

HEALTH POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION, B.S. (CAPITAL)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Harrisburg

Program Description

This major helps prepare students for management and policy positions or graduate study in the field of health care. Students in the major develop the skills and knowledge needed to understand the complex societal problem of providing access to quality health care at reasonable cost. All Health Policy and Administration students complete an internship in a health-care-related setting, giving them valuable experience and contacts in the industry. HPA students study a multidisciplinary curriculum that prepares them to work as health services managers or health analysts. Health services managers, also called health care executives or health care administrators, plan, direct, and coordinate medical, health, and/or long-term care services. They might manage an entire facility or specialize in managing a specific clinical area or department, administrate a program or manage a practice for a group of providers. Health analysts are employed throughout the health care industry gathering, compiling, modeling, validating, and analyzing data needed by different organizations of providers, payers, and policy makers. Analysts help these organizations understand the current trends in the health care system and to make well-informed decisions. Both health services managers and analysts must be able to adapt to changes in health care laws, regulations, and technology. HPA students have also used the degree to prepare for graduate study in business, law, medicine or allied health fields, health administration, health services research or policy, and public health.

What is Health Policy and Administration?

Health Policy and Administration (HPA) is a multidisciplinary course of study with courses in the liberal arts, business administration, and health sciences. In general HPA students are prepared to work in six types of health care organizations including:

1. Health care providers (hospitals, physician practices, nursing facilities, home health agencies, etc.)
2. Health insurers (nonprofit and commercial insurers, health maintenance organizations, etc.)
3. Health care consulting firms
4. Health care supply companies (pharmaceutical companies, medical device manufacturers, etc.)
5. Health services research and policy organizations (health policy research groups, industry trade groups, etc.);
6. Local, state, and federal health agencies (local health departments, state Department of Health, federal Department of Health and Human Services, etc.).

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTH POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hpa/>)

You Might Like This Program If...

- You are interested in business administration or management but want to focus primarily in the healthcare industry.
- You are interested in influencing health policy by working in government at the state or federal level
- You are interested in improving access to health care for underserved populations
- You are interested in reducing health care costs or improving health care quality through policy reform.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WHY STUDENTS CHOOSE TO STUDY HEALTH POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hpa/bachelor-science-bs-health-policy-and-administration/>)

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science degree in Health Policy and Administration, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	4-6
Requirements for the Major	81-83

12 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 6 credits of GQ courses; 6 credits of GS courses.

The requirements for the major are outlined below. Students may select courses in the Supporting Courses and Related Areas category to fulfill requirements for a minor, to develop a specialization, or to complete courses required for admission to medical, dental, law, or other graduate schools.

Per Senate Policy 83.80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. H P A requires students to complete 24 credits for the major through courses taken at University Park. Courses taken at other Penn State campuses may not be counted toward this 24 credit minimum. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for this major.

Requirements for the Major

To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
ECON 102	Introductory Microeconomic Analysis and Policy	3
HPA 101	Introduction to Health Services Organization	3
HPA 210	Health Care Payment	3
HPA 211	Financial Decisions in Health Care Organizations	3
HPA 301	Health Services Policy Issues	3
HPA 310	Health Care and Medical Needs	3
HPA 311	Population Health and Healthcare	3
HPA 332	Health Systems Management	3
HPA 390	Professional Development in Health Policy & Administration	3
HPA 395	Field Experience in Health Policy and Administration	3
HPA 455	Strategic Planning and Marketing for Health Services	3
PLSC 1	American Politics: Principles, Processes and Powers	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
CMPSC 101	Introduction to Programming	3-4
	or CMPSC 203 Introduction to Spreadsheets and Databases	
	or MIS 204 Introduction to Management Information Systems	
STAT 200	Elementary Statistics	3-4
	or STAT 250 Introduction to Biostatistics	
Select 9 credits from the following:		9
HPA 401	Comparative Health Systems	
HPA 410	Principles of Public Health Administration	
HPA 420	Principles of Managed Care	
HPA 430	Health Care Leadership	
HPA 433	Administration of Hospital and Health Service Systems	
HPA 435	Safety Net Health Care	
HPA 438	Culturally Competent Health Services for Diverse Populations	
HPA 440	Principles of Epidemiology	
HPA 442	Long-Term Care Management	
HPA 443	Nursing Home Administration	
HPA 444	Aging Policy in the United States	
HPA 445	Health Economics	
HPA 446	Economics and Health In Low- and Middle-Income Countries	
HPA 447	Financing Health Care	
HPA 450	Healthcare Policies and Politics	
HPA 454	Health Care Professional Communication	
HPA 460	Human Resource Management in Health Care Organizations	
HPA 470	Health Care Information Management	
HPA 475	Health Care Quality	
HPA 490	Physician Practice Management	
HPA 497	Special Topics	

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Select 30 credits from University-wide offerings on department list in consultation with adviser ¹

¹ Must include at least 9 credits at the 400 level.

