



Doctor of Health Sciences

Program Handbook

2023-2024 EDITION

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

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Welcome

Welcome to the Doctor of Health Sciences (DHSc) program at The George Washington University. This program allows clinical health professionals to advance their expertise and professional practice in either the clinical or academic environment. You will bring many assets to the program and your faculty, colleagues, advisors, mentors and a host of other stakeholders are excited to guide/accompany you on this journey. Success in the program will rely your ability to learn from others, reflect on your own assumptions, and make changes to promote your personal growth and professional advancement.

Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook is designed as a guide for students enrolled in the DHSc program at The George Washington University (GW). The handbook outlines the policies and regulations of the program relating to graduate students. These policies and regulations are to be considered an addendum to those outlined in the current School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) Bulletin, the Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities, and the University Policy on Academic Integrity. The current School of Medicine and Health Sciences Bulletin can be found at the Health Sciences website: <http://bulletin.gwu.edu/medicine-health-sciences/>

The program reserves the right to revise the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook as needed to facilitate the goals and mission of the program. The most updated version of the handbook will be posted in the Blackboard Orientation Course under the Student Resources link. Students are expected to remain current on all policies and procedures affiliated with their program of study. This handbook does not constitute a contractual obligation on the part of GW or the School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Please contact the program officials with any questions you may have regarding the information in this handbook or any other university publication.

Introduction

The Unique Character of a Doctor of Health Sciences Program

Gain a mastery of the design, implementation, and evaluation of healthcare programs, lead interprofessional teams, and evaluate evidence to advance healthcare. The program prepares those in clinical health positions with various backgrounds to build competencies in advanced professional practice, whether in clinical or academic environments.

The curriculum is primarily online, meaning you can continue in your profession full-time while learning when and where it is most convenient for you. There are two residencies required over separate weekends, and the program culminates with a finalized manuscript ready for submission to a peer review journal.

The program offers two concentrations:

- Clinical Practice Leadership Track
- Educational Practice Leadership Track

The program delivers the advanced skills and credentialing needed to meet expectations associated with higher-level positions.

General Information

The DHSc program is housed in the Department of Health, Human Function, and Rehabilitation Sciences (HHFR) within The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences is dedicated to improving the health of our local, national, and global communities by:

- **Educating** a diverse workforce of tomorrow's leaders in medicine, science, and health sciences.
- **Healing** through innovative and compassionate care.
- **Advancing** biomedical, translational, and health services delivery research with an emphasis on multidisciplinary collaboration.
- **Promoting** a culture of excellence through inclusion, service, and advocacy.

As a globally recognized academic medical center, [GW SMHS](#) embraces the challenge of eliminating health disparities and transforming healthcare to enrich and improve the lives of those we serve.

Office of Student Support (OSS)

Our goal is to provide all SMHS students with the highest quality support as they navigate the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the larger GW community.

Our Office supports several student-centered initiatives, including but not limited to:

- Academic Support
- Mental Health Support
- Student Life and SMHS Community Building

Our vision is to implement sustainable student support programs that improve educational outcomes, foster collaborative learning across SMHS, and develop a community of scholar-practitioners dedicated to the improvement of healthcare.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like additional information about OSS! We can be reached by emailing SMHSStudents@gwu.edu or calling 202-994-2818.

About the Department of Health, Human Function, and Rehabilitation Sciences.

The Department of Health, Human Function, and Rehabilitation Sciences captures the broad array of education, clinical practice innovation, and research being accomplished. Comprised of dedicated faculty and staff, our doctoral programs approach education and leadership development from an interdisciplinary perspective. In this way, we cultivate students' skills in critical thinking and research while guiding important insights into students' fields of study. We embrace the fundamental concepts of adult learning and encourage collaboration, experiential learning, creative thinking, and self-direction.

Doctor of Health Sciences Program Overview

The Doctor of Health Sciences Program consists of 48 credits in either the Clinical Leadership Track or the Educational Leadership Track. Of these 48 credits, 18 credit hours are in core content, 15 credits in research methods and inquiry, 9 credits in the chosen degree track, and 6 credits in electives. One elective needs to be a research methods course. The program is built to be completed at a part-time (6 credits) pace to support an adult learner and is offered in a distance education format to facilitate clinicians and other working healthcare professionals. There is a residency requirement for the program. In Seminar I and Seminar III, students are required to come to campus for an extended weekend to collaborate with peers and advisors related to their scholarly and research projects.

