UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STUDIES

INFORMATION CONCERNING THE DEGREES FOR THE
HONOURS BACHELOR OF ARTS IN HEALTH STUDIES;

MASTER OF ARTS IN HEALTH STUDIES;

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

AND

DOCTOR OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY IN HEALTH STUDIES

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Department of Health Studies offers:

- an Honours degree that allows candidates to specialise in the clinical fields of advanced midwifery, critical care nursing or pre-hospital emergency care or in the fields of health services management or health sciences education.

- two master’s degrees: Master of Arts in Health Studies: a research masters; and a Master of
Public Health (MPH). The latter is offered in collaboration with the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

**NB** Due to unforeseen circumstances, the student intake in the MPH programme (Curriculum A - General) is on hold for 2007. Only Curriculum B (Medical Informatics) is available to new students in 2007.

- a Doctor of Literature and Philosophy in Health Studies which provides the opportunity to do research in any health related field providing that it is in the same field of specialisation as the Master’s degree on which this degree is founded.

### 1.1 Vision of the Department

Within the vision of the University and that of the College of Human Sciences, the Department of Health Studies envisions optimising learner potential and social responsibility towards health and development.

### 1.2 Mission of the Department

The mission of the Department of Health Studies is to offer a wide range of quality programs to meet the diverse needs of communities within and beyond the borders of South Africa, by empowering and equipping them with the competencies and skills to address their challenges in an enlightened, responsible and constructive manner.
2. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Guidelines regarding the following appear in the University Calendar Part 1 (General information and general rules) and the Brochure, *General Information Master’s and Doctor’s degrees*

- General rules for postgraduate programmes
- Documents to be submitted for admission to the relevant programmes
- Re-registration
- Deferment of study
- Concurrent registration in a postgraduate programme and a course/paper/module(s) for non-degree purposes
- General rules PG19 to PG23 regarding duration of study, re-registration, requirements for a dissertation and a thesis.

3. DEGREE FOR THE HONOURS BACHELOR OF ARTS IN HEALTH STUDIES (0479-0)

3.1 Purpose of the Honours degree

The purpose of the Honours degree is to prepare students for research based postgraduate study and to consolidate the students’ expertise in particular clinical fields in order to prepare them as clinical experts and leaders in nursing.
3.2 Outcomes

The outcomes include:

• demonstration of basic understanding of the research process

• conducting of a mini research project in health matters

• identifying and solving client care and health service delivery problems

• designing and implementing a nursing care plan in the speciality fields

• preparing health education information sessions

• critically evaluating health care services via situational analysis

• designing a managed health care plan for clients

• designing and implementing educational strategies to teach clients and students

• organising and managing health care units and services

• demonstrating and understanding of comprehensive health service delivery and organisation

• functioning effectively as a member of the multi disciplinary health team
• demonstrating effective client care in the field of specialisation

• conceptualising the practice environment through micro theory construction.

3.3 Admission requirements

Curriculum A: (Specialising in Health Services Management or Health Sciences Education)

Prospective students must hold a Bachelor’s degree in nursing or equivalent qualification and

• Students who wish to register for Concepts and application of health services management must have passed health services management at third level or equivalent.

• Students who wish to register for Advanced Aspects of Health Sciences Education must have passed health sciences education at third level or equivalent.

Students who have not completed Nursing Dynamics (NUD211-9), must register for the module for non-degree purposes simultaneously with the degree to be eligible to register the qualification with the South African Nursing Council.
Curriculum B: (Specialising in the clinical field of Advanced Midwifery and Neonatal Nursing Science or Medical and Surgical Nursing Science: Critical Care Nursing Science or Pre-hospital emergency Care)

Prospective students must hold a Bachelor’s degree in nursing or equivalent qualification

or

Prospective students in the clinical fields of specialisation may have passed the four year Comprehensive Diploma in Nursing (Program leading to registration as a nurse: [general, psychiatric and community] and midwife).

