

# **PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

## **Healthcare Delivery Science (HDS)**

**Master's Degree**

## **Healthcare Quality Improvement**

## **Applied Health Informatics**

**Graduate Certificate**

**2023-2024**

**Administered programs offered through the  
College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP)  
and housed within Graduate Studies at the  
University of Nebraska Medical Center  
(UNMC)**

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## **Healthcare Delivery Science (HDS) Introduction**

The contents of this handbook are intended to help current and prospective students understand the structural and procedural operations for the Master of Healthcare Delivery Science, the Certificate in Healthcare Quality Improvement, and the Certificate in Applied Health Informatics. The academic offerings under HDS are administered by the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP) and housed within Graduate Studies at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). More specific information pertinent to respective graduate college policies and procedures are found using the link below:

<https://www.unmc.edu/gradstudies/index.html>

It is expected that students will be familiar with the contents of this handbook as well as the policies and procedures found within the University of Nebraska Medical Center and College of Allied Health Professions policies located using the link below:

[UNMC Student Policies](#)

[CAHP Student Handbook \(unmc.edu\)](#)

### **Program Mission**

The mission of the program is to provide practicing healthcare professionals with advanced knowledge of core administrative and leadership competencies related to five essential areas of healthcare practice.

### **Program Description**

The completely online program fosters improvement in the five essential areas identified by the National Academy of Medicine include: providing patient-centered care, working in interdisciplinary teams, employing evidence-based practice, applying quality improvement, and utilizing informatics. Coursework is delivered by an interdisciplinary faculty team utilizing an easily accessible distance education format. Individual plans of study include required courses in the five core areas while allowing the student to further develop their area of focus through the completion of self-selected elective courses.

### **Competencies and Objectives**

Based on the program's mission, students are educated in six core competency areas:

1. Healthcare Management
2. Finance
3. Healthcare Delivery Strategies
4. Patient Centered Care
5. Leadership

## **HDS Core Program Faculty**

**Victoria Kennel, PhD**

<https://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/faculty/kennel.html>

**Cindy Arnold, MSN RN-BC, CPHQ, LSS-GB**

<https://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/faculty/arnold.html>

**Sarah McBrien, PhD**

<https://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/faculty/mcbrien.html>

**Ron Shope, PhD**

<https://www.unmc.edu/publichealth/departments/healthpromotion/facultyandstaff/ron-shope.html>

**Tanya Custer, MS**

<https://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/faculty/custer.html>

**Kim Michael, MA, RT(R), RDMS, RVT, FSDMS**

<https://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/faculty/michael.html>

**Jana Koth, MPH, R.T.(R)(T)**

<https://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/faculty/koth.html>

## **Program Advisement**

Students are aligned with a program advisor after admission to the program. The role of the advisor is to provide mentoring and supervision for the student with regards to progression through the program.

## Admission Policies and Requirements

Review of applications are conducted on a "rolling" basis, meaning they are reviewed and offers made (when appropriate) as the applications are received. Students are **strongly encouraged** to apply as early as possible in the application process.

| Admit Term | Application Opens | Applicant Deadline |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Spring     | June 1            | Nov. 15            |
| Summer     | Sept. 1           | April 1            |
| Fall       | Oct. 1            | June 15            |

Current and prospective applicants should refer to the *Admission to the Graduate College* information set forth by Graduate Studies.

Refer to the following link: <https://catalog.unmc.edu/graduate-studies/admission/>

Students enrolled in the HDS Program need to possess computer operating system skills and have easy access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection and up-to-date software. Review the Computer Requirements by following this link:

[Computer Requirements | Allied Health | University of Nebraska Medical Center \(unmc.edu\)](#)

## Degree Requirements

Students should refer to the Requirements for Graduate Degrees as set forth by Graduate Studies.

Refer to the following link: <https://catalog.unmc.edu/graduate-studies/requirements-degrees/>

Students enrolled in the Master of Healthcare Delivery Science plan of study are required to complete a **total of 30 semester hours** as prescribed below or as approved by the student's Graduate Committee.

