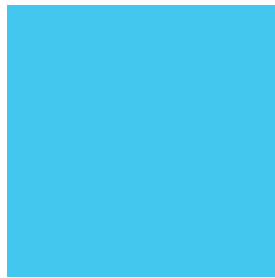


2026-2027 Student Handbook

Department of Health Services Administration

DSc in Healthcare Leadership



UAB
The University of
Alabama at Birmingham.
School of Health Professions

UAB SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
EXECUTIVE DOCTOR OF SCIENCE IN HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP
2026-2027 ACADEMIC HANDBOOK


Amy Yabrough Landry (Aug 25, 2026 09:23:18 CDT)

Amy Landry, PhD
Program Director

08/25/2026

Date



Jane Banaszak-Holl, PhD
Department Chair

08/26/2026

Date



Mark Merrick, PhD, AT, ATC, FNATA, FNAP, FSAHP
Dean
School of Health Professions

08/26/2026

Date

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INTRODUCTION

DEAN'S WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Health Professions where you are joining a legacy of excellence!

We are one of the six schools comprising the renowned UAB Academic Health Center. We offer more than 30 programs and 40 offerings at the certificate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. And we are home to nearly 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

You came here for an outstanding education, and we provide exactly that. However, **only you** can control whether you will become an excellent professional. To do so, you must challenge yourself every day and take advantage of all our vast resources, state-of-the-art facilities and research opportunities during your academic and clinical education. You also need to make the most of your access to the world-class faculty who are here to teach and support your journey. You didn't enroll here to be to be an amateur. You came to become a professional, and not an average one. I encourage you to become a "Pro" and an excellent one at that. Own it, live it, excel at what you do, and make both us and yourself proud.

I look forward to seeing you grow in your respective fields and watching you become the leader we know you can be.

Go Blazers!

Mark Merrick, Ph.D., AT, ATC, FNATA, FNAP, FASAHP

Dean, UAB School of Health Professions

OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

The UAB School of Health Professions (SHP) is one of the largest academic institutions of its type in the United States. What began in the 1950s as a collection of training programs in various para-professional disciplines has grown into an internationally recognized center of academic and research excellence.

Today, we have five academic departments – Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences, Health Services Administration, Nutrition Sciences, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy – that are housed in four buildings: Susan Mott Webb Nutrition Sciences Building (WEBB), Learning Resource Center (LRC), the School of Health Professions Building (SHPB), and the Center for Biophysical Sciences and Engineering (CBSE).

We are proud of many accomplishments including:

- *U.S. News & World Report* ranks all eligible SHP programs in the nation's top 25.
- Research funding is at an all-time high of \$26+ million and growing.
- Nearly 10 of our programs you will only find in Alabama at UAB.

- Our school has never been stronger or better positioned as a national leader in health professions education. And this status will only grow stronger as we continue to welcome students like you.

DISCLAIMER

This Handbook is an overview of general academic regulations specific to SOHP programs at UAB. Although UAB will make its best efforts to abide by this handbook, UAB reserves the right to interpret and apply its procedures and policies, and to deviate from these guidelines, as appropriate in the particular circumstances and in accordance with the mission and goals of the program. UAB also reserves the right to address issues not covered in this handbook and to make changes to the policy without advance notice. Changes become effective at the time the proper authorities determine so and the changes apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. Please refer to our website for the most up-to-date version.

All students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the general University rules and regulations pertaining to studying at UAB and the specific academic requirements of their particular degree program. This Handbook is not intended to nor does it contain all policies or regulations applicable to students. Each student is responsible for familiarizing him/herself with the contents of this Handbook. Although the policies contained herein are intended to reflect current rules and policies of the University, users are cautioned that changes or additions may have become effective since the publication of this material. In the event of a conflict, current statements of Board policy contained in the Bylaws, Rules, official minutes, and other pronouncements of the Board or Chancellor, or superseding law, shall prevail.

This Handbook does not constitute a contract and may not be deemed or construed as part of any contract between UAB and any student or student representative.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW

Although UAB works hard to prepare students for future careers in their desired fields, employment and salaries are not guaranteed. Employment outcomes depend on a student's efforts and market conditions. Students are responsible for understanding their financial responsibilities. [Tuition costs can be found on this UAB website](#). Scholarships are competitive and not guaranteed. Admission to other graduate or professional programs is also not guaranteed. Advisors will provide students with guidance, but students are ultimately responsible for degree completion, and timelines for completion may vary based on individual circumstances.

SECTION 1 – SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

All dates related to registration, payments of tuition and fees, drop/add dates, other administrative requirements, and official school holidays are recorded on the [UAB Academic Calendar](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE

The University established a new Academic Integrity Code effective August 23, 2021. This Code, which applies to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students as well as all academic activities, defines academic misconduct and outlines procedures for breaches of the code. The Academic Integrity Code process is managed by the Academic Integrity Coordinator (AIC). In the School of Health Professions, the AIC is the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs, and the office is located in SHPB 660. [You can see the full text of the Academic Integrity Code online.](#)

ADVISING

Undergraduate student advising is provided through advisors assigned to each program as well as through the Office of Student Services. Advisor and recruiter contact information can be found on the [Office of Student Services Website](#). Graduate student advising is provided through the SHP graduate programs.

AMBASSADORS

Ambassadors help to spread awareness of the School of Health Professions and its multifaceted undergraduate and graduate programs, serve as liaisons between the department and university-wide student organizations, and serve as a student voice in school and university committees. The SHP Ambassadors help to support the programs within the school that will impact recruitment and retention initiatives. [You can learn more about the SHP Ambassadors on their webpage.](#)

AskIT

AskIT is the technology help desk for faculty, staff, and students. You will be asked to supply your BlazerID when you request assistance. Contact them by phone at 205-996-5555 or [via email](#) or [visit the AskIT service portal online](#).

ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is expected in all SHP programs. Specific class, laboratory, or clinical site attendance requirements may be more stringent than university guidelines. Refer to the

program requirements in this handbook and in course syllabi for policies. The UAB attendance policy is as follows:

The University of Alabama at Birmingham recognizes that the academic success of individual students is related to their class attendance and participation. Each course instructor is responsible for establishing policies concerning class attendance and make-up opportunities. Any such policies, including points for attendance and/or participation, penalties for absences, limits on excused absences, total allowable absences, etc., must be specified in the course syllabus provided to students at the beginning of the course term. Such policies are subject to departmental oversight and may not, by their specific prescriptions, negate or circumvent the accommodations provided below for excused absences.

The University regards certain absences as excused and in those instances requires that instructors provide a reasonable accommodation for the student who misses assignments, presentations, examinations, or other academic work of a substantive nature by virtue of these excused absences. Examples include the following:

- Absences due to jury or military duty, provided that official documentation has been provided to the instructor in a timely manner in advance.
- Absences for students who have approved disability-related absence accommodations through Disability Support Services may follow the reasonable number of absences outlined in their flex plan or as determined by the instructor. Students are responsible for notifying instructors of these and any other approved accommodations through their Notice of Accommodations letter.
- Absences due to participation in university-sponsored activities when the student is representing the University in an official capacity and as a critical participant, provided that the procedures below have been followed:
 - Before the end of the add/drop period, students must provide their instructor a schedule of anticipated excused absences in or with a letter explaining the nature of the expected absences from the director of the unit or department sponsoring the activity.
 - If a change in the schedule occurs, students are responsible for providing their instructors with advance written notification from the sponsoring unit or department.
- Absences due to other extenuating circumstances that instructors deem excused. Such classification is at the discretion of the instructor and is predicated upon consistent treatment of all students.
- Absences due to religious observances provided that students give faculty written notice prior to the drop/add deadline of the term.

