

Doctor of Health Administration

program guide



A.T. STILL UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF GRADUATE HEALTH STUDIES

ATSU

ATSU Mission Statement

A.T. Still University of Health Sciences serves as a learning-centered university dedicated to preparing highly competent professionals through innovative academic programs with a commitment to continue its osteopathic heritage and focus on whole person healthcare, scholarship, community health, interprofessional education, diversity, and underserved populations

Graduate Health Studies Mission

The ATSU-College of Graduate Health Studies program's learner-centered model prepares primarily entry and mid-level healthcare leaders seeking to advance their education and careers in health administration. Our graduates are prepared to become highly competent administrators who adhere to the osteopathic traditions of whole person healthcare, which is consistent with the overall university mission.

Graduate Health Studies Vision

The ATSU Health Administration program will be a renowned learner-centered program where faculty, students, and administration work together to make a meaningful difference in healthcare and positively affect the lives of all the people we serve.

Graduate Health Studies Values

Leadership: We value a commitment to leadership through modeling and mentoring strong leadership skills for our students, faculty, and staff through the commitment to ethics, respect, vision, and lifelong learning.

Ethics: We value the highest ethical principles of integrity and honesty in all of our interactions.

Respect: We value diversity and difference of opinions by modeling compassionate and respectful behavior.

Vision: We value critical thinking and the generation of ideas through innovation and analysis.

Lifelong learning: We cultivate lifelong learning by demonstrating the value of acquiring knowledge, skills and abilities, and seeking continuous professional development.

Health Administration Mission

The ATSU College of Graduate Health Services' Health Administration program is learner-centered and prepares current and future healthcare leaders seeking to advance their scholarship and professional practice in health administration. Our graduates are prepared to become well regarded leaders who are recognized contributors to improving overall population health and furthering the osteopathic traditions of whole person healthcare.

Health Administration Vision

The ATSU Health Administration program will be globally recognized for its learner-centered program where students, faculty, and administration work together to make a measurable difference in worldwide healthcare outcomes.

Health Administration Values

Leadership - We value modeling and mentoring strong leadership skills that inspire individual and organizational excellence.

Integrity - We value strong ethical principles and fairness in our individual actions and our organizational decision making.

Diversity - We value the ideas and beliefs of all of our stakeholders, and work to foster an inclusive environment that respects the dignity of all.

Innovation - We value creative approaches to thinking, teaching, learning, scholarship, and research that inspire our students and faculty to promote positive change in the healthcare environment.

Lifelong learning ~ We value the pursuit of impactful knowledge that enhances the personal and professional development of all stakeholders, improves professional practice, builds learning communities, and promotes continual educational enrichment.

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From the Chair

Considered one of the world's supreme poets, playwrights, scientists and statesmen, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe once wrote: "Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it."

The pursuit of a doctoral degree is indeed a bold decision, one that requires careful thought and selection of the right program to meet your educational and professional needs. The Doctorate in Health Administration (DHA) offered by A.T. Still University is designed for working professionals and executives in the healthcare industry. If you are seeking a doctorate program grounded in a scholar-practitioner philosophy, then this program is for you! Scholar-practitioners are professionals who link research and theory with actual work in their fields.

The DHA program at A.T. Still University's College of Graduate Health Studies is committed to healthcare management, executive leadership, and education that places emphasis on patient centered care. It is based on our more than 118 years of experience in holistic health and our concern for the total patient.

This program provides the essential executive skills of leadership and management in the context of the healthcare environment, and the knowledge and skills needed for a life learning experience in a career that can make a better world because you will make a difference.

Letha Williams, PhD, FACHE
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A.T. Still University

Established in 1892 by the founder of osteopathy, A.T. Still, DO, ATSU began as the nation's first college of osteopathic medicine and has evolved into a leading university of health sciences. Today, ATSU is comprised of six schools: Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona, Arizona School of Health Sciences, Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health, College of Graduate Health Studies, Missouri School of Dentistry & Oral Health.

ATSU offers more than 20 master's degrees across allied healthcare disciplines; doctorates in health administration, health education, physical therapy, health sciences, and audiology; the doctor of dental medicine (DMD); and the doctor of osteopathy (DO).

College of Graduate Health Studies

The College of Graduate Health Studies (CGHS) offers doctoral degrees in health administration, health education, and health sciences; and master's degrees in health administration, kinesiology, and public health. CGHS educates and prepares current and future professionals for management and executive positions in a variety of healthcare settings via comprehensive online programs.

Doctor of Health Administration Curriculum

CGHS' doctorate program in health administration prepares students for executive leadership in the field. Graduates earn their health administration degree entirely online and can continue to work in this fast growing segment of the U.S. labor market. The U.S. Department of Labor forecasts that the medical and health segment of the economy will continue to grow, making the Doctor of Health Administration significant for those interested in career advancement and/or a new career in health care management education.

This program integrates web-based instruction, directed readings, email, chat room interactions, and dissertation collaboration between students and faculty. The College uses mission driven, context-based curriculum design, and assesses student learning through authentic assessments.

Requirements for Admission

1. Master's degree, or higher, from an accredited university recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Applicants who graduated from a university outside the United States must provide a degree equivalency evaluation.
2. Currently holds a leadership position in healthcare or has a minimum of three years healthcare experience.
3. Completed admissions application.
4. Official transcript from degree-granting institution. For students using VA benefits transcripts for all institutions attended are required.
5. Non-refundable application fee submitted with application.
6. Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.0 (4.0 scale) at the qualifying degree institution.
Candidates with a GPA below 3.0 may apply by completing an additional essay during the application process to explain factors that precipitated a student's low GPA and how and why a student will be successful in a program. Students who did not attend an institution where a GPA system was used are required to petition the program chair.
7. A current resume.
8. Completion of essay and submission of two professional references.
9. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for applicants when English is not their first language.
Students who have graduated from a regionally accredited four year university or college in the United States

are exempt from this requirement.

The Computer Based Test (CBT), Internet Based Test (iBT), or the Paper Based Test (PBT) are accepted.

The following are the minimum required score based on test type:

- CBT - minimum total score of 213
Minimum of 22/Reading Skills section | Minimum of 26/Writing Skills section
- iBT - minimum total score of 80
Minimum of 22/Reading Skills section | Minimum of 24/Writing Skills section
- PBT - minimum total score of 550
Minimum of 57/Reading Skills section | Minimum of 61/Writing Skills section

10. Applicants are selected by an admission committee.

11. Completion of background check, using a vendor selected by ATSU. CGHS requires criminal background checks on degree seeking students to ensure the safety of patients and employees. The checks are conducted by an ATSU selected vendor. The student will pay the cost of the criminal background check directly to the vendor. Failure to comply with this mandate will result in denial to matriculate. Applicants who fail to disclose anything on their application that is returned on their background check report will have that finding reviewed by an University Official.

In the event the required background check with the ATSU vendor occurred within the last 12 months, another background check is not required. Students currently enrolled in another ATSU program and matriculating into a CGHS program are not required to complete a background check.

12. Technology requirements as outlined at: <https://sites.google.com/a/atsu.edu/its/student-resources/student-technology-requirements>

Application Information

Applications are available online at <https://www.atsu.edu/application/cghs>, or you may contact an online enrollment counselor 877.469.2878 or onlineinquiry@atsu.edu.

Tuition and Expenses

Tuition	\$750 per credit hour*
Technology and Resource Fee.....	\$150 per quarter*
Application fee.....	\$70, non-refundable (not covered by financial aid)*

Tuition is to be paid using the appropriate payment option (or all financial aid award letter steps completed for the appropriate term) 14 calendar days prior to the first day of class. Students are responsible for the purchase of their Internet service, computer hardware, and software. Contact your admissions representative at 877.626.5577 or onlineinquiry@atsu.edu for more information*All fees are subject to change.

Financial Assistance

Federal Financial Aid is available to students who qualify. Scholarship and financial assistance opportunities are listed on the CGHS web page at http://www.atsu.edu/financial_aid/cghs-doctorate.htm. Veterans Administration (VA) benefits may also be used. For additional information please visit http://www.atsu.edu/registrar/veterans_benefits.htm.

Accreditation

A.T. Still University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, 230 S. LaSalle St.; Ste. 7-500; Chicago, IL 60604, phone: 800.621.7440.

Length of Program

14 courses, competency exam, plus dissertation courses *

*A student must take a minimum of four dissertation courses and typically will take four dissertation courses to complete the dissertation. A student may take more than four dissertation courses but the length of time to complete the program may not exceed seven years.

Curriculum

Academic Degree Plan	Credit Hours
Leadership and Ethics.....	4
Coaching, Mentoring and Interpersonal Communications	4
Research Methods I	4
Population Health	4
Quality Improvement/Performance Excellence	4
Health Policy, Law and Regulation	4
Research Methods II.....	4
Negotiation, Mediation, and Managing Conflict.....	4
Healthcare Economics and Financial Management.....	4
Healthcare Organization Informatics.....	4
Research Methods III.....	4
Health Organization Governance	4
Strategic Change Management for Healthcare Organizations.....	4
Current Healthcare Trends/ Dissertation Development/Comprehensive Examination.....	4
Dissertation (5 credit hours over 4 blocks).....	20

Course Descriptions

Leadership and Ethics: This self-reflective and development executive course is based upon group work and case based activity. Established leadership theories will be used to develop personal skills in leadership and individual ethical perspectives. Students will be required to engage an American College of Healthcare Executive ACHE Fellow as a mentor/coach throughout their doctoral program experience.

Coaching, Mentoring and Interpersonal Communications: Building upon practical experience gained via the Leadership and Ethics course, participants will examine the importance of succession planning and develop strategies for organizational development. Participants will identify interpersonal communication styles and strengths and further develop communication competencies.

Research Methods I: This course focuses on the fundamental techniques involved in designing research studies, including scientific thinking, effective evaluation of literature, identification of problems, and development of purpose statements and hypotheses. Reviews of basic statistics, computer software, and interpretation of statistical analyses are included.

Population Health: In this executive course students will investigate healthy people and healthy populations. Students will understand historical perspectives and emerging trends of health issues, populations, shared concerns of society and vulnerable groups. This will include public health risks and how they relate to epidemiology, globalization, changing demographics, and other factors that can affect the health and welfare of the overall population. The role of the health care administrator in promoting population health and wellbeing, as well as identification of potential resources for data and optimization of services will be explored.

Quality Improvement/Performance Excellence: In this executive course, concepts and principles of continuous improvement and patient safety using the Baldrige Criteria will be used. Group work and case studies will allow participants to develop evidence based management principles leading to patient centered, quality driven practices that will result in improved patient outcomes and more efficient and effective organizational practices.

Health Policy, Law and Regulation: This executive course will cover significant legislation impacting the health care industry, including current topics in health care reform, along with discussion on advocacy and active participation in policy development. Students are required to interface with local, state and federal legislators as a means to investigate and advocate for patient centered health related policy.

Research Methods II: In this course, students will be immersed in the principles and techniques involved in quantitative research methods. Topics covered include survey and experimental methods; sampling; hypothesis testing; exploring, displaying, and examining data; measures of association; multivariate analysis; and presentation of results.

Negotiation, Mediation and Managing Conflict: In this executive course students will identify personal negotiation style and strengths; and how to use this individualized approach to mediating and managing conflict at various levels of the organization and with both practitioners and non-practitioners.

Healthcare Economics and Financial Management: Participants will use key financial and economic principles to examine executive level decisions relative to capitalization, credit ratings, debt capacity, alternate funding sources, business plan development and overall organizational finance strategy. The concepts will be considered from a

non-profit and for-profit healthcare organizational perspective.

Course Descriptions (continued)

Healthcare Organization Informatics: In this executive course, students will investigate the qualities necessary to strategically evaluate, select and implement system wide informatics. Consideration is given to the effects of the rapidly evolving informatics field and resulting organizational adaptation. Decision support systems integrating financial, human resources, continuous quality improvement, and strategy and resource utilization will be introduced and applied.

Research Methods III: This course examines qualitative and mixed methods approaches in research. Students will focus on the researcher's role in these types of studies, data collection techniques such as observations or interviews, data recording methods, data analysis and validation of results. Mixed methods issues such as sequencing and integration of findings are also explored.

Health Organization Governance: In this executive course students are involved in processes used to identify and recruit governing boards, and the use of effective management and communication skills to establish board accountability and buy-in. Board development, board composition, fiduciary responsibility, leadership roles and the governing role of the board and its infrastructure are examined.

Strategic Change Management for Healthcare Organizations: In this executive course, students will investigate and integrate change management practices to strategically position the healthcare organization for the future. Students will assess their organization's current strategic position and apply relevant theoretical models and the necessary change management practices resulting developing organizational adaptability

Healthcare Trends/Dissertation Review/Comprehensive Examination: In this executive course, current healthcare trends and healing environments for patients will be studied. Students will review best practices and develop strategies to use in their specific work environments. In this capstone class, students review and present three dissertations and/or high level theses (if approved by the instructor) relating to their final applied dissertation, and then complete the comprehensive examination.

Dissertation: The dissertation is the cumulative project for the DHA program. The topics and projects introduced and implemented during this program of study will be used to complete this requirement. (5 credit hours)

*A series of DHAD 9500 courses (DHAD 9510, DHAD 9520, and DHAD 9530) are taken until the dissertation is completed; a minimum of four are required, and typically four dissertation courses (DHAD 9500-DHAD 9350) are taken to complete the dissertation. The dissertation must be completed within seven years of beginning the program.

Administration



Don Altman, DDS, DHSc , MPH, MBA, MA

Dean, College of Graduate Health Studies

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Don Altman, DDS, DHSc, MPH, MBA, MA holds a dental degree as well as master's degrees in public health, business administration, and bioethics. He also has a doctorate in Health Sciences. He is a diplomat of the American Board of Dental Public Health and has worked in the dental public health field for more than 31 years.

Dr. Altman has taught dentists and dental hygienists in the classroom for many years and has been teaching online since 2006. He has taken a general MPH curriculum and developed a program for individuals interested in dental public health. Dr. Altman is the Dean of the College of Graduate Health Studies, and is also a professor and Director of Public Health and Research at ATSU's Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health. Prior to his role as Dean, Dr. Altman served as Chair, Department of Public Health and program chair for the dental MPH program.

He previously worked for local and state governments as well as private industry. His areas of interest include professionalism and ethics, community-based dental programs, leadership for the dental professional, and quality assurance.



Katherine M. Adler, DHA, FACHE

Associate Professor

Associate Dean of Academic Success and Assessment

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Katherine Adler, DHA, FACHE, is the Associate Dean for Assessment and Student Success at the College of Graduate Health Studies. She began teaching for CGHS in 2006, became the program chair for Health Administration in 2009, program chair for Public Health in 2010, and became Associate Dean in 2012.

Doctor Adler holds a Doctorate in Healthcare Administration and Leadership from the Medical University of South Carolina. She has over 25 years of varied experience in the not-for-profit health care industry, spending the bulk of her career working at safety-net hospitals in urban Detroit.

During her tenure in administrative roles, Dr. Adler worked closely with physicians in medicine and surgery, having direct oversight over those departments and subspecialties, and gained extensive knowledge in public health, epidemiology, social and behavioral sciences and environmental health sciences. Through her formal training and work, Dr. Adler has a strong background in health services administration as well as public health. She is a patient advocate, understands the plight of the underserved and underinsured and has worked to incorporate patient centered care into the curriculum with the understanding that prevention and whole person care are the key to a healthy community and society.



Letha Williams, PhD, FACHE

Associate Professor and Program Chair
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Letha Williams, PhD, FACHE, has more than 15 years of higher education experience in both teaching and administrative roles. She began with ATSU in 2010 as adjunct faculty, became a full time Associate Professor later that year, and became Chair of the Health Administration Programs in 2012. Her professional experience includes more than 30 years in leadership positions in healthcare organizations, including the American Red Cross, as well as hospitals, long-term-care facilities, and a home care agency.

Dr. Williams' expertise is in market strategy development, organizational change and crisis management, team building, and leadership development. Dr. Williams has championed many growth-oriented strategic plans and marketing programs, developed and led award-winning teams, and coached supervisors, peers, and students who are currently making positive contributions to their organizations and disciplines.

Dr. Williams holds a PhD in Organization and Management with a specialization in Leadership, and maintains a research interest in leadership ethics. She also holds a Master degree in Public Administration with a healthcare emphasis earned at the University of Michigan, and a bachelor degree in journalism earned at Oakland University. She previously held appointments as department chair for the accelerated business programs at Baker College, and adjunct professor at Davenport University and Trident University International.