

Criterion 3.1 Graduate-Level Curriculum Development

3.1.3 Graduate-Level Required Program Topics Definitions

Table of Contents

Analytical Reasoning	2
Communication: Written and Oral	2
Critical Thinking	2
Cultural Competence in Healthcare: Development student’s skills to work with all populations and communities	3
Data Literacy & Data-Supported Decision Making	3
Healthcare Ethics	4
Health Industry Foundations	4
Healthcare Finance	5
Healthcare Human Resources	5
Healthcare Information Technology (including AI in healthcare)	5
Healthcare Innovation & Innovation Principles	6
Healthcare Legal Considerations	6
Healthcare Management Across the Continuum	7
Healthcare Management & Operations	7
Healthcare Quality and Safety	8
Leadership in Healthcare	8
Patient-Centered Care	9
Performance Measurement & Improvement in Healthcare Settings	9
Population Health	9
Professionalism in Healthcare Settings	10
Strategic Thinking	10
Sustainability in Healthcare	11
Teamwork in Healthcare Settings	11

Analytical Reasoning

Definition

The ability to systematically analyze complex healthcare business challenges by integrating quantitative and qualitative information, evaluating competing interpretations, applying structured analytical frameworks, and exercising judgment to support evidence-informed managerial and policy decisions.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Framing ambiguous healthcare business problems into analytically tractable questions
- Interpreting multi-source data to inform executive decision making
- Evaluating strategic alternatives using explicit criteria and tradeoffs
- Testing assumptions underlying organizational decisions
- Constructing defensible, evidence-based business arguments
- Assessing risk and uncertainty in healthcare investments or initiatives
- Analyzing interdependencies across healthcare systems and markets
- Evaluating the credibility and applicability of data sources
- Applying decision frameworks to complex management scenarios
- Assessing outcomes to inform organizational learning and improvement

Communication: Written and Oral

Definition

The ability to communicate complex healthcare business information clearly, persuasively, and appropriately across professional contexts, audiences, and decision-making environments.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Developing executive-level written analyses and recommendations
- Preparing concise decision briefs for senior leadership
- Presenting data-supported business cases orally
- Communicating effectively with internal and external stakeholders
- Facilitating structured professional discussions
- Persuading decision makers using evidence and rationale
- Producing professional correspondence aligned with organizational goals
- Translating technical information for non-specialist audiences
- Presenting analytical findings using visual and narrative techniques
- Providing and incorporating professional feedback

Critical Thinking

Definition

The capacity to rigorously evaluate information, challenge assumptions, synthesize perspectives, and exercise judgment in complex healthcare management contexts.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Critically evaluating competing interpretations of healthcare data
- Identifying implicit assumptions in organizational decisions
- Assessing the strength and limitations of managerial arguments
- Synthesizing evidence across multiple sources
- Distinguishing data-driven conclusions from unsupported claims
- Applying logical reasoning to complex healthcare problems
- Questioning established practices and proposing alternatives
- Drawing defensible conclusions under uncertainty
- Evaluating the implications of decisions on outcomes
- Reflecting on reasoning processes to improve decision quality

Cultural Competence in Healthcare: Development student's skills to work with all populations and communities

Definition

The ability to incorporate awareness of cultural, social, and contextual diversity into healthcare leadership, decision making, and organizational strategy.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Analyzing how cultural factors influence healthcare utilization
- Evaluating organizational inclusivity and responsiveness
- Incorporating diverse workforce and patient perspectives into decisions
- Communicating effectively across cultural contexts
- Integrating equity considerations into strategic planning
- Reflecting on personal and organizational bias
- Assessing organizational policies for cultural responsiveness
- Leading teams in diverse healthcare environments
- Engaging communities as strategic stakeholders
- Evaluating policy implications for diverse populations

Data Literacy & Data-Supported Decision Making

Definition

The ability to critically interpret data, evaluate its relevance and limitations, and apply insights to support strategic and operational healthcare decisions.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Interpreting performance dashboards for executive use

- Evaluating qualitative and quantitative data sources
- Formulating strategic questions that data can inform
- Comparing decision alternatives using data evidence
- Identifying data gaps and limitations
- Communicating data insights to decision makers
- Integrating analytics into recommendations
- Assessing data relevance to organizational goals
- Monitoring indicators to inform management action
- Supporting decisions with defensible evidence