In these instances, instructors must give students the opportunity to complete assignments in a way that corresponds as much as possible to the nature, scope, and format of the original. Options may include making up exams or other assignments, rescheduling student classroom presentations, or arranging for early or late submission of written assignments. The course make-up policy should be included in the syllabus.

BLAZERID / BLAZERNET / EMAIL

BLAZERID

All students receive a unique identifier, the BlazerID, established at [BlazerID Central](#). Your BlazerID is required for accessing BlazerNET and other campus resources. To activate one's BlazerID, select "Activate Accounts."

BLAZERNET

[BlazerNet](#) is the official portal of the UAB information network and is accessible from any Internet-accessible computer, on- or off-campus.

EMAIL

UAB student email is provided through Microsoft Office 365, a cloud-based system. Students have 50 GB of email space and 25 GB of free file 1 TB storage. The UAB email is the official communication medium for courses, news, information, and announcements. Students should not forward their UAB account to a personal email account. UAB is not responsible for information not received by the student due to the 'redirecting' of a UAB account to another email server.

BLAZER EXPRESS

The UAB Blazer Express Transit System provides transportation throughout the UAB campus. With a valid UAB ID badge, students can enjoy fare-free bus transportation. All buses are ADA-accessible and can seat approximately 35 riders. For an updated schedule, route maps, and hours of operation please [visit the Blazer Express website](#).

BOOKSTORE

There is one bookstore located on the UAB campus in the Hill Student Center. It offers a wide variety of products and services to students, including online purchasing and shipping. The bookstore stocks UAB memorabilia and college wear in addition to all required textbooks and course material. Visit [the UAB Barnes and Noble Bookstore online](#) for more details.

CAMPUS ONECARD

The UAB OneCard is the official university identification card. It is used for personal identification, for entry to campus events and the recreation center, for library checkout, and for other UAB services. It also serves as a declining balance card for the UAB meal plans and for Blazer Bucks accounts. Additional information is available on the [UAB OneCard website](#).

CAMPUS MAP

[UAB's campus map can be found online](#).

CAMPUS SAFETY

[Campus safety procedures and resources can be accessed online](#).

CANVAS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Canvas Learning Management System is the platform used for managing instructional materials online. Canvas course sites are accessed through BlazerNET or at the [UAB Center for Teaching and Learning website](#). Students should monitor their course sites routinely for communication from faculty and to manage course assignments.

CATALOG

The UAB Catalog is published annually and includes UAB's courses, policies, and curricula. Students can [find the Undergraduate or Graduate catalog online](#).

COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

[Community Standards and Accountability](#) is responsible for upholding the integrity and purpose of the University through the fair and consistent application of policies and procedures to students' behavior to ensure a community that respects the dignity and right of all persons to reach their highest potential. UAB Student Advocacy, Rights & Conduct (SARC) delivers programs and services in order to promote student safety and success, the pursuit of knowledge, respect for self and others, global citizenship, personal accountability and integrity, and ethical development. More information can be found at the [UAB SARC website](#). [The UAB student conduct code may be accessed online](#).

COUNSELING SERVICES

Student Counseling Services offers no cost, confidential counseling for UAB students related to physical, emotional, social, intellectual, or spiritual concerns. Student Counseling Services is located on the 3rd floor of the Student Health and Wellness Center at 1714 9th Avenue South. For more information, call 205-934-5816 or [visit the Student Counseling Services website](#).

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

UAB is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students. If you are a student with a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and you require accommodations, please [contact Disability Support Services for information on accommodations, registration, and procedures](#). Requests for reasonable accommodations involve an interactive process and consist of a collaborative effort among the student, DSS, faculty, and staff. If you have a disability but have not contacted DSS, please call 205-934-4205 or visit [the DSS website](#).

If you are a student registered with Disability Support Services, it is your responsibility to contact the course instructor to discuss the accommodations that may be necessary in each course. Students with disabilities must be registered with DSS and provide an accommodation request letter before receiving academic adjustments. Reasonable and timely notification of accommodations for the course is encouraged and provided to the course instructor so that the accommodations can be arranged.

EMERGENCIES

Report suspicious or threatening activity to the UAB Police Department immediately. Law enforcement officers are available 24 hours, seven days a week. Also, more than 300 emergency blue light telephones connected directly to the police dispatch are located throughout campus.

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT (BTAM)

The UAB and UAB Medicine Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Team (BTAM) is an interdisciplinary team dedicated to maintaining a safe, secure, and healthy campus environment for all students, employees, and visitors. BTAM uses a structured, proactive process to identify, assess, and manage behavioral threats to campus safety and well-being. Concerning behaviors—such as a significant change in academic performance or conduct, aggressive or irrational behavior, expressions of severe distress, or inability to control anger—should be reported promptly. Non-emergency situations involving students may be reported through the Division of Student Affairs at (205) 975-9509 or via the online reporting form. For more information, visit the [UAB BTAM website](#).

UAB POLICE:

For an emergency, dial 911 *from a campus phone*. For non-emergencies call: 205-934-3535 or 205-934-HELP (4357) or 205-934-4434.

Emergencies affecting campus are communicated via the following:

- UAB Severe Weather & Emergency Hotline 205-934-2165
- [UAB home webpage](#)
- [UAB Emergency Management webpage](#)
- Announcements on [BlazerNET](#)
- Cell phone messages and SMS text via B-ALERT. [Register for B-ALERT online](#).

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:

UAB is an [Equal Employment/Equal Educational Opportunity Institution](#) dedicated to providing equal opportunities and equal access to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), genetic information, age, disability, and veteran's status. As required by Title IX, UAB prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to UAB's Assistant Vice President and Senior Title IX Coordinator. [The Title IX notice of nondiscrimination is located online](#).

FERPA TRAINING

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 provides protection for all educational records related to students enrolled in an educational program. UAB has a dedicated [FERPA website](#) with information about your rights and protection of your records. You may [email any questions or concerns about FERPA issues](#) to FERPA@uab.edu. All SHP students are required to complete FERPA Training. The course can be accessed at [THIS WEBSITE](#).

FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid Counselors are available each day in the One Stop Student Services Office located in the Hill Student Center, [1400 University Blvd.](#) Suite 103. If you have general

questions, you can contact the Office of Student Financial Aid at 205-934-8223 or [via email](#). For additional financial aid information [visit the UAB Cost & Aid website](#).

FOOD SERVICES

There are several dining facilities available on campus. The [campus dining map](#) can show you the closest to the SHP buildings. For additional information about meal plans and campus dining facilities [visit the Campus Dining website](#).

GRADUATE SCHOOL

The UAB Graduate School offers doctoral programs, post-master's specialist programs, and master's level programs. Graduate programs in SHP are coordinated through the Graduate School, and students must adhere to the Graduate School policies and procedures. Graduate School information for current students is available at [the UAB Graduate School website](#). Policies and Procedures for the Graduate School can be found in the [Graduate School Catalog](#).

GRADUATION

All students must complete an application for degree six months prior to graduating and no later than the deadline in the academic calendar. The University holds commencement every semester. Check the [UAB commencement website](#) for the most current information.