Throughout the program, students work to identify gaps in knowledge and best practices in healthcare. A process that is facilitated by previous work experiences as well as ongoing engagement in authentic contexts, primarily in clinical and educational settings. Students learn how to use program theory to identify projects, strategies, and initiatives to address those gaps. The interprofessional healthcare content throughout the program and track-specific coursework will strengthen students' skills to lead innovation and change as effective members of a collaborative team.

Why GW's Doctor of Health Sciences Program?

Program Learning Objectives

Graduates will:

1. Design programs to advance the practice of health professionals in academic and clinical settings.

Examples of track-specific objectives:

- a. Academic Track: Create educational programs that prepare participants to serve as effective health professionals in complex healthcare environments.
- b. Clinical Track: Design strategies to improve clinical practice guidelines and/or clinician performance in current healthcare contexts.

2. Collaborate with interprofessional stakeholders to foster improvements in education and practice in healthcare.

Examples of track-specific objectives:

- a. Academic Track: Collaborate with interprofessional stakeholders to build educational practices that foster teamwork in patient-centered care.
- b. Clinical track: Collaborate with interprofessional teams to address a common goal such as improved efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources, or improved satisfaction among patients and health care providers.

3. Apply systematic methods to appraise gaps in knowledge and best practices in healthcare.

Examples of track-specific objectives

- a. Academic track: Analyze gaps in educational research to support the effective preparation of health professionals to provide high-quality patient/client-care practice.
- b. Clinical track: Analyze gaps between the evidence of best practice and current practice in health care practice environments.

4. Advance the body of knowledge through action-oriented research and scholarship.

Examples of track-specific objectives

- a. Academic track: Design and test an educational innovation to support improved outcomes in healthcare education.
- b. Clinical track: Design and test a guideline to support effective clinical practice and improved outcomes in a healthcare environment.

The DHSc Experience

You will matriculate into the DHSc program in the Fall semester. Your courses and advising will begin right away. Before starting your coursework, you will complete an online orientation. During the orientation, you will learn more about the resources at GW to support your academic endeavors. You will also virtually meet the Program Director, program faculty, and staff advisors.

The program offers two concentrations in either clinical or educational practice. You are encouraged to reach out to your faculty and staff advisors as indicated to discuss your concentration, electives, and other course questions.

Clinical Practice Leadership Track

Manage the clinical aspects of a healthcare facility and improve its outcomes. By graduation you'll be able to:

- Design strategies to improve clinical practice guidelines, clinician performance, and improved outcomes in a healthcare environment
- Collaborate with interprofessional teams to address a common goal such as improved efficiency and effectiveness, or improved satisfaction among patients and health care providers
- Analyze gaps between the outcomes of best practice and current practice in healthcare practice environments

Educational Practice Leadership Track

Improve your health or higher-education staff's student outcomes and meet the rigorous standards for leadership positions in this field. By graduation you'll be able to:

- Create educational programs that prepare participants to serve as effective health professionals in complex healthcare environments
- Collaborate with interprofessional stakeholders to build educational practices that foster teamwork in patient-centered care
- Analyze gaps in educational research to support the effective preparation of health professionals
- Design and test an educational innovation to support improved outcomes in healthcare education

Coursework

Core DHSc Courses

The DHSc program requires a total of 48 credits. Eleven core courses (33 credits) are required; three courses (9 credits) within either the Clinical Practice and Educational Leadership and two courses (6 credits) are electives. One of those electives must be a research elective.

