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INTRODUCTION TO THE HANDBOOK

The Master of Science in Allied Health Graduate Student Handbook contains the most current policies and procedures; thus, this version of the handbook supersedes any previous versions of the student handbook regarding policies and procedures related to the Master of Science in Allied Health. This handbook does not replace published university requirements and should be used in conjunction with the Graduate Catalog and ETSU policies and procedures. The faculty encourages you to bookmark the Graduate Catalog online for future reference.

Goals of the Master of Science Degree in Allied Health program:

1. To prepare allied health practitioners to analyze, interpret, and respond to the major factors influencing health and health care policy.
2. To prepare allied health practitioners to have an understanding of administration/management skills.
3. To prepare allied health practitioners to function as educators and/or leaders in academic, clinical, or community settings.
4. To prepare allied health practitioners to be critical thinkers able to analyze concepts, principles, research, clinical findings, technologies, and outcomes and apply them to the professional practice.
Curriculum

The program of study in the Master of Science in Allied Health consists of 18 hours of major field core, 12 hours of guided electives, and a 6 hour thesis or non-thesis capstone project. The student will work with his/her advisor to select courses from the guided electives that meet his/her professional needs and career aspirations. Guided electives are available in allied health administration, education, and public health.

1. **Allied Health Major Field Core (18 credits):**
   
   ALHE 5000  Information Technology in Allied Health Sciences  1
   ALHE 5100  Interdisciplinary Health Care Teams  2
   ALHE 5200  Assessment, Planning, and Evaluation  3
   ALHE 5050  Legal and Ethical Issues in Allied Health  3
   ALHE 5070  Leadership Theory for Health Care Delivery  3
   ALHE 5150  Population Health Issues for the Allied Health Professional  3
   ALHE 5500  Methods of Research in Allied Health  3

2. **Guided Electives (12 credits – choose 4 classes):**
   
   ALHE 5010  Clinical Teaching Strategies  3
   ALHE 5060  Allied Health Curriculum Design  3
   ALHE 5300  Administration at the Department Level  3
   ALHE 5700  Strategic Initiatives for Allied Health  3
   BSTA 5310  Biostatistics I  3
   EPID 5400  Epidemiology I  3
   HSMP 5550  Human Resources Management  3
   COBH 5900  Grant and Proposal Development  3

3. **Thesis or Non-Thesis Option (6 credits):**
   
   ALHE 5800  Advanced Practice Seminar in ALHE OR  6
   ALHE 5960  Thesis  6

   **Total Credits**  36

Advisory Committee

The student is required to form his/her advisory committee no later than the final semester of coursework. The committee will be composed of at least three (3) faculty members who hold graduate faculty status; the committee chair must hold member or senior member status. In warranted circumstances, a fourth committee member who does not have graduate faculty status may be added if the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies approves the individual for a temporary graduate faculty appointment.
The MSAH graduate coordinator is responsible for coordinating the administration of the comprehensive examination to the master’s candidate and certifying that the candidate has completed all requirements in the program for the master’s degree.

Advisory committee members are available to students during the terms of each semester (from the first day of the semester through the last day of final exams) but not on holidays or over the breaks between semesters. Students in the MSAH program should plan their work, particularly on the thesis/capstone accordingly.

If changes in the composition of the advisory committee are needed, the student must submit an approval form, available at the School of Graduate Studies office, with signatures of the retiring member(s), replacement member(s), the committee chair, the department chair, and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

**Admission to Candidacy and Approval of the Program of Study**

Admission to the School of Graduate Studies, and the approval to pursue a degree program, does not in any way imply that a student is admitted to candidacy for the master’s degree. To be admitted to candidacy the student must:

1. Remove all conditions required at the time of admission by the School of Graduate Studies.
2. Complete at least one (1) semester (9-12 hours) of study following admission to the School of Graduate Studies.
3. Meet the specific requirements of the major department.
4. Have an overall GPA of 3.0 and be in good academic standing.
5. Submit the completed forms for admission to candidacy and an approved program of study to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Ideally, the program of study is filed well in advance of the published deadline. When the application for candidacy is approved, the student may be considered a candidate for the graduate degree. If the program of study is filed with the School of Graduate Studies after the published deadline, graduation will be delayed until all program requirements have been verified.

