



Program Name & Location

DES MOINES UNIVERSITY
Des Moines, IA

Dates of the site visit

February 11-13, 2015

Accreditation: 3 year CAHME Accreditation, effective 2015 through 2018

Accreditation History:

Season	Year	Action
Spring		Initial Accreditation

Program Description

Des Moines University is a graduate health sciences institution of higher education located in Des Moines, Iowa. The University offers a total of nine degree programs through three Colleges:

- College of Osteopathic Medicine
- College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery
- College of Health Sciences

The Master of Health Care Administration (MHA) Program is located within the College of Health Sciences. The MHA degree program requires a total of 48 semester hours of graduate coursework.

The Program has been designed for students who are generally in the beginning (secured their first position) through the mid-point (middle management role) of their health care careers and would benefit from training in management or leadership, as well as training on the history and evolution of the US health care industry. The majority of our students are working adults who value the unique flexibility of our course delivery format and the "generalist" focus of our curriculum.

The foundation of the program's curriculum is a competency model created by the National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NCHL). Our modes of course delivery are innovative, combining three on-campus executive residencies with a blend of web-based, synchronous and asynchronous, delivery formats.

Since the beginning, the MHA program consistently listens and responds to industry demands, our faculty, and the needs and wants of our students, to shape and deliver a program that produces desired outcomes. Several unique features of DMUs MHA program include:

- **An experienced faculty** that possesses the academic credentials but that also have proven experience in the field. The faculty bridge theory to practice by setting all course content in the context of effective leadership.
- **Flexibility.** MHA students are typically juggling many demands (e.g. work, children, caring for older parents, community, professional organizations, etc.) and cannot make



- their pursuit of knowledge the top priority in their lives. As such, the program is designed to be as flexible as possible while also supporting their success. Students have seven years to complete all degree requirements. They are only required to complete one credit each year. The Program (with University support) has a blend of monitoring processes and policies to help student navigate the demands of the program; their personal and professional lives; and, ultimately achieve their goal of a graduate degree.
- **An engaged student** who is "in the trenches" looking for knowledge, skills, etc. to be more effective in their work. The student's workplace serves as a living "lab," providing them the opportunity to apply their learning in real time.
 - **A highly diverse student population.** DMU's reputation as a graduate health professions institution pulls a diverse mix of clinical and nonclinical, dedicated students with experience across the continuum of health care services into a highly engaging learning environment. Faculty work to facilitate student exchange of knowledge, experiences, beliefs, etc. to achieve higher levels of competence.
 - **A competency-based curriculum.** Faculty members are committed to the design of courses that directly support students' achievement of competence. Over the last four years, the level of sophistication of our curriculum map has grown from a simple spreadsheet to a completely integrated system embedded in our learning management system. Starting in the Fall of 2014, students now have access to see (in real time) their achievement on the program's competency model as they progress through their classes.
 - **A passionate/supportive culture.** Students and faculty support each other in a student-centered, supportive culture. Faculty work to hold students accountable to high levels of learning yet provide an environment to support individual goals or special needs. Program faculty and staff know our students' names, their history, their goals. University officials and support services care about our students' success and work to create policies/procedures and services to ensure their success in practice.

The unique history of the MHA program (developed in the 1980's in response to two health systems' requests) and the market we serve (early-to-mid careerists), have required the program stakeholders to listen, really listen, to the needs of the health care industry and the constraints of those who desire to serve within. The faculty, staff and University have worked tirelessly to create a value-driven, learning experience to equip our graduates to lead. More information the MHA Program is available on the DMU webpage at <http://www.dmu.edu/mha/>.

Findings

CAHME sends a team on-site to review the program. On the first day, the CAHME Fellow reviews the records and resources of the Program. On days two and three, the full team completes an extensive evaluation of the Program based on CAHME requirements. These findings are reported, and programs are designated as being a leader in meeting the requirement (a "strength"), meeting the requirement; partially meeting the requirements, or not meeting the requirement. Sometimes, a program may "meet" a requirement, but the site visitors suggest a recommendation for the program to improve ("Consultative Recommendations").



