COLLEGE OF HUMAN ECOLOGY
Graduate Programs in Health

Overview

What is a Master's Program?

After completing an undergraduate degree, many students choose to further their education by pursuing a Master's, or graduate, degree. A Master's degree is a second degree awarded at the postgraduate level to individuals who have successfully undergone study demonstrating a high level of expertise in a specific field of study or area of professional practice. It serves to further a students's knowledge in a particular subject, explore other areas of interests after undergraduate, or to improve career prospects. Most graduate programs require an applicant to have gained a Bachelor's degree prior to matriculation into the program. However, there are certain programs that allow undergraduate students to start their Master's degree as they complete their bachelor's degree; these programs are more commonly known as "4+1 Programs". The number of individuals holding a Master's degree has increased in the past years. While having a graduate degree does have many benefits, such as providing students with additional knowledge and the opportunity to regularly meet with key industry players, it does not necessarily make them a more "competitive candiate". Students should pursue a graduate degree if they are genuinely interested in the subject, and if the degree will be beneficial for their career.
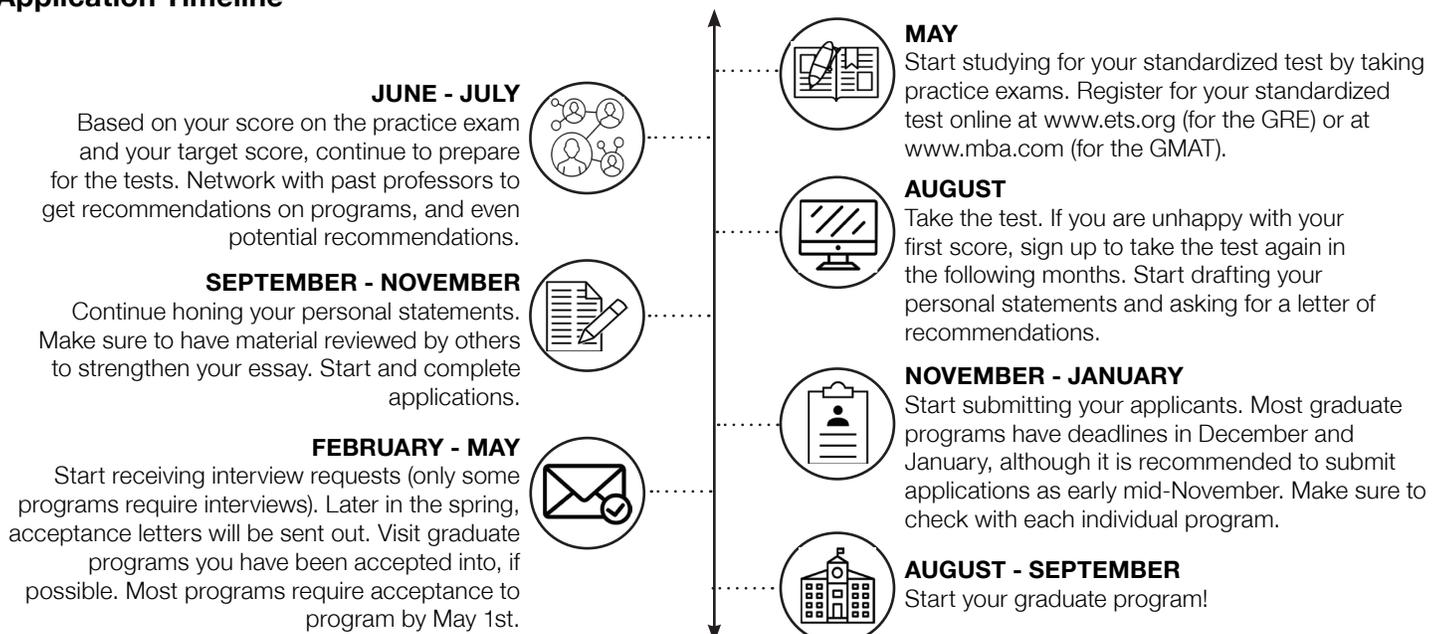
Duration of Program

Master's Degree usually last from 1 to 3 years, dependeing on the degree and the institution. For example, dual graduate programs that allow students to earn two Master's degree concurrently take, in general, 3 years. On the other hand, certain programs allow their undergraduate degrees, requiring only one additional year of studies. The majority of graduate programs, such as Master's in Public Health, however, are two year programs.

