



PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

Health Policy and Management

Student Handbook | 11th Edition

This student handbook provides an overview of the Health Policy and Management major and seeks to answer many of the most common questions asked by a wide range of students—from prospective majors to second semester seniors. If new questions arise, or the explanation presented below seems unclear, please chat with a faculty member so that we can improve this handbook in future editions!

Faculty

Tuba Agartan, *Professor* (PhD 2008, Binghamton University). Areas of specialization and research/teaching interests: comparative health policy (Europe, Turkey), global health, medical sociology, social welfare policy. Dr. Agartan joined the PC faculty in 2008.

Office: Howley 205 | Phone: x1262 | Email: tagartan@providence.edu

Tricia Forte, *Visiting Instructor* (JD 2020, Roger Williams University). Areas of specialization/interest: health care management, hospice, quality improvement, pharmaceutical benefit management. Ms. Forte joined the PC faculty in 2015. Email: tforte@providence.edu

Robert Hackey, *Professor* (PhD 1992, Brown University). Areas of specialization/interest: health care reform; health care in popular culture, state implementation of the Affordable Care Act; state certificate of need regulation; public opinion. Dr. Hackey joined the PC faculty in 1999.

Office: Howley 108 | Phone: x2453 | Email: rhackey@providence.edu

Deborah Levine, *Associate Professor, Department Chair* (PhD 2008, Harvard University). Areas of specialization/interest: history of medicine; obesity; medical technology. Dr. Levine joined the PC faculty in 2009.

Office: Howley 203 | Phone: x2238 | Email: dlevine2@providence.edu

Jessica Mulligan, *Professor* (PhD 2007, Harvard University). Areas of specialization/interest: medical anthropology, managed care, epidemiology, culture and health. Dr. Mulligan joined the PC faculty in 2010.

Office: Howley 204 | Phone: x2021 | Email: jmullig5@providence.edu

Candidus Nwakasi, *Assistant Professor* (PhD 2019, Miami University) Areas of specialization/interest: global health and aging, health policy, public health, and palliative care. Dr. Nwakasi joined the PC faculty in 2020.

Office: Howley/Service 229 | Phone: x 2632 | Email: cnwakasi@providence.edu

Todd Olszewski, *Associate Professor, Field Experience Director* (PhD 2008, Yale University). Areas of specialization/interest: history of American medicine & public health, biomedical research, drug development, health activism, and chronic disease prevention. Dr. Olszewski joined the PC faculty in 2011.

Office: Howley 201 | Phone: x1217 | Email: tolszews@providence.edu

Aishah Scott, *Assistant Professor, Health Policy & Management and Black Studies* (PhD 2019, Stony Brook University). Areas of specialization/interest: twentieth-century American history, African American history, race, gender, and public health. Dr. Scott joined the PC faculty in 2021.

Office: Howley 213 | Phone: x1581 | Email: ascott7@providence.edu

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HPM faculty mailboxes and the department's Administrative Assistant are located in Howley 206. The program also has a computer lab in Howley/Service 226 that can be reserved for group study and/or student meetings when not in use.

Sarah Wojtusik, *Administrative Assistant*

Office: Howley 206 | Phone: x1631 | Email: swojtusi@providence.edu

Marcelo Rocha, *Graduate Assistant* (MBA, Providence College)

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Declaring a Major in HPM

All new students seeking to change their major to HPM must register for HPM 101 BEFORE they formally declare their major. Our goal is to ensure that HPM is a good fit for all incoming majors, and the best way to do this is to ensure that students have a clear understanding of our department and its subject matter before making a commitment to HPM. The process for declaring the major is straightforward. Interested students should fill out the [Change of Major/Minor](#) form; obtain all of appropriate signatures/email approvals, then return the completed form by email to records@providence.edu.

Please note that seating capacity for HPM 101 is limited; due to current staffing constraints, we cannot accommodate all students who wish to declare a major in HPM. If the sections are full, please email Sarah Wojtusik (swojtusi@providence.edu, HPM Administrative Assistant) to request a spot on our internal waitlist. If you cannot get a seat for the upcoming semester, the waitlist will guarantee you a seat in the section of your choice for the following semester.

Beginning with the 2014-2015 academic year, all students must declare their major in HPM by the end of their sophomore year. This change follows a proposal by the College's Academic Advising Committee, which recommended a change in the declaration of major deadline based on the additional requirements associated with the new core and scheduling challenges for students who plan to study abroad. Please note that students who plan to study abroad must submit their plan of study by December 1 of their sophomore year (for a junior year abroad experience). Students seeking permission to add HPM as a major as a junior must write a letter of petition outlining their reasons for changing from their current major and their interest in HPM. Students should send this letter to the department chair, Dr. Deborah Levine, in Howley 203 (or via email at dlevine2@providence.edu) and should also attach a copy of their unofficial transcript from CyberFriar. Petitions will be considered by the HPM faculty, who will review each application and vote on the student's request. Students will be notified by email once the faculty have reached a decision.