**Comprehensive Examination**

Near the end of the student’s program of study he/she must successfully pass a comprehensive examination. Comprehensive exams are offered three (3) times per year: On the first (1st) and third (3rd) Tuesday of March, June, and November. The student will work closely with his/her committee chair to schedule the exam on-site or using a recognized testing center with a proctor. Pre-approval is required if the student is using a proctor and testing center. The comprehensive examination is an assessment of the student’s ability to synthesize knowledge and skills acquired throughout the program curriculum.

The comprehensive exam has eight (8) sections: six (6) from the core coursework and two (2) from the guided electives. The student must pass each of the eight (8) sections with a minimum score of 80%.

The student’s performance in the final examination will be classified into one (1) of three (3) categories. The student may (1) pass; (2) fail with no opportunity for re-
examination; or (3) fail with an opportunity for further study and re-examination by
the committee. Re-examination can be written or oral. The nature of such further
study and a schedule for re-examining the student’s performance will be established
by the committee. A second failure by any candidate will result in the student’s
dismissal from the graduate program.

Advanced Practice Seminar and Thesis

The student is required to complete six (6) credit hours of advanced practice seminar
(capstone project) or thesis. The student must register for two consecutive semesters
of three (3) credit hours each of thesis or advanced practice seminar. Students
must maintain continuous enrollment during the summer term. When the student has
completed 6 credit hours but not finished the thesis or capstone project he/she must
enroll in ALHE 5990 Readings and Research for each consecutive semester until
the thesis or project is complete.

The advanced practice seminar option (capstone project) is designed as a
culminating clinical experience in administration or education and provides an
alternative to the thesis option. The student must present an advance practice plan
and identify a clinical preceptor (if applicable) prior to beginning the project to his/
her graduate committee. Upon completion of the experience, the student will provide
a written evaluation of the project. The student will also perform an oral defense to
his/her committee.

The thesis represents a high standard of scholarly inquiry, methodology, techniques,
statistics, and literature review. Upon completion of the research and written thesis,
the student will perform an oral defense to his/her committee. The student must
meet additional thesis requirements as stated in the ETSU Graduate Catalog.

Oral defense of both the advanced practice seminar and the thesis are scheduled
adhering to the dates set forth by the School of Graduate Studies.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

All research involving human subjects must be approved by the East Tennessee
State University IRB prior to initiation of the research. IRB approval is necessary to
protect the rights of human subjects involved in physical, psychological, or social
research. The student will complete the IRB CITI training as a requirement in the
ALHE 5000 course. The student may have to update his/her training before the end
of the program depending on how much time has elapsed from the initial training.
The application forms for research involving human subjects and review of such
research projects are available on-line.

Thesis Process

The thesis topic will be selected by the candidate with the advice and approval of the
thesis director and committee. The student must prepare a prospectus describing the
research problem, its full limits, and the research methods. A copy of the prospectus
will be given to each member of the student’s committee. Changes in the prospectus
may be made at the committee’s discretion, with the consent of the student. After
the thesis topic has been researched and written, and approved by the advisory
committee members, the oral defense must be scheduled with the School of Graduate
Studies. Copies of the thesis should be distributed to committee members at least
two (2) weeks prior to the oral defense. Following successful completion of
the defense, the student must prepare the thesis in final form, have it reviewed by
the chair of the advisory committee and the department reader of the MSAH
program. The chair will submit the final thesis to Turnitin. The student will submit
the final paperwork which includes the Turnitin summary and report and the final
thesis to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies for review and approval through
the electronic thesis and dissertation website: http://etd-submit.etsu.edu./

Submission of the Thesis—Students must submit theses in the format prescribed
at the time of submission. All students submitting theses must pay a microfilming
fee. Students seeking exemption from electronic submission of the thesis will still be
responsible for microfilming. More detailed instructions are available from the School
of Graduate Studies.

The School of Graduate Studies publishes a Guide to the Preparation of Theses and

Oral Defense

Each student will complete an oral defense of either the capstone project or thesis.
The date, time, and place of the oral defense will be determined by the student and
graduate committee chair.

The final thesis defense will be attended by no fewer than 3 members of the
student’s graduate committee and will be open to all faculty and invited quests.
The student works with his/her committee chair to establish a date, time, and place.
Students have the option of a virtual defense since this is a distance education
program. The graduate committee must receive the final copy of the thesis or
advanced practice seminar paper two weeks prior to the scheduled final defense.
Students who do not meet the two week deadline must reschedule their oral defense
and may have to register for Readings and Research the next semester and be
responsible for applicable fees.

