HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH, PHD

Banner Code: HH-PHD-HSR

Alison Cuellar, PhD; Program Coordinator
Website: chhs.gmu.edu/students/coordinators.cfm#hap

The purpose of the PhD program in Health Services Research is to prepare graduates to be scholars, educators, researchers, and leaders in higher education, health care and service organizations, health care consulting firms, government and nonprofit organizations, and private businesses that support or regulate the health service industry. The degree has the following two specialized programs of study (concentrations):

• Health Systems and Policy
• Knowledge Discovery and Health Informatics

Admissions & Policies

Admissions
Requirements
Students must have a master’s degree or other advanced degree (i.e., MD, JD, PhD or equivalent) from a regionally-accredited institution before being admitted to the 72-credit PhD program.

Applicants must meet the admission standards and application requirements specified in Graduate Admissions and must apply using the online Application for Graduate Admission (https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid). For application deadlines and detailed application requirements, refer to the CHHS Admissions website (http://chhs.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate/deadlines.cfm).

Policies
Reduction of Credit
Students who enter with a master’s or other advanced degree may have the credit requirement reduced by up to 30 credits (to a minimum of 42) for previous coursework that closely corresponds with doctoral program requirements. The credit reduction decision will be made by the doctoral program coordinator and requires approval of the department chair. Requests for reduction of credit are reviewed only after acceptance to the doctoral program.

Time Requirements
Students must complete all requirements for the PhD in Health Services Research within 9 calendar years from the time of first enrollment as a doctoral student in the program or with provisional status. PhD students are expected to progress steadily toward their degree and to complete all coursework and the written exam in order to advance to candidacy within no more than 6 years.

Requirements

Degree Requirements
Total credits: 72

Core Courses
Research and Computational Methods Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAP 719</td>
<td>Advanced Statistics in Health Services Research I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 760</td>
<td>Philosophy of Science in Health Services Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 819</td>
<td>Advanced Statistics in Health Services Research II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 835</td>
<td>Causal Inference in Health Services Research</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

Knowledge Discovery and Health Informatics Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAP 709</td>
<td>Health Care Databases</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 720</td>
<td>Health Data Integration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 780</td>
<td>Data Mining in Health Care</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Health Systems and Policy Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAP 715</td>
<td>Health Economics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 742</td>
<td>Health Policy Development and Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 868</td>
<td>Advanced Research Seminar in Health Policy Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits: 30

Concentration and Electives
Students take additional courses in one of two concentration domains: Knowledge Discovery and Health Informatics or Health Systems and Policy. Doctoral-level electives outside of CHHS or concentration-related content areas may be taken as approved by the student’s academic advisor. A maximum of 6 credits of 600-level courses may be applied to the degree.

Concentration in Knowledge Discovery and Health Informatics (KDHI)

Thirty credits from the following: 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAP 618</td>
<td>Computational Tools in Health Informatics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 701</td>
<td>Health Data: Vocabulary and Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 730</td>
<td>Health Care Decision Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 745</td>
<td>Health Care Security Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 752</td>
<td>Advanced Health Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 770</td>
<td>Medical Decision Making and Decision Support Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 823</td>
<td>Comparative Effectiveness Analysis using Observational Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 925</td>
<td>Advanced Methods in Qualitative Research for Health Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCH 807</td>
<td>Measurement Theories and Applications in Health Care Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHBS 720</td>
<td>Principles of Clinical Trials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHBS 816</td>
<td>Rehabilitation Efficacy and Effectiveness Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 663</td>
<td>Statistical Graphics and Data Exploration I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 763</td>
<td>Statistical Graphics and Data Exploration II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
theoretical concepts of research design and methods (including study
comprehensive examination to assess the student’s ability to apply
Members of the dissertation committee will utilize a written
Written Comprehensive Exam
exams after the maximum number of attempts will be dismissed from the
the following semester. No more than one additional attempt at the
pass either of the comprehensive exams may attempt each exam again
must pass both exams to enter PhD candidacy. Students who fail to
Director. The dissertation committee will develop and evaluate the
dissertation committee with a chair approved by the HSR PhD Program
Students shall indicate by the end of the previous regular semester their
coursework (except for dissertation sequence courses).
comprehensive exams must be taken within one year of completion of all
analysis of data in order to provide a comprehensive answer.) The
computational exam presents the student with a question that requires
necessary knowledge and skills to undertake dissertation work. (Note: A
oral or computational) will determine whether the student has the
oral or Computational Comprehensive Exam
members who have agreed to serve. During the oral proposal defense, the Dissertation Committee
student will describe their proposed research and address questions by
committee members. At the oral defense, the Dissertation Committee
determines approval or disapproval of the proposal. Committee
An oral proposal defense must be scheduled with dissertation committee
proposal must address the feasibility of completing the dissertation
and describe the proposed study design and analytic methods. The
rationale for the research objectives, state the dissertation objective(s),
must provide a detailed literature review that provides the context and
in a timely manner is grounds for academic probation. The proposal
Chair and committee. The proposal shall describe the proposed research
as directed by the Chair and Committee. Failure to submit the proposal
in a timely manner is grounds for academic probation. The proposal
must address the feasibility of completing the dissertation
research and state the chair and members of the student’s dissertation
committee (with signatures or other appropriate documentation through
e-mail) and include a short rationale for the inclusion of each member.
An oral proposal defense must be scheduled with dissertation committee
members who have agreed to serve. During the oral proposal defense, the student
will describe their proposed research and address questions by
the committee members. At the oral defense, the Dissertation Committee
determines approval or disapproval of the proposal. Committee
disapproval is accompanied by written recommendations for improving
the proposed research with expectations for resubmission.