Programs need to report to CAHME following their site visit their remediation activity for all requirements that are not “Met” in a “Progress Report”. Thus, evaluating a program based on “Not Mets” or “Partially Mets” may not reflect the progress a program has made since their last site visit. Programs have two years to complete all criteria found partially or not met on their site visit report. Accreditation past two years indicates that the program has successfully completed progress reporting.

		Number	Percent
Met	Strengths	3	9%
	Other Met	27	77%
Partially Met		5	14%
Not Met		0	0%
Total		35	100%
<i>Consultative Recommendations</i>		<i>13</i>	<i>37%</i>

Program Strengths

II.A.2 THE PROGRAM WILL HAVE RECRUITING PRACTICES AND WELL-DEFINED ADMISSION CRITERIA DESIGNED TO ADMIT QUALIFIED STUDENTS AND PURSUE A DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATION.

Strength Comment:

The program’s requirement for prospective students to complete two essays with one focused on problem solving and the other on an applicant’s motivation for pursuing an MHA degree is an excellent screening tool that is well aligned with the program’s mission.

III.A.6 THE PROGRAM CURRICULUM WILL DEVELOP STUDENTS' CORE COMPETENCIES

Strength Comment:

The Program has developed three outstanding on-campus Executive Residencies (Professional Development Seminar I, II, and III) which connect students to the Program, the faculty, and fellow students while also fostering students' attainment of team-building skills, leadership abilities, professionalism, knowledge and application of ethical frameworks, and other important competencies.

III.C.2 THE PROGRAM WILL EVALUATE COURSE INSTRUCTION AND THE CURRICULUM AND USE THE RESULTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.



Strength Comment:

The Program's practice of writing and sharing instructor-generated Course Evaluation Reports (CERs) among the faculty is an outstanding method for improving course delivery. The CER process enables faculty to reflect on student feedback about their courses, generate ideas for potential improvements in their courses, share their results and ideas for improvement with colleagues, and obtain valuable input from fellow faculty members.

Partially Mets

I.B.1 THE PROGRAM WILL HAVE SUFFICIENT FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO ENSURE THAT ITS MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES CAN BE ACHIEVED.

Assessment:

From the team's review of the self-study, meetings with the faculty and administration, meeting with the students, and meeting with the alumni and other important stakeholders, it was readily apparent to the site visit team that the program's financial and technical resources related to marketing, applications and admissions, and student advising are inadequate to meet the program's current mission, goals and objectives and future aspirations.

Criterion Related Concern:

The program's financial and technical resources related to marketing, applications and admissions, and student advising are inadequate to meet the program's mission, goals and objectives.

Criterion Related Recommendation:

The University and College must deploy additional resources to assure the program's goals and objectives regarding program marketing, admissions and applications, and student advising can be met.

II.A.5 THE PROGRAM WILL ENSURE THAT GRADUATES' CAREER PREPAREDNESS IS MONITORED, DOCUMENTED AND USED FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

Assessment:

The evidence reviewed did not show that the program monitored and tracked student preparedness and graduates' career progress adequately. The evidence reviewed also showed that the completion rates reported by the program fell below CAHME's minimum standard of 80%.

Criterion Related Concern 1:

Concern 1: The program has not adequately monitored student preparedness or tracked graduates' career progress.

Criterion Related Concern 2: The completion rates are 69.4% and 77.6% respectively, for students that entered the program in 2005 and 2006 (based on the University's stipulated



normative time of seven years for masters degrees), which falls below CAHME's minimum of 80%.

Criterion Related Recommendation 1:

The program must monitor career preparedness and progression for three years of graduates and use the results of this monitoring for program improvement.

Criterion Related Recommendation 2:

The program must assure admissions, curriculum planning, and advising processes which impact retention and student success, that result in minimum completion rates of 80%.

III.C.1 THE PROGRAM WILL INCORPORATE A RANGE OF ASSESSMENT METHODS DRIVEN BY ADULT LEARNING PRINCIPLES. THE METHODS WILL BE BASED ON HIGHER EDUCATION TAXONOMIC LEVELS APPROPRIATE TO GRADUATE EDUCATION AND ALIGNED WITH DEFINED COMPETENCIES.

