



## SCHOOL OF POPULATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH Master of Health Administration

### SPHA 590 - Research Project (6 cr) Supervisor Role and Timelines

Thank you for your consideration of a supervisor role for the MHA program's SPHA 590 Research Project. Below is some information on the project, requirements for the students, grading, the supervisor's role and timelines.

#### **Overview**

SPHA 590 is a 6-credit project that is a student's capstone and is required for all MHA students. This portion of the MHA program enables students to apply acquired health administration skills to a specific problem or project under direct faculty supervision and, in some cases, a preceptor at the senior management level. Completion of a significant pre-approved project within a health care setting or organization and submission of a written report is required to graduate from the program.

#### **Student's role and responsibilities**

Before beginning the project, a brief (2-page) Project Proposal must be developed, reviewed by the project supervisor, and submitted to the MHA Program Director for approval.

The project will consist of a detailed study containing the background, objective, hypothesis, methods, rationale, results, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations for solutions or action. It must reflect the student's capacity to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the structure/policies/function of the health care setting or organization in which the research occurs
- Show an appreciation of the social, political, and economic context of the health care sector or agency delivering service, as it exists or functions
- Demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and methodological skills, acquired from MHA program modules, to conceptualize, develop, and operationalize a protocol with an underlying evaluation component.

In addition, the process of carrying out the project must demonstrate the student's ability to meet Graduate Program standards and those of the host health care setting or agency.

#### **Research Ethics**

Students are responsible for reviewing the ethics requirements for their project in consultation with their supervisor. Students should consult the "Checklist for Quality Improvement, Quality Assurance, Program Evaluation or Curriculum Development Studies Requiring Ethical Review<sup>1</sup>" for further details.

Institutional review boards (at the hospitals/ health authorities or at UBC) can also be consulted to determine whether ethical review is required. It is acknowledged that there is some 'gray area' on quality improvement initiatives and as such, students should build additional time into the project should ethics be required.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://research.ubc.ca/sites/research.ubc.ca/files/uploads/BREB\\_ChecklistForResearchRequiringEthicsReview.pdf](http://research.ubc.ca/sites/research.ubc.ca/files/uploads/BREB_ChecklistForResearchRequiringEthicsReview.pdf)

## Recommended timelines for the SPHA 590 Research Project\*

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| Year 1                                  | Students use first year courses to develop and enhance their understanding of issues in the health care field.   |
| Summer break before year 2              | Students explore topics for their project and identify possible supervisors  |
| Year 2 Fall and Spring semester         | Students formalize their ideas and use in-class discussions to develop their topic. Students write their project proposal  |
| Year 2 Summer semester (June to August) | Students write their project and prepare to submit to their supervisor in order to have a final grade assigned by the end of August. (Exact date set each year by the Faculty of Graduate Studies) |

\*timeline based on program completion by end of summer session of year 2 of the program. Students who anticipate a later program completion should contact the program to discuss an alternate timeline.

## Supervisor's role and responsibilities

Supervisors provide an important role in the development of a student's project. Graduate education can be greatly enhanced by the experience of working closely with faculty and working under his or her expertise. Students are asked to make the initial contact to approach potential supervisors and the level of support required is student driven. The approximate total number of hours is 10-20 for the entire project, depending on the student and his or her topic.

Supervisors are accessible to the student for consultation and discussion of the student's topic and ideas for their project.

- The frequency of meetings will vary according to the independence of the student. Ad-hoc meetings are satisfactory. Ideally, interaction should be determined through an individualized timeline determined between the supervisor and student based on the project proposal.
- Faculty supervisors must have a faculty appointment with UBC. The faculty appointment can be in any department/faculty of UBC.
- Supervisors facilitate introductions to other content experts to support the students' project needs.
- Supervisors grade the project.
- There is no required documentation for this role.

For information about the graduate advisor/supervision process, see Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website: <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/grad-admin/policies-procedures/supervision>

## Grading

This course is worth 6 credits—i.e., the equivalent of 4 regular MHA courses. The work should therefore reflect this credit weighting. A general guideline would be 50-75 pages, but the appropriate length for a specific research topic should be discussed with the supervisor.

The grade awarded is an "Honours", "Pass" or "Fail". A printed or electronic copy of the report is submitted to the supervisor for grading, and a second copy is submitted to the MHA Program office. Supervisors who have further questions about grading the project are encouraged to contact the MHA Program office.

## Contact Information

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