Students who select a clinical specialisation field:

• must provide proof of experience of at least one year in the chosen field

• should note that only a limited number of students can be admitted to the programmes and will be selected by a selection committee

• must be actively practicing in the relevant field of study for the duration of their study in order to gain the necessary exposure to clinical practice. Written proof in this regard must be submitted with registration and re-registration

• should note that students who complete the degree cannot automatically be guaranteed compliance with all the requirements for registration with a relevant professional registering body in their respective countries
In addition to previous stipulations, students who intend to register for this option should note the following:

- Students in the Republic of South Africa must ensure that the clinical facility in which they work and in which they do their practica is approved by the SANC for Midwifery and Critical Care Training.

- Students in countries other than the Republic of South Africa must contact the Academic Chairperson of the Department of Health Studies prior to their registration for the programme to clarify matters concerning the approval of the clinical facilities in which they intend to do their practica.

- Students who apply for exemption from a part/s of the theoretical and/or practical component of the programme must contact the Academic Chairperson of the Department of Health Studies prior to registration.

Students who have not completed *Nursing Dynamics* (NUD211-9), must register for the module for non-degree purposes simultaneously with the degree to be eligible to register the qualification with the South African Nursing Council.

### 3.4 Duration

The duration for study for the honours degree shall be a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 2 years. The papers for Curriculum A and B comprise one-year courses. These examinations are written during January of each year.
3.5 Language of offering

This programme is offered in English only. However, candidates who wish to do so may correspond with the Department in Afrikaans and may also answer examination papers in Afrikaans.

3.6 Curriculum

3.6.1 Curriculum A: (0479-0)(GEN)

The curriculum for Health Services Management and Health Sciences Education, comprises of five papers of which one (*Principles and methods of health research*) is compulsory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compulsory</th>
<th>Principles and methods of health research (MNURS1-E)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electives (any four)</td>
<td>Concepts and application of health services management (MNUB2A-H)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Advanced aspects of health sciences education (MNUB2B-J)</td>
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<td>Theory development and utilisation in health care and health services (MNURB5-D)</td>
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<td>Transcultural health care (MNURB4-C)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>General practice and applied ethics (MNURB7-F)</td>
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3.6.2 Curriculum B

For specialisation in a clinical field (Curriculum B), the curriculum comprises of five papers of which one (Principles and methods of health research) is compulsory.

Students must choose one of the following fields of specialisation

- Medical and Surgical Nursing Science: Critical Care General
- Advanced Midwifery and Neonatal Nursing Science (in collaboration with the University of Johannesburg and the University of Limpopo)
- Pre-hospital and Emergency Care

To pass the student must obtain 50% of individual papers. To pass with a distinction students must obtain an average of 75%.

3.6.2.1 Papers for Medical and Surgical Nursing Science: Critical Care General (MSN)

Compulsory:

- Principles and methods of health research (MNURS1-E)
- Foundations of critical and high care nursing (MNUCCF-X)
- Nursing Care of critically ill patient with medical alterations (MNUCCM-9)
Nursing Care of critically ill patient with surgical alterations (MNUCCS-F)

Critical care nursing science practica (MNUCCP-C)

3.6.2.2 Papers for Advanced Midwifery and Neonatal Nursing Science (MNN) (in collaboration with the University of Johannesburg and the University of Limpopo)

Compulsory:

Principles and methods of health research (MNURS1-E)

Adaptation in the pre-natal period (MNUAMA-B). Adaptation in human reproduction and the intra-partum period (MNUAMH-J)

Adaptation in the post -partum period and neonatal practica (This paper comprises of a 50% theoretical examination and a 50% practica portfolio) (MNUAMN-Q)

The practice of the midwife and obstetrical practica (This paper comprises of a 50% theoretical examination and a 50% practica portfolio) (MNUAMP-S)

3.6.2.3 Papers for Pre-hospital Emergency Care (TEC)

Compulsory:

Principles and methods of health research (MNURS1-E)

Fundamental aspects of pre-hospital emergency nursing science (MNUTEF-U)
Physical trauma (MNUTEP-9)

Medical emergencies (MNUTEM-5)

Clinical practice of pre-hospital emergency nursing (MNUTEN-6)

**NB! *Additional courses required for practica***

Students who have registered for an Honours degree in Health Studies (Pre-hospital Emergency Care) must complete and pass the following internationally recognised courses as part of the practica module prior to the conferment of the degree:

- **BTLS**: Basic Trauma Life Support;
- **APLS**: Advanced Paediatric Life Support
- **ACLS**: Advanced Cardiac Life Support

Foreign students should contact the Academic Chairperson of the Department of Health Studies in writing should assistance be required.