Cost of Program

The cost of attendence varies based on numerous factors, such as whether the institution is a private or public one, the duration of the program, and the cost of attending the school itself. Public schools are usually more affordable for in-state students, and prestigious programs tend to cost more. On average, graduate programs cost $40,000 to $60,000 per year. However, many graduate programs do offer scholarships and tuition discounts, in return for being a teaching or research assistant.

Application Timeline

JUNE - JULY
Based on your score on the practice exam and your target score, continue to prepare for the tests. Network with past professors to get recommendations on programs, and even potential recommendations.

SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER
Continue honing your personal statements. Make sure to have material reviewed by others to strengthen your essay. Start and complete applications.

FEBRUARY - MAY
Start receiving interview requests (only some programs require interviews). Later in the spring, acceptance letters will be sent out. Visit graduate programs you have been accepted into, if possible. Most programs require acceptance to program by May 1st.

MAY
Start studying for your standardized test by taking practice exams. Register for your standardized test online at www.ets.org (for the GRE) or at www.mba.com (for the GMAT).

AUGUST
Take the test. If you are unhappy with your first score, sign up to take the test again in the following months. Start drafting your personal statements and asking for a letter of recommendations.

NOVEMBER - JANUARY
Start submitting your applicants. Most graduate programs have deadlines in December and January, although it is recommended to submit applications as early mid-November. Make sure to check with each individual program.

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER
Start your graduate program!

Master of Health Administration (MHA)

The MHA is a degree with a general focus in administration and skill building around the healthcare industry. Most programs have a multi-faceted approach that includes coursework in healthcare policy, business, and law. Executive MHA tracks are offered for executives, physicians, and healthcare professionals looking to enhance management and leadership skills. Graduates often pursue a career in consulting, hospital or clinical administration roles, and other related fields.

Most programs require the GRE or GMAT. Average length of study is 2 years, including a summer internship opportunities. Some recommended classes include statistics, accounting, and health policy.

Possible careers with a MHA degree include:
- Healthcare Consultant
  - Average annual salary: $49,800 - $103,600
- Healthcare Administrator
  - Average annual salary: $103,700
- Hospital CEO/CFO
  - Average annual salary: $155,000 - $156,000

Well-known Programs:
- Cornell University, Sloan Program in Health Administration
- University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Master of Health Services Administration Program
- University of Minnesota, School of Public Health

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)

The MSN is a degree that allows candidates to learn skills and advanced training in nursing care and health care services. Students pursuing this degree gain more opportunities for higher pay and greater responsibilities in nursing. It is projected that career opportunities in this field will rise with the aging population.

Most programs require the GRE. Average length of study is within 2 to 3 years. Some programs may require a Bachelor's degree in Nursing. Most have required classes such as anatomy, chemistry, microbiology, and statistics.

Possible Careers with a MSN degree include:
- Director of Nursing
  - Average annual salary: $62,250 - $89,900
- Nurse Practitioners
  - Average annual salary: $68,650 - $86,700
- Nurse Anesthetist
  - Average annual salary: $157,700

Well-known Programs:
- Johns Hopkins University, School of Nursing
- University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing
- University of California San Francisco, School of Nursing
- Yale University, School of Nursing
- Many universities offer online programs, such as:
  - Duke University
  - Medical University of North Carolina
  - Ohio State University

Master of Public Health (MPH)

The MPH degree is a multidisciplinary degree that focuses on public health practice. Public health is the science and efforts of improving and protecting communities through the promotion of healthy living and prevention of disease. There are many different components covered by the program, such as communication and informatics, diversity and culture, and epidemiology. It should be noted that MPH programs usually have little emphasis on clinical or teaching aspects.

Most programs require the GRE, but GMAT or LSAT may suffice for some programs. Average length of study is within 2 years, depending on the school curriculum. Some schools have specific requirements such as work experience and/or prerequisite courses such as biology and statistics.

Possible careers with a MPH degree include:
- Epidemiologist
  - Average annual salary: $38,100 - $136,300
- Clinical Research Worker
  - Average annual salary: $38,000 - $51,500
- Biostatistician
  - Average annual salary: $33,000 - $63,000

Well-known Programs:
- Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Harvard University, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
- University of North Carolinia, Gillings School of Global Public Health

Master of Health Informatics (MHI)

The MHI is a degree that equips students with tools to better understand the relationship of the healthcare system with technology and data. The field of health informatics focuses on the effective use of information and information technologies in healthcare. Students learn about different areas such as health data management, biostatistics, and clinical informatics. The career outlook for health informatics is promising as many healthcare providers are improving their information technology resources.