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements**First Year Engagement**

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Program Learning Objectives

- **Know Health Organizations:** HPA graduates will possess in depth understanding of health and health care, including the structures, policies, processes and institutions that make up the U.S. health care system.
- **Organize and Direct Resources:** HPA graduates will possess the knowledge and skills necessary for organizing and directing resources towards the achievement of organizational objectives.
- **Policy Analysis:** HPA graduates will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate public policy.
- **Emotional Intelligence:** HPA graduates will possess an awareness of and the ability to manage ones own emotions in a way that enables positive interpersonal interactions and the building of productive relationships.
- **Diversity Adeptness:** HPA graduates will recognize the value of diversity and possess sensitivity to underrepresented and underserved groups in health care.
- **Critical Thinking:** HPA graduates will be able to interpret, analyze, and evaluate information to identify, examine, and solve problems that occur in the health care system.
- **Communication:** HPA graduates will be able to effectively receive, process, and relay information through speaking, writing, and listening.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged

in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

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Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (*Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin*).

Health Policy and Administration, B.S. at Harrisburg Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
HPA 101*	3	HPA 210*	3
BISC 004 or BIOL 141 or BBH 101	3	General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3	ECON 102 ^{*†}	3
PL SC 001 ^{*†}	3	CAS 100A or 100S [‡]	3
ENGL 15, 15S, 30T, or ESL 15 [‡]	3	Supporting Course	3
	15		15

Second Year

Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
HPA 301W*	3	HPA 332*	3
General Education Course	3	HPA 311*	3
STAT 200 or 250 ^{*†}	3	3-4 General Education Course	3
HPA 211*	3	ENGL 202A [‡]	3

Supporting Course	3	Supporting Course	3
	15-16		15
Third Year			
Fall		Credits	Spring
HPA 310*	3	HPA 400-level course*	3
HPA 390W*	3	General Education Course (GHW)	1.5
General Education Course	3	HPA 395*	3
CMPSC 101 or 203 ^{*†}	3-4	Supporting Course	3
Supporting Course	3	Elective	4
	15-16		14.5
Fourth Year			
Fall		Credits	Spring
HPA 400-level Course*	3	HPA 400-level Course*	3
400-level Supporting Course	3	400-level Supporting Course	3
Supporting Course (Select ECON or PLSC)	3	400-level Supporting Course	3
Supporting Course	3	Supporting Course	3
Supporting Course	3	HPA 455*	3
	15		15

Total Credits 119.5-121.5

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

¹ ENGL 030 (GWS), Effective Fall 2012, all incoming Schreyer Honors College freshmen at University Park will take ENGL/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL /CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry GWS designation and replace both ENGL 030 and CAS 100. Each course is 3 credits. At the discretion of the college, ENGL/CAS 138T satisfies the first-year seminar requirement.

² CAS 100 (GWS), Effective Fall 2012, all incoming Schreyer Honors College freshmen at University Park will take ENGL/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL /CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry GWS designation and replace both ENGL 030 and CAS 100. Each course is 3 credits. At the discretion of the college,

³ ENGL/CAS 138T satisfies the first-year seminar requirement.

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

Career Paths

The mission of the Bachelor of Science Program (B.S.) in HPA is to develop graduates with the knowledge, skills, and values appropriate to work in entry-level management or policy-related positions or for the pursuit of graduate education in health administration, health policy, health law, health services research, public health, and other health related needs. HPA students develop the skills and knowledge needed to understand the complex societal problem of providing access to quality health care at reasonable cost.

Careers

The HPA curriculum prepares students to work as health services managers/administrators or health analysts. Health services managers/administrators plan, direct, and coordinate medical, behavioral, and/or long-term care services. These individuals might oversee matters of personnel, budgeting, billing, equipment outlays, information systems, planning and more. Health analysts are responsible for analyzing, compiling, and validating information needed by different organizations of providers, payers, and policy makers. Analysts help these organizations understand the current trends in the health care system and to make well-informed decisions. Employment in the health care sector is projected to grow 18 percent from 2018 to 2028, much faster than all other occupations.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE HEALTH POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hpa/undergraduate/career-opportunities/career-outlook-health-care-professionals/>)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

HPA's blend of courses in liberal arts, business administration, and the health sciences, is designed to prepare students for careers or further study in health care. HPA students have used the degree to prepare for graduate study in business, law, medicine or allied health fields, health administration, health services research or policy, and public health.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hpa/undergraduate/integrated-undergraduate/graduate-programs/>)

Professional Resources

- Association of University Programs in Health Administration (<https://www.aupha.org/resourcecenter/futurestudents/>)
- American College of Health Care Administrators (<https://www.achca.org/student-societies/>)
- American College of Healthcare Executives (<https://www.ache.org>)

Accreditation

HPA is a fully certified member of the Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA). As such it has been recognized for having withstood the rigors of peer review wherein curricula, faculty, and educational outcomes have been critically examined by external peer review. In a process comparable to other specialty program accreditations, programs seeking AUPHA certification must submit an extensive self-study detailing the program's structure, educational processes, and assessment mechanisms in response to national criteria established by AUPHA.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ACCREDITATION BY THE ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS IN HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (<https://www.aupha.org/main-site/certification/certification/>)

Professional Licensure/Certification

Many U.S. states and territories require professional licensure/certification to be employed. If you plan to pursue employment in a licensed profession after completing this program, please visit the Professional Licensure/Certification Disclosures by State (<https://www.psu.edu/state-licensure-disclosures/>) interactive map.

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<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-health-policy-and-administration-bachelor-of-science-degree> (<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-health-policy-and-administration-bachelor-of-science-degree/>)