Requirements for the Major

As an interdisciplinary department, the HPM major at PC provides students with a great deal of flexibility. Many students choose to combine HPM with a pre-clinical program of study (i.e., biology, pre-med). Others build on the major's link to the humanities and social sciences by combining their studies in HPM with programs such as public service, political science, psychology, sociology, or a foreign language. Still others choose to complement their HPM major with additional business coursework, either by minoring in accountancy or by completing the college's Business Studies program (HPM 420 Strategic Management of Health Care also fulfills the capstone seminar requirement for BSP students).

All students must complete ten (10) HPM courses. Courses from other departments at PC cannot be used to fulfill HPM major requirements. Students who have not completed the required courses prior to senior year may not be eligible to register for field experience during the first semester without the permission of the department chair. Many students choose to enroll in more than the minimum number of HPM courses, but all students must complete the following core courses within the major:

- **HPM 101 American Health Care System** (a prerequisite for all other HPM courses)
- **HPM 240 Epidemiology of Health and Disease** (Social Science Core Requirement)
- **HPM 300 Financial Management of Health Care Institutions**
- **HPM 310 Health Law**
- **HPM 408 Policy Analysis** (Civic Engagement Proficiency)
- **HPM 450 Field Experience** (see discussion of internships below)
- **HPM 480 Senior Seminar** (a team-taught capstone course)

All students must also complete a minimum of three (3) electives within the major. Students define their area of interest/specialization in the major through their choice of elective courses. For example, a student interested in health care management might elect courses in human resources management, administration of the extended care facility, and strategic management. Students interested in public health, however, might choose coursework in health education/promotion, aging, or obesity. Other students may mix and match a variety of electives. In any event, there are no formal "distribution requirements" for electives within the major.

Research Seminars

In recent years, the department has offered a growing variety of special topics seminars (HPM 470) that reflect the department's desire to strengthen student research and writing skills. All sections of HPM 470 require students to write a significant research paper (15-20 pages) that draws upon peer-reviewed sources; students will familiarize themselves with proper citation techniques and will learn to analyze, rather than merely describe, health care issues through this assignment. Additional writing and/or oral presentations may also be required. As reading and writing intensive courses, enrollment in HPM 470s is typically reserved for junior and senior majors. Topics for HPM 470 courses vary according to the current research and teaching interests of department faculty; in recent years, seminars addressed comparative health policy, culture, health, and illness, drugs and disease, gender and health, global health, health care in popular culture, heart disease, and medical sociology. HPM 445, a research and writing intensive seminar, also satisfies the College's CORE INTENSIVE WRITING II requirement.

Advising

All HPM students are assigned to a full-time faculty member who will serve as their academic advisor once they declare their major; students may visit their advisors during office hours or make an appointment to meet with faculty at a mutually convenient time outside of normally scheduled times. Each year, the department reviews student advising assignments to distribute the number of majors evenly across all department faculty. In recent years, staffing changes and faculty leaves required some switches in students' advising assignments. Each year, the department rebalances faculty advising loads, which may result in some students being assigned to a new academic advisor. Students will be notified of any advising changes via email in advance of registration.

Course Pre-Registration

Each semester, the HPM department pre-registers all declared majors in HPM courses (we cannot register students for non-HPM courses, which must be selected through the normal registration process on CyberFriar). All students must meet with their HPM faculty advisor prior to registration; faculty hold additional office hours to accommodate student demand during the preregistration period. Students should sign up for a time slot or visit faculty during normal office hours to obtain their alternate PINs, review degree audits to check on progress towards meeting major and core requirements, and decide on courses for the upcoming semester. With the exception of students studying abroad, we do not distribute alternate PINs or degree audits via email. Students who do not make an appointment to meet with their faculty advisor will not be able to register for courses. Please note that HPM courses fill up fast—you should make an appointment with your advisor as soon as possible. To ensure that a sufficient number of seats remain available for all majors, students may preregister for a maximum of two HPM courses per semester.

Pre-registration is conducted on a first-come, first serve basis using a shared roster for each course section. All HPM faculty will begin registering students for courses on the same day; pre-registration continues until all classes have finished selecting courses, or until all course sections are full. Please note: All requests for over-enrollment must be approved by the department chair. Students may enroll in more than two HPM courses per semester but may only pre-register for two classes prior to their scheduled registration date; additional courses may be added via CyberFriar during the student's regular registration

time.