Core courses include:

HFR 8101 Interprofessional Collaboration in Practice
HFR 8102 Health Professional Practicum I
HFR 8103 Health Professional Practicum II
HFR 8107 Program Theory and Innovation in the Health Professions
HFR 8116 Academic and Clinical Leadership in the Health Professions
HFR 8203 Bioethical Implications of Health Research
HFR 8270 Research Methods in Health Professions I
HFR 8271 Research Methods in Health Professions II
HFR 8996 Seminar I
HFR 8997 Seminar II
HFR 8998 Seminar III

Clinical Practice Leadership Track Courses (pick 3):

CML 6203 Health Information, Quality, and Outcomes
HCQ 6206 Introduction to Health Care Quality
HFR 8313 Knowledge Translation in Health Care
HFR 8314 Health Care Research

Educational Practice Leadership Track Courses:

HFR 8212 Teaching Strategies in the Health Professions
HFR 8213 Curriculum Development in the Health Professions
HFR 8214 Assessment in Health Professions Education

Elective Courses (pick 2):

Course electives may be selected in collaboration with your faculty and program advisors. They will be based on your interests, development needs, and career goals. You may complete a course in the track that you are not completing a concentration (see the above list). The below courses are also approved elective courses. At least one elective course must be a research elective (denoted by *)

COHM 6220 Finance for Health Care Operations
HFR 8123 Qualitative Methods for Health Professional Leadership*
HFR 8220 Measurement of Human Function and Learning
HFR 8272 Mixed Methods of Translational Health Sciences*
HFR 8227 Survey Methods for Health Professionals*
HSCI 6241 The Health Care Enterprise
HSCI 6297 Independent Study for Health Professionals
CTS 6266 Grant Writing – Individual Investigator*
THS 8127 Systematic Review of Health Care Innovation*

Course Descriptions

Please visit the SMHS Bulletin to view all up-to-date course offerings and descriptions.

[Doctor of Health Sciences Program Bulletin](#)

Health Professional Practicum Courses I and II

HFR 8102 and HFR 8103 are designed to provide the student a mentored opportunity to complete a project that is important to the work or professional context of the student and requires the student to apply leadership skills to the design, implementation, and evaluation of project outcomes. The project focus and design encompass a broad range of possibilities but must be approved by the course mentor or supervisor. Examples of projects completed to date include: developing a fellowship program to enhance advanced competency skills; assessing the needs and developing strategies to address burnout in health care providers; redesigning the curriculum of an accredited program to improve efficiencies and contain cost; conducting a pilot study to determine predictors and possible interventions associated with retention strategies in a rigorous health science program; and,

Students are best prepared for completing the practicum courses following the completion of HFR 8107 Program Theory and Innovation. Strategies related to identifying gaps, designing interventions, evaluating processes, and outcomes covered in that course will be applied to the student's work during the practicums. It is feasible that the project undertaken by the student is part of a larger project that will be ongoing. The student agrees with the course mentor that the "deliverables" related to the project are consistent with the expected level of effort associated with the course credits.

Although it is possible to utilize the practicum series to complete critically important pilot work for planned research in the Seminar series, the practicum is a distinct sequence that must stand on its own. The Seminar Series is similar to the dissertation series in most programs; students complete research to be submitted for publication over the course of three semesters, usually the final three semesters of the program.

A separate handbook describes the Seminar Series.

Course Sequence:

We have outlined a recommended sequence. We recommend you take 2 courses (6 credits) each semester to complete the program in two and a half academic calendar years. You will work with the Program Associate to register for your courses.

FALL ADMIT			
Fall 1	Research Methods I		
	Leadership in the HP		
Spring 1	Research Methods II		
	Program Theory and Innovation		
Summer 1	HP Practicum I		
	Teaching in the HP		
	Knowledge Translation in Health Care		
Fall 2	Bioethical Implications of Health Research		
	HP Practicum II		
Spring 2	Interprofessional Collaboration in Practice		
	Intro to Quality or other CP leadership course		
	Curriculum in HP		
Summer 2	Seminar I		
	Health Care Research		
	Assessment in HP Education		
Fall 3	Seminar II		
	Research Elective		
Spring 3	Seminar III		
	Elective		
	KEY		
	Required for both tracks		
	Required for Academic Leadership		
	Required for Clinical Leadership		Note: Must take 3 of the 4 courses

Advisors & Mentors at GWU DHSc

Faculty Advisor

You will be assigned a faculty advisor to support you throughout the program. Please schedule a meeting with your faculty advisor when indicated to discuss career aspirations and if you wish to discuss the curriculum goals in more detail.

Program Advisor/Associate

The program advisor will be assigned by the program immediately before or just following orientation. Program advisors facilitate doctoral students' access to needed resources, support adjustments to the demands of doctoral education, and guide individual development program plans. In collaboration with the Program Director, Program Advisors/Associates:

1. Monitor progress in the program.
2. Assist in identifying students' specific learning needs.
3. Support students in developing and updating an individualized development plan
4. Encourage the student to use available educational and research resources.
5. Advise the student in the selection of electives.
6. Assist the student in understanding the unique characteristics of a Doctor of Health Sciences degree.