Assessment:

While some program faculty have transitioned their student assessment methods from lower to higher order learning methods and assessment techniques, this isn't consistent across the full curriculum and faculty. There are good examples of cases where this has occurred, and the faculty recognize these efforts and are using them as models for improvement in other areas. The program needs to continue to move the entire curriculum (courses) and other degree requirements toward higher order assessment methods.

Criterion Related Concern:

Although there are excellent examples of higher order assessment methods in some courses, the Program has not adequately assessed students' attainment of competencies using higher order assessment methods across the curriculum.

Criterion Related Recommendation: Program faculty must develop and consistently use higher order assessment methods, which enable students to demonstrate their application of knowledge, skills and abilities in Program competencies.

III.C.3 THE PROGRAM WILL REGULARLY EVALUATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS AND GRADUATES ATTAIN THE COMPETENCIES AND USE THE EVALUATION FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

Assessment:

While the program has provided evidence of a plan for regularly evaluating the extent to which students and graduates master core competencies, the plan has not being fully implemented nor used for making informed decisions for continuous improvement of the program.

Additionally, while it is up to the Program to select competencies and adapt them for the De Moines University Program's unique mission, vision, values and goals, if the Program chooses to adopt a particular model such as the NCHL Competency Model, the underlying logic of the



model must remain in-tact. The Program's current implementation of the model breaks with the designer's intent with regard to the "levels" of competencies within each of the 26 main competency statements. Those levels were never intended to be used as a scale; they are instead, different facets of the main competency.

Criterion Related Concern 1:

While evidence shows the Program has collected student self-assessment data on their 26 NCHL competencies and has collected preceptor, mentor, and faculty assessment data on nine competencies which the Program has determined are core competencies, the Program has not yet effectively used these data to make informed decisions for continuous improvement of the Program.

Criterion Related Concern 2:

The Program's competency assessment tools are not consistent with the underlying logic of the NCHL model.

Criterion Related Recommendation 1:

The Program must comprehensively and systematically use their competency data to determine if curricular changes are needed and then make informed changes for improvement as necessary.

Criterion Related Recommendation 2:

While the Program can adapt the NCHL model to fit its unique mission and goals, the Program must implement assessment tools that are consistent with the model's logic.

IV.B.2 THE PROGRAM WILL ENSURE THAT THERE IS A SYSTEMATIC PLAN FOR, AND INVESTMENT IN, INDIVIDUAL FACULTY RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP.

Assessment:

The evidence reviewed showed that the program has not implemented the plan for, and investment in, faculty research and scholarship using the approach described to the team that has been developed for the entire college.

Criterion Related Concern:

While the College has developed a new plan for, and investment in, individual faculty research and scholarship, the plan has not been fully implemented.

Criterion Related Recommendation:

The program, with support from the University and College, must implement a plan to ensure scholarly development of all core faculty and monitor these activities and results.

Consultative Recommendations



I.A.1 THE PROGRAM WILL HAVE STATEMENTS OF MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES THAT GUIDE THE PROGRAM'S DESIGN, EVALUATION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS.

Consultative Recommendation:

As the University and College increase emphasis on research and scholarship, and as the program moves forward with new strategic and operational planning following initial accreditation, the faculty should be mindful of the need to formally incorporate scholarship more explicitly in the mission statement.

I.A.3 THE PROGRAM WILL MONITOR CHANGES IN THE HEALTH SYSTEM, THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT, AND MANAGEMENT THEORY AND PRACTICE AND ADJUST ITS MISSION, VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCY MODEL AS NECESSARY.

Consultative Recommendation:

The program should monitor the university and healthcare environments more proactively and systematically and use the information to make needed changes to the program.

1.B.3 PROGRAM AND UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP WILL ENSURE THAT THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO FACULTY ARE COMMENSURATE WITH WORKLOAD.