Healthcare Ethics

Definition

The application of ethical reasoning to healthcare business decisions, balancing organizational objectives, professional responsibilities, and societal impact.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Applying ethical frameworks to management dilemmas
- Evaluating accountability in leadership decisions
- Balancing competing organizational and stakeholder interests
- Assessing ethical implications of policy or strategy choices
- Evaluating governance structures and ethical oversight
- Exercising ethical leadership under pressure
- Managing confidentiality and trust
- Integrating fairness and equity into decisions
- Navigating ethical challenges in management roles
- Reflecting on professional values in leadership

Health Industry Foundations

Definition

An understanding of the structure, dynamics, and forces shaping the healthcare industry and influencing organizational strategy.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Analyzing healthcare system structures
- Evaluating roles of public and private sector organizations
- Assessing stakeholder influence on healthcare delivery
- Interpreting healthcare financing mechanisms
- Evaluating regulatory environments
- Analyzing workforce trends
- Assessing industry pressures and market dynamics

- Understanding historical influences on current systems
- Evaluating cross-organizational/cross-sector relationships
- Assessing environmental factors affecting organizations

Healthcare Finance

Definition

The application of financial principles to support strategic, operational, and investment decisions in healthcare organizations.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Interpreting financial statements for decision making
- Evaluating budgets and financial plans
- Analyzing revenue models and payment structures
- Assessing cost structures and efficiency
- Supporting management decisions with financial analysis
- Allocating resources strategically
- Evaluating financial performance
- Assessing financial risk and uncertainty
- Analyzing capital investment decisions
- Linking financial outcomes to organizational strategy

Healthcare Human Resources

Definition

The strategic management of human capital to support organizational performance and sustainability in healthcare settings.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Evaluating workforce needs and planning strategies
- Analyzing recruitment and retention challenges
- Assessing performance management systems
- Supporting workforce development initiatives
- Evaluating organizational culture impacts
- Leading and supervising healthcare teams
- Managing employee relations strategically
- Navigating legal and regulatory workforce considerations
- Developing talent management strategies
- Leading people through organizational change

Healthcare Information Technology (including AI in healthcare)

Definition

The strategic use of information systems and digital capabilities to support healthcare operations, analytics, and decision making.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Evaluating information system capabilities
- Assessing data governance and stewardship
- Aligning technology investments with strategy
- Applying decision support systems
- Analyzing information flow across organizations
- Evaluating technology adoption and change impacts
- Assessing interoperability challenges
- Managing data security and risk
- Evaluating technology effects on workflows
- Leveraging information technology for competitive advantage

Healthcare Innovation & Innovation Principles

Definition

The application of structured and creative approaches to develop, evaluate, and implement innovations that enhance healthcare organizational performance and outcomes.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Applying innovation frameworks to organizational challenges
- Identifying opportunities for value creation
- Designing and testing innovative solutions
- Evaluating feasibility and impact of new ideas
- Managing adoption and diffusion processes
- Balancing innovation risk and return
- Assessing organizational readiness for innovation
- Embedding continuous improvement practices
- Leading innovation initiatives
- Measuring innovation outcomes

Healthcare Legal Considerations

Definition

An understanding of how legal and regulatory environments shape healthcare organizational strategy, operations, risk exposure, and executive decision making.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Analyzing regulatory requirements affecting healthcare organizations
- Evaluating compliance risks and mitigation strategies
- Interpreting legal responsibilities related to patient rights
- Assessing organizational obligations for data privacy and security
- Analyzing fraud and abuse risks in financial and operational decisions
- Evaluating licensure and scope-of-practice implications for workforce strategy
- Assessing contractual arrangements and organizational risk
- Analyzing employment law implications for healthcare management
- Evaluating liability exposure and risk management strategies
- Interpreting enforcement actions and organizational accountability

Healthcare Management Across the Continuum

Definition

An understanding of healthcare management across interconnected settings and stages of care.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Evaluating coordination across care settings
- Managing transitions and handoffs
- Assessing service integration strategies
- Analyzing organizational roles across settings
- Applying system-level management perspectives
- Managing continuity of care challenges
- Evaluating cross-setting management risks
- Leading collaboration among providers
- Analyzing patient flow across systems
- Planning systemwide management strategies

Healthcare Management & Operations

Definition

The oversight and coordination of organizational processes to achieve efficient, high-quality healthcare delivery.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Evaluating operational performance
- Analyzing workflows and process design
- Coordinating resources across functions
- Applying process improvement methodologies
- Managing capacity and throughput
- Balancing quality, efficiency, and access
- Overseeing operational performance metrics

- Making operational decisions under constraints
- Leading cross-functional coordination
- Resolving complex operational problems

Healthcare Quality and Safety

Definition

The evaluation, management, and improvement of healthcare quality, patient safety, and care outcomes across individual, team, organizational, and system levels to support safe, effective, equitable, patient centered, timely, and efficient healthcare delivery.

