

## Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: Master of Health Administration (MHA)	Department: Health Management and Policy (HMP)
Degree or Certificate Level: MHA	College/School: College for Public Health & Social Justice
Date (Month/Year): April 2023	Assessment Contact: Kimberly R. Enard, PhD, Associate Professor and MHA Program Director
In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? AY 2021-2022	
In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? 2015	
Is this program accredited by an external program/disciplinary/specialized accrediting organization? Yes. The MHA program is accredited by Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME, <a href="http://cahme.org">cahme.org</a> ).	

### 1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle? (Please list the full, complete learning outcome statements and not just numbers, e.g., Outcomes 1 and 2.)

The Saint Louis University (SLU) competency model (Appendix 1) includes 21 competencies nested within five domains: leadership (L); critical thinking and analysis (CTA); management (M); culture and community engagement (CCE); and communication (C). All core courses required for the residential MHA (rMHA) and executive MHA (eMHA) program tracks are mapped to this competency model to ensure coverage of the two-year curriculum. The rMHA track is conducted 100% in person, while the eMHA track is conducted in a hybrid (but primarily online) format. In this report, we include assessments for one competency for each of the five domains, as outlined below:

- L1. Leadership Excellence: Demonstrate the abilities and behaviors that are characteristic of leadership excellence, which include establishing a vision and inspiring and supporting others to work towards that shared vision and related goals
- CTA2. Environmental Analysis: Evaluate political, economic, social, technological, workforce, legal and regulatory factors that impact systems, organizations, communities, and individuals at multiple levels along the health care continuum
- M4. Systems Management: Demonstrate the ability to deploy organizational resources and enforce accountability to support implementation of systems-based management approaches
- CCE2. Community Engagement: Apply evidence-based approaches to engage communities and multilevel partners in working together to improve modifiable determinants of health and health outcomes
- C2. Convey Information: Demonstrate formal and informal communication using traditional and contemporary modalities to convey messages that are clear and cogent for the target audience

### 2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning

Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please describe the artifacts in detail and identify the course(s) in which they were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

The program attempts to triangulate competency attainment for both tracks (unless otherwise indicated) through several direct and indirect assessments, including student self-assessments; faculty assessments; internship preceptor assessments (rMHA only); Year One (Y1) qualifying exam (rMHA only) and Year Two (Y2) comprehensive exam. The assessments used may vary by MHA track (residential v. executive); for example, eMHA students do not complete internships and do not take the Y1 qualifying exam. Summarized below are the direct and indirect measures included in this report.

#### **DIRECT MEASURES (rMHA and eMHA)**

1. Y1 Qualifying Exam: In 2022, we piloted for the first time a Y1 qualifying exam with the aim of assessing students' progress toward achieving specific competencies within five domains of the SLU MHA Competency

Model (Leadership, Critical Thinking and Analysis, Management, Cultural and Community Engagement, and Communication; attached). The exam covered content from HMP 5000, HMP 5030, HMP 5300, HMP 5500, HMP 5110, HMP 5190, HMP 5200, and HMP 5700. It consisted of two parts: 1. multiple choice, multiple response, true/false and short answer questions (approximately 1 hour); and 2. a brief case analysis of a health care management situation (approximately 2 hours), with a 2-3 page memo as the final deliverable. The exam is intended to serve as a formative learning experience; the assessments are in no way used to penalize students or impede your progress in the program. Rather, the assessments highlight additional learning and skill building opportunities that can help students reinforce competencies in areas where improvement is needed.

2. Y2 Comprehensive Exam: All a) rMHA, and b) eMHA students must complete a comprehensive exam as their culminating experience in the program. Using a competency-based rubric, faculty collectively evaluate students' ability to integrate the knowledge, skills and experience they have gained systematically and effectively (1) in the classroom and in the field and (2) communicate that knowledge, skills and experience as a professional. The comprehensive exams assess the students' progress toward competency achievement based on the students' analyses and presentations of the assigned case, which covers each of the five domains in the SLU MHA Competency Model (Leadership, Critical Thinking and Analysis, Management, Cultural and Community Engagement, and Communication).