Most programs require the GRE. The average length of study is 2 years.

Possible Careers with a MHI degree include:
- Health Informatics Specialists
  - Average annual salary: $61,000
- Health Information Manager
  - Average annual salary: $94,500
- Clinical Informatics Specialists
  - Average annual salary: $68,700

Well-known programs:
- University of Michigan, The School of Information and The School of Public Health
- George Washington University, Milken Institute School of Public Health
- Many online programs available through universities such as:
  - Northwestern University
  - University of Illinois at Chicago
  - Brandeis University

Master of Health Sciences (MHS)

The MHS is a degree that provides opportunities for advanced study and research. It is offered as an alternative to MPH for students who desire more focused skills in specialized areas from health policy to community health. Programs offer MHS degrees in many different departments, such as social factors in health, health economics, clinical investigation, cancer epidemiology, etc. Graduates with this degree often pursue a career in medicine, public health, etc.

Most programs require the GRE. Average length of study is within 1-2 years depening on the school curriculum.

Possible careers with a MHS degree include:
- Physician (with further training and an MD/DO degree)
  - Average annual salary: $170,000 - $200,000
- Healthcare Administrator
  - Average annual salary: $105,000
- Environmental Scientist/Specialist
  - Average annual salary: $68,000

Well-known programs:
- Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Nova Southeastern University (MHSc)
- Boston University School of Medicine (MAMS)

Master of Science in Medical Sciences (MMS)

The MMS is a degree that prepares students for a career in medicine by providing a rigorous curriculum that involves anatomy, neuroscience, genetics, etc. This program provides advanced scientific training and offers an opportunity for students to analyze published research. Graduates with this degree often become health practitioners, clinicians, and healthcare administrators from a wide variety of disciplines.

Most programs require the GRE or MCAT. Average length of study is within 1-2 years, depending on the school curriculum.

Possible careers with a MMS degree include:
- Research Scientist
  - Average annual salary: $45,000 - $90,000
- Engineer
  - Average annual salary: $65,000 - $110,000
- Dentist (with further training and a DMD degree)
  - Average annual salary: $130,000 - $170,000

Well-known programs:
- Boston University Graduate Medical Sciences, MAMS Program
- Drexel University College of Medicine, MMS Program
- University of South Florida College of Medicine, MMS Program

Master of Science in Health Communication (MS-HCOM)

The MS-HCOM is a dgree that enables students to correctly decipher health information and advocate for health policy initiatives. The program places an emphasis on "hands-on" applied learning and trains students in how to facilitate better understanding between medical professionals and patients. Students are able to examine patients' perspectives from this fuller education. Graduates with this degree often pursue careers in biotech firms, federal agencies, health departments, and non-profit organizations.

Most programs require the GRE, but the MCAT or GMAT may suffice for certain programs. Average length of study is within 1 year.

Possible careers with a MS-HCOM degree include:
- Editorial Manager
  - Average annual salary: $80,000
- Marketing officer
  - Average annual salary: $50,000 - $100,000
- Health communication consultant
  - Average annual salary: $70,000 - $80,000

Well-known programs:
- Tufts University School of Medicine
- Northwestern University, School of Communication
- Many online programs are also available through universities such as:
  - University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
  - Boston University Metropolitan College
  - University of Missouri, School of Journalism

Master of Public Policy (MPP)

The MPP is a degree that focuses on analyzing issues related to public policy. The program trains students in formulating policy and examining the role of economic and political factors in public decision-making. Compared to Masters of Public Administration programs, this degree places more emphasis in policy analysis, research, and evaluation. Graduates with this degree often pursue careers in law as well as the government's public and private sectors.

Most programs require the GRE or GMAT. Average length of study is within 2 years. Required undergraduate courses may include microeconomics, calculus, and statistics. It is also recommended to have 2-3 years of prior work experience before applying.

Possible careers with a MPP degree include:
- Lawyer (with further training and a JD degree)
  - Average annual salary: $80,000 - $133,000
- Government affairs specialist
  - Average annual salary: $65,000 - $80,000
- Data and policy analyst
  - Average annual salary: $68,000

Well-known programs:
- University of California Berkeley, Goldman School of Public Policy
- Harvard University, JFK School of Government
- University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy