

Master of Science in Health Policy and Management

The master of science in health policy and management program offers a competency-based curriculum designed to prepare students for a rapidly changing health policy and management environment that is characterized by increasing emphasis on outpatient care and population health, a constantly changing reimbursement and regulatory environment, and performance-based management and decision making.

The master's degree in health policy and management is offered to both full- and part-time students. Applicants with experience in health services delivery, management and/or policy will find that the program broadens their skills and equips them to meet the challenges posed by the ever-changing health care environment. Students without such experience will find the field experience and opportunities for hands-on research an excellent preparation for a career in health policy and management.

The program has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education.

Program Requirements

Forty-seven credits of coursework are required to complete the master's in health policy and management. Coursework is characterized by both individual and group assignments designed to build skills and to integrate learning across the curriculum. In addition to course content, writing and communication skills are developed throughout the curriculum. Organizing and presenting material orally to students and faculty is a performance requirement in several courses, as are writing assignments of increasing complexity. Students are required to declare a track in either management or policy. The declaration establishes the additional content courses that the student is required to successfully complete.

The Curriculum

At the center of the curriculum is a required Core course of study providing a foundation of knowledge and skills for effective performance in health policy and management. For either track, the following courses are required. Students are advised to take these courses as early as possible in order to inform their selection of a track.

Core			<i>Credits</i>
HPM	570	The American Health Care System	3
HPM	574	Community Health and Medical Care	3
HPM	530	Fundamentals of Leadership in Health Care	2
HPM	676	Health Care Planning and Marketing	3
HPM	678	Health Law	3
HPM	681	Quality and Outcomes of Health Care	3
PPM	611	Economic Public Policy and Management with Health module	<u>3</u>
Total:			20

For those students electing the policy track, the following additional core courses are required:

Policy Track			
AMS	545	Applied Biostatistical Analysis	3
HPM	672	The Politics of Health Policy	<u>3</u>
Total:			6

In order to reach the 47 credits required for the degree, students who have declared a policy track will satisfy 16 additional credits among the elective courses that are available to them.

For those students electing the management track, the following additional core courses are required:

Management Track			
HPM	634	Health Care Finance I	2
HPM	636	Health Information Management	3
HPM	680	Health Resource Seminar	1
HPM	684	Health Care Finance II	2
MBA	504	Probability and Statistics for Business Decision Making	3

PPM 632	Human Resource Management in Public, Nonprofit, and Health Organizations	3
		Total: 14

In order to reach the 47 credits required for the degree, students who have declared a management track will satisfy 8 additional credits among the elective courses that are available to them.

Electives

To satisfy elective credits, students may select from the above courses which are not required for a student's selected track. Students may also select courses from the following list. Finally, students, with advisor approval, may substitute other graduate-level courses offered at USM to satisfy elective requirements.

AMS 535	Introduction to Epidemiologic Research
HPM 679	Research Seminar in Health Care Policy
HPM 682	Social and Behavioral Foundations for Public Health
HPM 683	Topics in Practice Management
PPM 524	Gender, Race, Politics, and Public Policy
PPM 526	Public Policy and Children
PPM 602	Research Design
PPM 603	Applied Research Methods
PPM 604	Evaluation Methods
PPM 630	Organizational Dynamics

Other courses:

Field Experience	2
Capstone	3
Total	47

Field Experience

Each student is required to demonstrate proficiency in the skills learned in the program in one of two ways. Students with substantial work experience in a health care setting have the option of a two-credit independent study that focuses on a topic related to their current or recent work experience. For students with limited experience, or for those interested in broadening their experience, a two-credit field experience is required in a participating health care organization under the direction of an approved preceptor. Either of these options is available to students who have earned at least 24 credits in the HPM program.

Capstone Project

The capstone project is undertaken by students working independently under faculty supervision. The capstone project requires the student to integrate knowledge and skills acquired in the HPM program, and to demonstrate competence in their application to a specific topic in health policy or management. The project may take many forms, including a policy or management research project, the development of a strategic plan for a health care organization, an organizational or human resource analysis, or a financial study, among others. The precise form will be determined by the student in consultation with his or her capstone advisor.

Concentration in Public Health

The concentration in public health further emphasizes public health competencies in epidemiology, biostatistics, community health, evaluation, social health as well as management, all within a public policy context. In addition to the core courses, the concentration specifies the completion of AMS 535, PPM 604, and HPM 682. Students are also required to complete their field experience and capstone project in an area of public health.

Concentration in Practice Management

The concentration in practice management further emphasizes those skills related to the management of physician and other professional health care practices. The concentration specifies the completion of the management track, plus HPM 683. Students are also required to complete their field experience and capstone project in an area of practice management.

Research Opportunities

The Muskie School's Institute for Health Policy has become, over the past decade, a nationally recognized and funded center for health policy and services research. All core faculty in the health policy and management program have joint appointments in the Institute for Health Policy. In addition to state-level health policy and services research in Maine (with substantial collaboration with governmental and other organizations throughout the state), the Muskie School has a growing national research agenda.

The HPM Program will utilize extensive research, demonstration, and technical assistance activities and projects underway within the Institute for Health Policy to provide practical, hands-on research and/or management experience for five to ten HPM students each year. These experiences may include paid graduate or research assistantships working with the Institute's faculty and staff, and internship and field experiences. HPM students will also have the opportunity to access the Institute's extensive databases for capstone and other projects.

AMS 535 Introduction to Epidemiologic Research

This course is intended to give students a basic foundation in principles for the conduct and interpretation of population-based studies of the distribution, etiology, and control of disease. Topics will include randomized experiments, non-randomized cohort studies, case-control studies, cross-sectional and ecological studies, causal inference, source of bias, and measures of effect. Recent publications from the epidemiologic and general medical literature will be used to illustrate the application of the concepts to specific epidemiologic issues. Cr 3.

AMS 545 Applied Biostatistical Analysis

This course is intended to give students a working understanding of the major types of biostatistical analysis used in laboratory sciences, clinical research, and public health. Topics will include estimation, descriptive statistics, hypothesis testing, crosstabulations and stratified analysis, life tables, multiple regression, and logistic regression. The course is designed primarily for students with little formal training in biostatistics, but may also prove valuable to other students who desire a course providing an integrated approach to diverse biostatistical techniques within an applied framework. Students will learn to manipulate datasets, analyze them, and interpret the results using the SAS software package. Cr 3.

HPM 530 Fundamentals of Leadership in Health Care

This course will focus students on understanding, learning, and ultimately internalizing what they can do to become more effective leaders. This course will include theories and types of leadership as well as an understanding and development of leadership skills around motivation, power, delegation, communication, teaming, conflict resolution, diversity, and performance evaluation. The course will also discuss change management at both the strategic and operational level of an organization. Case studies will be used extensively to analyze and demonstrate the application of theories to the management of health care organizations and systems. Cr 2.

HPM 570 The American Healthcare System

Introduces students to the organization, financing, and management of the American health care system and the dynamic changes that are affecting health care organizations as a result of market-based and policy forces. The course develops an understanding of the key elements of health care systems and organizations and the relationship among consumers and purchasers, providers, and the regulatory and policy environment in which the system functions. Students will explore political, policy, and market forces affecting the health care system and will examine the implications of these trends for health care organizations, federal, and state-level policy and health system reform efforts. Cr 3.

HPM 574 Community Health and Medical Care

This course investigates the relationship between the health care system and health. Areas of study include definitions and indicators of health and its relationship to medical care; epidemiology; the determinants of health; prevention; and public health and vulnerable populations. Current models of community-based health needs assessment using primary and secondary data are used by students to assess the needs of vulnerable populations in Maine. Cr 3.

HPM 634 Health Care Finance I

This course will begin with a review of analytical techniques for examining and understanding the financial characteristics and performance of health care organizations. An understanding of the revenue cycle, cost and pricing structures, and budgeting in different health care organizations as well as the management of these critical financial activities will be addressed. Prerequisites: an introductory, college-level accounting course, or permission of instructor, and knowledge of Excel. Cr 2.

HPM 636 Health Information Management

This course addresses the uses of health information by managers. With an emphasis on the strategic management that depends on timely, accurate information, the course inventories the numerous systems (patient record, finance, scheduling, laboratory, pharmacy, etc.) within the health care system that generate such information, with current examples from southern Maine organizations. The course also addresses data security, the procurement of information systems, and the use of health information technology for process improvement. Cr 3.