Consultative Recommendation:

The University and College should assure that expectations for faculty time across teaching, scholarship, practice, and service are aligned with individual faculty positions and actual work load, and that time for scholarship, if expected, be protected.

II.A.3 THE PROGRAM WILL ENSURE THAT STUDENTS ARE PROVIDED APPROPRIATE ADVISING AND SUPPORT SERVICES, AND THAT THESE SERVICES ARE EVALUATED REGULARLY AS A BASIS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

Consultative Recommendation:

In general, the faculty does an excellent job advising and providing support services. However, based on feedback from students and the nature of the student population (typically employed fulltime, often pursuing the degree part-time, and often taking more than two years to complete the degree), faculty should communicate more proactively at least once per term to keep students abreast of their progress and program changes.

II.A.4 THE PROGRAM WILL INVOLVE STUDENTS, ALUMNI, AND PRACTITIONERS IN APPROPRIATE AREAS OF PROGRAM DECISION-MAKING AND EVALUATION.

Consultative Recommendation:



While stakeholder feedback has been pivotal to the success of the program, the program would benefit from more systematic student input and involvement in appropriate areas of Program decision-making and evaluation.

III.A.1 THE PROGRAM WILL ADOPT A SET OF COMPETENCIES THAT ALIGN WITH THE MISSION AND TYPES OF JOBS GRADUATES ENTER. THE PROGRAM WILL USE THESE COMPETENCIES AS THE BASIS OF ITS CURRICULUM, COURSE CONTENT, LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS.

Consultative Recommendation:

Given the amount of data collected on the 26 NCHL competencies the program has adopted, and the difficulties associated with using the data for curriculum improvement, the program should give strong consideration to reducing the number of competencies adopted, in a manner that aligns with the program's mission and best prepares graduates for professional growth and career opportunities.

III.A.2 THE PROGRAM CURRICULUM WILL PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A DEPTH AND BREADTH OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM AND HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT ALIGNED WITH THE MISSION.

Consultative Recommendation:

The program should provide an expanded description of where and how the curriculum ensures that students have the depth and breadth of knowledge of the healthcare system and healthcare management required based on the program's mission.

III.A.3 THE PROGRAM CURRICULUM WILL DEVELOP STUDENTS' CORE COMPETENCIES

Consultative Recommendation:

The program should provide an expanded description of where and how the curriculum covers the various competencies associated with the areas of communications and interpersonal effectiveness for the students.

III.A.4 THE PROGRAM CURRICULUM WILL DEVELOP STUDENTS' CORE COMPETENCIES

Consultative Recommendation:

The program should provide an expanded description of where and how the curriculum covers the various competencies associated with the areas of critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving for the students.

III.A.5 THE PROGRAM CURRICULUM WILL DEVELOP STUDENTS' CORE COMPETENCIES

Consultative Recommendation:



The program should provide an expanded description of where and how the curriculum covers the various competencies associated with the areas of management and leadership for the students.

III.A.6 THE PROGRAM CURRICULUM WILL DEVELOP STUDENTS' CORE COMPETENCIES

Consultative Recommendation:

The program should provide an expanded description of where and how the curriculum covers the various competencies associated with the areas of communications and interpersonal effectiveness for the students.

III.B.1 THE PROGRAM WILL INCORPORATE A RANGE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS DRIVEN BY ADULT LEARNING PRINCIPLES. THE METHODS WILL BE BASED ON HIGHER EDUCATION TAXONOMIC LEVELS APPROPRIATE TO GRADUATE EDUCATION.

Consultative Recommendation:

The Program should continue encouraging and involving faculty in discussions of actions they can take to transition their lower order teaching and learning methods to higher order methods within their individual courses and across the curriculum.

IV.B.1 FACULTY WILL DEMONSTRATE A RECORD OF RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP AND /OR PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT APPROPRIATE TO THEIR CAREER STAGE, ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM, AND THE PROGRAM'S MISSION AND GOALS.

Consultative Recommendation:

The University and College should assure that expectations for faculty time devoted to scholarship are aligned with faculty positions and actual work load, and that time for scholarship, if expected, is protected; and that faculty are held to expectations regarding scholarship.