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Mentorship in program courses and Seminars

In addition to the advisors described above, students may be assigned a mentor in several of the core courses. The assigned mentors are typically course instructors who work with students toward the successful completion of course goals and objectives.

Students are also assigned a research mentor and a subject matter expert when completing their research in the Seminar series.

- Seminar Course Instructor: This is a GW Health Sciences faculty member that is experienced in either the clinical or the health professional educational setting, depending on a student's track and topic area. The instructor will work with the student to:
 - Approve the research question.
 - Guide the structure and content of the investigation.
 - Approve the selection of the target peer-reviewed journal.

- Approve the final manuscript.
- Research Mentor or Subject Matter Expert: This individual can be external or internal to GW but will have specific expertise in the area the student is investigating. Students are asked to identify an appropriate mentor with expertise aligned with their research area early in the process.
- Additional information is available in the Seminar Handbook.

Policies & Procedures

Academic Policies

Students are responsible for staying up to date with all SMHS and University policies and procedures. Please visit the bulletins below for additional information.

- [George Washington University Bulletin](#)
 - Guide to Students' Rights and Responsibilities
 - Equal Opportunity
 - Sexual Harassment
 - Privacy of Student Records
 - Student Grievance Procedures
 - University Policy Regarding Religious Holidays
 - Tuition Refund Policy
- [Health Sciences Programs Bulletin](#)
 - Background Checks and Drug Screenings
 - Course Drop Refund Schedule
 - Authorship on Scientific and Scholarly Publications
 - Computer-Based Exam Policy
 - Student Documentation in the Medical Record
 - Ethical Behavior and Professionalism
 - Health Screening and Immunization Policy
 - Technical Standards and Essential Functions for Admission, Continuance, and Graduation

Grading Policy.

The following grading system is used for graduate students: A, Excellent; B, Good; C, Satisfactory; F, Fail; other grades that may be assigned are A-, B+, B-, and C+. Symbols that may appear include AU, Audit; I, Incomplete; IPG, In Progress; W, Authorized Withdrawal; Z, Unauthorized Withdrawal; CR, Credit; NC, No Credit.

Unauthorized Withdrawal:

The symbol of Z is assigned when students are registered for a course that they have not attended or have attended only briefly, and in which they have completed no graded work. At the end of the academic year, students' records are reviewed; if there is more than one Z per Semester, a student's record will be encumbered until released by the student's advising office. The symbol of Z is not a grade but an administrative notation.

Course Repeats:

Except for courses that specifically state that repetition for credit is permitted, a candidate for a degree at GW may not repeat a course in which a grade of C for graduate students or better was received, unless

required to do so by the department concerned. A Registration Transaction Form must be submitted to the Health Sciences Student Services for processing, accompanied by a written statement by the Program Director authorizing the repeat registration.

Incompletes:

The symbol I (Incomplete) indicates that a satisfactory explanation has been given to the instructor for the student's inability to complete the required work of the course during the Semester of enrollment. At the option of the instructor, the symbol I may be recorded if a student, for reasons beyond the student's control, is unable to complete the work of the course, and if the instructor is informed of, and approves, such reasons before the date when grades must be reported. This symbol may be used only if the student's prior performance and class attendance in the course have been satisfactory. Any failure to complete the work of a course that is not satisfactorily explained to the instructor before the date when grades must be turned in will be graded F, Failure.

Grade Changes:

If acceptable reasons are later presented to the instructor, that instructor may initiate an appropriate grade change. The work must be completed within the designated time period agreed upon by the instructor, student, and school. Incomplete work must be made up by a date agreed upon by the instructor and the student but no later than the last day of the examination period for the semester immediately following the semester or summer session in which the notation of I is assigned. An extension of one additional semester can be requested by the student and may be approved by the program director.

Students who are granted an Incomplete must work with their instructor to develop a learning contract. This document outlines the work to be completed, due dates, and includes an acknowledgment by the student and instructor that failure to complete work by the stated due dates will fail the assignment(s).

