

# HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION

**Department website:** <https://sps.northwestern.edu/masters/healthcare-administration> (<https://sps.northwestern.edu/masters/healthcare-administration/>)

Northwestern's Healthcare Administration (MHA) degree prepares students for a variety of leadership roles in the healthcare industry with a focus on the business side of healthcare. Students will engage in coursework which analyzes effective healthcare models and examines how to deliver excellent, innovative, and efficient care while balancing costs. Courses cover strategic planning, leadership, financial management, and human resource responsibilities. The curriculum draws on the strengths of faculty from Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and renowned healthcare systems nationwide, offering students opportunities to build healthcare administration knowledge and apply their learning via practical experiences integrated across the program.

## Degrees Offered

- Healthcare Administration, MS (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/health-care-administration/health-care-administration-ms/>)

## Healthcare Administration Courses

### HCA 401-DL The American Healthcare System: Patient, Payor, and Provider (1 Unit)

The U.S. healthcare model has evolved into a complex assortment of systems within systems. Understanding the history will help in developing a better model for the future. Students will learn about the delivery structure and evolution of our healthcare system and its different levels of care, financial relationships, technology enhancements, and government/regulatory requirements. Students will improve their foundational knowledge through reading, case studies, assignments, and class discussions in order to contemplate innovative methods that could improve health and healthcare delivery in the future.

### HCA 402-DL Clinical Thinking for Healthcare Administrators and Clinical Managers (1 Unit)

This course will provide the clinical context for aspiring healthcare leaders by describing the clinical environment of care and the elements that define and impact the patient experience. The student will learn how to decipher medical terminology and understand the roles of the clinical team. The student will be able to explain the role of evidence-based practice in the application of quality and safety initiatives to improve patient care outcomes. The overall objective of this course is to provide a clinical perspective and present some key issues as an introduction to many of the topics that will be covered in depth as you proceed through the program.

### HCA 403-DL People Leadership and Change Management in Healthcare (HR1) (1 Unit)

This course provides a foundation for applying human resource management in healthcare settings. The course focuses on the major elements of human resource management, as well as how it can be effectively applied in developing and operationalizing organizational performance that keeps patients at the forefront of our work. Students will learn about the spectrum of human resource practices and issues from position design to recruitment and retention. Subjects will include

the employment contract/agreement, training/education/support, performance evaluation, coaching for improvement, discipline and dismissal, overriding legal and regulatory issues, and strategic planning. Emphasis will be placed on communication techniques, self-analysis, and strategies for best practices to ensure maximum patient success and effectively implement key leadership and management concepts in dynamic healthcare environments.

### HCA 404-DL Financial Management in Healthcare Organizations (Finance 1) (1 Unit)

This course introduces the terminology, theory, concepts and techniques used in the finance functions in healthcare organizations that are relevant to a healthcare administrator. Students gain an understanding of the important role of finance in healthcare organizations and learn various techniques to develop, manage, and control finances. Through case studies, students will interpret financial statements, prepare analyses, calculate Return on Investment (ROI), and conduct break-even analyses. The course provides students with experience in capital and operating budgets, financial forecasts, and business plan preparation. Students will be expected to have a sufficient level of competence in their utilization of spreadsheet applications.

### HCA 405-DL Data-Driven Healthcare Management: Why Data Matters (1 Unit)

This foundational course introduces students to the various types of data that healthcare organizations create, manage, and analyze to improve decision-making. Students will learn about key systems used within healthcare organizations and how their computing architectures impact the value generated from the underlying data. Students will gain a working knowledge of fundamental methods for analyzing, interpreting and understanding performance metrics. The course will prepare students to leverage data to analyze processes, communicate information, and improve performance. The course is focused on the applied use of data to become effective leadership consumers and communicators of information.

### HCA 410-DL Leading Quality Care and Ethical Compliance (1 Unit)

This course will familiarize students with leading approaches to ensuring clinical quality and patient safety, and the regulatory, payor, and consumer perspectives which influence evaluation of quality and patient safety. The course includes significant attention to leadership, culture and teamwork as vital elements of high-quality and high-reliability care. The course will enable students to conceptualize the synthesis of healthcare quality, safety and equity, compliance and ethics with the demands of an operationally effective healthcare organization.