HEALTH INSURANCE

To ensure that all students have adequate health care coverage, including ongoing primary and specialty care, the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) requires all students to have major medical health insurance. Students can provide proof of their own private coverage or be enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan. The plan is a 1-year commercial policy provided by United HealthCare and is re-negotiated annually. This policy is a comprehensive health insurance policy at an affordable cost that is specifically designed to meet the needs of UAB Students. If you are required to have insurance but have sufficient coverage on another plan and wish to opt out of the Student Health Insurance Plan, you are required to submit a waiver to Student Health Services at the beginning of every semester. More information including submitting a waiver can be found at the [UAB Student Health Insurance Waivers website](#).

HIPAA TRAINING

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) includes significant requirements for protecting individual privacy of health information. All students in the School of Health Professions must complete an online tutorial and be tested on HIPAA regulations at the time of program admission. A BlazerID is required to access the training site, located at [UAB Online Learning](#). Compliance with the training requirement is monitored by the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs.

HONOR SOCIETIES

All students in the School of Health Professions are eligible for consideration for the Alpha Eta Honor Society. The UAB Chapter of this Society recognizes students registered in the final term of a baccalaureate or graduate health professions program. Inductees must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (4.0 = A) and be in the upper 10% of their program. Nominations are made by program directors in spring and summer terms.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

To provide a safe and healthy environment for all students, faculty, and staff at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), first-time entering students, international students and scholars, and students in clinical & non-clinical programs, must provide proof of immunization against certain diseases, unless they have an approved medical or religious exemption. Full details can be found on the [UAB Immunizations webpage](#).

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN USE (IRB)

Student researchers must comply with all requirements for protection of human subjects. Detailed information is available on the [IRB website](#).

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Intellectual property refers to an asset that originated conceptually, such as literary and artistic works, inventions, or other creative works. These assets should be protected and used only as the creator intends. Training materials defining inventor status, patent criteria, and other intellectual property issues, as well as University Policies on Patents, Copyright, and Intellectual Property are on [the Office of Compliance & Risk homepage](#).

LACTATION CENTERS

The University has provided several lactation centers for students, faculty, and staff across the campus. Visit [the UAB Lactation Resources webpage](#) for a resource guide and a location map. The School of Health Professions' lactation room is in the Susan Mott Webb Nutrition Sciences Building at [1675 University Blvd](#), Room 431. Lactating students enrolled in the School of Health Professions have access to the room via their student ID/OneCard. If you cannot access the room, contact the building administrator, Julia Tolbert-Jackson at 205-873-5666.

LIBRARIES AND LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

[UAB's libraries](#) house excellent collections of books, periodicals, microforms, and other media. Students have online remote access to catalogs and online collections. Computers are available for student use during regular hours of operation.

SHP LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER (LRC)

The School of Health Professions Learning Resource Center (LRC) provides a unique set of enterprise solutions that promote an exciting, intriguing, and innovative learning environment. It provides audio/visual support, and information technology management of public, classroom,

and testing labs. The building is at [1714 9th Avenue South](#), and the SHP student space is on the second floor. You can contact LRC staff [via email](#) or via phone at 205-934-5146.

LISTER HILL LIBRARY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES

[Lister Hill Library](#) (LHL) is the largest biomedical library in Alabama and one of the largest in the south. It is located [across the crosswalk](#) from the School of Health Professions.

MERVYN H. STERNE LIBRARY

[Mervyn H. Sterne Library](#) has a collection of more than one million items supporting teaching and research in the arts and humanities, business, education, engineering, natural sciences and mathematics, and social and behavioral sciences. It is located at [917 13th Street South](#).

UAB STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The Student Conduct Code promotes honesty, integrity, accountability, rights, and responsibilities expected of students consistent with the core missions of the University of Alabama at Birmingham. This Code describes the standards of behavior for all students, and it outlines students' rights, responsibilities, and the campus processes for adjudicating alleged violations. Behavior that violates UAB standards of conduct listed within the Student Conduct Code and elsewhere will be subject to disciplinary action through the appropriate conduct process. Whether it is determined that an individual or group is responsible for the violation(s), either by direct involvement or by condoning, encouraging, or covering up the violation, appropriate response will occur with respect to the individual(s) and/or group involved.

[Undergraduate Non-Academic Policies](#)

[Graduate Non-Academic Policies](#)

ONE STOP STUDENT SERVICES

The mission of the One Stop is to provide a single point of professional integrated service to students. The One Stop serves students who need assistance with academic records, financial aid, registration, student accounting, OneCard, and other related topics. One Stop is located in the Hill Student Center, [1400 University Blvd.](#) Suite 103. You may contact the [One Stop](#) office by phone or email at 205-934-4300, 855-UAB-1STP (855-822-1787), [or via email](#).

PARKING

Student vehicles must be registered with [UAB Parking and Transportation Services](#), located at [608 8th Street South](#). Parking is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Parking fees are established by location, payable by semester or year, and are billed to the student's account.

PLAGIARISM AND TURNITIN

Plagiarism violates the Academic Integrity Code and will be addressed in accordance with it. All papers submitted for grading in any SHP program may be reviewed using the online plagiarism monitoring software. Please note that all documents submitted to [Turnitin](#) are added to their database of papers that is used to screen future assignments for plagiarism.

RECREATION CENTER

The [Campus Recreation Center](#) is located at [1501 University Blvd](#). A valid student identification card or membership card is required for access. Facilities include basketball courts, racquetball courts, weight rooms, swimming pools, exercise rooms, and indoor track.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS AWARDS

All students in the School of Health Professions are eligible for consideration for [the SHP Student Awards Program](#), which includes the following awards:

- Alfred W. Sangster Award for Outstanding International Student – This award is presented annually to an international student in recognition of their academic and non-academic achievements.
- Cecile Clardy Satterfield Award for Humanism in Health Care – This award is made annually to recognize one outstanding student for humanitarianism, professionalism, and commitment to health care.
- Charles Brooks Award for Creativity – This award is made annually in recognition of creative accomplishments such as written publications or artistic contributions which complemented the student's academic activities.
- Dean's Leadership and Service Award – Presented to a maximum of three outstanding SHP students annually, this award recognizes leadership to the School, UAB, and the community.

A call for nominations will be sent to program directors each year. Please refer to the program section of this handbook for awards available to students in individual programs.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOLARSHIPS

SHP has several scholarship opportunities for students enrolled in SHP programs. The Scholarship Committee, comprised of faculty from each department, reviews and selects awardees. Please go to [the SHP Scholarship Application webpage](#) for a list of scholarships and instructions for application.

Application announcements are made by the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs. Many programs in SHP also have scholarships available to currently enrolled students in those programs. Please refer to the program section of this handbook for more information.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS SHARED VALUES

- Collaboration
- Compassion & Caring
- Excellence & Achievement
- Integrity
- Respect
- Service
- Social Responsibility

- Stewardship

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can serve as useful communication tools. However, health professions students should use the forums judiciously. For more information visit [the UAB Social Media Guidelines webpage](#). The school's official sites are on the following platforms:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Vimeo](#)
- [X/Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The University provides prevention, counseling, and treatment services to students through [Student Health Services](#) (SHS) located at [1714 9th Avenue South](#). Appointments may be scheduled via [their online portal](#).