When work for the course is completed, the instructor will complete a grade change form and submit it to the Office of the Registrar. The final grade will replace the symbol of "I". If work for the course is not completed within the designated time, the grade will be converted automatically to a grade of F, Failure, 0 quality points, and the grade-point average and academic standing recalculated. For additional guidance, see the [University Bulletin](#).

The Grade-Point Average: Scholarship is computed in terms of the grade-point average, obtained by dividing the number of quality points by the number of credits for which the student has registered, both based on his or her record in this university. The grade-point average is computed as follows: A, 4.0; A-, 3.7; B+, 3.3; B, 3.0; B-, 2.7; C+, 2.3; C, 2.0; for each credit hour for which the student has registered as a degree-seeking student. Grades of C-, D+, D, and D- are not used for doctoral students. In the case of a student who is allowed to repeat a course, the first grade received remains on the student's record and is included in the grade-point average. Courses marked AU, CR, I, IPG, P, NP, R, W, or Z are not considered in determining the average, except that courses marked I will be considered when a final grade is recorded. With the exception of Consortium courses, grades in courses taken at other institutions are not considered in computing the grade-point average.

Academic Warning and Probation

A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.2 will receive a letter of warning from either the department or the Office of Student Services. A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. The probationary period will extend until the student has completed 9 credits in their course of study. If the student succeeds in raising their cumulative GPA to 3.0 or higher, academic probation will be lifted. A student who fails to raise their cumulative GPA to a 3.0 or has been placed on probation more than one time will be recommended for dismissal from the Program which is in accordance with SHMS policies. Students who believe their grade or evaluation is unjust or inaccurate have the right to an appeal process as outlined on the [Health Sciences Academic Website](#).

Repeated Submissions

A faculty course lead may allow a student with one opportunity to resubmit a paper that does not meet a passing standard in a course (applies to HFR courses only). The repeated submission opportunity is limited to one per course and the maximum grade assigned is the minimal passing grade for the assignment. That faculty member providing the second opportunity is required to inform the academic standing committee of that repeat attempt. A student will be restricted to no more than 3 repeated submissions during the program. This policy does not apply to faculty review and consultation prior to the submission due date.

Registration Policy

Maintaining Continuous Registration.

As per the guidelines provided in the [SMHS Bulletin](#), all DHSc students are required to maintain continuous registration from their first Semester of enrollment through the successful completion of their program. Maintaining continuous registration means that the student is enrolled in at least one class every Fall and Spring Semester until graduation. Summer is generally considered an optional term, but due to the DHSc suggested program schedule, it is required.

Failure to maintain continuous registration is considered breaking enrollment. If a student breaks enrollment, they will have to reapply for admission to resume their studies. Readmission is not guaranteed. Students who break enrollment and must reapply for admission are subject to the current criteria, regulations, curricula, and tuition rate at the time of readmission.

Under very specific circumstances, continuous registration may be maintained by registering for Continuous Enrollment (CE) or a Leave of Absence (LOA). Each is briefly described below in the GWU University Graduate Student Bulletin:

Continuous Enrollment (CE).

Once entered into a degree program, a student is expected to be continuously enrolled and actively engaged in fulfilling the requirements for the degree each semester of the academic year until the degree is conferred. A student is considered to be continuously enrolled when registered for courses through GW or when registered for continuous enrollment and engaged in and appropriately registered for activities such as the following, with the prior approval of the school in which the student is enrolled: cooperative work semester; study abroad program; attendance at another institution with prior approval to have work transferred back to the GW program; completion of outstanding work in courses in which a grade of Incomplete or In Progress was received; or non-course instructional activities unique to the

particular school. This status is generally limited to one year. Should the student break continuous enrollment at the University and not request and be granted a leave of absence (see below), they must apply for readmission and, if granted, be subject to the requirements and regulations then in force.

[Leave of Absence \(LOA\).](#)

A degree student who finds it necessary to interrupt the active pursuit of the degree may petition their advising office for a leave of absence for a specific period of time, generally limited to one calendar year. A degree student who discontinues active enrollment in degree studies without being granted a leave of absence, or a student granted a leave who does not return to active study at the close of the period of approved absence, must apply for readmission and be subject to the regulations and requirements then in force. The right to the use of the University facilities is suspended while the leave is in effect.