Graduate Faculty Representation at Thesis Defenses—The defense of the thesis
is a formal gathering at which the master’s candidate presents and defends the
thesis to members of the university community. The defense is a capstone event in
the development of graduate students as scholars, professionals, or future teachers
and must entail open and fair exchange of scholarly views. A member of the
graduate faculty from outside the candidate’s committee and department must be
present at the defense to monitor the process.

The procedure to be followed in scheduling an oral defense and the format for the
graduate faculty representative’s narrative report are available in the Graduate
Studies office. The defense must be scheduled according to dates specified in the
Academic Calendar published in this catalog and in the Schedule of Classes Bulletin.

Academic Calendar

The School of Graduate Studies follows a calendar with strict deadlines for
registration, forms (i.e. intent to graduate, committee forms, candidacy forms, and
programs of study), thesis/dissertation preparation workshops, scheduling oral
defense of theses, completing the oral defense, and filing the initial review of copies
of theses with the School of Graduate Studies for graduation in fall, spring, and
summer. Please refer to the School of Graduate Studies Graduate Catalog for a calendar of deadline dates.

**Grades**

Grades given in the School of Graduate Studies carry the following meaning and quality points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Quality Points per Hour</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Clear Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Satisfactory Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Minimum Passing Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Failed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Satisfactory Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WF</td>
<td>Withdrawal Failing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To remain in good standing a graduate student must maintain an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 “B” or better. Graduate credit will be given for grades of “A”, “A-”, “B+”, “B”, “B-”, “C+”, and “C” in graduate level courses. Graduate credit is not awarded for Pass/Fail grades. Grades of “P” or “F” do not count toward degree requirements. All graduate course grades earned at East Tennessee State University by a student will be used in computing the grade point average (GPA). An overall GPA of 3.0 is required for admission to candidacy and for graduation.

**“S”, “SP”, and “U” Grades**—The letter grades of “S” (Satisfactory Completion), “SP” (Satisfactory Progress), and “U” (Unsatisfactory) are given for Readings and Research, Capstone Projects, Thesis, and Dissertation. A grade of “S” carries graduate credit and indicates satisfactory completion of the course. Each program must specify the number of hours required for Thesis/Dissertation or Readings and Research. Degree completion requires an “S” on the most recent hours associated with Thesis/Dissertation or Readings and Research. “SP” indicates progress toward project or research completion, but carries no credit. This grade does not affect the student’s GPA. Students who receive an “SP” must, in subsequent semesters (including summer), enroll in additional hours of Thesis/Dissertations or Readings and Research until the requirements are completed. The “U” grade carries no credit and indicates unsatisfactory progress toward research or project completion. Students who receive a “U” must enroll for the course the following semester, including summer. The first “U” does not affect the GPA; the “U” is equivalent to an “F”.

6
Incomplete Grades – A grade of "I" (incomplete) indicates that a student was passing the course at the end of the semester, but due to circumstances beyond the student’s control, was unable to complete the course requirement. It also indicates that the student has received consent from the instructor to complete the work for which an “I” is assigned. The “I” grade cannot be used to allow a student to do additional work to raise a deficient grade or to repeat a course. An “I” grade must be removed no later than one calendar year from the time the grade is awarded. Time extension requests for removal of “I” grades must be submitted to and approved by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies before the allotted time expires. An “I” grade not removed under the guidelines noted above will be converted to an “F.” When an “I” grade converts to an "F" after one calendar year, the GPA is adjusted retroactively; consequently, a student may be subject to dismissal without a probationary term. A student cannot withdraw from or drop a course after a grade of “I” has been assigned or after one year has elapsed. To remove an “I” grade, the student must complete the work independently and must not register for the course a second time or attend the same course at a later time in order to complete the course requirements.

Repeating a Course – If a student chooses to repeat a course, all grades earned are computed in the grade point average. The grade earned on the repeat does not replace the original.

Grade Reports and Appeals – Grade reports are available through GoldLink to all students who complete registration each term. Academic departments are required to retain grade documentation for a period of one year. Specific student concerns regarding academic records, other than the Grade Appeal process described in the Student Handbook (Spectrum), must be addressed within one academic year from the date of posting of grades for the term in question.

