

DOCTOR OF MEDICAL SCIENCE PROGRAM CATALOG ADDENDUM

Program begins in Fall 2024.

Name: Doctor of Medical Science

Offered by: College of Medical Sciences

Program Director: Deanna Oliver, DMSc, PA-C

Program Overview

The Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) is a 44-credit professional doctorate designed for working physician assistants (PAs), with instruction delivered completely online through structured asynchronous courses that can be integrated into the professional work schedule. SCU's DMSc degree provides students with a core curriculum in healthcare systems leadership and management within a foundation of integrative whole person health. The DMSc program offers flexible concentrations and flexible scheduling.

Flexible concentrations: In addition to the core curriculum, students pursue a concentration in either Health Professions Education or Society and Population Health.

Flexible schedules: The DMSc admits students three times per year; new students start about every 4 months. Courses are scheduled and delivered to provide a high degree of flexibility for students. Students may opt for one of two program schedules:

4-Term Schedule (fully online and asynchronous): Students in the 4-Term Schedule are expected to enroll full-time for 4 consecutive terms, including summer.

8-Term Schedule (fully online and asynchronous): Students in the 8-Term Schedule are expected to enroll for 8 consecutive terms, including summer.

Flex Schedule (fully online and asynchronous): Students in the Flex Schedule may complete the program at their own pace. Students will meet with a program advisor to discuss an enrollment plan and register for courses that best suit their schedules and availability.

The DMSc degree has no on-ground courses or practicum component and may be completed completely online in as few as four terms (16 months). The curriculum sequence is designed to offer maximum flexibility in enrollment options to meet the needs of working PAs.

Program Delivery Model

This program is a fully online program. All courses are online; no in-person residency is required. See State Authorization information in the University Catalog.

Program Mission

The mission of the Doctor of Medical Science program at Southern California University of Health Sciences (SCU) is to advance the PA (physician assistant) graduate's knowledge and skills in leadership and integrative whole person health within an evidence-based learning environment that is focused on SCU's values of health equity, and inclusivity.

Program Learning Outcomes

1. **Interprofessional Collaboration and Integrative Whole Person Health:** The graduate will serve as an effective member of the healthcare team and collaborate with other professionals to improve whole person health and patient outcomes of individuals and the community.
2. **Health Systems and Practice-based Learning and Quality Improvement:** The graduate will successfully evaluate, develop, and implement a healthcare management plan using appropriate professional methodologies and quality care to achieve best patient/population outcomes.
3. **Evidence-based Knowledge:** The graduate will utilize foundational evidence-based knowledge to critically appraise and apply relevant scientific literature and other resources in professional healthcare or educational settings.
4. **Interpersonal and Communication Skills:** The graduate will effectively interact with patients/clients, colleagues, stakeholders, and the public using appropriate professional verbal, non-verbal, and written communication.
5. **Professionalism and Ethics:** The graduate will demonstrate leadership, integrity, respect, cultural awareness, and self-reflection while employing ethical and legal standards in professional and community interactions.
6. **Integrative Whole Person Patient-centered Care:** The graduate will employ the abilities of available health professionals and associated resources to complement the PA's professional expertise and develop optimal strategies to enhance integrative whole person patient-centered care.
7. **Society and Population Health:** The graduate will recognize and understand the influences of the ecosystem of person, family, population, environment, and policy on the health of patients and integrate knowledge of these determinants of health into patient and population care decisions.

Application Requirements

Applicants for the DMSc degree must submit the following:

- Completed application.
- Official transcripts demonstrating successful completion of an ARC-PA accredited physician assistant (PA) program.
- Proof of current NCCPA certification, active state licensure, or eligibility for licensure.

- State licensure or NCCPA certification must be received prior to matriculation into the DMSc program. NCCPA PA-C Emeritus is accepted.

Admissions Standards

Applicants for the DMSc degree must meet the following admissions requirements. Exceptions may be made individually with program director approval.

- Master's degree from an ARC-PA accredited physician assistant program within a regionally accredited institution.
 - Physician assistants without a master's degree may be eligible for the Bachelors to Doctorate Pathway.* See below for equivalency requirements and contact an admissions advisor for additional information.
- Proof of current NCCPA certification, active state licensure, or eligibility for licensure.
 - State licensure or NCCPA certification must be received prior to matriculation into the DMSc program. NCCPA PA-C Emeritus is accepted.
- A minimum overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale upon completion of the physician assistant program.
- Meet the technical requirements to successfully complete the program, with or without reasonable accommodations.

The GRE is not required.

*Bachelors to Doctorate Pathway:

To enter the Bachelors to Doctorate Pathway, applicants must have a bachelor's degree in physician assistant/associate AND provide documentation of at least one (1) of the criteria below:

- Completion of an approved military or civilian post-professional PA residency or fellowship
- Completion of an approved medical specialty graduate certificate program (e.g., public health certificate, healthcare administration certificate)
- A Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) by the NCCPA
- At least 15 credit hours of post-secondary education toward a master's degree
- Currently certified by the NCCPA with a minimum of at least ten (10) years of continuous certification maintenance

Prematriculation Requirements

Upon acceptance, students must submit official documentation of state licensure or NCCPA certification and declare their intended concentration on the enrollment agreement. Requests to change concentration after beginning the program will be considered individually.

