right to impose the corrective action plan requirement (see above), and students who either don’t achieve the measurable corrective actions and/or receive one additional grade of B- or less will be dismissed from the program.

There is no formal appeal mechanism within the Graduate Program in Health Services Administration for academic dismissal.

## **STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Xavier’s MHSAs program is committed to providing an educational climate that is conducive to the personal and professional development of each student. A student who has an unresolved disagreement or dissatisfaction with a faculty or staff member, another student, student group or administrator has the right to file a written complaint without prejudicing his or her status with the University.

### **Definition**

A complaint involves a concern, problem, or issue other than something that is academic related (covered above). A student should first attempt to resolve such an issue by approaching the other party before filing a written complaint. Nonacademic grievances can include but are not limited to the following types of allegations: issues regarding sexual harassment, discrimination or an alleged infringement upon the rights or sensibilities of an individual by a university employee, student, or student organization. The student should first try to resolve the issue by approaching the person(s) involved if they are comfortable doing so., If they are not, then they should discuss their issue with the MHSAs Program Director, Department Chair before filing a written complaint if they are comfortable doing so. If not, they can file a written complaint with the Title IX Office at Xavier.

### **Disability Discrimination**

Any student who believes that a University employee has discriminated against him/her due to a disability should file a statement with the Office of Disability Services (<https://www.xavier.edu/disability-services/index>)

### **Process**

The student is encouraged to attempt to resolve all grievances at the lowest possible level. The student should first discuss the problem or complaint with the person whose decision or action is being contested, if possible, and then with the MHSAs Program Director. If the grievance cannot be resolved, the student can submit a formal complaint to the Dean of Students Office or the Title IX Office. A complaint must be based on a claimed violation of a university rule or policy that has not been resolved through ordinary processes.

## **GRADE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Students may appeal final grades if they believe that the grade was awarded unfairly. The student is responsible for the burden of proof and must be able to provide some evidence of the lack of fair treatment in order to file a formal grievance. The following procedure must be followed when filing such an appeal.

The instructor is obligated to participate in the grade grievance process. If the instructor does not participate, the MHSA Program Director, Department Chair and/or dean will proceed without the instructor.

1. The student shall indicate in writing to the Department Chair of the appropriate academic department that he/she is appealing the grade. This notification must be submitted in person or postmarked by February 1 for fall grades, June 15 for spring grades and September 1 for summer grades.
2. The student shall meet with the instructor to try to resolve the grade dispute before February 15 for fall grades and before September 15 for spring and summer grades.
3. If a resolution is not reached and the student still believes that the grievance has merit, the student shall submit a request in writing to the Department Chair for a meeting with the Department Chair and the instructor. This request should indicate when the meeting with the instructor was held and its outcome; explain exactly how the instructor's action was unfair; and be received by the Department Chair by March 1 for fall grades and October 1 for spring and summer grades. The student then meets with the Department Chair and instructor to try to resolve the dispute at this level.
4. If a resolution is not reached and the student wishes to pursue the grievance, he/she shall submit the statement from step #3, along with all evidence and documentation which supports the allegation, to the dean of the appropriate college. This should be done within five working days after the meeting with the Department Chair and the instructor.
5. The dean shall convene a committee, composed of him/herself, three faculty members and two students, to conduct a hearing on the grievance. Two of the faculty members shall be from within the college and one from outside the college in which the instructor is located, and all shall be appointed by the dean. The two students shall have the same status as the grieving student (either graduate or undergraduate). If undergraduate, they shall come from a pool of 4-6 students appointed by the president of the student government. One student shall be from within the college in which the grieving student is enrolled, and one shall be from outside the college. The dean shall choose the two students from the pool. If graduate, the dean shall meet with the appropriate graduate student organizations from the colleges to select the two students to sit on this committee.

The committee shall hold a hearing chaired by the dean. The instructor and the student shall be present (in person or via video conference for EMHSA students) and each shall be allowed an advisor (from within the University committee) and shall be permitted to present witnesses. The committee, advisors, instructor and student shall all have the right question to the witnesses. The committee shall deliberate in closed session and must present its decision in writing to the student and the instructor within five working days after the decision is reached. If the committee's decision is that the grade given was

inappropriate, the academic vice president shall authorize the registrar in writing to change the grade.

6. The decision of the committee is final unless new evidence or new witnesses not previously considered or heard at the meeting become available. The student must submit this new evidence to the academic vice president within ten working days following the receipt of the committee's final decision and must indicate precisely how this evidence or testimony related directly to the alleged unfair awarding of the disputed grade.

The decision of the academic vice president is final. There is no further appeal.