TITLE IX

In accordance with Title IX, the University of Alabama at Birmingham does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its programs or services. The University is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination based on sex and expects individuals who live, work, teach, and study within this community to contribute positively to the environment and to refrain from behaviors that threaten the freedom or respect that every member of our community deserves. For more information about Title IX, policy, reporting, protections, resources, and supports, please visit [the UAB Title IX webpage](#).

TUITION AND FEES

[UAB tuition and fees are published online](#). They may be paid through BlazerNET. SHP programs have specific fees attached to programs, courses, and/ or laboratories. Payment deadlines for each semester are published on the official academic calendar. Please note that failure to meet payment deadlines can result in being administratively withdrawn from courses.

WEATHER

Severe weather situations that may affect the safety of students, faculty, and staff are communicated through the same channels as other emergencies. UAB has a dedicated [Preparedness webpage with Severe Weather Gathering Points and supply lists](#). Other information sources include the [B-ALERT System](#) (contact information must be setup and current) and the UAB Severe Weather & Emergency Hotline 205-934-2165.

WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE / PROGRAM

Withdrawal from a course or from your program is an official process and should be discussed with your academic advisor and/or program director. Most programs in the School of Health Professions are full-time and the curricula specifically sequenced. Withdrawal from a course may risk you having to wait to register for the class again. Withdrawals are made through the UAB registration system via the Student Resources tab in BlazerNET. Notice of program withdrawal should be given in writing to the program director. For more information [visit the UAB Add/Drop, Extended Drop and Withdrawal Policy webpage](#), which also includes a medical withdrawal policy.

SECTION 2 – SHP AND UAB POLICIES

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS POLICIES

DISMISSAL OF STUDENT FOR FAILURE TO MAKE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

[Dismissal of Student and Appeal Process](#)

EMERGENCY PLAN – SHPB/LRC/WEBB

[SHPB/LRC/WEBB Emergency Plan](#)

BACKGROUND CHECK AND DRUG SCREEN POLICY

Students in SHP programs are required to undergo a background check and drug screen using the school's approved vendor, [Disa Healthcare Technology](#), at the time of program admission, and again, prior to placement in a fieldwork placement (clinical, internship, practicum, residency, etc.). Additional checks/screens may be required by the individual sites therefore; students should work with the program to ensure compliance requirements are met. Instructions for requesting the background check and drug screens are provided to students by their programs. Students in SHP undergraduate programs must complete a module on drug screening and background checks during their first semester. The module will be located in Canvas, UAB's learning management system.

The [SHP Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs](#) is responsible for ensuring student compliance with the Background Check and Drug Screen Policy throughout the program. Students found to be non-compliant with this policy will not be allowed to matriculate in the program (orientation, attend class, fieldwork placement, etc.) until all requirements are met. Program Directors, Fieldwork Coordinators, and students will be notified of non-compliance and a hold will be placed on the students' account.

- Fees for these screenings will be the responsibility of the student.
- The rules and regulations governing individual fieldwork placement sites may include additional provisions and/or more stringent guidelines which supersede this policy. Fees for these screenings are the responsibility of the student.
- Should your criminal background check contain issues, or if you fail a drug screen that may prevent you from receiving or sitting for board certification/licensure, a representative from the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs will contact you. Depending upon the outcome, students will have a registration hold placed on their account until in compliance and this may result in being dismissed from the program. See your program's guidelines regarding specific consequences.

Programs requiring a criminal background check and drug screening by the end of the first semester of enrollment and again, prior to fieldwork placement (if applicable in the program requirements), are the following:

- Administration Health Services, PhD
- Biomedical Sciences to Biotechnology Fast Track
- Biomedical Sciences to Clinical Laboratory Science Fast Track

- Biomedical Sciences to Health Physics Fast Track
- Biomedical Sciences to Nuclear Medicine & Molecular Imaging Sciences Fast Track
- Biomedical and Health Sciences, MS
- Biotechnology, MS
- Biotechnology, PhD
- Dietitian Education Program, Graduate Certificate
- Genetic Counseling, MS
- Health Administration (Residential), MSHA
- Health Care Management to Healthcare Quality and Safety Fast Track
- Health Care Management to Health Informatics Fast Track
- Health Care Management to Occupational Therapy Doctorate Fast Track
- Health Physics, MS
- Medical Laboratory Science, MS
- Nuclear Medicine & Molecular Imaging Sciences, MS
- Nutrition Sciences, MS
 - Dietetic Internship Clinical Track
 - Dietitian Education Program
 - Research Track
- Nutrition Sciences, PhD
- Occupational Therapy, OTD – (entry level)
- Physical Therapy, DPT
- Physician Associate Studies, MSPAS
- Rehabilitation Science, PhD

The following students enrolled in SHP undergraduate programs will complete a learning module related to background checks and drug screens in Canvas, UAB's learning management system by the first semester of enrollment. If a fieldwork placement (clinical, internship, practicum, residency, etc.) is required, students must complete criminal background checks and drug screens prior to the first day of the semester of a fieldwork placement:

- Health Care Management, BS
- Biomedical Sciences, BS
- Nutrition Sciences, BS
- Disability Studies and Rehabilitation Science, BS

Programs waived from the Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening requirements are the following:

- Applied Mixed Methods Research, Graduate Certificate
- Biotechnology Regulatory Affairs, Graduate Certificate
- Clinical Informatics, Graduate Certificate
- Health Administration (International and Executive tracks), MSHA
- Health Informatics, MSHI
- Healthcare Finance Management, Graduate Certificate
- Healthcare Leadership, DSc

- Healthcare Leadership, Graduate Certificate
- Healthcare Quality and Safety, MS
- Healthcare Quality and Safety, Graduate Certificate
- Health Services Research, MS
- Healthcare Simulation, MS
- Healthcare Simulation, Graduate Certificate
- Nutrition for Community Health, Graduate Certificate
- Nutrition Sciences, MS
 - Clinical Track-Prior Learning
 - Lifestyle Management and Disease Prevention Track
- Low Vision Rehabilitation, Graduate Certificate
- Multi-Tiered Approach to Trauma, Graduate Certificate
- Occupational Therapy Doctorate (Post Professional)
- Physical Therapy Residencies (Neurologic, Orthopedic)
- Primary Care Physical Therapy for Underserved Populations, Graduate Certificate

Students enrolled in exempt programs who participate in a course(s) incorporating community, corporate or other high impact, out-of-classroom activities such as service learning, capstone projects or other hands-on learning experiences, may be required by placement sites to submit background check and drug screening results. Students are responsible for the fees associated with such screening.

DISA HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTIONS

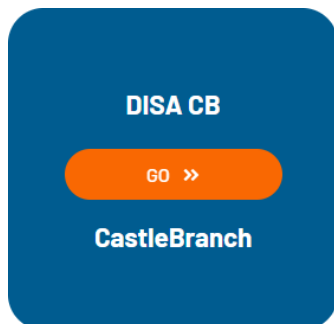
[Disa Healthcare Technology](#) is a secure platform that allows you to order your background check & drug test online. Once you have placed your order, you may use your login to access additional features, including document storage, portfolio builders and reference tools. Disa Healthcare Technology also allows you to upload any additional documents required by your school.

Order Summary

- Required Personal Information
 - In addition to entering your full name and date of birth, you will be asked for your Social Security Number, current address, phone number, and email address.
- Drug Test (LabCorp)
 - Within 24-48 hours after you place your order, the electronic chain of custody form e-chain will be placed directly into your CastleBranch account. This e-chain will explain where you need to go to complete your drug test.
- Payment Information
 - At the end of the online process, you will be prompted to enter your Visa or MasterCard information. Money orders are also accepted, but will result in a \$10 fee and additional turn-around-time.

