

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Healthcare Delivery Science (HDS)

Master's Degree

Healthcare Quality Improvement

Applied Health Informatics

Graduate Certificate

2025-2026

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

HDS Program Committee 2025-2026

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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 on the [Office of Graduate Studies website](#).

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 [Graduate Studies policies](#).

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

[Cindy Arnold, MSN RN-BC, CPHQ, LSS-GB](#)

[Tanya Custer, PhD](#)

[Victoria Kennel, PhD](#)

[Kim Michael, EdD](#)

[Ron Shope, PhD](#)

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.

Refer to the [admission deadlines and requirements](#) for more information.

Current and prospective applicants should refer to the [Admission to the Graduate College](#) information set forth by Graduate Studies.

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](#).

Degree Requirements

Students should refer to the [Requirements for Graduate Degrees](#) as set forth by Graduate Studies.

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.

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

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

A complete list of courses can be found in the HDS catalog for the [HDS Master's](#), [HDS-AHI](#), and [HDS-QI](#).

If an 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.

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. For more information including a [timeline for the comprehensive exam](#), please visit the graduate studies website.

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 Master's Degree Guide (HDS students are considered NON-THESIS) [Master's Timeline](#)

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

Probation and/or Dismissal

Graduate students are expected to complete work of high caliber. Failure to do so may result in probation and/or dismissal. Grounds for probation and/or 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.
 - a. Students are expected to perform at a level of B or above in any graded course that is offered for graduate credit.
 - b. A minimum grade of C may be acceptable for graduate-level courses (electives), although receipt of two grades of C may be cause for dismissal. Any grade below C is not acceptable for graduate credit and may be cause for dismissal.
 - c. Please see the graduate studies website for the full policy on [grading policies](#).
2. Failure to perform in course work, comprehensive examination, or research at an acceptable level in the program unit.
 - a. A minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required to be in good academic standing within the program and with graduate studies.
3. Failure to make timely progress toward the degree or certificate.
 - a. Required Program Completion time for a certificate program is three years and for a masters' degree, it is five years.
 - b. Please see the UNMC website for the full policy on [satisfactory academic progress](#).

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 three consecutive calendar years. Course work over three 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.

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. The Accessibility Services Center (ASC) provides reasonable accommodations (e.g., auxiliary aids and services or academic adjustments) to students with disabilities and/or medical conditions 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 in need of accommodations should reach out to the ASC as soon as possible to initiate the request, as accommodations are not retroactive in nature. 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.

For more information, read the full [Accommodation Policy \(ADA Policy\)](#) and visit the [Counseling & Psychological Services website](#).

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