

## Department of Health Policy & Management (HPM) - FAQs

### DEGREE OPTIONS

*What degree programs are offered in HPM?*

HPM offers two degrees – the Master of Public Health (MPH) and the Master of Health Administration (MHA).

Please note: HPM no longer offers the MPH degree with a concentration in healthcare management and instead now offers the MHA degree. Students interested in a management-based curriculum should consider applying to the MHA program.

*What is the MPH program?*

The HPM MPH at Columbia University is known as the Columbia MPH and is offered in two formats: a two-year program and a one-year accelerated program. The accelerated MPH is for applicants who have earned advanced degrees (such as MD, PhD, MSW, RN, DDS, JD) or MD students mid-way through their studies. The department also offers a dual-degree option for the MPH.

MPH students in the two-year program are required to select a certificate as part of their academic program. Certificates are not available to accelerated or dual students. All students in the MPH program begin their coursework with the integrated Mailman School of Public Health (MSPH) Core.

HPM Columbia MPH – students who want to focus their public health discipline curricula in HPM take five required departmental courses including: Accounting & Budgeting, Health Policy & Political Analysis, Research Methods I: Empirical Data Analysis, Research Methods II: Program Evaluation, and Health Economics. MPH students in the two-year program also apply to a certificate and pursue coursework related to their certificate. The Health Policy Analysis, Health Policy & Practice (for non-HPM students) and Comparative and Effectiveness Outcomes Research certificates are offered through the HPM Department. The majority of HPM-MPH students elect the Health Policy Analysis certificate, which includes health policy and management classes.

HPM Accelerated MPH – students take a series of required HPM courses (up to 45 credits) in addition to the integrated MSPH Core in one year (September through the end of May). The Accelerated students engage in a bi-weekly seminar, as well as work closely with the Faculty Director and their advisor to register for the appropriate coursework. Accelerated students are not eligible to receive a certificate.

*What is the MHA program?*

The Columbia Master of Health Administration degree program is offered in three distinct formats: full-time (FT), part-time (PT) and executive (EXEC). The curriculum is focused on management methods, analysis and skills. Coursework includes: Managerial & Organizational Behavior, Healthcare Finance, Strategic Management, Hospital Management, Healthcare Marketing and Healthcare Information Technology. Courses also provide an overview of the political, economic and legal healthcare framework and an introduction to core concepts and principles of public health required for administrators in healthcare settings. MHA students are not eligible to receive a certificate. The MHA does not have a dual-degree option and does include the MSPH core curriculum. The program is dual-accredited by CAHME and CEPH.

*What is the difference between an MBA and an MHA?*

Students take traditional management coursework in the context of the healthcare system and learn advanced skills in finance, strategy, leadership and analytics. Each course contains healthcare examples and case studies, and faculty discuss the healthcare environment, language and policies in class.

## **ADMISSIONS**

*How do I apply?*

Please see the MSPH website for application guidelines and further details about how to apply: <http://publichealth.columbia.edu/apply/how-to-apply>.

*Do I need to have full-time work experience?*

No. The FT program is designed for students who have a range of undergraduate backgrounds/degrees and typically some full-time work experience (about half of incoming students have at least one year of FT work experience).

## **THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE**

*Can I work part-time?*

It is not recommended that MPH students hold part-time jobs in their first semester due to the core curriculum schedule. However, many students do pursue part-time positions in subsequent semesters related to their career goals and a number of students continue at their summer practicum placement. Students will not be able to rearrange their courses to fit a part-time or full-time work schedule.

*What is the HPM Professional Development Program (PDP)?*

To ensure that students have the skills necessary to enter and compete in the workforce, FT students are required to complete a comprehensive Professional Development Program (PDP) which includes (1) an 18 month co-curricular course and (2) a 10-week 350 hour full-time practicum internship (Practicum) in an established healthcare setting. The required PDP course provides focused training on essential skills such as presentation, communication, interviewing and teamwork and culminates in the required Practicum which takes place during the summer after a student's first year of graduate studies. The PDP is only offered to HPM students.

*What is the Practicum requirement?*

The Practicum takes place during the summer after the student's first year. Students obtain practica in an extraordinary range of institutions including hospital systems (such as the Mayo Clinic, NY Presbyterian, and Cedars Sinai), consulting firms (such as Deloitte, Mercer, and PwC), global health agencies (such as the Clinton Foundation, WHO, Doctors Without Borders and Burma Children's Medical Fund), insurance companies (such as Aetna and EmblemHealth), pharmaceutical firms (such as Pfizer, Sanofi, and Novartis), and government agencies (such as the NY State Department of Health and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). Students intern under the supervision of an on-site *practicum preceptor*, who supervises, evaluates, and guides students' work.

*I am an international student. Will I be able to find a summer practicum?*

Yes. International students can complete a summer practicum in the United States or abroad and are eligible to receive payment, where available.

*Can students do research with faculty?*

Yes. HPM offers some research internship opportunities for students to work closely with faculty on current research. The department pays a stipend per semester of work.

*Is there a thesis requirement for HPM students?*

No. There is no thesis requirement for HPM students.

*Will I have a faculty advisor?*

Yes. All HPM students are assigned a faculty advisor prior to orientation. Students are also assigned an academic program advisor.

*Can I take classes at other Columbia University schools?*

Yes. Students are able to cross-register at other Columbia University schools for their elective courses. Popular schools include the School of International Public Affairs (SIPA) and Columbia Business School (CBS). Courses offered through the School of Continuing Education are not generally accepted. Cross-registration requires two types of approvals: permission from the HPM program advisor and permission from the school offering the course.

*What are examples of jobs that HPM students get after graduation?*

MPH and MHA graduates from the HPM Department work in a variety of settings throughout the healthcare system. Recent data shows that 95% of graduates secure jobs within six months of graduation and less than 1% are still searching. There is considerable diversity in the fields, institutions, and positions into which graduates are placed. Examples of sectors and typical institutions are listed below:

- Consulting (27%)
  - Deloitte, PwC, Grant Thornton, The Chartis Group, The Advisory Board, *inter alia*;
- Health Systems (26%)
  - North Shore LIJ, New York Presbyterian, Memorial Sloan Kettering, Massachusetts General, Kaiser Permanente, Cedars Sinai, Mayo Clinic, *inter alia*;
- Non-profits (15%)
  - Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Health & Global Policy Institute, International Rescue Committee, RWJ Foundation, Clinton Foundation, UNAIDS, Community Health Advisory and Information Network, *inter alia*;
- Government (8%)
  - New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, US Government Accountability Office, State, County and City Departments of Health, *inter alia*;
- Insurance (8%)
  - Emblem Health, Anthem, Fidelis, Aetna, UnitedHealthcare, *inter alia*;

- Pharmaceutical (3%)
  - Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, Novartis, Roche, *inter alia*;
- University/Research/Other (13%)
  - Harvard University Health Services, Columbia University Medical Center, Cornell Weill, UCLA Health System, Guttamacher Institute, *inter alia*.

## QUESTIONS

Questions about the **MPH**? Contact Debra Osinsky at [do79@cumc.columbia.edu](mailto:do79@cumc.columbia.edu)

Questions about the **MHA**? Contact Marni Selman at [mbs2206@cumc.columbia.edu](mailto:mbs2206@cumc.columbia.edu)