Place Your Order

[Visit the website](#), click “place order” and choose the Disa CB platform (see logo screenshot below).



Enter package code AHO1 – Background Check and Drug Test. You will be required to enter your program under “Student Information” classification. You will then be directed to set up your Disa/CastleBranch profile account. This package code is for the following majors:

- Health Care Management
- Biomedical Sciences
- Biotechnology
- Biomedical and Health Sciences
- Genetic Counseling
- Health Administration – Residential (MSHA)
- Health Care Quality and Safety (not employees of health care organizations)
- Health Informatics
- Health Physics
- Medical Laboratory Sciences
- Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging Sciences
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Physician Associate Studies
- Rehabilitation Sciences

View Your Results

Your results will be posted directly to your Disa/CastleBranch profile account. You will be notified if there is any missing information needed to process your order. Although 95% of background check results are completed within 3-5 business days, some results may take longer. Your order will show as “In Process” until it has been completed in its entirety. Your school’s administrator can also securely view your results online with their unique username and password. If you have any additional questions, you may contact the Service Desk at 888-723-4263 x 7196 or submit a question [using the online contact us form](#).

ACCIDENTS / INJURIES OCCURRING ON CAMPUS:

All accidents/injuries occurring while involved in a program associated with the School of Health Professions are to be promptly reported to the faculty member in charge of class. Incident reports for accidents and injuries must be filed with the Department Administrative Office within 48 hours of the incident. Failure to report accidents or injuries within 48 hours of the incident may impact UAB's ability to address the accident or injury.

ACCIDENT / INJURY REPORTING PROCEDURE

When a student, visitor, faculty, or staff is involved in an accident or sustains an injury while involved in a program associated with the School of Health Professions, an accident / injury report is required. The faculty member in charge of the class where the injury occurs, or who is the first point of contact following the injury should download and complete this [Incident Report Form](#).

NEEDLESTICK/ BLOOD OR BODY FLUID EXPOSURES

When a student, visitor, faculty, or staff is involved in a body fluid or needlestick exposure while involved in a program associated with the School of Health Professions, they should follow the procedures on [the UAB Human Resources website](#). The faculty member in charge of the class where the exposure occurs, or who is the first point of contact following the injury should download and complete this [Incident Report Form](#).

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE VOLUNTEER RESEARCH:

Undergraduate or graduate volunteer students wanting to conduct research in a School of Health Professions laboratory should contact [Dr. Samantha Giordano-Mooga via email](#) for requirements.

UAB POLICIES

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

[UAB ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS](#)

[UAB ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS](#)

HEALTH

[UAB POLICY ON IMMUNIZATIONS](#)

[UAB POLICY ON NEEDLE STICKS AND EXPOSURES](#)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

[UAB POLICY ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT](#)

POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

[UAB POLICY ON CAMPUS SAFETY](#)

[UAB POLICY ON FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, AND OTHER DANGEROUS WEAPONS](#)

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

[UAB POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE](#)

[UAB POLICY ON ETHICAL STANDARDS IN RESEARCH AND OTHER SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES](#)

[UAB POLICY ON PATENTS](#)

SUBSTANCE USE/ABUSE

[UAB POLICY ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, USE AND CONSUMPTION](#)

[UAB POLICY AS A DRUG FREE CAMPUS](#)

[UAB POLICY ON NON-SMOKING](#)

TECHNOLOGY

[UAB POLICY ON TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES](#)

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

[UAB COMPLAINT POLICY](#)

SECTION 3: DOCTOR OF SCIENCE IN HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP SPECIFIC INFORMATION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Executive Doctoral program is designed for healthcare executives who are seeking to engage in a rigorous course of study that will also permit them to retain their demanding work and life responsibilities. D.Sc. students are typically interested in continuing a practice-focused career, as opposed to the academic career sought by most residential Ph.D. students.

FACULTY AND STAFF

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Amy Landry, PhD

Professor and Howard W. Houser Endowed Chair Director, Executive Doctoral Program

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Office Number: SHPB 557

Street Address: 1716 9th Ave South, Birmingham, AL 35294

Email Address: akyarb@uab.edu

Office Phone: 1(205) 996-7767

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Leandra Y. Celaya, MSc

Assistant Professor and Director of Operations, International Programs and Executive Doctoral Program

Director, Center for Healthcare Management and Leadership

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Office Number: SHPB 555

Street Address: 1716 9th Ave South, Birmingham, AL 35294

Email: lcelaya@uab.edu

Office Phone: 1(205) 934-3588

PROGRAM MANAGER

Shirley Levins

Program Manager, Doctoral Programs in Health Services Administration

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Office Number: SHPB 553

Street Address: 1716 9th Ave. South, Birmingham, AL 35294

Email: mrsvito@uab.edu

Phone Number: 1 (205) 934-3113

Our faculty and staff are teachers, scholars, researchers and leaders who provide exceptional mentoring and training. They are prepared to deliver high-quality education to all our students. Visit our website by clicking [here](#) to see our faculty and staff.

ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

CRITERIA AND REQUIRED MATERIALS

ADMISSION STANDARDS

Qualified applicants will preferably have a master's degree in health administration; health informatics; business administration; or a related field. Degree(s) must be from an accredited institution. In addition, qualified applicants will have a minimum of five years of mid- to senior-level managerial/leadership experience in health care.

Students whose first language is not English must submit recent scores for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam or IELTS. Applicants who have received a degree from an accredited U.S. institution or from institutions in countries where English is the primary language are not required to submit the TOEFL or IELTS score.

GRE/GMAT WAIVER

As of January 2010, the UAB Graduate School has approved a waiver of the GRE/GMAT requirement for all applicants to the Executive Doctoral Program. Admission requirements to the *residential* PhD Program are not affected by this change.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The application procedure for the D.Sc. Program requires an application to the UAB Graduate School. Application instructions can be found on the "Admissions" page of the program website [here](#).

ADMISSION

Applications are reviewed by the Admissions and Policy Committee of the Executive DSc Program. The committee forwards a recommendation to the Dean of the UAB Graduate School who then communicates official admission decisions via written letter.

As it is based on a cohort model, the Executive DSc Program only admits for the fall of each year.

DEPOSIT

Students who accept an admission offer into the Executive Doctor of Science Program are required to pay a \$1,000.00 deposit to secure their space in the cohort. This deposit is non-refundable and will be credited to fall tuition of the first year.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

CREDIT HOURS

Program requirements include successful completion of required DSc coursework, a comprehensive examination, a dissertation proposal, and a dissertation.