Please note: During a LOA, faculty members are not to help students with the capstone and students will not have access to many of the University's resources. If the student does not enroll each Semester and has not been granted a LOA or CE, they will break enrollment and need to discuss their options for readmission with the Program Director.

Deceleration.

The doctoral program is structured to be completed within three years. Upon entry into the program, students are expected to follow the recommended program of study. Students who are having difficulty maintaining a full workload should speak to their advisor about other options (see [Leave of Absence](#)). Some courses need to be taken in a particular order, your Program Associate and Program Director can walk you through these policies should you need to decelerate.

Registration Procedures

Students will work with the DHSc program advisor to register for courses each semester. The administrator will contact students individually during the course registration period to facilitate enrollment. Students seeking to review their program of study should reach out to make an appointment with the program advisor.

Course Drops and Withdrawals

DHSc students should speak to their academic advisor before dropping or withdrawing from a course (see Deceleration, above).

Drop vs. Withdraw

A dropped course is removed from the student's record and typically incurs a refund. A withdraw results in a grade of W and does not include a refund. The Health Sciences drop/refund schedule is available here and is updated each semester: <https://smhs.gwu.edu/academics/health-sciences-programs/student-services/course-drop-refund-schedule>

After the add/drop period, DHSc students need approval from their advisor, Department Chair, and Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences for course drops. Both a Course Drop/Withdrawn Petition and a Registration Transaction Form must be submitted for review. If the student is requesting to drop

all courses, a request for a LOA should be included to maintain enrollment.

Withdraw requests prior to the deadline only require a Registration Transaction Form, but students should consult with their advisor prior to submitting the request. Requests to withdraw after the deadline require the same petition process as dropping a course after the deadline.

Failure to attend classes or unofficial notification to the instructor does not constitute dropping a course and may result in a transcript notation of Z (unauthorized withdrawal) or a failing grade. Courses can be dropped only through the add/drop procedure described above.

Academic Integrity.

GW SMHS faculty and students have the joint responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and guaranteeing the high standard of conduct of the institution. An ethical code is based upon the support of both faculty and students who must jointly accept the responsibility to live honorably and to act when necessary to safeguard the academic integrity of this University.

Students enrolled in doctoral programs in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to The George Washington University's mission as an institution of higher education and in accordance with [the Code of Academic Integrity](#). A student is obligated to refrain from acts that they know, or under the circumstances have reason to know, impair the academic integrity of the University. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to cheating; fabrication; plagiarism; knowingly furnishing forged or false information to any agent of the University for inclusion in an academic record; academic dishonesty; violation of the rights and welfare of the animal or human subjects in research; and misconduct as a member of either School or University committees or recognized groups or organizations.

By submitting work for evaluation in this program, you represent it as your own intellectual product. Unless explicitly (written) permission is extended by the course instructor, you may not submit for evaluation any content (e.g., ideas, text, code, images) that was generated, in whole or in part, by Generative Artificial Intelligence tools (including, but not limited to, ChatGPT and other large language models). Doing so in this course constitutes cheating under the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity.

All members of the GW community are responsible for immediately informing the instructor, Department Chair, the Office of Academic Integrity, and/or the Academic Integrity Council of any suspected violations of its Code of Academic Integrity. The Academic Integrity Council, composed of four students and two faculty members, is responsible for implementing its Code of Academic Integrity according to the procedures set forth therein. This includes formal hearings of suspected violations. Students and faculty should become familiar with the Code of Academic Integrity, copies of which are provided in student and faculty publications and materials, posted on the GW website, and can be obtained at the Office of Academic Integrity.

Dismissal:

A doctoral student who has received two or more grades below “B” (3.0) may be recommended for dismissal. In courses that are graded Credit/No Credit, a No Credit (NC) grade is considered a grade below a “B”. Additional conditions for dismissal and the full policy may be found in the Regulations section of the Health Sciences [Bulletin](#).

Student Appeals Process.