Examples: The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Human factors engineering and systems based safety design
- High reliability organization (HRO) principles in healthcare
- Evaluating healthcare quality and patient safety outcomes
- Applying continuous quality improvement methodologies
- Analyzing healthcare errors, risks, and adverse events
- Using data to monitor and improve performance
- Supporting a culture of safety and accountability
- Implementing evidence based quality improvement initiatives
- Measuring and reporting quality and safety metrics
- Leading interdisciplinary quality improvement efforts
- Improving patient centered care processes and outcomes
- Designing and evaluating organization wide quality and patient safety strategies

Leadership in Healthcare

Definition

The ability to guide individuals and organizations through influence, decision making, and strategic direction in healthcare environments.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Applying leadership theories to healthcare contexts
- Demonstrating self-awareness and reflection
- Influencing stakeholders and teams
- Making complex leadership decisions
- Leading organizational change
- Exercising ethical leadership
- Communicating vision and direction
- Developing and leading teams
- Aligning leadership actions with strategy
- Shaping organizational culture

Patient-Centered Care

Definition

A management approach that integrates patient needs, preferences, and experiences into healthcare decision making and organizational design.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Analyzing patient experience data
- Evaluating engagement and communication strategies
- Managing care coordination processes
- Assessing experience and satisfaction measures
- Integrating patient preferences into decisions
- Supporting shared decision making models
- Designing services around patient needs
- Evaluating quality and safety impacts
- Improving organizational responsiveness
- Assessing outcomes from the patient perspective

Performance Measurement & Improvement in Healthcare Settings

Definition

The use of systematic measurement and improvement approaches to evaluate performance and drive organizational learning in healthcare settings.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Selecting and evaluating performance indicators
- Applying measurement frameworks
- Conducting data-driven performance evaluations
- Leading continuous improvement initiatives
- Monitoring outcomes and trends
- Benchmarking against peers
- Designing feedback mechanisms
- Supporting organizational learning
- Developing improvement plans
- Ensuring sustainability of improvements

Population Health

Definition

A strategic approach to improving health outcomes for defined populations through analysis, coordination, and targeted intervention.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Analyzing population-level health data
- Assessing social and environmental determinants
- Integrating data across sources
- Evaluating preventive strategies
- Applying risk stratification approaches
- Developing community partnerships
- Measuring population health outcomes
- Addressing equity and access issues
- Targeting resources strategically
- Evaluating long-term population outcomes

Professionalism in Healthcare Settings

Definition

The demonstration of ethical conduct, accountability, and responsibility expected of healthcare management professionals.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Exercising professional judgment
- Communicating with professionalism
- Demonstrating accountability
- Managing responsibilities effectively
- Engaging respectfully with others
- Commitment to ongoing development
- Upholding role responsibilities
- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Representing the profession appropriately
- Engaging in reflective professional practice

Strategic Thinking

Definition

The ability to evaluate complex healthcare environments, anticipate future conditions, and guide long-term organizational direction.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Conducting environmental and market analysis
- Developing long-term strategic plans

- Aligning strategy with organizational mission
- Prioritizing resources strategically
- Evaluating competitive positioning
- Assessing strategic risk
- Applying scenario planning techniques
- Ensuring organizational alignment
- Evaluating strategic effectiveness
- Adapting strategy to changing conditions

Sustainability in Healthcare

Definition

The ability to maintain organizational effectiveness and value creation over time.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Evaluating long-term organizational viability
- Managing resources responsibly
- Assessing financial sustainability
- Supporting workforce sustainability
- Integrating environmental considerations
- Building strategic resilience
- Ensuring program and service continuity
- Mitigating long-term risks
- Enhancing organizational adaptability
- Measuring sustained impact

Teamwork in Healthcare Settings

Definition

The ability to collaborate effectively across roles and disciplines to achieve shared organizational objectives.

Examples; The examples listed below are illustrative and non-exhaustive and do not represent required elements. Programs retain full discretion in determining how this topic is addressed, consistent with their mission, target student population, competency model, assessment strategy, curriculum design, and post-graduate outcomes.

- Leading and participating in collaborative problem solving
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Communicating effectively within teams
- Managing and resolving conflict
- Sharing accountability for outcomes
- Collaborating across disciplines
- Making group-based decisions
- Building trust within teams
- Developing team leadership capacity

- Evaluating team performance