All students should check on any administrative or financial holds prior to meeting with their faculty advisor. Some students will be unable to register at the time of their initial meeting with a faculty member. In such cases, we can reserve seats until the first day of registration for the graduating class/dec graduates. Once course registration begins, students will be responsible for registering themselves for courses via CyberFriar once the hold on their account is removed.

A special note for student athletes who register early: In past semesters, some students with early registration times chose to register for courses that were not approved by their HPM advisor, or registered themselves for additional courses within the major, effectively overriding course enrollment caps. This is NOT allowed. Students who register for unapproved courses will be dropped by the department chair if their name is not on the approved pre-registration roster. HPM faculty carefully coordinate section sizes based on faculty workload and curricular needs, so any request to over-enroll in an HPM course must be approved by the department chair.

Studying Abroad

HPM is a particularly good fit for many study abroad programs. Beginning with the Class of 2015, we will not waive course prerequisites for students except in extraordinary circumstances. In particular, students seeking to study abroad should plan to take their core HPM requirements (HPM 240, HPM 300, and HPM 310) prior to taking Policy Analysis (HPM 408). These courses may be taken in any order but must be completed before enrolling in HPM 408. While HPM 408 can be taken during the first semester of senior year, it should be taken prior to Senior Seminar. Students will not be allowed to enroll in our capstone field experience course without having completed HPM 240, HPM 300, HPM 310, and HPM 408. For many students choosing to study abroad, this means that Field Experience will be completed during the 2nd semester of senior year. Our external review reinforced our long-standing belief that students will gain the most from their field experiences by having a broad understanding of concepts from health care financial management, epi, health law, and policy when they begin their placements. If you are planning to study abroad, you should meet with your HPM advisor as early in your sophomore year as possible to ensure that you complete the required courses needed to stay “on track” in the major.

The study abroad office is the best resource to determine which — if any — courses taken abroad will satisfy PC core requirements. The program has endorsed more than twenty different study abroad options in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and Australia/New Zealand. In many cases it is possible to satisfy HPM major requirements or electives while abroad. In general, we advise students to begin planning for study abroad as early as possible, particularly if they are considering a minor or double major, as a semester abroad can affect course sequencing and scheduling. Please note, however, that your choice of study abroad programs may impact your ability to complete your major/minor coursework on time. We will not waive pre-registration requirements for students in programs that offer no HPM coursework (e.g., who take all free electives abroad), nor can students who take only free electives abroad expect to enroll in 3-4 HPM courses per semester upon their return. Studying abroad, in short, requires careful planning. Students who are studying abroad will receive their Alternate PINs and other registration information from their faculty advisor during their time abroad.

Internships (Field Experience)

All students who are interested in internship experiences, either as seniors or over the summer, should meet with Dr. Olszewski, the department's Field Experience Coordinator. Students are strongly encouraged to identify their internship placements prior to enrolling in the field experience (HPM 450) seminar during their senior year. Please note, however, that internships completed during the sophomore or junior years do not satisfy the department's required field experience course, which couples work in the field (a minimum of 120 hours) with seminar meetings that reflect upon the student's experiences at his/her workplace. The field experience seminar, in other words, is an applied study of the organization you are placed with as an intern. Thus, students must be enrolled in the seminar while they are completing their internship experience; only in exceptional circumstances will students be allowed to complete their internship hours during the summer or over an intersession.

During the course of their field placement, students will have many opportunities to learn from practitioners and to practice their professional skills in real world settings. In the field, students will be expected to apply concepts and skills from their previous coursework to practical problems in their organization. The field experience is a required component of the HPM major at Providence College and at other HPM programs around the nation, for it offers students a unique opportunity to "test drive" a career. A successful internship will provide students with letters of reference, networking opportunities, and firsthand experience in the "real world" prior to graduation.

Once you have selected a site, you must develop a learning agreement that specifies the objectives, activities, supervision, and daily responsibilities for your internship. The prompt completion of your learning agreement is a crucial element of a successful placement, for it specifies the goals, responsibilities, and tasks for all parties in the internship. Your learning agreement must be completed within the time period specified by your instructor, or you will receive a failing midterm grade for HPM 450. To be complete, the form must be signed by you, your agency/organizational preceptor, and your faculty member. You cannot receive credit for HPM 450 without a signed learning agreement; this should be your first official task with your supervisor, for without it, you are embarking on a journey with no roadmap.