HPM 672 Politics of Health Policy

Acquaints the student with the following factors influencing health policy: ethical values as expressed through theories of distributive justice; politics, including political parties, congressional committees, and interest groups; and public opinion, as expressed through news media and opinion polls. Also analyzes examples of both state and national health care legislation and the influences exerted upon them by these factors. Cr 3.

HPM 676 Health Care Planning and Marketing

This course examines concepts in strategic planning and marketing of health services. Topics include environmental analysis, service area and market definition, medical staff analysis, competitor identification and analysis, market research, medical staff analysis, and product and service specific markets and marketing strategies. Cr 3.

HPM 678 Health Law

This course explores legal issues that permeate the health care system, addressing: (i) the sources of applicable law affecting health care; (ii) the tensions

between conflicting goals, expectations, ethical obligations, and rights and duties of various participants in the system (such as patients, providers, payors, purchasers, and different levels of government); and (iii) specific legal issues, with an emphasis on governmental regulation of health care delivery and payment. The course examines the development and implementation of the law affecting the health care delivery system, understood as the result of advocacy in various forums by parties with differing interests. Topics covered include: the regulatory licensing, certification, and credentialing, as well as indirect regulation through requirements for reimbursement and tax-exemption; client/patient rights issues such as consent, confidentiality, and health care decision making; government oversight of competition, including antitrust enforcement, insurance regulation, and other mechanisms; issues in public health, and governmental strategies to promote access to health care. Cr 3.

HPM 679 Research Seminar in Health Care Policy

Provides students “hands-on” experience in conducting a health policy analysis project. The course is designed to develop students’ abilities to think critically about health policy problems and issues and to perform policy research and analysis. The course provides students the opportunity to apply, integrate, and refine analytic skills acquired in core courses and in the health policy sequence. Students work as a group to conduct an analysis of a policy problem/issue. Class sessions are devoted to special topics and assignments, both methodological and substantive, related to the research project. Prerequisite: HPM 670 or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

HPM 680 Human Resource Seminar

This course will be arranged around a case study that focuses on human resource issues and challenges that are a consequence of changing environmental, regulatory or structural factors that impact a health care organization. Students will be required to analyze and develop human resource solutions and strategies that address the case. Examples include, but are not limited to, the human resource issues associated with a merger or acquisition, the management of a workforce reduction initiative or the development and implementation of an outsourcing strategy. Prerequisite: PPM 632 or permission of instructor. Cr 1.

HPM 681 Quality and Outcomes of Health Care

This survey course provides an overview of health care quality and outcomes. It covers a conceptual framework for describing and studying quality and outcomes, commonly used measurement and monitoring systems, key agencies and organizations, and policy and technical issues related to quality improvement and outcome measurement. The course focuses on several recent developments in the field: the focus on outcomes rather than process, including the patient’s perspective, measuring quality and outcomes among populations of managed care enrollees, and using risk adjustment to “level the playing field” when comparing quality outcomes across providers. Prerequisites: HPM 670 and AMS 545 or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

HPM 682 Social and Behavioral Foundations for Public Health

This course provides an overview of the evolution of theory, frameworks, and approaches to population-based social and behavioral health services as well as practical applications of current approaches to program design, implementation, and evaluation.

HPM 683 Topics in Practice Management

This course will examine topics related to human resource, financial, marketing, and legal issues that are critical to the successful strategic and operational management of a professional practice. These topics include, but are not limited to: scheduling, compensation, pricing, coding, billing, payables, collections, risk management, HIPPA, reporting, quality management, and informational technology. Students will be required to analyze and make recommendations on a significant management issue that has been identified by an operational practice. Cr 3.

HPM 684 Health Care Finance II

Second in the finance sequence, this course addresses financial investment analysis, capital budgeting and decision-making, sources of capital for health care organizations, and financial business planning. The course will also address the financial dimension associated with special topics around managed care and prospective reimbursement, mergers, and acquisitions, pay for performance, taxes, and real estate, across different health care organizations. Prerequisite: HPM 634. Cr 2.

HPM 695 Independent Study Cr 3.

HPM 696 Field Experience Cr 2.

HPM 699 Capstone Project Cr 3.