

# Master of Health Administration

program guide



A.T. STILL UNIVERSITY | ATSU  
COLLEGE OF GRADUATE HEALTH STUDIES

**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

**College of 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.

**College of 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.

**College of 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



The future of healthcare administration is best summed up by the Bureau of Labor Statistics: “Healthcare and social assistance, including public and private hospitals, nursing and residential care facilities, and individual and family services, will grow by 25.4 percent and add four million new jobs [by the year 2016]. Employment growth will be driven by increasing demand for healthcare and social assistance because of an aging population and longer life expectancies.”

This rapid growth will create outstanding opportunities for healthcare managers and administrators in a variety of direct care settings such as hospitals, medical practices, long-term care facilities, outpatient care centers, and emergency clinics. There will also be opportunities in health insurance companies, electronic medical records services, health services research, and government agencies. It is an exciting time for you to pursue a career in managing America’s healthcare system.

The MHA program at A.T. Still University’s College of Graduate Health Studies is committed to healthcare management that places emphasis on patient-centered care based on our more than 118-year experience in holistic health and our concern for the total patient. This program provides the core skills of business management in the context of the health and medical environment and with the knowledge and skills for a life learning experience in a career that can make a better world by making a difference.

Letha Williams, PhD, FACHE  
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Health Administration Programs  
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## **A.T. Still University**

Established in 1892 by the founder of osteopathy, A.T. Still, MD, 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, and Missouri School of Dentistry & Oral Health.

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

### **College of Graduate Health Studies**

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

### **Master of Health Administration Curriculum**

CGHS's master's degree program in health administration prepares students for leadership in the field. Graduates earn their health administration degree online and enter a fast growing segment of the U.S. labor market. The U.S. Department of Labor forecasts that Employment of medical and health services managers is expected to grow by 22 percent from 2010 to 2020, faster than the average for all occupations. As the large baby-boom population ages and people remain active later in life, the healthcare industry as a whole will see an increase in the demand for medical services, making the Master of Health Administration significant for those interested in career advancement.

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

## Requirements for Admission

1. Bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited university. Applicants who graduated from a university outside the United States must provide a degree equivalency evaluation.
2. Completed admissions application.
3. Official transcript from degree-granting institution. For students using VA benefits transcripts for all institutions attended are required.
4. Non-refundable application fee submitted with application.
5. 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.
6. A current resume.
7. Completion of essay and two professional references.
8. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for applicants when English is not their first language. The Computer Based Test (CBT), Internet Based Test (iBT), or the Paper Based Test (PBT) are accepted. Students who have graduated from a regionally accredited four year university or college in the United States are exempt from this requirement.

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

- CBT - minimum total score of 213  
Min. 22/Reading Skills section | Min. 26/Writing Skills section
  - iBT - minimum total score of 80  
Min. 22/Reading Skills section | Min. 24/Writing Skills section
  - PBT - minimum total score of 550  
Min. 57/Reading Skills section | Min. 61/Writing Skills section
9. Applicants are selected by an admission committee.
  10. 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.

11. 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 [www.atsu.edu/master-of-health-administration-degree](http://www.atsu.edu/master-of-health-administration-degree), or you may contact an online enrollment counselor at 877.469.2878 or [onlineinquiry@atsu.edu](mailto:onlineinquiry@atsu.edu).

## Tuition and Expenses

Tuition .....\$478 per credit hour\*

Technology and Resource Fee.....\$150 per quarter\*

Application fee..... \$70, non-refundable\*

CGHS tuition rates are competitive.

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](mailto: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](http://www.atsu.edu/financial_aid). Veterans Administration (VA) benefits may also be used. For additional information please visit [http://www.atsu.edu/registrar/veterans\\_benefits.htm](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.



## Master of Health Administration Curriculum

### *Online Learning*

#### Course Descriptions

Course descriptions, course durations, and related information are subject to change. All courses are four credit hours.

**Introduction to Graduate Research and Writing\*:** In this course, students will develop a grounding in graduate-level research and writing. The fundamentals of using scholarly and industry-respected sources in the preparation of academic manuscripts will include topics such as writing style, citations and referencing using the APA Publication Manual. At the conclusion of the course, students will have achieved a basic mastery of research and APA style writing, and be better prepared to write at the graduate level. Students are required to take this course in their first term and are expected to pass this course in order to continue in the MHA program.

*\*This course must be taken in the first block attended. It must be passed before moving forward in the program and can be taken with Health Services in the US.*

**Health Services in the US:** This course provides a comprehensive overview of the U.S. healthcare system. Healthcare terminology, concepts, critical issues, and a description of existing delivery systems are presented. The organization, delivery, financing, payment, and staffing of the U.S. healthcare system are discussed, along with issues related to competition, regulation, technology, access, quality, primary care, long-term care, mental health, and ethics.

**Population Health Management:** This course introduces students to the concepts, practices, and developing trends of population health management. It examines multiple determinants of health. It covers population health management's essential strategies, impact by the Affordable Care Act, and relation to U.S. healthcare delivery system as the system transforms from episodic non-integrated care to outcome-accountable care and further to community-integrated healthcare. The course addresses health's relation to overall wellbeing, measures health in individuals and populations, explores economic concepts in population health, and discusses ethical and managerial issues in population health improvement. Additionally, this course integrates real-world examples to guide students on how to identify, analyze, and present data in a meaningful way to elevate the awareness of population health and increase understanding of population health outcomes.