CHRONOLOGY OF STEPS FOR DEGREE:

1. Admission to doctoral degree program.
2. Maintenance of good standing throughout program.
3. Completion of first year of coursework.
4. Completion of second year of coursework.
5. Passing of comprehensive examination at the end of the second year.
6. Completion of IRB Investigator Training.
7. Participation in the international study experience at the beginning of the third year.
8. Selection of dissertation committee (4 members, Chair must hold a primary appointment in HSA).
9. Students begin the third year by taking 6 hours of “non-dissertation research” (AHD 798). This course carries no workload other than developing a dissertation proposal.
10. Development and defense of dissertation proposal and receipt of IRB approval for the study.
11. Admission to candidacy - Students must take a minimum of two semesters AND 12 hours of “dissertation research” hours (AHD 799) before graduation. Students typically take 6 hours of AHD 799 in each semester, following admission to candidacy. Students who have been admitted to candidacy can be referred to as a “doctoral candidate.” If a student has completed the required 2 semesters and 12 hours of AHD 799 after admission to candidacy, but has not yet defended the final dissertation, the program only requires enrollment in 1 hour of AHD 799 for the additional semesters.
12. Application for degree – See deadlines for each term, as set by the Graduate School.
13. Production of preliminary version of dissertation.
14. Final defense of dissertation – deadline established each term by the Graduate School.
15. Complete the Graduate School post-defense checklist, including submitting a PDF of the defended, committee-approved manuscript via ProQuest no later than 10 days after defense.
16. Conferring of degree.

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

The curriculum for the Executive DSc is a “lock-step” curriculum. Students progress through the didactic portion (first two years) of the program with their cohort, taking the courses in the sequence as pre-determined by the program. The curriculum does not include “elective courses” or an option for part-time enrollment.

The third year of the program is devoted to the completion of the applied dissertation. The UAB Graduate School website and the DSc Canvas Student Center contain more detailed explanations of the requirements for candidacy and completing the dissertation.

The following is a *sample* curriculum sequence for the DSc program. The specific sequencing of courses depends upon the year in which the student enrolls in the program and is subject to change. Courses with an asterisk (*) are offered every year and are sequenced as part of the Research Methods core. Other courses are offered every other year. AHD 798 and AHD 799 are offered every semester as part of the dissertation phase of the program.

FIRST SEMESTER

- AHD 715: Research in Organization Theory (3 hours)
- AHD 731: Health Policy (3 hours)
- AHD 707: Research Methods (3 hours)¹

SECOND SEMESTER

- AHD 710: Comparative Health Systems (3 hours)
- AHD 714: Marketing Strategy & Research (3 hours)
- HCI 719: Foundations of AI in Medicine for Healthcare Leaders (3 hours)

THIRD SEMESTER

- AHD 735: Healthcare Quality Improvement (3 hours)
- AHD 632: Quantitative Methods (3 hours)¹

FOURTH SEMESTER

- AHD 711: Health Systems Leadership (3 hours)
- AHD 705: Health Care Finance (3 hours)
- AHD 722: Regression Analysis (3 hours)¹

FIFTH SEMESTER

- AHD 730: Health Econ & Insurance (3 hours)
- AHD 718: Strategic Implementation and Evaluation (3 hours)

¹ Students who do not complete their dissertation by the end of the third year will continue to enroll in either AHD 798 or AHD 799, depending upon their candidacy status. Program leaders will provide guidance on an individual basis.

- AHD 775: Strategic Planning and Mgt. (3 hours)

SIXTH SEMESTER

- AHD 706: Strategic Management Theory and Research (3 hours)
- AHD 727: Applied Multivariate Statistics for Health Administration Research (3 hours)¹

DISSERTATION PHASE (YEAR 3)

SEVENTH SEMESTER

- AHD 798: Non-Dissertation Research (6 hours)

EIGHTH SEMESTER

- AHD 799: Dissertation Research (6 hours)

NINTH SEMESTER

- AHD 799: Dissertation Research (6 hours)

ON-CAMPUS SESSIONS

The Executive DSc Program is taught in a blended delivery format, with one intensive on-campus session each semester.

The Executive DSc Program follows the UAB Academic Calendar for start and end dates of each semester. The academic calendar can be reviewed [here](#).

Dates for the on-campus sessions occur once each semester (three times per year) and are set by the Program. Attendance is *required* at all on-campus sessions. Due to the executive format of the courses, one or more absences may result in the student's inability to complete the course during the current term. Accommodations are considered on a case-by-case basis and typically require filing with UAB Disability Support Services (DSS), the UAB Title IX Office, or (in extremely limited cases) DSc program leadership. The DSS website can be reviewed [here](#). The Title IX website can be reviewed [here](#).

Due to the potentially confidential nature of classroom discussions, recording of on-campus sessions is not allowed.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2026-2027 ACADEMIC YEAR ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Please note that the on-campus sessions will begin at 8:00 a.m. on the first day and will conclude at noon on the final day. All times are Central Time. Students will be notified of any exceptions with ample advance notice.

FALL 2026

- August 24: First day of classes for Fall semester
- October 3: Orientation for first year students
- October 4-8: Fall On-Campus Session
- December 4: Last Day of classes for Fall semester

SPRING 2027

- January 11: First day of classes for Spring semester
- February 21-25: Spring On-Campus Session
- April 23: Last Day of classes for Spring semester

SUMMER 2027

- May 10: First day of classes for summer semester
- June 13-17: Summer On-Campus Session
- August 6: Last day of classes for summer semester

The dates of the international experience for third-year students (see section below) are determined in consultation with students and in-country hosts. The trip typically occurs in early- to mid-September of the 3rd year.

During the third year, on-campus meetings are scheduled at the convenience of the student and the dissertation committee. Students work with their dissertation chair to schedule at least one on-campus visit in each semester of the third year.

DISTANCE LEARNING AND CANVAS

The off-campus portion of each course will employ a variety of distance-learning instructional methods. Students will read selections from texts, periodicals, and empirical literature; participate in online discussions with instructors and fellow students; conduct applied projects within their organizations; write research papers; and complete assignments that are designed to reinforce course principles and analytical skills.

Students will access course materials, syllabi, readings, assignments, etc. via the online Canvas system. Canvas course sites can be accessed through BlazerNET linked [here](#) or at Canvas. Additional information about Canvas can be found [here](#). Students should monitor their course sites routinely for communications from faculty and to manage course assignments. Course sites are available on the first day of classes for each semester.

Assignments and due dates will be described in the course syllabus at the beginning of each semester. Course materials (including readings, assignments, and course announcements) will be available on Canvas. Students are responsible for accessing Canvas on a regular basis and are expected to be aware of all assignment due dates.

Assignments should be submitted via Canvas. Email is not a reliable method for submitting assignments and is discouraged for this purpose. Students are, however, encouraged to communicate with their instructors and classmates via the email feature in Canvas. Communication between students and instructors is key to the success of any distance-learning activity. Instructors are accessible via email, phone call, and/or video conferencing during the off-campus portion of the course. Please refer to the course syllabus for instructor contact information, preferred method of communication, and details regarding instructor availability.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Students in the DSc Program must pass a comprehensive examination before they can be admitted to candidacy (i.e., before they will be allowed to defend their dissertation proposal).

Students are eligible to take the comprehensive exam once they have completed the required courses for the didactic portion of the program. The comprehensive exam question for each student will be unique, and the topic is often closely related to or the same as the student's dissertation topic. Therefore, detailed feedback on written proposal chapters will not be given prior to or during the comprehensive exam.

Comprehensive exams are in the form of take-home, open-book exams. Each student must submit a one-page prospectus that describes the topic they plan to research. The prospectus will be emailed to the DSc Program Director and Director of Operations by the deadline established by the program. The Program Director will then write each student's comprehensive exam question and will email each student's question on a previously established day.

Students have one month to write and turn in a paper in which they must respond to the questions provided. At the time they receive the question, students will be reminded of the deadline to submit their manuscripts. Late submissions will not be accepted and will result in a failing grade for the comprehensive exam. Early submissions are permitted but are not encouraged.