### HCA 411-DL Leadership Development and Organizational Behavior (HR2) (1 Unit)

This course will help students appreciate and identify various individual leadership talents in handling organizational challenges, such as leading organizational change, building strong culture, developing effective teams, resolving conflicts, problem-solving and implementing effective motivational systems. Key values that guide a leader's personal and professional behavior and influence overall effectiveness will be explored, as well as their impact on overall leadership styles. Introduction to organization theory and behavior with focus on health services organizations, facilitated by reading and class discussion. Woven among these elements will be understanding and applying the difference between management and leadership. Individuals will understand the importance of corporate values, leading change management, and strengthening collaboration. (Required: HCA 403-DL)

### HCA 412-DL Healthcare Value and Revenue Cycle Management (Finance 2) (1 Unit)

This course introduces healthcare administrators to information directly related to a modern healthcare revenue cycle and the impact that this process has on the financial viability of all healthcare organizations. Students will discuss and apply economic analyses to the health services sector; topics of discussion include the concept of efficiency and distribution of health services, health insurance, government programs, healthcare personnel, and health services organizations. Students will learn about emerging reimbursement trends and payment models within the regulatory parameters. (Required: HCA 404-DL)

**HCA 413-DL Healthcare Organizations: Operations and Performance Improvement (1 Unit)**

This course introduces the tools and techniques of contemporary project management. The course will address time management and the difference between management of ongoing operations and new projects, as well as the need for a disciplined approach when planning and executing projects. Specific topics will include continuous quality improvement and re-engineering, demand forecasting, facility location and design models, decision analysis techniques, and patient access models. Students will understand the language, applications, and limitations of quantitative models with regard to decision making and problem solving in healthcare organizations. Students will define variations and methods and tools to differentiate among Process and Performance Improvement, Project Management and the intersection of utilizing data and research to maximize outcomes. (Required: HCA 405-DL.)

**HCA 420-DL Operating in the Patient-Centric Healthcare Environment and Structures (1 Unit)**

The course will focus on enhancing students' effectiveness as healthcare leaders by expanding their capabilities in organizational structure and leadership, and within the ever-evolving health ecosystem. The course will develop student skills in observation and reflection on individual behavior, group processes, and healthcare systems. Students will understand the importance of personal leadership and lifelong learning. Course will discuss legacy organizational structures in academic and community settings, as well as current patient-centric approach via key service lines (oncology, women's, cardiovascular, neuro, and musculoskeletal). Additional learnings will include developing and executing creative ways to review and improve the patient-centered care model. (Required: HCA 401-DL.)

**HCA 430-DL Defining Value in a Healthcare Market: Strategic Planning and Marketing (1 Unit)**

This course aims to integrate the knowledge and skills developed during the program's foundational courses into the context of strategic management of healthcare organizations. Learning is supported by individual and team analysis of complex health management cases. Students will be aware of approaches to managing and marketing health services from a strategic perspective, including the regulatory landscape. We will address techniques for determining strategies for unique services, integration of strategy, structure, and administrative systems. This course provides an overview of the principal components of healthcare innovation, including business planning, raising philanthropic funds, and innovation in existing healthcare organizations.

**HCA 498-DL Capstone - Final Business Project and Program Development (1 Unit)**

This course provides students with opportunities to apply the fundamentals of strategic planning, marketing, human resources, finance, analytics, and operations acquired in previous courses to approach practical problems and decisions faced by healthcare systems. The project will address an applicable and current issue in the student's current organization or develop a project with the use of the case

studies such as problem-solving a crisis management issue. Students apply techniques of situational assessment, data analysis, strategy development, problem-solving, and critical thinking. (Required: Students may take one other course simultaneously with HCA 498-DL. All other core course requirements must have been completed before the commencement of this course.)

**HCA 499-DL Independent Study (1 Unit)**

An independent study is a customized course of study undertaken by a single student under the guidance of an instructor. Independent studies are comparable in their demands to other graduate-level courses. Please see the SPS Graduate Student Handbook and your academic advisor for more information about independent study registration.