



Master of Applied Health Services Research Program

Student Handbook

2023-2024

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Section 1: Important Dates and Information

***Dates for the last class and when courses must be dropped vary among universities. Check the university calendar of the relevant university or with your professor for the correct dates. University breaks will be set according to the dates for the instructor's campus.**

Table 1

Date	Fall 2023 Semester
September 7	Orientation for First Year Students (virtual), 3:30-5:00PM
September 11	Fall Semester Start Date: All campuses See Table 2 for the start date for your individual course
December 2024	MAHSR-P Graduate Student Workshop (virtual)
Date	Winter 2024 Semester
January 8	Winter Semester Start Date

Table 2: Class Schedule*

Fall Semester			Winter Semester		
Day	Course	Instructor	Day	Course	Instructor
Mon 4:00-7:00pm	AHS 6005/MED 6288 Policy and Decision Making Starts Sept 11 2023	Dr. Rick Audas (MUN)	Mon 6:00-9:00pm Starts Jan 8 2024	AHS 6009/MED 6295 Advanced Quantitative Methods 1	Dr. Timur Ozbilir (UNB)
Tues 2:00-5:00pm	AHS 6001/MED 6282 Canadian Health System Starts Sept 12 2023	Dr. Emily Doyle (MUN)	Tues 4:00-7:00pm Starts Jan 9 2024	AHS 6011 Indigenous Health	Katelynn Carter- Rogers (SMU)
Wed 12:30-3:30p m	AHS 6000/MED 6285 Introduction to Health Services Research Starts Sept 13 2023	Dr. Bill Montelpare (UPEI)	Wed 3:30-6:30 pm Starts Jan 10, 2024	AHS 6008/MED 6294 Advanced Qualitative Methods	Lacie White (UPEI)
Thurs 12:30-3:30p m	AHS 6004/MED 6290 Determinants of Health Starts Sept 14 2023	Dr. Emily Richard (UNB)	Thurs 1:00-4:00pm Starts Jan 11, 2024	AHS 6007/MED 6293 Knowledge Transfer and Research Uptake	Dr. Lucie Kocum (SMU)
All Times in Atlantic					

Table 3: Seminar Schedule - All times in Atlantic Standard Time		
Seminar #1:	Welcome and Welcome Back: Meet some Grads	Sept 22/23 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #2:	Conducting an effective literature research (Each seminar will be conducted through your university library.) (Required for first-year students only; optional for second-year students)	Oct 20/23 2:00 - 3:30 p.m: Date to be finalized. We will arrange with your campus librarian
Seminar #3:	Research Data Centre (RDC)	Nov 24/23 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #4:	Writing your thesis: Dr. Jennifer Taylor	Jan 19/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #5:	Publishing in Health Services Research: Dr. Sarah Hewko	Feb 9/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #6:	Biosecurity in Canada: Lauren Audas	Mar 22/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Seminar Schedule - Year 2 - All times in Atlantic Standard Time		
Seminar #1:	Research Presentations	October 27/23 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #2:	Research Presentations	Dec 1/23 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #3:	Research Presentations	Jan 26/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #4:	Research Presentations	Feb 16/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #5:	Research Presentations	March 15/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Section 2: About the Atlantic Regional Training Centre (ARTC)

The [Atlantic Regional Training Centre \(ARTC\)](#) is a collaborative venture among four Atlantic Canada universities - Memorial University, the University of New Brunswick, the University of Prince Edward Island, and Saint Mary's University. The objectives of the ARTC are to:

- Provide graduate education at the master's level in the area of applied health services research from an interdisciplinary perspective;
- Advance reciprocal arrangements between academic communities and decision-maker organizations which facilitate the use of evidence in policy decisions affecting the health of Atlantic Canadians;
- Create a platform where interchanges between decision-makers and health researchers from academic communities can generate policy-relevant research.

Each university has a Program Lead, who is responsible for program administration at each site. Program Leads form the ARTC Management Team, for which Dr. Jennifer Taylor serves as Chair.