### Core Courses (18 hours required)

|                 |                                                       |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>HDS 831</u>  | MANAGEMENT IN HEALTH CARE, 3 SEM HRS                  |
| <u>HDS 852</u>  | DESIGN OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES, 3 SEM HRS  |
| <u>HDS 860</u>  | INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH INFORMATICS, 3 SEM HRS         |
| <u>HSRA 872</u> | HEALTH CARE FINANCE AND ECONOMICS, 3 SEM HRS          |
| <u>HPTT 823</u> | LEADERSHIP IN HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION, 3 SEM HRS |

### Capstone Courses (3 hours required)

|                |                                             |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <u>HDS 871</u> | INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL PORTFOLIO, 1 SEM HR |
| <u>HDS 872</u> | DIGITAL PORTFOLIO CAPSTONE, 2 SEM HRS       |

### Elective courses (9 hours required)

|                |                                                    |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <u>HDS 815</u> | COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE IN HEALTHCARE, 3 SEM HRS |
| <u>HDS 823</u> | PRINCIPLES OF CRITICAL INQUIRY, 2 SEM HRS          |

|                 |                                                                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>HDS 826</u>  | HEALTH CARE ETHICS AND CRITICAL THINKING, 3 SEM HRS                      |
| <u>HDS 830</u>  | SCANNING HEALTH CARE ENVIRONMENT, 3 SEM HRS                              |
| <u>HDS 850</u>  | FOUNDATIONS OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT, 3 SEM HRS                            |
| <u>HDS 851</u>  | SYSTEM AND SOCIAL INFLUENCES IN QUALITY AND SAFETY                       |
| <u>HDS 853</u>  | IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES         |
| <u>HDS 861</u>  | HEALTH DATA ANALYTICS                                                    |
| <u>HDS 862</u>  | HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEMS                                               |
| <u>HDS 863</u>  | HEALTHCARE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY                           |
| <u>HDS 873</u>  | SPECIAL TOPICS IN HEALTHCARE                                             |
| <u>HPTT 830</u> | RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND DESIGN FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION, 3 SEM HRS |

Students enrolled in the Certificate plan of study are required to complete four of the core courses for a **total of 12 semester hours (course are specific to each certificate).**

Courses are offered only online. Any comprehensive exam requirement will be conducted synchronously.

If a HDS student is requesting to take coursework outside of UNMC but within the NU system (UNO, UNL, UNK), they will need to complete an intercampus registration application every semester at <https://graduate.unl.edu/academics/intercampus>.

Once intercampus registration is approved, students will complete registration for the course at the campus from which the course is being taught.

### **Comprehensive Exam (required for HDS Masters Students):**

The final capstone course (HDS 872) will involve the creation of an e-portfolio showcasing the application of content throughout the plan of study and presented to the advisor, course instructor, and program committee members. The presentation of the e-portfolio will be scheduled as the comprehensive examination in the online Seguidor system to occur at a defined time. A student that fails HDS 872 has the opportunity to complete the HDS 872 course with embedded projects a second time. The timeline for the comprehensive exam will be as follows:

- First Opportunity to Complete the Comprehensive Exam – at least 2 weeks prior to commencement.
- Second and Final Opportunity to Complete the Comprehensive Exam – at least 1 month following the first attempt. The scheduling of the second attempt may impact the timeliness of graduation and successful completion of the HDS 872 course.

### **Program Course Sequence**

Course offering sequence is dependent upon student need and faculty availability. HDS student plans of study are assessed on a semester by semester basis. A course offerings schedule is monitored by the HDS Program committee to assess student need. Courses with projected enrollment of less than five students are not offered unless the offering affects the students' progress in the program. Courses with a projected enrollment of greater than 25 students are assessed to determine if faculty assistance

is needed or if the frequency of the course offering needs to be increased.

## Code of Conduct

Students at the University of Nebraska are members of an academic community in which academic integrity and responsible conduct are essential for the community to function. To ensure that students know what is expected of them, the University has adopted the Standards of Academic Integrity and Responsible Conduct (“Standards”).

The policy can be found following this link: [https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Code\\_of\\_Conduct](https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Code_of_Conduct)

## Background Checks

All students are required to complete a background check prior to matriculation into their program. The purpose of this check is to evaluate the background of students with regard to their ability to complete program requirements.