DHSc students have the right to appeal any University decision made regarding their academic record. All appeals follow the same informal and formal attempts as resolution. Grade appeals include an additional aspect of the formal process, which is specified in the Regulations section of the [Bulletin](#) called *Appeal Procedures for Cases of Alleged Improper Academic Evaluation*. For appeals not involving academic evaluation, please refer to the process below:

Informal Attempts at Resolution: Prior to appealing a decision through the Health Sciences Dean’s Office, the student should first attempt to resolve the matter with the faculty member(s) most directly responsible. The student must submit a written appeal to the relevant faculty member(s) within ten calendar days of the time of the perceived academic infraction, with a copy to the Program Director. The letter requesting an appeal must include the following information:

- i. A description of the reason for requesting the appeal.
- ii. A detailed description and timeline of events.
- iii. A statement explaining outcome sought by student.
- iv. A clear plan of action if the appeal is approved.

If no resolution results, the student should then consult with the individual at the next administrative level; for example, the Program Director or the chair of the relevant department. A review shall then be conducted by the Program Director and Department Chair, consulting as appropriate the student and faculty involved.

If there continues to be no resolution, the Program Director, Department Chair, or student may contact the Health Sciences Dean’s Office and solicit assistance to ensure that adequate steps are made to resolve the issues at an informal level without the complaint escalating to the status of a formal appeal.

Formal Attempts at Resolution: If a mutually satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the student may, within five days of the decision being rendered, submit a written letter of appeal to the Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences.

Application for Graduation.

All DHSc students are to complete the online graduation application in GWeb for the Semester in which they plan to graduate. The deadlines to submit the application via GWeb are February 1 for Spring, July 1 for Summer, and October 1 for Fall. If a student does not complete their degree requirements in the Semester anticipated in the initial graduation application, they must re-apply for graduation in a later Semester. Students must be actively enrolled in the Semester in which they are applying for graduation.

The Health Sciences Dean’s Office will contact the student regarding all graduation and commencement matters (tickets, parking, obtaining regalia, etc.) if they indicated on the graduation application that they plan to attend Commencement. Information pertaining to graduation can also be found on the main GW and Health Sciences websites.

Student Accounts and Financing a Graduate Education

Health Sciences admission decisions are made without regard to financial need. Descriptions of available financial assistance are provided in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences' Sources of Aid (<http://smhs.gwu.edu/fin-aid/sources>) and the GW Office of Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships website (<http://www.gwu.edu/~fellows/>). Students enrolled at other campuses or centers should contact their program faculty to determine if there is tuition support available.

NOTE: Please review the eligibility factors for details on financial aid eligibility. Students following the program of study will be considered full-time students from Semesters 1 - 5, and half-time students in Semester 6. Students will be below half-time status starting Semester 7. Please contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance directly for specific information about financial aid eligibility.

Students utilizing federal financial aid must also be aware of [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\) regulations](#) for graduate students. These are minimum academic standards that must be met in order to receive federal financial assistance.

Billing

The George Washington University bills by Semester. Statements are available approximately 4-6 weeks prior to the start of the Fall and Spring Semesters and approximately 3-4 weeks prior to the Summer Semester. An email notification is sent when the bill is ready to view. GW does not mail paper statements; all billing is done electronically through the [Student Accounts eBill system](#).

Students always have access to their [eBill](#) and Student Account status through [GWeb](#). Students are strongly encouraged to check their Student Accounts regularly to ensure that the account is in good standing.

Students can add Authorized Users (e.g., parent, relative, spouse) so they may also review account activity and/or make online payments.

Should any issues arise with your eBill, please contact the Student Accounts Office:

Student Accounts Office

Finance Division
45155 Research Place
Ashburn, VA 20147
Phone: 202-994-7350 | Fax: 571-553-1099
sao@gwu.edu

Due Dates: Payment for each term is due on the first day of the Semester or upon registration for any courses added after the first day. If an outstanding balance remains after the start of the Semester, a monthly statement including late payment fees and finance charges will be sent. This statement will have a new due date. Please remit payment by this date to avoid additional late payment fees and finance charges. Students are not dropped from classes for non-payment.

Late Payment: Failure to meet payment deadlines results in an administrative hold, late fees, and finance charges. The administrative hold will remain on the account until the balance is paid in full. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that payment arrangements are made in a timely manner.

Financial Hold: A financial hold can be placed on a student's account for a variety of reasons. The Student Accounts Office applies financial holds for outstanding balances, returned checks, and invalid addresses. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their account for holds.

Monthly Payment Plans.