Degree Completion Requirements

The Doctor of Medical Science may be conferred upon those who have fulfilled the following requirements:

- Completed 44 credits within the required categories of coursework:
 - 12 credits in Healthcare Systems Leadership and Management Skills
 - 9 credits in Foundational Principles of Society and Population Health
 - 4 credits in Integrative Whole Person Health Practice
 - 12 credits within the declared concentration:
 - Health Professions Education, *or*
 - Society and Population Health
 - 7 credits in Research, Scholarship, and Doctoral Capstone Project
- Earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75
- Completed all degree requirements within 5 years of matriculation
- Submitted a Petition to Graduate

Program Sequence

DMSc 4-Term Schedule Sequence

Students are assigned their schedule of courses each term and are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their schedules. Student schedules may vary based on term of entry and other factors, including student progression. Not all courses are offered every term. Each term includes a combination of 15-week course offerings (Block AB) and 7.5-week course offerings (Blocks A and B). The Dean or Program Director’s Office maintains sample schedules.

Students must complete DMSC610 Researching, Publishing, and Presenting in Healthcare prior to enrolling in the Doctoral Capstone Project course series, which must be completed in sequential order.

Sample Sequence

Term 1	Duration	Block	Credit
DMSC610 Researching, Publishing, and Presenting in Healthcare	15 weeks	AB	4
DMSC612 Profession & Science of Public and Population Health	7.5 weeks	A	3
DMSC614 Factors Related to Human Health	7.5 weeks	B	3
IWPH610 Integrative Whole Person Health Practice I	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			11
Term 2	Duration	Block	Credit

DMSC620 Organizational Behavior, Leadership, and Strategy	15 weeks	AB	3
DMSC622 Quality Improvement in Healthcare	7.5 weeks	A	3
DMSC624 Healthcare Economics	7.5 weeks	B	3
IWPH620 Integrative Whole Person Health Practice II	15 weeks	AB	1
DMSC701 Doctoral Capstone Project I	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			11
Term 3	Duration	Block	Credit
DMSC630 Ethical and Legal Considerations in Healthcare	15 weeks	AB	3
IWPH630 Integrative Whole Person Health Practice III	15 weeks	AB	1
DMSC702 Doctoral Capstone Project II	15 weeks	AB	1
Students are required to complete 6 credits from a concentration	7.5 weeks	A & B	6
Total Term Credits			11

Term 4	Duration	Block	Credits
DMSC640 Improving Healthcare Equity, Inclusivity, and Outcomes	15 weeks	AB	3
IWPH640 Integrative Whole Person Health Practice IV	15 weeks	AB	1
DMSC703 Doctoral Capstone Project III	15 weeks	AB	1
Students are required to complete 6 credits from a concentration	7.5 weeks	A & B	6
Total Term Credits			11

DMSc 8-Term Schedule Sequence

Students are assigned their schedule of courses each term and are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their schedules. Student schedules may vary based on term of entry and other factors,

including student progression. Not all courses are offered every term. Each term includes a combination of 15-week course offerings (Block AB) and 7.5-week course offerings (Blocks A and B). The Dean or Program Director’s Office maintains sample schedules.

Students must complete DMSC610 Researching, Publishing, and Presenting in Healthcare prior to enrolling in the Doctoral Capstone Project course series, which must be completed in sequential order.

Sample Sequence

Flex Sequence: Year 1, Term 1	Duration	Block	Credit
DMSC610 Researching, Publishing, and Presenting in Healthcare	15 weeks	AB	4
IWPH610 Integrative Whole Person Health Practice I	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			5
Flex Sequence: Year 1, Term 2	Duration	Block	Credit
DMSC620 Organizational Behavior, Leadership, and Strategy	15 weeks	AB	3
IWPH620 Integrative Whole Person Health Practice II	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			4
Flex Sequence: Year 1, Term 3	Duration	Block	Credit
DMSC630 Ethical and Legal Considerations in Healthcare	15 weeks	AB	3
IWPH630 Integrative Whole Person Health Practice III	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			4
Flex Sequence: Year 1, Term 4	Duration	Block	Credit
DMSC640 Improving Healthcare Equity, Inclusivity, and Outcomes	15 weeks	AB	3
IWPH640 Integrative Whole Person Health Practice IV	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			4
Flex Sequence: Year 2, Term 5	Duration	Block	Credit

DMSC612 Profession & Science of Public and Population Health	7.5 weeks	A	3
DMSC614 Factors Related to Human Health	7.5 weeks	B	3
Total Term Credits			6
Flex Sequence: Year 2, Term 6	Duration	Block	Credit
DMSC622 Quality Improvement in Healthcare	7.5 weeks	A	3
DMSC624 Healthcare Economics	7.5 weeks	B	3
DMSC701 Doctoral Capstone Project I	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			7
Flex Sequence: Year 2, Term 7	Duration	Block	Credit
Complete 6 credits from a concentration	7.5 weeks	A & B	6
DMSC702 Doctoral Capstone Project II	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			7
Flex Sequence: Year 2, Term 8	Duration	Block	Credit
Complete 6 credits from a concentration	7.5 weeks	A & B	6
DMSC703 Doctoral Capstone Project III	15 weeks	AB	1
Total Term Credits			7

DMSC Flex Schedule Sequence

Students in the Flex Schedule may complete the program at their own pace. Students must meet with a program advisor to discuss an enrollment plan and are responsible for their own registration and for ensuring accuracy of their schedules. Not all courses are offered every term. Each term includes a combination of 15-week course offerings (Block AB) and 7.5-week course offerings (Blocks A and B). The Dean or Program Director's Office maintains sample schedules.