### **INDIRECT MEASURES (rMHA and eMHA)**

We collect several indirect measures of students' progress toward competency achievement and overall program quality. In this report, we summarize post-survey data for the Y1 qualifying exam for continuing students and exit survey data that include placement data and students' satisfaction with their experiences in the program for graduating students.

1. Post Y1 Qualifying Exam: Students were asked to complete an experience survey during the week following the exam. The questions used as indirect measures of progress toward competency achievement were: "The topics and assignments in the Y1 courses sufficiently prepared me to succeed on the exam;" "I understand how the exam questions enabled me to demonstrate my progress toward achieving the program competencies;" "I understand how the case analysis enabled me to demonstrate my progress toward achieving the program competencies;" and "After taking the exam, I have identified specific areas in which I want to improve my progress toward achieving the program competencies."
2. Post-Graduation Placement/Employment: Students were surveyed between January 2022 – July 2022 to obtain data reflecting their a) post-graduate placements (rMHA) or b) current employment (eMHA)
3. Student Experience: Students were asked to characterize 1) how satisfied they were with their program of study; and 2) all things being equal, would graduates choose to go to their program again?

We do not offer MHA courses in Madrid or at any other off-campus locations.

### **3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process**

What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and **include them in/with this report document** (please do not just refer to the assessment plan).

#### **DIRECT MEASURES (rMHA and eMHA)**

1. Y1 Qualifying Exam: Faculty who teach Y1 courses (HMP 5000, HMP 5030, HMP 5300, HMP 5500, HMP 5110, HMP 5190, HMP 5200, and HMP 5700) were asked to contribute 10 or more multiple choice, multiple response, true/false and short answer questions that reflected the competencies targeted in their courses. The questions were entered into and administered via Canvas. The exam was programmed to randomly select five (5) questions from each course. The students' responses were auto-graded (e.g., students received immediate feedback). The brief case analysis 2-3 page memo was reviewed and scored by three (3) different faculty members based on their assessment of how well the students addressed the competencies within each domain with the competency model. Faculty members did not consult about scores until grading was complete.

- Y2 Comprehensive Exam:** Faculty write Q&A and develop competency-based rubrics for each domain. Each student receives the same case (e.g., a Harvard case study) to analyze in advance of his/her scheduled presentation (24 hours for rMHA and 48 hours eMHA students). Each student is allotted 20 minutes to present his/her analysis before a panel of 2 faculty in a simulated professional setting; presentations are followed by 10 minutes of Q&A. Faculty teams assess the analyses and presentations using the competency-based rubrics which cover each of the five domains in the SLU MHA Competency Model (Leadership, Critical Thinking and Analysis, Management, Cultural and Community Engagement, and Communication); to pass, students must earn  $\geq 3$  points for each domain (15 total); students receiving  $\geq 20$  total points pass with distinction. Faculty provide immediate feedback to students via exam debriefings.

Individual results for the Y1 and Y2 exams were entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Summary statistics (mean, median, range, frequency percentage) were calculated using Excel and Stata v. 13.1).

#### INDIRECT MEASURES (rMHA and eMHA)

- Y1 Qualifying Exam (Post Survey):** Data were collected via a Qualtrics survey and analyzed using Excel.
- Post-Graduation Placement/Employment:** Data were collected via a Qualtrics survey and analyzed using Excel.
- Student Experience:** Data were collected via a Qualtrics survey and analyzed using Excel.

#### 4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

#### DIRECT MEASURES (rMHA and eMHA)

- Y1 Qualifying Exam Results (rMHA):** The summary results of the rMHA Y1 qualifying exam are presented in Table 2 and Table 3 below. For the quiz component of the exam, the maximum possible score for each subject was 12.5 points. In general, there was wide variability in average scores within and across the different courses. For the case analysis part of the exam, most students were assessed as having moderate/average or notable/above average competency on each domain. However, 20-40% of students were assessed as having demonstrated little or no competency on leadership (20.5%); critical thinking and analysis (27.3%); management (25%); culture and community engagement (40.9%) and communication (34.1%).

Table 2. Y1 Subject Matter Knowledge	Accounting Semester 1 (S1)	Analytical Methods (S2)	Finance (S2)	Health Care Organization (S1)	Health Econ (S2)	Health Policy (S1)	Mgt of HCOs (S1)	Operations Mgt (S2)	Total Score
Student Score <sup>1</sup>	12.5	12.5	10	7.5	10	12.5	12.5	5	82.5
Scores for 2022 Cohort (n=44)									
Mean	8.9	9.9	7.4	8.7	11.1	9.0	10.3	7.6	72.8
Median	10	10	7.5	10	12.5	10	10	7.5	73.8
Min	2.5	2.5	0	5	2.5	2.5	5	0	42.5
Max	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	87.5

In Table 2 above, an example student's scores are highlighted in blue for each course.

Table 3 Y1 Progress toward Competency Achievement (Case Analysis)	Leadership	Critical Thinking & Analysis	Management	Culture and Community Engagement	Comm.
Individual Student Assessment <sup>1</sup>					
Little, or no, competency	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Minor, or very limited, competency	20.5%	27.3%	25.0%	40.9%	34.1%
Moderate, or average, competency	68.2%	34.1%	47.7%	50.0%	54.5%
Notable, or above average, competency	11.4%	38.6%	27.3%	9.1%	11.4%
Major, significant, recognizable competency	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

<sup>1</sup> Each student was informed in which percentage group they were assessed for each competency domain, compared the overall distribution of students in the cohort (n=44). In Table 3 above, an example student is highlighted in blue for each competency domain.

2. Y2 Comp Exam Results (rMHA and eMHA): The summary results of the Y2 Comprehensive Exam are presented in Table 4 below. The maximum possible score for each domain was 25 points. All students in each cohort were assessed at having at least moderate or average competency in each domain. Mean scores for each domain were higher for eMHA (n=4), compared to rMHA (n=37) students.

Table 4. Y2 Comprehensive Exam	rMHA, n=37				eMHA, n=4			
	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Min	Max
Leadership	3.2	3	1.5	4	3.8	3.5	3	5
Critical Thinking & Analysis	3.5	3.5	1.5	5	3.9	4	3	4.5
Management	3.3	3	1.5	5	3.8	3.5	3	5
Culture & Community Engagement	3.4	3	1.5	5	3.6	3.5	3	4.5
Communication	3.4	3	1.5	5	3.6	3.5	3	4.5
Total Score	16.8	16.5	7.5	22.5	18.6	18	15	23.5

Pass with Distinction, rMHA=9; eMHA=1

Pass, rMHA=25; eMHA=3

Fail/Retake, rMHA=3; eMHA=0

Pass Retake, rMHA=3; eMHA=not applicable

Scale:

1=Little, or no, competency

2=Minor, or very limited, competency

3=Moderate, or average, competency

4=Notable, or above average, competency

5=Major, significant, recognizable competency

#### INDIRECT MEASURES (rMHA and eMHA)

1. Y1 Qualifying Exam (Post Survey): The summary results of the rMHA Y1 qualifying exam post-survey are presented in Table 5 below. Of the 30 students who responded to the survey, most agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements: “The topics and assignments in the Y1 courses sufficiently prepared me to succeed on the exam” (80.0%); “I understand how the exam questions enabled me to demonstrate my progress toward achieving the program competencies” (80.0%); “I understand how the case analysis enabled me to demonstrate my progress toward achieving the program competencies” (93.3%); “After taking the exam, I have identified specific areas in which I want to improve my progress toward achieving the program competencies” (93.3%).

Table 5. Y1 Exam Post-Survey	<i>“The topics and assignments in the Y1 courses sufficiently prepared me to succeed on the exam.”</i>		<i>“I understand how the exam questions enabled me to demonstrate my progress toward achieving the program competencies.”</i>		<i>“I understand how the case analysis enabled me to demonstrate my progress toward achieving the program competencies.”</i>		<i>“After taking the exam, I have identified specific areas in which I want to improve my progress toward achieving the program competencies.”</i>	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Strongly Agree	3.3%	1	6.7%	2	20.0%	6	30.0%	9
Agree	76.7%	23	73.3%	22	73.3%	22	63.3%	19
Disagree	16.7%	5	16.7%	5	3.3%	1	6.7%	2
Strongly Disagree	3.3%	1	3.3%	1	3.3%	1	0.0%	0

2. **Post-Graduation Placement/Employment:** Post-graduate placement data for rMHA students graduating in Spring 2022 (n=38) improved to 97% employment within 60 days of graduation, compared to 93.5% in 2021. The median salary for Spring 2022 graduates was \$72,000 for jobs (n=15) and \$57,000 for fellowships (n=17). Administrative fellowships (n=17) and consulting (n=10) were commonly reported positions among the rMHA graduates. Of the 11 eMHA students graduating in Spring 2022, nine (9) were employed in a hospital or health system and three (3) were employed in information technology/analytics jobs. Three of 11 graduating eMHA students completed the exit survey. The median job salary reported was \$82,711.
3. **Student Experience:** Of the Spring 2022 rMHA graduates who completed the student experience survey (n=33), 88% reported begin satisfied or very satisfied with their program of study, and 85% indicated that, all things being equal, they would choose to go to their program again. Of the graduating eMHA student respondents, 2 of 3 (66%) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their program of study, and 100% reported that, all things being equal, they would choose to go to their program again.

## 5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

The data tell us that, despite a time of transition at program, department, and College leadership, the MHA program remains strong. Our MHA students continue to have internship, fellowship, and job placement rates that are competitive with the top programs in the nation. Students are making significant progress toward competency achievement and, not only is this being recognized by students, it is also being recognized by preceptors/practitioners in the field. We are a learning organization committed to continuous quality improvement (CQI). These data tell us that we are doing a better job of communicating to students the link between assignments/assessments and competencies and their progress toward competency achievement. This improved communication is also helping students, and faculty, identify areas for improvement. We will use this information to continue to improve our courses and program. We are pleased that our current students and recent alumni are doing quite well in the marketplace, and we hope to continue this success.

## 6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

- A.** When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

Students receive the aggregate results of self-assessment of competency achievement for their cohort so that they can reflect on their progress in context with others in class. Students are provided feedback on individual assignments, which are linked back to specific competencies targeted in the course. In addition, students receive summaries of the preceptor feedback based on their summer internship experiences – continuing (2nd year) students also share the highlights of the internship experiences with incoming (1st year) students and department faculty. Following the Y1 qualifying exam, students receive immediate feedback on subject matter knowledge via the quiz tool in Canvas. The students receive feedback from instructors on their case analyses within 2-3 weeks of taking the exam. Students also receive a report, or dashboard, with their results and aggregate results for the cohort to be discussed with their faculty mentor. For the Y2 comprehensive exam, students receive immediate feedback from faculty following their oral presentations. Faculty also debrief with students about the comprehensive exam process and results, and faculty discuss this information during the next HMP department meeting.

- B.** How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies

- Course content
- Teaching techniques
- Improvements in technology
- Prerequisites
- Course sequence
- New courses
- Deletion of courses
- Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings

Changes to the Assessment Plan

- Student learning outcomes
- Artifacts of student learning
- Evaluation process
- Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)
- Data collection methods
- Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

We continue to engage in a process of robust self-reflection and change. Despite multiple leadership transitions at the program director and chair level, we are improving our efforts to systematically collect, analyze, and use data for CQI. This will continue to be the primary focus of our CQI efforts over the next few years. We have implemented several changes in course sequencing based on feedback from students and alumni. We are also improving our evaluation tools and providing more training for faculty re: competency assessment. For example, our current department chair has implemented faculty development sessions during which department faculty who have demonstrated success in an area of pedagogy share best practices with others during webinars. The webinars are recorded and available on demand for full-time and part-time faculty.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

N/A

## 7. Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

1. Course Re-sequencing: Based on student and internship preceptor feedback, we changed the sequencing of our courses so that students take Operations Management prior to their summer internship. In AY 2023-2024, we are implementing a change to require students to take Analytical Methods in Y1, semester one (S1), prior to taking Operations Management in Y1S2.
2. Case Analysis: During the Y2 oral comprehensive exam debriefs, students told us they needed more exposure to the case analysis and presentation process throughout the program. Based on this feedback, we have increased students' exposure to case analyses throughout the curriculum. Students now conduct a comprehensive case analysis as a team in Y1S1 and present their findings in a case competition format. The Y1 qualifying exam, in which students conduct an individual-level case analysis, is also a result of student feedback.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

The course re-sequencing has not been formally assessed but the general feedback from students and preceptors has been positive. The increased exposure to the case analysis process is assessed during the Y1 qualifying exam and post-exam survey.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

Please see Section 4 above.

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

As stated above, we will continue to systematically collect, analyze, communicate, and use data to inform CQI efforts.

**IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools (e.g., artifact prompts, rubrics) with this report as separate attachments or copied and pasted into this Word document. Please do not just refer to the assessment plan; the report should serve as a stand-alone document.**

## LEADERSHIP (L)

L1. **Leadership Excellence:** Demonstrate the abilities and behaviors that are characteristic of leadership excellence, which include establishing a vision and inspiring and supporting others to work towards that shared vision and related goals

L2. **Ethical Behavior:** Demonstrate ethical behavior through words and actions, which include honesty, integrity, and a concern for justice

L3. **Social Responsibility:** Prioritize goals and policies that balance the mission, vision and values of organizational stakeholders with the values and needs of the community

L4. **Adapting to Change:** Evaluate changing environments, listen to diverse viewpoints, and propose effective responses that align with personal values and organizational mission

## CRITICAL THINKING AND ANALYSIS (CTA)

CTA1. **Data Analysis:** Apply appropriate methods and technology to analyze data patterns, trends and relationships

CTA2. **Environmental Analysis:** Evaluate political, economic, social, technological, workforce, legal and regulatory factors that impact systems, organizations, communities, and individuals at multiple levels along the health care continuum

CTA3. **Translating Complexity:** Translate the results of complex analyses into information that illustrates potential problems and opportunities in a persuasive, meaningful way

CTA4. **Evidence-Based Decision Making:** Assemble and utilize reliable and valid information sources and data to support informed, evidence-based decision-making

CTA5. **Systems Thinking:** Apply appropriate models and methods to analyze issues from a systems perspective and to design creative, flexible solutions that advance organizational goals and effectiveness

CTA6. **Ethical Analysis:** Identify ethical concerns in management and policy and analyze those concerns using appropriate frameworks and principles

## MANAGEMENT (M)

M1. **Management Functions:** Apply management theories, approaches and core functions to routine operations and to current and emerging issues in the health care environment

M2. **Teamwork:** Demonstrate the ability to lead and work with people and teams to accomplish planned goals and actions on time, with budgeted resources

M3. **Adapting to Uncertainty:** Under conditions of uncertainty, demonstrate the ability to produce high quality work, make decisions, adapt to changing priorities, and learn from mistakes

M4. **Systems Management:** Demonstrate the ability to deploy organizational resources and enforce accountability to support implementation of systems-based management approaches

M5. **Professionalism:** Demonstrate conduct characteristic of health care professionals, which includes adhering to professional expectations, workplace norms, and performance standards; engaging in professional and community service; and participating in professional development opportunities

## CULTURE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CCE)

CCE1. **Cultural Competence:** Build cultural competence in personal standards and practices and within the performance standards and practices of organizations, systems, and communities

CCE2. **Community Engagement:** Apply evidence-based approaches to engage communities and multilevel partners in



working together to improve modifiable determinants of health and health outcomes

## **COMMUNICATION**

**C1. Create Information:** Demonstrate the ability to promptly create and organize ideas and information that are effective and customized to fulfill the needs of the target audience

**C2. Convey Information:** Demonstrate formal and informal communication using traditional and contemporary modalities to convey messages that are clear and cogent for the target audience

**C3. Interpersonal Effectiveness:** Foster positive interpersonal relationships with internal and external stakeholders through use of bidirectional communication techniques, which include listening and responding appropriately to the ideas and opinions of others; giving and receiving feedback; and participating in crucial conversations

## **COMPETENCY DOMAIN RATING SCORES:**

5= major, significant and recognizable competency in this area

4= notable or above average competency in this area

3= moderate or average competency in this area

2= minor or very limited competency in this area

1= little or no competency in this area

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