Students are expected to write their responses to the questions in the form of a research paper, complete with appropriate citations in the most current version of APA format. Students are not allowed to confer with any other person (including, but not limited to, the student's dissertation committee members and/or committee chair) in

writing their responses. Compliance with the letter and spirit of all academic integrity policies of the program and the university is fully expected.

Students will be granted an opportunity to provide additional information on any portion of the response that needs clarification. A student will receive a passing grade only after completing the exam to the satisfaction of the grading committee. Students have only two opportunities to pass the comprehensive exam. Failure on the second attempt will constitute a basis for dismissal from the program.

DISSERTATION

THE DISSERTATION REQUIREMENT/YEAR THREE

The successful completion of a dissertation is the final requirement for obtaining the D.Sc. degree once Candidacy has been achieved. The student is required to work on the dissertation under the guidance and supervision of a Dissertation Committee.

The dissertation, like other individual work that is assigned in the Program, must represent the student's own effort. Jointly authored papers or otherwise collaborative work may not under any circumstance count toward satisfying the dissertation requirement. In fact, the submission of such collaborative papers or work in fulfillment of the dissertation requirement is a form of [academic misconduct](#).

It is important, therefore, that whenever the dissertation is in any way related to a larger study or data collection effort two conditions be satisfied: the dissertation project must clearly represent a separate and distinct entity within the broader study or effort; and the project must be understood by all concerned to be the sole responsibility of the student, who is to work on it under the guidance of the Dissertation Committee. Because of the basic orientation and goals of the Doctoral Program, all dissertations are expected to include an explicit discussion of how the dissertation's topic, findings, and conclusions are relevant and important from the perspective of healthcare management.

Similarly, given the applied, practitioner orientation of the D.Sc. degree, unlike most traditional Ph.D. dissertations, students are not expected to make an original contribution to theory or methodology, even though making such contributions is a welcome feature. Rather, in judging a dissertation's appropriateness and worth the emphasis is expected to be on the skill and rigor with which the analytic and conceptual approaches taught in the Program have been put to good use in shedding new light on an important healthcare management question. Moreover, it is expected that every dissertation will be of sufficient quality to result in a least one published paper in a leading journal in the health field. Submission for publication is encouraged but not required.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

A DSc Dissertation Committee must consist of at least four members. The committee's chair must hold a *primary* faculty appointment in the UAB Department of Health Services Administration (HSA). Each committee may have a member outside of HSA who is either a regular University of Alabama at Birmingham faculty member or an individual who is eligible for and receives a UAB Graduate School Appointment. For purposes of service on Dissertation Committees a regular faculty member is defined as any person holding an unmodified appointment (i.e., not visiting, adjunct, emeritus, etc.) at The University of Alabama at Birmingham as a Professor or an Associate Professor, or as an Assistant Professor with an earned doctorate from an accredited institution. A minimum of three regular members of the faculty must be on each committee. One of them must be the Chair of the committee.

SPECIFIED DISSERTATION COMMITTEE ROLES

The Chair is responsible for guiding and encouraging the Candidate's design and execution of an original, high quality, doctoral project. The Chair is also expected to play a leading role in providing direction for the project. Additional faculty members monitor the quality of the dissertation. These members should also hold an appointment in a cognate discipline related to the student's dissertation topic. University faculty and staff who are not regular faculty members and qualified people from outside the University whose service on a Dissertation Committee would contribute significantly may be nominated to serve as special members on the committee. In making a nomination for a person to serve as a special member on a specific Dissertation committee, the nominee's expertise and research experience pertinent to the dissertation topic must be detailed. Special members of a committee need not be employed by The University of Alabama at Birmingham and need not hold academic appointments. However, they must be reviewed and approved for AdHoc appointment by the UAB Graduate School.

DISSERTATION PROCESS

Students are expected to proceed on their dissertation work according to the following sequence:

1. During the second year of the Program each student begins working with a faculty member of the student's choosing on selecting and specifying a dissertation topic and identifying potential members for the student's Dissertation Committee.
2. The student submits to the D.Sc. Program an abstract of the proposed dissertation topic, along with a proposed list of members for the student's Dissertation Committee.

3. The Dissertation Committee approves the proposal. Provided all other pertinent requirements (including IRB approval) are satisfied, the UAB Graduate School will advance the student to Candidacy.
4. When the Dissertation Committee agrees that the student's dissertation is essentially completed, the final oral examination is scheduled. The final oral examination is not scheduled until each member of the committee concurs.
5. Once the student successfully passes the oral examination and obtains approval of any final corrections, the student should have thereby met all graduation requirements and is eligible to receive the D.Sc. degree upon completing a diploma application. Additional information on each of the above steps is provided in the sections that follow.

SELECTION OF TOPIC AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

In their second year in the Program, students are expected to work with a faculty member of their choosing in selecting a dissertation topic, refining it, and identifying potential members for the student's Dissertation Committee.

Once the topic is sufficiently well specified, the student should submit to the D.Sc. Program a one- page prospectus of the proposed dissertation topic and a proposed list of members for the student's Dissertation Committee. The prospectus should describe the question to be addressed, its significance for health management, and the approach that will be followed in addressing the question. The D.Sc. Program will evaluate the proposed topic for its consistency with Program expectations and assess whether the proposed membership of the Dissertation Committee is appropriate for the topic, sufficiently balanced, and in a good position to assure that students are held to uniform standards of performance. The D.Sc. Program may approve the topic and Dissertation Committee membership as submitted by the student, or with suggested modifications, or it may ask the student to reconsider and submit another proposal that addresses the concerns. Once the dissertation topic and the membership of the Dissertation Committee have been approved by the D.Sc. Program, and once all prospective members have indicated their willingness to serve, the student must formally request that the committee be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School.

The Committee Approval Form should list the membership of the proposed committee, providing for each member the academic rank, departmental affiliation, and role on the committee (i.e., chair, or member). Nominations of any special (i.e. ad hoc) members should also be included and should provide the pertinent information to support the nomination. The committee is officially constituted when appointed by the Dean. Any changes in the membership of the Dissertation Committee must be approved by the Graduate School Dean. Requests for change in committee membership should be sent by the student to the Program Director, with an explanation for the requested change. If

the resulting composition of the Committee meets all relevant criteria, the Program Director will request the Dean's approval. Changes in status of any Committee member, such as resignation or retirement from the University, will necessitate adjustments in the Dissertation Committee's composition if as a result of the change the Committee's membership no longer has the requisite composition. For example, if the chair of the Committee resigns from the HSA Department, it would be necessary to appoint a new chair who is currently a member of the Department. Students are encouraged to consult with the Program Director about such changes in the Committee members' status. Every effort will be made to minimize the resulting disruption while still meeting the basic criteria and requirements for Dissertation Committee composition.

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

The student must prepare a dissertation proposal for formal approval by the Dissertation Committee. This document must be sufficiently specific and well-grounded to guide the actual conduct of the dissertation, and it must be substantial enough to serve as a "contract" between the student and the Dissertation Committee.

Key elements of an acceptable proposal are:

1. One-page summary.
2. The problem, question, or hypotheses to be addressed.
3. Review of key literature relevant to the topic.
4. Importance of the topic and its contribution to health management.
5. Scope of the investigation: limitations and assumptions.
6. Constructs or model that underlies the investigation.
7. Data and methods to be used.
8. Proposed timetable.