Students must complete DMSC610 Researching, Publishing, and Presenting in Healthcare prior to enrolling in the Doctoral Capstone Project course series, which must be completed in sequential order. DMSc Flex Schedule students will complete the Doctoral Capstone Project series during the second year of the program. (Term/year may vary in the 8-term and Flex sequences.)

Concentrations

DMSc students must complete 12 credits from one of two concentrations. Students declare their concentration at the time of admission on the Enrollment Agreement. Requests to change concentration after beginning the program will be considered individually by the program director.

Health Professions Education Concentration

This concentration broadens the student's understanding of curriculum development and delivery, adult learning theory, and assessment and evaluation in PA education.

- Adult Learning Theory
- Curriculum Design and Delivery
- Assessment and Evaluation Methods
- Educational Technology and Simulation

Society and Population Health Concentration

This concentration broadens the student's understanding of societal health issues, population health, environmental health, and public health emergency preparedness and disaster response.

- Evidence-based Approaches to Public and Population Health
- Planning and Management to Promote Population Health
- Leadership Principles and Communication Strategies in Population Health
- Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response

Transfer Credit Eligibility

The Doctor of Medical Science Program does not accept transfer credits.

Residency Requirements

The Doctor of Medical Science program requires that students complete all 44 credits at Southern California University of Health Sciences (SCU) to qualify for degree completion.

Research, Scholarship, and Doctoral Capstone

The Research, Scholarship, and Doctoral Capstone consists of four courses in sequential order, beginning with DMSC610 Researching, Publishing, and Presenting in Healthcare in term one. The Doctoral Capstone Project courses (DMSC701, DMSC702, DMSC703) are completed in terms two, three, and four.

Throughout the Research, Scholarship, and Doctoral Capstone Project course series, students will collaborate with a faculty capstone mentor to engage in a structured process of topic identification, proposal development, literature review, and scholarly writing. Students will identify a problem in either clinical practice, the health system, PA education, or the PA profession, and utilize and/or extend existing research to propose a solution incorporating the principles of integrative whole person health in a final manuscript suitable for submission to a peer-reviewed publication. (Terms vary in the 8-term and Flex sequences.)

Curriculum

Course Number	Course Name	Modality	Hours	Credits
Healthcare Systems Leadership and Management Skills				
DMSC610	Organizational Behavior, Leadership, and Strategy	Online	135	3
DMSC622	Quality Improvement in Healthcare	Online	135	3
DMSC624	Healthcare Economics	Online	135	3
DMSC630	Ethical and Legal Considerations in Healthcare	Online	135	3
Total Healthcare Leadership and Management Skills			540	12
Foundational Principles of Society and Population Health				
DMSC612	Profession and Science of Public and Population Health	Online	135	3
DMSC614	Factors Related to Human Health	Online	135	3
DMSC640	Improving Healthcare Equity, Inclusivity, and Outcomes	Online	135	3
Total Foundational Principles of Society and Population Health			405	9
Interprofessional Education				
IWPH610	Integrative Whole Person Health Practice I	Online	45	1
IWPH620	Integrative Whole Person Health Practice II	Online	45	1
IWPH630	Integrative Whole Person Health Practice III	Online	45	1
IWPH640	Integrative Whole Person Health Practice IV	Online	45	1
Total Interprofessional Education			180	4

Health Professions Education Concentration				
DMSC632	Adult Learning Theory	Online	135	3
DMSC634	Curriculum Design and Delivery	Online	135	3
DMSC642	Assessment & Evaluation Methods	Online	135	3
DMSC644	Educational Technology & Simulation	Online	135	3
Total Health Professions Education Concentration			540	12
Society and Population Health Concentration				
DMSC633	Evidence-based Approaches to Public and Population Health	Online	135	3
DMSC635	Planning and Management to Promote Population Health	Online	135	3
DMSC643	Leadership Principles and Communication Strategies	Online	135	3
DMSC645	Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response	Online	135	3
Total Society and Population Health Concentration			540	
Research, Scholarship, and Doctoral Capstone				
DMSC610	Researching, Publishing, and Presenting in Healthcare	Online	180	4
DMSC701	Doctoral Capstone Project I	Online	45	1
DMSC702	Doctoral Capstone Project II	Online	45	1
DMSC703	Doctoral Capstone Project III	Online	45	1
Total Research, Scholarship, and Doctoral Capstone Courses			315	7
			2520	44