The policy link can be found following this link:

<https://catalog.unmc.edu/general-information/student-policies-procedures/background-check-policy/>

At any time during their time in the program, students may be asked to complete an additional background check. Students should report ANY misdemeanor or felony charge that occurs while enrolled in any graduate program IMMEDIATELY to program faculty members, upon which time the steps described above will be followed.

## The Master's Degree Guide (HDS students are considered NON-THESIS)

<https://www.unmc.edu/gradstudies/programs/masters-timeline.html>

## Academic Expectations and Quality of Work Standards

All students will be expected to follow the academic expectations and quality of work standards described below.

|                   |        |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |     |
|-------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Grade Point:      | 4.0    | 4.0   | 3.67  | 3.33  | 3.0   | 2.67  | 2.33  | 2.0   | 1.67  | 1.33  | 1.0   | 0.67  | 0   |
| Final Percentage: | 100-98 | 97-93 | 92-90 | 89-88 | 87-83 | 82-80 | 79-78 | 77-73 | 72-70 | 69-68 | 67-63 | 62-60 | <60 |
| Letter Grade:     | A+     | A     | A-    | B+    | B     | B-    | C+    | C     | C-    | D+    | D     | D-    | F   |

A "B" (3.0 on a scale of 4.0) average must be maintained in all graduate work taken as part of a degree program.



## **Dismissal**

Graduate students are expected to do work of high caliber. Failure to do so may result in dismissal. Grounds for dismissal could include, but are not limited to:

1. Receiving a grade of "C-" (1.67 on a 4.0 scale) or below in any course taken in the student's plan of study.
2. Failure to make timely progress toward the degree or certificate.
3. Failure to perform in course work, comprehensive examination or research at an acceptable level in the program unit.

## **Probation or Dismissal**

The program may recommend that the Dean for Graduate Studies either dismiss, or place on probation with conditions for reinstatement as a student in good standing, when a student fails to maintain a "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) average in all graduate work taken as part of the degree or certificate program.

## **Transfer of Graduate Credit**

Students wishing to use credit taken from a university outside the University of Nebraska system should contact the HDS program director to review the transfer of credit policy respective to the UNMC Graduate Studies' policies.

## **Time Limit for Graduate Degrees**

The degree program (as defined in the plan of study) for Master's degrees must be completed within five consecutive calendar years. Course work over ten years old at the completion of the degree program (as defined in the plan of study) cannot be used for a Master's degree. The first day of class of the earliest course which appears on the student's plan of study is the beginning of the student's graduate education.

The plan of study for the Certificate must be completed within five consecutive calendar years. Course work over five years old at the completion of the certificate (as defined in the plan of study) cannot be used for the certificate.

If the student is not enrolled for two consecutive semesters, they must contact the advisor for options or may be considered disenrolled from the program.

## Graduation Policies

While advisors and faculty will do what they can to support a student's timely completion of program requirements for graduation, students are ultimately responsible for knowing and adhering to timelines for graduation requirements at their respective campus. Failure to do so can result in a delay in graduation.

<https://www.unmc.edu/gradstudies/current-students/graduation.html>

## Counseling and Psychological and Disability Services

The University of Nebraska Medical Center takes pride in its diverse population and is committed to providing all students the opportunity to take full advantage of its programs and facilities. In keeping with this philosophy, UNMC strives to eliminate architectural and programmatic barriers that may prevent qualified students with disabilities from obtaining an academic or professional degree. Reasonable accommodations (e.g. auxiliary aids and services or academic adjustments) are offered to provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in academic programs and to promote and facilitate the integration of students with disabilities into the mainstream of university academic life. Students should initiate requests for accommodation; however, the accountability and responsibility of accommodations is shared among faculty, students, administrators, and staff. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities are designed to provide equal access in a manner that does not compromise essential elements of academic programs. Full policy link: <https://catalog.unmc.edu/general-information/student-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy/>

Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with UNMC Accessibility Services Center (UNMC ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact UNMC ASC (Location: Student Life Center, Suite 2031; Phone: 402.554.2872, email: [unmcasc@unmc.edu](mailto:unmcasc@unmc.edu)).

<https://www.unmc.edu/student-success/support-services/counseling/index.html>