Memorial University

Dr. Rick Audas

raudas@mun.ca / (709) 864-6009

Saint Mary's University

Dr. Steven Smith

steven.smith@smu.ca / (902) 420-5581

University of New Brunswick

Dr. Lisa Keeping-Burke

lkeeping@unb.ca / (506) 648-5685

University of Prince Edward Island

Dr. Jennifer Taylor

jtaylor@upei.ca / (902) 566-0475

Section 3: The Master of Applied Health Services Research (MAHSR) Program

The ARTC, through its four interconnected sites, offers the Master of Applied Health Services Research (MAHSR) program. This advanced degree program accepts students from interdisciplinary backgrounds and prepares them with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate complex issues facing healthcare decision-makers. The Master's Degree is a full-time two-year program. Students interested in completing the program on a part-time basis should contact the MAHSR Program Coordinator for more information.

The Master's in Applied Health Services Research Program consists of:

- Five online courses
- Spring and winter online seminars (September-April- approximately 12 seminars)
- A workshop for first year students
- A thesis

Section 3.1: Program Objectives

Graduates from the MAHSR Program are expected to achieve the following learning objectives:

- Undertake health services research;
- Design, supervise, and evaluate research projects;
- Critically evaluate health services research literature;
- Employ innovative approaches in health services research through understanding diversity in decision-making environments and processes;
- Communicate health research issues and results clearly and responsibly to decision makers, academics, professionals, and to the general public; and
- Integrate and synthesize health services research results across disciplines

Section 3.2: Career Opportunities

Graduates of the MAHSR program typically find work in policy development, program development, or research. Graduates of the MAHSR program work in organizations including:

- Primary Health Care, Nova Scotia Health Authority
- Population Health, Horizon Health
- Government of Prince Edward Island
- Health Research Unit, Memorial University
- Emergency Health Services, Nova Scotia

Section 3.3: Admission Requirements

All students are expected to meet the minimum graduate student entrance requirements of the ARTC University site where they intend to carry out their program of studies. Due to a limited number of graduate supervisors and available funding, students should note that entry is very competitive. Generally, these requirements include

- Successful completion of a four-year bachelor's degree or bachelor's degree with Honours.
- A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (equivalent to a "B" or 75%).
- Evidence of proficiency in the English Language (both written and spoken), as defined by the student's anticipated home university.

Please visit the following university websites for more information and to apply to the program:

Institutions	Application Deadline	Websites
St. Mary's University	March 15	https://smu.ca/academics/master-applied-health-services-research.html
Memorial University	March 1 st	https://www.med.mun.ca/CommunityHealth/Academic-Programs/M-Sc-Med-(AHSR).aspx
University of Prince Edward Island	March 1 st	https://www.upei.ca/programs/master-applied-health-services-research
University of New Brunswick	March 1 st	https://www.unb.ca/gradstudies/programs/mahsr.html

Section 3.4: Application Procedures

Choice of University Site - Students in the MAHSR Program must select one of the four participating university sites (Memorial University, Saint Mary's University, the University of New Brunswick, or the University of Prince Edward Island) as their "home university." This will be selected based on the student's home residence and the location of their thesis supervisor. Applications for admission to the program and all subsequent administrative matters are handled at the student's chosen university.

Prospective Student Advising - Students anticipating an application to the MAHSR program should seek the advice of the Program Lead at their home university well before the application deadline.

Supporting Documentation - Besides the appropriate application form, prospective students must submit the following:

- Official Transcripts of all university and post-secondary institutions attended.
- Letters of recommendation from post-secondary instructors or others familiar with the student's work (**Note: Memorial University and UPEI require two letters of recommendation; Saint**

Mary's University requires three letters of recommendation; and the University of New Brunswick requires three references).

- An individual Letter of Intent describing the student's research and professional interests in the area of applied health services research and describing how the ARTC Master's program matches the student's own goals and experiences.
- TOEFL Test Scores (or equivalent) for students whose first language is not English
- All applicable university application fees

Section 4: MAHSR – Program of Study

The program of study for the MAHSR degree includes a prescribed sequence of courses, workshops, residency, and thesis research, completed over a period of two years for full-time students.