Whenever subsequent exploration of the topic results in the need to deviate substantially from an approved dissertation proposal, the changes should be formally approved by the Dissertation Committee. After the Dissertation Committee is satisfied that the proposal meets all Committee and Program expectations and the student has received IRB approval for the proposed research, the student will be eligible to apply to be advanced to candidacy status by the Graduate School.

ORAL EXAMINATION/DEFENSE

The Dissertation Committee Chair will inform the student when the Committee considers the dissertation to be complete and the Committee is ready to conduct the final oral examination. The student and the Committee members should then schedule the examination (the final defense).

Faculty, graduate students and others will be invited to attend. During the oral examination, the student may be asked to reconsider certain aspects of the work done for the dissertation and to make certain changes or corrections in the document submitted. At the end of the examination, the chair will discuss the oral examination with the other members of the committee in private and inform the student of their assessment.

If a member of the committee is not able to attend the oral examination (either in person or via distance-supporting technology), the member must read the dissertation and abstract and submit their evaluations to the Dissertation Committee Chair at least two working days before the examination. An absent member of the committee may also communicate questions to the Chair to be discussed at the oral examination. The findings of the absent member must be incorporated into deliberations of the Committee.

After the oral examination, the Dissertation Committee Chair will notify the Program Director of the outcome of the examination. Should there be a disagreement within the Dissertation Committee over the acceptability of the dissertation, the Program Director will consult with the members of the Dissertation Committee and will act as final arbiter. If the Dissertation Committee asks for changes or corrections in the dissertation, the student should make these and show them to the Committee Chair for approval. Once all requirements have been met, the Dissertation Committee Chair will recommend to the Graduate School Dean that the student be awarded the D.Sc. degree

FUNDING & FINANCIAL INFORMATION

INSTITUTIONALLY APPROVED FEE

The cost of the Executive Doctoral Program is \$36,600 per year for each of three years. Students enrolled in the Executive DSc Program will not experience an increase in the total cost during their three-year period of enrollment.

The institutionally approved fee includes required courses, university fees, required software, and costs associated with supporting distance learning technologies. Tuition also covers all books and learning materials, meals during the on-campus sessions, speaker costs associated with national experts brought to Birmingham, and an international health system visit experience (excludes airfare).

BOOKS AND MATERIALS

Required text books and learning materials will be purchased by the program and delivered to students, prior to the beginning of each semester. All required readings (journal articles, cases, etc.) will be made available via Canvas or shipped to students. Only *required* books and readings are covered by the institutionally approved fee.

Executive DSc students also have access to an expansive collection of resources via the UAB libraries.

PARKING

Executive DSc students do not need to purchase a parking pass through UAB Parking and Transportation. The cost of a pass for on-campus sessions is included in the institutionally approved fee. Students who require parking for the on-campus sessions should contact the program office (205-934- 3113) to request access.

Students should contact their hotel directly for information regarding parking at the hotel location.

MEALS

The institutionally approved fee includes the cost of meals during the on-campus sessions, orientation, and special workshops. Included meals are breakfast, lunch, and dinner on full days of the on-campus session and breakfast on half days. Meals during the orientation session in the first year are also included. Included meals will be catered or scheduled group dinners at local restaurants. Snacks and beverages are also provided throughout the week.

As a state institution, UAB cannot and will not cover the cost of alcoholic beverages.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The institutionally approved fee includes the cost of the international experience at the beginning of the third year. The fee includes educational fees, speaker fees, iTAP insurance through UAB's provider, in-country transportation to various lectures and site visits, and lodging for four nights (Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday). Included meals are Sunday dinner; breakfast, lunch, dinner, and planned breaks Monday-Wednesday; and breakfast on Thursday. The cost of a CFAR insurance policy may also be covered by the program, subject to availability through the university's insurance provider. Airfare and transportation between the airport and the designated hotel are *not included*.

Participation in the international health system visit is a requirement of the DSc program. In the event that a student is unable to travel with the group, the university will not be able to offer a refund of any portion of their institutionally approved fee. Participation in a future health system visit might be available but will be at the student/alum's additional expense and subject to space restraints.

For any students who bring spouses or travel companions on the international experience, our contracted logistics vendor will set a special "package rate" that includes the additional cost of double occupancy in the hotel and select meals and

expenses. The package rate will be communicated in advance and will depend upon the agenda and location of the visit.

TUITION BEYOND YEAR THREE

For students who do not finish at the end of year three, the institutionally approved fee will not apply beyond the ninth semester of the program. The cost for any extended semesters will revert to the tuition and fee rates as determined by the Board of Trustees and will vary depending upon residency status and the number of credit hours in which the student is enrolled (based on candidacy status and whether the student has completed 2 semesters and 12 hours of AHD 799).

DEADLINES, INVOICING AND PAYMENTS

Typically, students (or their organizations) pay a portion of the year's cost each semester. Please refer to your program-issued invoice for the amount due for each term. Each semester, UAB Student Accounting issues deadlines for payment. A missed deadline may result in late fees and/or reinstatement fees. Payment deadlines will also appear on the invoice that students receive from the Program Office.

INVOICES

Our program has received special permission to issue our own invoices for Executive Doctoral Students who are enrolled in years 1, 2 and 3. Students with organizational support should contact the Program Coordinator with any requests for special structure or processing of the invoices.

PAYMENTS AND FEE BREAKDOWN

The cost of the Executive Doctoral Program in Healthcare Leadership is \$36,600 per year for each of three years. For the 2026-2027 academic year, students in years 1, 2 and/or 3 will be charged \$12,200 per semester for each of 3 semesters.

Please note: The UAB Student Accounting system is not designed to support a "flat rate" tuition structure. Therefore, manual adjustments must be made to the account to ensure that charges for the year are equal for all students, regardless of residency. If your student account does not match the invoice you received from the program and/or the numbers below, please contact the Program Office immediately (Click [here](#) for Shirley Levins email).

Non-Alabama residents who paid more than \$36,600 in the 2024-2025 and/or 2025-2026 academic years will receive an adjustment on their total cost for Year 3 (in other words, the cost for year 3 will be less than \$36,600 to compensate for the higher rates in Y1&2.)

PAYMENT BY CHECK

Checks should be made payable to “The University of Alabama at Birmingham” and should be mailed to the Program Office Attn: Shirley Levins (see address below). The Program will process your check and apply the payment to your student account.

Address:

University of Alabama at Birmingham
Executive Doctoral Program in Healthcare Leadership
1716 9th Ave S. (SHPB 553)
Birmingham, AL 35294

ELECTRONIC PAYMENT METHODS

There is also an option to make payments online at BlazerNet via credit card or e-check. Please note that credit card payments will incur a surcharge of 2.95% for all credit card payments that are made via this system. E-checks do not incur the surcharge.

As mentioned above, at the beginning of each semester, a manual adjustment must be made to your student account. Please do not attempt to make a payment if your online student account does not match your program invoice. Students who receive an email directly from the Student Accounting Department, encounter problems with their Student Accounts, or receive emails regarding an account hold should notify the DSc program office immediately before taking any further action. (Click [here](#) for Shirley Levins email).

FINANCIAL AID

The UAB Office of Financial Aid is the primary contact for any questions regarding student loans or other forms of financial aid. Financial Aid advisors can assist students with applying for financial aid, understanding how to accept an award, etc. To access the Office of Financial Aid's website, click [here](#).