**Health Administration Law & Ethics:** This course is designed to help non-legal professionals develop a concrete foundation in healthcare law and ethics, as well as practical approaches to improving the excellence and delivery of healthcare. Critical thinking skills are honed as students review issues such as Sarbanes-Oxley, privacy of medical information, and other current case law issues.

**Healthcare Financial Management:** This course introduces the essential and practical elements of healthcare financial management to health administration students who may not be financial managers. It places an emphasis on key financial management concepts and their applications that are critical to making business decisions in both non-profit and for-profit healthcare organizations. It integrates finance, economics, and financial and managerial accounting principles. It provides real world examples to guide students through topics in financial statement analysis, value-based purchasing, revenue cycle management, financial planning and analysis, cash budgeting and working capital management, capital budgeting and long-term financing, and organizational financial performance analysis.

**Leading Healthcare Organizations:** This course focuses on healthcare administration, including the management process, descriptions of the managerial functions, managerial roles, motivation, and communication. In addition, this course will provide students with an understanding of leadership and ethics in healthcare

administration in the context of the U.S. healthcare system. Codes of professional conduct and ethical policy statements will be reviewed from the American College of Healthcare Executives.

**Healthcare Information Systems:** This course examines the knowledge and skills needed by healthcare executives to manage information and information systems in a modern healthcare organization. The course begins with a primer on healthcare information including a description of patient care processes and the information that is created during these processes. This course then provides a description of healthcare information systems, their evolution, and the major clinical and administrative applications in use today with a focus on electronic medical record systems. Basic information technology concepts that support information systems are then covered. The final topic is Senior Management IT Challenges: what it takes to effectively manage, budget, govern, and evaluate information technology services in a healthcare organization.

**Managing Human Resources:** The focus of this course is workforce planning, recruitment, hiring, supervision, motivation, training, evaluation, and overall management of staff members in organizations. Students are introduced to human resources laws and the various ways employees behave in healthcare organizations. Emphasis is placed on understanding how healthcare managers can foster creative problem solving, collaboration, conflict resolution, empowerment, and teamwork while maintaining a fair and productive working environment.

**Healthcare Strategic Planning and Marketing:** This course presents a general overview of the strategic planning and marketing processes in health service organizations. In comparison to operational management, this course will emphasize the planning function of health care management with an external or strategic orientation. In addition, students will be introduced to a variety of marketing topics, strategies, and creative approaches, as well as an understanding of the development and execution of marketing techniques. Examples from a wide variety of healthcare provider applications are used.

**MHA Capstone Project\*\*:** In this course, students will integrate all of the theories and knowledge gained throughout the MHA program to apply a systems-based approach to a project designed to present challenging opportunities for decision-making. The course focuses on the complexities of healthcare delivery systems, building alliances within and outside of the healthcare industry, and strategic decision-making. Students must complete all core courses before registering for this course.

*\*\*This course must be in the last term.*

### **Program Electives**

**Community Based Healthcare:** The development and maintenance of a community-based healthcare model are the focus of this course. Administering programs to sustain and promote a state of healthy well-being in the community and activate community resources are discussed as well as the impact of emerging models of community-based healthcare programs.

**Cultural Change in Geriatrics:** Cultural changes have affected the perceptions of aging and its impact on intergenerational relationships. This course examines the impact those cultural changes may have on the future direction of the healthcare industry.

**Data Management and Design:** Databases are the heart of any health information system. Their design affects the ease of creating and accessing information from the data entered. This course focuses on the function and requirements of data design, management, and warehousing. Students will learn subtleties of design such as naming fields and creating connections to data that lead to effective reporting.

**Death and Dying, Life and Living:** Learners review death, dying, and bereavement. During the exploration of these topics, this course also covers the developmental perspective, legal and moral issues, and current events.

**Electronic Health Records System Administration:** This course surveys the types and functions of electronic

health records systems, from a historical perspective to their use in current practice. It familiarizes the student with decision-making processes used in selecting and maintaining electronic health records systems, including issues such as hardware and software support, system security and access controls, employee and medical staff training, and system testing.

**Health Information Systems Development and Design:** This course examines the functions of a systems analyst, the interface between technical staff and end users. Students will develop knowledge of programming, systems design, and the life cycle of an information system from determining the needs of end users and the organization, to system sunset.

**Managing Individual Employees:** This course takes a focused perspective in how to manage the individual employee. Topics range from hiring the right person, to individual motivation, to development planning, and promotion. Students also will study methods for handling difficult or under-performing employees.

**Managing Teams:** This course takes a macro perspective in managing teams of employees. A case study approach is used to explore topics such as team development, motivation, coaching, and incentives. Students will have the opportunity to build team management plans for their own use in current or future healthcare roles.

**Technology in Evidence-based Decision-making:** In this course, students will examine the use of technology in evidence-based decision-making by the healthcare administrator. The course focuses on the transformation of data into information and knowledge designed to improve decisions and, ultimately, patient and organizational outcomes. Students will explore the nature of databases and internet applications in healthcare decision-making, as well as use available technology to organize, interpret, and present administrative data.

***MHA Students wishing to pursue their Doctorate of Health Administration Degree may elect to take two DHA courses as electives. Any or all of the following courses may be selected:***

**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.

**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.

## 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 the college 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

Health Administration Program

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Letha Williams, PhD, FACHE, has more than a decade 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 MHA program 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.