### **COMPLETION OF REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION and ADMINISTRATIVE RESIDENCY/PRACTICUM ADVISOR**

Students are expected to complete all requirements for a course in the manner and by the date indicated either in the course syllabus, Canvas, or as announced by the instructor. To the maximum extent possible, specific "due dates" and specific requirements will be stated by the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

Final grades submitted to the Registrar Office as "M" (incomplete) should be cleared within four weeks after the last day of the semester in which the course was taken. This time limit may be extended but may not exceed a period of one year from the end of the semester. Effective immediately, grades of "M" will automatically be changed to a grade of "F" (failure) after the period of one year from the end of the semester unless an extension has been granted by the full faculty. Requests for extensions should be made by the student to the responsible faculty member who will present it to the College of Professional Sciences Dean's Office.

Grades of "IP" may be given in the case of residency courses if the student's residency course in some situations. If a student begins their residency later in the summer of their third year, they may not have been at their residency for enough time to complete the course assignments for their residency course. In such instances, an IP grade is given until such time as the student is able to complete coursework. At that point, their instructor will submit a grade change form.

The Master's Project (HESA 750) for the full-time MHSA students is an exception to this policy. For requirements for completion of this course, see the Program policy entitled "Time for Completion of Degree Requirements." Also refer to "Residency Guidelines" for additional information. Other exceptions to the above policy must be initiated by a written request from the student to be acted upon by a majority vote of the full-time faculty of the Program.

An MHSA faculty member will be assigned to serve as the student's faculty advisor during the third year administrative residency/fellowship. Once everyone in the class has accepted a residency/fellowship, MHSA faculty members will meet to decide who will be faculty advisors to which students. A number of factors are involved in this decision, including geography of where students are going and the type of experience students will have.

Lobbying faculty members to "be my advisor" is not part of this process. Each faculty member has students' best interests in mind.

## **STUDENT PROGRESS AND REACTIVATION**

According to University policy, no more than six years may elapse between admission to the Graduate Program and completion of work for the master's degree. Candidates for the master's degree who fail to complete all requirements within six years after the date of matriculation into the Graduate Program must apply for readmission. The matriculation date is the official University date of the start of classes for the student's first semester in the Graduate Program. A petition must be submitted to the Dean of the College of Professional Sciences before proceeding. Readmitted students are held to Graduate Program requirements in place at the time of readmission. The Dean may impose certain stipulations as conditions for readmission.

In addition, University policy states that a student who has not registered for classes for a period of one year is required to complete a Reactivation Form before registering. For all cases, reactivation, and the conditions for such, will be determined by the MHPA Program Director.

## **SECTION 2:** **PERSONAL READINESS and PROFESSIONALISM**

### **IMMUNIZATIONS AND PRACTITIONER READINESS FOR FULL-TIME MHPA STUDENTS**

Practitioner opportunities are an important part of the Xavier MHPA degree. For your summer internship and for your 8-12 month administrative residency, be prepared for job readiness testing that may be required by healthcare organizations, including criminal background checks, drug tests, and a record of immunizations.

In our application process you've already declared about any past disciplinary and criminal events.

Because your HESA 561 Clinical Processes course taken in the first fall semester has you completing on-site rotations at hospitals as well as at the Cincinnati Health Department, up-to-date immunizations are required by these organizations. You will receive detailed instructions from the course instructor, about how to comply with the required immunizations. It is your responsibility to take care of this obligation in advance of the course's schedule.

### **EXTERNAL EMPLOYMENT**

External employment is not prohibited. However, the full-time MHPA program is the student's primary job, and it is the student's responsibility to fulfill all academic requirements. The full-time MHPA program reserves the right to make schedule changes on short notice, and requires attendance at certain meetings, field experiences and other events outside of regular class time. External employment must not interfere in any way with any aspect of the full-time MHPA program. Students who work are strongly recommended to seek jobs in healthcare, as this provides experience for the HSA career path and builds the MHPA resume.

The Executive MHPA students are expected to be employed in healthcare or similar, at the time of enrollment in the program and keep their employment when pursuing their degree. Any change in work status has to be shared with the academic advisor and the MHPA Program Director at the time of the change. In case of unemployment, the student must work with the MHPA Program Director to determine how they will complete all requirements of the EMHPA Program as some are rendered more difficult without a job in healthcare.



## **STUDENT DRESS POLICY**

Healthcare administration is a highly visible profession. Healthcare administrators are leaders and need to look the part. From the outset, MHSA students “dress for success”. Business Casual and Formal Business Attire are the uniforms of MHSA.

On campus, business Casual attire will be worn **Monday – Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.**. Exceptions to this general rule are:

- For the Professional Development courses 1, 2, 3, and 4, students are required to wear formal business attire to every class.
- At the discretion of the MHSA Program Director or a faculty member, students in any class may be required to wear formal business attire on occasion; for instance, when a guest speaker will address the class.
- In all off-campus business meetings where students represent the program, they will wear formal business attire.