The program of study for students starting in September 2023 is outlined below:

MAHSR Courses	
Semester 1 (Fall)	Required: AHS 6000: Introduction to Health Services Research AHS 6004: Determinants of Health 1 elective from: AHS 6001: Canadian Health System AHS 6005: Policy and Decision Making
Semester 2 (Winter)	Required: AHS 6008: Advanced Qualitative Methods OR AHS 6009: Advanced Quantitative Methods 1-2 electives from the following: AHS 6007: Knowledge Transfer and Research Uptake AHS 6011: Indigenous Health AHS 6012: Big Data In Health (tentative) 2-day workshop
Semester 3 (Spring/Summer)	AHS 6120: Optional Residency Placement AHS 6997: Thesis
Semester 4 (Fall)	AHS 6997: Thesis
Semester 5 (Winter)	AHS 6997: Thesis
Semester 6 (Spring/Summer)	Thesis defence Program completion

Part-time Status: The MASHR program (thesis option) was initially designed to be *full-time*. With the current program, students normally complete their coursework in the first two semesters and then focus on their research and thesis to complete their program in approximately 24 months. Students who wish to complete the MAHSR program (thesis option) *part-time* should consult with their supervisor and consider graduate school regulations at their home university. While courses can be taken over two years, part-time status could impact students' ability to carry out their research and complete their thesis in a timely manner. It is expected that all students will participate in all online seminars (since there are normally six per semester), and all first-year students will complete the workshop in the Spring of their first year.

New Professional Program: We are currently in the final stages of obtaining approval for a course-based “professional” program (MAHSR-P) which will have a part-time option. We expect the program to accept its first full cohort in September 2024, with an application deadline of March 1, 2024.

If you have any questions about your program, please contact Nyeno Kwasi (nyeno.kwasitsu@smu.ca) or Jennifer Taylor (jtaylor@upei.ca) (Chair).

Section 4.1: MAHSR Courses

All MAHSR courses are 12 weeks long and delivered synchronously online using the learning management system Brightspace, hosted by Memorial University. Each semester, students will be added to their online courses based on program requirements and/or the electives they have chosen. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure they have internet access, a computer or laptop, a microphone, and speakers or headphones to participate in weekly lectures fully. Brightspace will also be used for assignment submissions and student presentations. Course descriptions are found here: <https://www.mahsr-artc.org/current>. If students experience technical difficulties at any time, they can contact IT support at <https://www.citl.mun.ca/support/>. For full course descriptions, please visit <https://www.mahsr-artc.org/current>.

Section 4.2: MAHSR: Course Information and Registration

To be registered for MAHSR courses, you need to first register at your home university. This is needed to ensure that grades will be recorded by your program lead.

The content of each course, however, will be accessed through Brightspace, located at Memorial University. The program leads at each university will submit your name to the program manager, and you will be sent a code to access that platform and view your course materials.

Course codes for registration purposes differ between the four sites. Refer to the table below when registering for your courses each semester:

COURSE REGISTRATION				
	Course number and name			MUN
	UNB	UPEI	SMU	
Semester 1	AHS6000: Introduction to Health Services Research AHS6004: Determinants of Health AHS6001: Canadian Health System AHS6005: Policy and Decision-Making			MED6288: Policy and Decision-Making MED6285: Introduction to Health Services Research MED6282: Canadian Health System MED6290: Determinants of Health
Semester 2	AHS6008: Advanced Qualitative Methods OR AHS6009: Advanced Quantitative Methods AHS6007: Knowledge Transfer and Research Uptake AHS6011: Indigenous Health 2-day workshop			MED6295: Advanced Quantitative Methods MED6293: Knowledge Transfer and Research Uptake MED6294: Advanced Qualitative Methods MED Indigenous Health
Semester 3	AHS6120: Optional Residency Placement AHS6997: Thesis			MED6296: Residency Placement Thesis: No number at MUN; named "Master's Thesis".
Semester 4	AHS6997: Thesis			
Semester 5	AHS6997: Thesis			
Semester 6	Thesis completion			Thesis completion
	Program completion			Program completion

Section 4.3: Online Seminars

During the spring and winter semesters of Year 1, six online seminars will be held. These mandatory seminars will include information about thesis writing, professional development, and health research in action. All seminars will be recorded so that students who cannot attend can watch them later. In Year 2, students must attend and participate in 6 online research seminars, presenting their thesis proposals or

progress to date.