Academic Probation – To remain in good standing, a graduate student must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better on all graduate work attempted. No more than 6 semester hours of “C” grades in the program of study can be applied toward the degree. Students must have a cumulative grade point of 3.0 or better in order to register for thesis or advance practice seminar. When the cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0, the graduate student will be placed on academic probation. If the student does not achieve a 3.0 cumulative grade point average at the conclusion of one probationary semester, the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and appropriate college/departamental/program officials will determine whether the student should be dismissed from graduate study at East Tennessee State University or continued on probation. No student will be allowed more than two probationary semesters, whether consecutive or cumulative. At the end of a second probationary semester a student whose cumulative grade point average is still below 3.0 will be dismissed from graduate study. A student will be removed from probationary status upon attaining a cumulative 3.0 grade point average. When an “I” grade converts to an “F” after one calendar year, the GPA is adjusted retroactively; consequently, a student may be subject to dismissal without a probationary term.

Dismissal – Students may be dismissed from the School of Graduate Studies for such reasons as academic misconduct, failure to meet conditions of admission, failure to meet a requirement of the program, or for exceeding the allowed number of probationary semesters.
Reinstatement – Students who have been dismissed from the School of Graduate Studies for academic reasons may address a written request for reinstatement to the chair of their department of major. The request should include reasons why the reinstatement should be considered.

The department will review the request for reinstatement and make recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the request is denied at the departmental level, the student may then direct a written appeal to the dean of the Graduate School, and a final decision will be made in accordance with policies established by the Graduate Council.

MSAH Program Timelines

1. Complete all coursework (30 credit hours) and develop committee for thesis/capstone project (advanced practice seminar).

2. File application for candidacy, approved program of study, and committee form with the School of Graduate Studies.

3. Pass written competency exams. (Offered the first and third Tuesday of March, June and November).

4. Complete thesis or capstone project (This may include approval from IRB).

5. File intent to graduate, clear records, and pay fees for graduation.

6. Complete oral defense.

7. Submit review copies of thesis to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

8. Submit final copies of thesis to the School of Graduate Studies.

Students have 6 years to complete the degree and time for completion of the degree is counted from the date of matriculation of the first course applied toward the degree requirements, including transfer work.

Revalidation of ETSU Coursework that Exceeds Matriculation Limits—It is the department’s responsibility to recommend to the School of Graduate Studies one of the following actions for revalidating course content in each instance that exceeds the matriculation limits. The department may:

1. Examine the student (orally or in writing) and report the results to the School of Graduate Studies.

2. Design an independent study if no course currently exists by which the student may update course content.

3. Have the student repeat the outdated course.

4. Have the student complete additional coursework.
This procedure may not be used to revalidate coursework for transfer purposes when the course already exceeds the matriculation limit at the time of application.

**Change in Program of Study**—Changes in the planned program of study for candidacy must be approved by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Forms for program changes are available in the Graduate Studies office or through its website.

**Required GPA**

In order to graduate, students must have a minimum 3.0 grade point average overall and on the program of study for all degrees.

**Intent to Graduate**

The student must file an Intent to Graduate Form with the School of Graduate Studies no later than the end of the second week of the semester in which the student expects to complete the requirements for a graduate degree. If the student does not graduate in that term, a new Intent Form must be completed and submitted prior to the published deadline.

**Graduation Instructions**

The School of Graduate Studies publishes a Graduation Instruction Sheet for each term which provides all deadline and instructions for meeting graduation requirements.

**Forms**

Please refer to the School of Graduate Studies website for appropriate forms for committee appointments, program of study, approval of thesis prospectus, candidacy and others. [http://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/forms/](http://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/forms/)
AGREEMENT

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Master of Science in Allied Health (MSAH) Graduate Student Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for following the policies and procedures in this handbook, the Graduate Catalog, ETSU policies and procedures, and any additional policies outlined by the University. I further understand that this manual is not intended to be all-inclusive and that individual instructors may establish additional policies provided these policies do not conflict with this manual or the policies, rules, or regulations or East Tennessee State University. I understand that violation may result in immediate dismissal from the MSAH Program.

_________________________________________  ______________
Student’s Signature                          Date