The definitions of “business casual attire” as defined by the GPHSA faculty are:

- Neatly pressed slacks, skirts, collared shirt, blouses that are collared, turtle neck, mock turtle neck and jewel neck (no plunging necklines), sweaters, and sweater sets whose inner sweater meets the same qualifications as blouses above are acceptable. Dress shoes and socks, and casual shoes such as loafers, casual flats, or heels are acceptable, as are some open-toed shoes (sandals are not acceptable). A sport coat, tie, and dress shirt are appropriate but not required. Sweaters over collared shirts are acceptable as are pressed and solid-color polo shirts (preferably darker colors). These items are not acceptable: sweatshirts – zippered or not, jeans, jean skirts jean jackets, T-shirts, sweat suits, casual pants, shorts, or athletic shoes of any kind, sandals, or platform shoes.

The definitions of “formal business attire” or “professional business attire” as defined by the GPHSA faculty are:

- Suits (jacket and skirt or jacket and dress slacks), coats and ties and dress slacks, dress with jacket are all acceptable. Dress shoes and dress socks, or dress flats or heels are appropriate, as are some open-toed shoes (sandals are not acceptable). Blouses are as defined above. Long cardigan sweaters are not jackets and are not acceptable as substitutes for jackets.

## **POLICY REGARDING PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FUNCTIONS**

Students are encouraged to attend professional association conferences/functions. However, when these functions conflict with the full-time MHSA academic schedules, students will be allowed to attend functions only if approved by the Graduate Program faculty and if missed classes are rescheduled prior to conference dates. Rescheduling must be negotiated with individual course instructors. Students are responsible for all academic work assigned during the associated time period.

In the event that association functions conflict with any university holiday (e.g. spring break), additional holiday time will not be negotiable with the Graduate Program/course instructors. Attendance at these functions is voluntary by students.

Students attending professional association conference/functions represent not only themselves but also the Graduate Program. Therefore, students are expected to behave in a professional manner and dress appropriately. Misconduct may result in disciplinary actions, including dismissal from the Graduate Program and University.

## **ACCEPTING RESIDENCY OR FELLOWSHIP OFFERS**

### Residencies and Fellowships that are Non-NAFCAS (National Administrative Fellowship Centralized Application Service)

Xavier MHSA requires you to accept the first residency or fellowship offer you get. Keep in mind that there is no obligation for a location to provide a residency experience. Many residency sites work with our students year after year in order to provide a unique healthcare administrative learning opportunity for students. If you apply to a residency or fellowship, you need to be sure you would go there. Once you receive an offer from a Non-NAFCAS site to which you applied, take it. Sites have invested time and money in you through their consideration and interview process, so be respectful of that. Prior residents have followed this rule and today we have many residencies available for you because of the good will, seriousness of interviewing students, and overall excellence of the residency search process. We're counting on you to keep this positive picture going.

### Residencies and Fellowships that are NAFCAS (National Administrative Fellowship Centralized Application Service)

Since NAFCAS fellowships are national, applications follow a published timeline and students have the opportunity to put an offer on "hold" for a brief period of time. More information is found at this website: <https://nafcas.liasoncas.org>

## **SECTION 3: ADDITIONAL POLICIES**

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Xavier University is dedicated to equality of opportunity in all areas of education and employment, and its goal is to achieve a diverse multi-racial community. Accordingly, Xavier University does not practice or condone discrimination in any form against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or handicap. The University commits itself to positive action to secure equal opportunity. Xavier University reserves the right to maintain its heritage and destiny as a Christian and Catholic witness in higher education. Xavier University supports the protections available to members of its community under all applicable Federal laws.

<https://www.xavier.edu/hr/documents/1EqualEmploymentOpportunities.pdf>

### **SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION**

Sex discrimination (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, stalking, rape, other sexual misconduct, or retaliation) is prohibited by law and by Xavier. More information

about this prohibited conduct, including examples, and how to report suspected sexual discrimination can be found in Section 4.1.1.1. of the Harassment Code and Accountability Procedures

<https://www.xavier.edu/titleix/documents/HarassmentCodeandAccountabilityProcedures.pdf> and Section 2.3.3 of the Student Handbook <https://www.xavier.edu/handbook/aggregate>

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Only students who are on regular student status are eligible to receive financial assistance through the Graduate Program. Students admitted on a conditional basis or students who are on academic warning are not eligible for financial assistance until their status changes to regular student status.

Grants and scholarships awarded to a student through Xavier University may affect the amount of federal loans for which the student is eligible. In general, the amount of a federal loan for which a student qualifies cannot exceed the cost of attendance less the family contribution and less the amount of scholarships and/or grants.