The university has partnered with ECSI to offer an interest-free monthly payment plan available to all students. Specific information regarding these payment plans may be found online through the [Office of Student Financial Assistance](#).

Student Health Insurance.

GW offers voluntary comprehensive health insurance through [Aetna Student Health](#) by the Affordable Care Act, many benefits that are offered include:

- An unlimited lifetime maximum benefit
- Prescription benefit coverage
- Preventative services covered at 100% (at preferred providers)
- Contraception covered 100% (at preferred providers)

Additional information regarding Student Health Insurance may be found through [Colonial Health Center](#) Note: Students may opt out of GW's insurance plan through any private plan that meets university criteria for coverage.

Tuition Awards and Scholarships.

GW SMHS offers limited tuition awards and scholarship assistance for students in the Health Sciences. These resources come from a variety of different endowed and restricted scholarship funds as well as through research or contracted training grants. To qualify, an applicant must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, be enrolled full-time in an approved program of study, and demonstrate exceptional potential for success in their program as evidenced by their post-secondary academic achievement, professional experiences, and leadership in the community. No additional scholarship application is required for consideration.

Tuition awards and scholarships are credited to the student's account at the beginning of each Semester after the student has registered for the required credits. These awards cover the cost of tuition for coursework that is credited towards the student's degree program, up to the total amount of the award. Any part of the tuition award that is not used within the academic term stated reverts to the department and cannot be converted to cash.

The student has full responsibility, unless the award letter states otherwise, for covering the costs of the following charges upon registration: The Student Association fee, tuition charges above the tuition award, late registration fees, special course-related fees, and the health insurance fee. The student will also be liable for any payment due and charges for courses that are (1) not on the student's program of study, or not taken for credit. Consortium courses are allowed if the particular course is not offered at GW and if the consortium course is included in the student's official program of study document.

Award Termination: All or part of a tuition award or scholarship may be terminated at any time if the conditions of the award as described in the award letter are not met or if poor academic performance warrants it. This also includes course registration situations in which a student drops a course once the Semester has begun and does not replace it with another approved course carrying the same number of credit hours. In this case, the tuition award will be withdrawn and the student will be liable for any payment due. In some cases, the entire award is withdrawn. The George Washington University reserves the right to terminate a tuition award or scholarship immediately and without prior notice if, in the judgment of the Department Chair or awarding department and in concurrence of the Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences, such action is warranted.

Tax Implications: It is the responsibility of the student to understand the federal and state income tax implications of receiving a tuition award or scholarship. The University has no tax withholding or reporting requirements related to the tuition component of a tuition award or scholarship. The Tax Department's website (<http://taxdepartment.gwu.edu>) provides general information to assist students in determining tax liability and reporting obligations. Because tax liability depends on a student's particular circumstances, students are advised to contact a personal tax advisor or the IRS with any questions or concerns

Student Loan Implications: It is the responsibility of the student to understand the student loan implications of receiving a tuition award or scholarship. If the student has applied to borrow any sum and has financial awards, then an adjustment may be made to the loan amount. It is recommended that the student consult with a representative from the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) for additional information.

The OFSA is located in Colonial Central (University Student Center, lower level), 202-994-6620, finaid@gwu.edu, <http://financialaid.gwu.edu>.

Important Information Regarding Federal Student Loan Eligibility.

Federal regulations require students to maintain good academic standing and make [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\)](#) in order to remain eligible to receive federal student loans. The federal standard for *making satisfactory academic progress* is measured in three ways: cumulative GPA, Percentage of Credits Earned (PACE), and maximum time frame. For details regarding any of these policies and evaluation of SAP, visit the [Office of Student Financial Assistance](#).

Full-Time/Half-Time Certification.

Students who intend to register for less than the number of credit hours required in the Fall and Spring Semesters (full-time = 9; half-time = 4.5 credit hours), and who need to be certified as in full or half-time status must complete the Full-/Half-Time Certification Form. The requirements and limitations of this certification are listed on the first page of the form. The form should be completed and submitted to the Office of Student Services (hsp@gwu.edu) after student registration and academic advisor approval.

Note: Students enrolled in Summer Semester classes are considered half-time as long as they are enrolled in at least 3 credits. They will not need to complete and submit the Full-/Half-Time Certification Form for the Summer Semesters.

Students registered for CE may be certified as half-time and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.