Section 4.4: Graduate Student Workshop

This year, the MAHSR workshop will be held in person in Spring 2024. Attendance and participation is mandatory. The workshop will bring students together to offer additional training. It will feature guest speakers from the health research and policy field, emphasizing practitioners. There will also be opportunities to network with previous program graduates and critical stakeholders in the sector.

Section 4.5: Residency Placement

In the third semester, students have the option of doing a residency placement with an approved decision-making organization. The goal of the placement is to provide students with the opportunity to gain practical experience in the field of health research and to put their classroom skills to use. Past placement organizations have included Eastern Health in St. John's, the New Brunswick Department of Health and Wellness, PEI Canadian Mental Health Association, Veterans Affairs Canada, McGill University, and Nova Scotia Health Authority in Halifax. Residency placements must be a minimum of 240 hours in duration.

Section 4.6: Thesis

To complete the program, students will be required to successfully complete a piece of scholarly research that must also be defended before their examining committee (note: Memorial students are not required to defend their thesis). Each site has its own specifications for writing a thesis that students should be familiar with:

https://www.mun.ca/sgs/go/guid_policies/Guidelines_Theses_and_Reports.pdf

https://www.unb.ca/gradstudies/_assets/documents/sgsthesisformattingguide2018.pdf

https://smu.ca/webfiles/th023_mastersphdformat_procedures.pdf

https://files.upei.ca/science/graduatestudies/science_thesis_guidelines.pdf

Section 4.7: Thesis Guidelines

All MAHSR students must successfully complete a master's thesis that describes the framework and outcomes of an applied research project in an approved area of health services research. The thesis research topic and an initial proposal for the investigation are normally developed in conjunction with the program's advanced research courses and in consultation with a supervisor. All applicable research proposals must receive ethical approval from the appropriate review committee at the student's home university before the research is carried out.

The Thesis may be written in a traditional thesis style using the style recommended at the student's home university or may take the form of one or more publishable research manuscript (s). In either case,

the thesis will conform to the Graduate Studies standards and regulations in place at the student's home university; the student should consult with their academic supervisor. Examples of appropriate guidelines for the preparation of a publication or manuscript thesis can be found at the following websites:

- MUN: <http://www.mun.ca/sgs/thesisguide.htm>
- UNB: <http://www.unb.ca/gradschl/guidelines/index.html>
- UPEI: https://files.upei.ca/science/graduatestudies/science_thesis_guidelines.pdf
- SMU: <http://www.smu.ca/academics/archives/masters-thesis.html>

Section 4.8: Thesis Supervision

Each student's thesis shall be supervised by someone approved to supervise at the student's home university. The supervisor will guide and advise the student in planning and carrying out the thesis research and preparing it. In all cases, the selection and constitution of supervisory committees shall conform to the regulations governing graduate student supervision at the student's home university.

Section 4.9: Thesis Defense

All MAHSR students (except MUN students) will be required to successfully defend their thesis in front of their examination committee to pass their thesis and complete the program successfully. The presentation will also normally be open to members of the public and advertised at the student's home university. The thesis defence will include an oral presentation of the student's research followed by questions from the examining supervisory committee and, if applicable, members of the public in attendance.

Section 5: ARTC (MAHSR) Program Policies and Regulations

Section 5.1: Course Grading

Grading for all MAHSR courses will conform to the overall grading regulations in place at the student's home university.