Comprehensive Exams
Two comprehensive examinations (one written and one either
oral or computational) will determine whether the student has the
necessary knowledge and skills to undertake dissertation work. (Note: A
computational exam presents the student with a question that requires
analysis of data in order to provide a comprehensive answer.) The
comprehensive exams must be taken within one year of completion of all
coursework (except for dissertation sequence courses).

Students shall indicate by the end of the previous regular semester their
intent to take the comprehensive exams. Students must have organized
dissertation committee with a chair approved by the HSR PhD Program
Director. The dissertation committee will develop and evaluate the
individual’s comprehensive exams on a pass/no-pass basis. Students
must pass both exams to enter PhD candidacy. Students who fail to
pass either of the comprehensive exams may attempt each exam again
the following semester. No more than one additional attempt at the
exams will be permitted. Students who do not pass both comprehensive
exams after the maximum number of attempts will be dismissed from the
program.

Written Comprehensive Exam
Members of the dissertation committee will utilize a written
comprehensive examination to assess the student’s ability to apply
theoretical concepts of research design and methods (including study
design, data acquisition or collection, data management, analysis
and interpretation) to relevant research questions in the student’s
concentration and area of research.

Oral or Computational Comprehensive Exam
Members of the dissertation committee will utilize either an oral or a
computational comprehensive examination to assess the student’s
knowledge of theory and application pertaining to the content of the
“field” and relevant subject matter, based upon the student’s
concentration and areas of research.

Advancement to Candidacy
Students who pass the comprehensive exams and all core and
concentration course requirements advance to candidacy. A student
must advance to candidacy status before taking the dissertation courses.

Dissertation Sequence Courses
Complete at least 12 credits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAP 998</td>
<td>Doctoral Dissertation Proposal</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAP 999</td>
<td>Doctoral Dissertation (at least 6 credits)</td>
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</table>

Total Credits 12

Dissertation
After advancement to candidacy, the HSR PhD student must complete
an approved dissertation. The student must seek and obtain the approval
of the HSR PhD Program Director on the selection of his/her Dissertation
Chair and committee members. The committee must have at least three
members, each of which must be a full-time member of the graduate
county. The Chair must hold an appointment in the Department of
Health Administration and Policy (HAP) and be approved by the Program
Director. The second member of the dissertation committee must be
a member of either the HAP Department or the College of Health and
Human Services, and the third member of the committee must be from
the College or other academic unit at George Mason University. A fourth
member of the committee may be appointed, from another academic unit
or from outside Mason, with the approval of the Program Director.

Within six months of passing the comprehensive examinations, the
student must submit a draft dissertation proposal to the Dissertation
Chair and committee. The proposal shall describe the proposed research
as directed by the Chair and Committee. Failure to submit the proposal
in a timely manner is grounds for academic probation. The proposal
must provide a detailed literature review that provides the context and
rationale for the research objectives, state the dissertation objective(s),
and describe the proposed study design and analytic methods. The
proposal must address the feasibility of completing the dissertation
research and state the chair and members of the student’s dissertation
committee (with signatures or other appropriate documentation through
e-mail) and include a short rationale for the inclusion of each member.
An oral proposal defense must be scheduled with dissertation committee
members who have agreed to serve. During the oral proposal defense, the student
will describe their proposed research and address questions by
the committee members. At the oral defense, the Dissertation Committee
determines approval or disapproval of the proposal. Committee
disapproval is accompanied by written recommendations for improving
the proposed research with expectations for resubmission.