You must complete 120 hours of work at your field experience site to earn credit for HPM 450. Timesheets will be submitted each week. At the end of the semester, your field experience supervisor must certify that you have completed the required number of hours. Past experience suggests that one of the principal reasons for formalizing your placement before the semester begins is that students who begin work at their placement during the first two weeks of the semester can reduce the number of hours they must work per week. For example, a student who began his/her placement during the first week of the semester would have to work an average of 8.6 hours a week over a 14-week period to complete their requirements, while a student who did not begin work until the third week of the semester would need to work 10.9 hours per week to do so. Starting the field experience earlier affords students greater flexibility and places a more manageable burden on overbooked student schedules.

Students may only enroll in HPM 450 once. Any student who fails to complete his/her field experience due to violations of academic integrity or who fails to follow the expectations for student behavior outlined in the HPM Field Experience Handbook will not be allowed to retake HPM 450. As interns, students represent not only themselves, but also the HPM department and faculty, as well as Providence College. Unprofessional behavior during an internship will result in an F in HPM 450, a conversation with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and removal from the major.

Registration for HPM 450, the department's required Field Experience seminar, is managed via a random assignment process. Exceptions to this policy will be made upon written request to the department chair for students who provide documented evidence of hardship (e.g., double majors, participation in college-sponsored intercollegiate athletic programs, off-campus work responsibilities).

Independent Study

The HPM department offers students the opportunity to complete an independent study on an area of interest that is not covered by existing courses in the curriculum. As an upper level, self-directed learning experience, students should have junior standing and have completed (or be concurrently enrolled in) their core HPM requirements before registering for HPM 490-91. This is designed as an advanced course, and as such, the student and the faculty member must agree upon a syllabus that includes a schedule of assigned readings and a major paper/project. Students may incorporate a “real world” internship component into an independent study, but this is designed to complement, not replace, the academic component of the independent study experience. In such cases, students must identify a topic, and demonstrate how an experiential learning component will enhance their traditional reading and writing assignments for the independent study. Students who wish to obtain an additional field experience can do so through an independent study in HPM, or by enrolling in another department’s internship program. Please note: No faculty member may supervise more than 3 independent studies in a semester.

Choosing a Minor

Students are not required to have a minor, but HPM faculty are always available to discuss possible double majors and/or minors that complement the HPM curriculum. HPM students elect a wide range of different minors depending upon their areas of interest. In recent years, HPM students completed minors (or a second major) in Accounting, Art History, Biology, Economics, Finance, History, Mathematics, Political Science, Public and Community Service, Sociology, and Women's Studies. To add a minor, please obtain the Academic Program Adjustment Form from the Office of The Registrar.

Student Involvement and Leadership Opportunities

Alumni Career Forums | The department hosts alumni career forums, where recent graduates return to share their stories about the job market and career opportunities.

Alzheimer's Fundraiser | In November 2014, a wonderful group of HPM students led by Michelle LaFrance '14 and Genevieve Ilg '14 organized the college's first annual “memory walk” to benefit the Alzheimer’s Association of RI.

Charles V. Chapin Honor Society | Beginning in the 2009-10 academic year, the HPM department created the Charles V. Chapin Honor Society to recognize the achievements of students who earned a grade point average of 3.55 or higher within the major. We host an induction ceremony each Spring.

Health Care Club | The HPM department has an active and engaged student club that sponsors alumni events, assists with planning and hosting the annual HPM undergraduate student conference, and participates in a variety of service and fundraising opportunities. Club members host regular meetings throughout the semester. Please contact co-presidents, Grace Sherlog or Madelyn Crago, for more information about how to get involved (gsherlog@friars.providence.edu; mcrago@friars.providence.edu).

Health Care Leadership Forum | In recent years, the HPM department has brought nationally known speakers to campus who are leaders in their respective fields to provide students with a fresh perspective on trends in the healthcare industry and emerging healthcare challenges. In 2013, we hosted Girish Kumar Navami, CEO of eClinicalWorks, one of the nation's leading electronic medical records providers; our 2014 forum was coordinated by Michelle LaFrance '14, and brought Dr. David Dosa to campus to discuss the challenges of providing compassionate, coordinated care at the end of life. For more information about how to get involved, please see Dr. Olszewski.

Undergraduate Conference | Since 2010, the department has hosted an annual undergraduate research conference during the Spring semester. A joint committee of students and faculty review proposals from students around the nation (and Canada) to present papers at the conference. Students have many opportunities to become involved in our conference by serving as members of the program organizing committee, publicizing the conference to area colleges and universities, or as part of the hospitality team on the day of the conference. For more information, please speak to any HPM faculty member!