See the table below:

Grade	UNB	UPEI	SMU	MUN
A+	90-100	91-100	90-100	
A	85-89	85-90	85-89	80-100
A-	80-84	80-84	80-84	
B+	77-79	77-79	77-79	
B	74-76	74-76	73-76	65-79
B-	70-73	70-73	70-72	
C+	65-69	67-69	67-69	
C	60-64	64-66	63-66	55-64

Section 5.2: Course Failures

The definition of a course failure differs between the sites: the minimum passing grade at UNB and UPEI is B-, and at MUN and SMU it is B. Students who fail to achieve these minimum grades for any MAHSR course will be required to retake that course to complete the program successfully. Failure to pass a retake will result in withdrawing any funding and the student's removal from the program.

Section 5.3: Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence that could have serious consequences ranging from the loss of credit to the revocation of a degree. The ARTC policy on plagiarism is that a student who commits such an offence will be subject to the academic regulations regarding plagiarism at the site where the student is registered.

Section 5.4: Student Grievance and Appeal Procedures

A student may dispute matters of academic standing. Students who wish to raise questions or register a complaint about matters of academic standing are encouraged to first communicate such concerns with the appropriate course instructor and/or the site-specific ARTC program lead, who may seek a review under formal procedures. Site-specific academic regulations and policies will be followed.

Students are bound by the policies at their home university, which may differ between the sites. Although several important policies are highlighted below, students should contact their university's School of Graduate Studies for an exhaustive list.

Section 5.5: Financial Assistance

The ARTC does not provide funding (tuition, student fees, or scholarships) to students accepted into the program. However, students may receive personal and research funding through their thesis supervisor if funding is available. Students are also strongly encouraged to apply for external funding sources (scholarships, grants, etc.), which can be found on each site's School of Graduate Studies website.

General health-related awards

[MSSU Studentship Awards competition](#)

[Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation \(hallfoundation.ca\)](http://hallfoundation.ca)

[CIHR Student Grant](#)

Section 5.6: Accessibility

Accessibility is a shared value among all ARTC universities. If you experience a barrier to full participation in this program, please reach out to your instructors individually and/or your Program Lead. You may also wish to access your local campus, which can assist you with accessibility solutions tailored to your needs.

Fred Smithers Center at Saint Mary's University
<https://smu.ca/campus-life/fred-smithers-centre.html>

Accessibility Center at University of New Brunswick
<https://www.unb.ca/fredericton/studentservices/academics/accessibility/>

Blundon Center at Memorial University
<https://www.mun.ca/student/new-student-experience/access.php>

University of PEI Accessibility Services
<https://www.upei.ca/accessibility>

Section 5.7: Student Mobility

Although students normally base themselves at a specific ARTC university site during the course of their studies, the ARTC recognizes the potential value of providing access to resources at other ARTC sites (e.g., library and other research resources, faculty members with specialized expertise, etc.), where such access would facilitate individual students' research. To that end, participating ARTC universities have agreed to provide access to specific university resources at no additional cost to students who wish to undertake a portion of their studies as visiting graduate students at another ARTC site.

Section 5.8: Student Leave of Absence

Registration in the MAHSR program is normally continuous for the full duration of the program. However, under extenuating personal or professional circumstances, students may apply for a temporary leave of absence to interrupt their studies for a defined period. Students wishing to apply for a leave of absence should provide a letter of application to the program lead at their home university, outlining their specific request and the expected duration of the proposed absence. Leaves are reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the student's home university and are typically restricted to one period of leave per student.

Section 5.12: Continuance Fees

Students who do not complete their thesis and graduate from the program within the designated two years of study must maintain active student status and pay continuance fees to their university until their thesis has been completed or the student withdraws from the program. The policies listed above apply

to continuing students as well. Continuance fees for the MAHSR program vary by institution and can be found here:

UNB

[Master's and PhD tuition and Fees | UNB](#)

SMU

[Annual Program Fee Sched](#)

UPEI

http://www.upei.ca/finance/accounting/fees?field_faculty_department_tid=9&field_type_value=domestic&field_time_value=fulltime&field_level_value=graduate

MUN

<http://www.mun.ca/sgs/MinimumExpense.pdf>

Section 5.13: Graduation

Once students have successfully completed or defended their thesis, they must apply to graduate from their home university's School of Graduate Studies. Each university will have specific deadlines for when students can apply for graduation and attend convocation. Students should refer to their home university's academic calendar for more information.