### 4. **MASTER OF ARTS IN HEALTH STUDIES (MA)**

(degrees code: 0702-1)

#### 4.1 Purpose of master’s degrees offered in the Department of Health Studies

The purpose of the masters degree is to advance the study, development and understanding of nursing, health and research and to prepare nurses and other
members of the multi disciplinary health team as leaders in the health care system as well as competent researchers.

4.2 Admission requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Health Studies

A student must hold the degree of Honours Bachelor of Arts in Nursing Science or an equivalent qualification, approved by the Academic Chairperson of the Department of Health Studies.

A student who holds an additional qualification in Critical Care Nursing, Advanced Midwifery, Pre-hospital Emergency Care, Paediatric Nursing, Theatre Technique or any other additional qualification is, with the permission of the Chairperson of the Department of Health Studies, eligible to register for the MA Health Studies, option A, provided that they complete or have completed the Principles and Methods of Health Research (MNURSI-E) for non-degree purposes.

Candidates will not be allowed to continue with the degree if the research proposal has not been accepted by the supervisor within the first year of registration for the degree. A maximum of three (3) attempts to submit the research proposal will be granted within the first year of registration.
4.3 Objectives of master's degrees offered in the Department of Health Studies

The objectives of the masters programme are to enable students to:

- independently appraise, use and conduct research in nursing or any health field;

- synthesise theories from natural, behavioural and social sciences to support advanced developments in health and health care;

- evaluate the use of theories as a foundation for advanced health practice;

- function effectively in a leadership role in the health care arena;

- collaborate with other disciplines to improve health care and to meet the needs of a multicultural society;

- demonstrate commitment to continued professional development;

- have a foundation for doctoral study.

4.4. Duration of MA in Health Studies

Minimum period of 1 academic year and a maximum of 4 academic years
4.5 Curriculum

The curriculum comprises a dissertation (DIS702-M) on an approved topic in the field of nursing/health care.

4.6 Language of offering

This programme is offered in English only. However, candidates who wish to do so may submit their dissertation in Afrikaans.

At least one article based on the selected area of research, which will be suitable for publication in a journal, must be submitted together with the dissertation.

The dissertation may be submitted for examination within the first academic year of registration.

To pass, the candidate must obtain 50%. To pass with distinction, the candidate must obtain 75%.

5. MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH)
(degree code: 0779-X)

NB: Only Curriculum B of the MPH is available during 2007. Please note that due to large student numbers for curriculum A, and limited human resources to provide support and guidance to students, NO new intakes for curriculum A will be considered for 2007. You are advised to visit this website again
during July 2007 if you consider to register for curriculum A in 2008.

5.1 Background

The Master of Public Health (MPH) offered by UNISA through distance education, was established through the collaboration between UNISA and the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The MPH has been approved by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) as the first collaborative degree offered in South Africa. The MPH is further recognized and approved by the Council for Higher Education.

5.2 The academic programme

The MPH degree provides two curriculums, namely a general MPH (Curriculum A) and a MPH in Medical Informatics (Curriculum B).

**The purpose of Curriculum A:** To enable candidates to through the synthesis of public health theories, assess promote and preserve the health of populations.

**The purpose of Curriculum B:** To enable candidates to apply knowledge and skills to appropriately applied areas of Medical Informatics.

5.3 Admission criteria

A student must
- hold a postgraduate diploma in public health (or recognized equivalent) or;
- be a health worker with an honours degree (or equivalent) in a relevant field of study. According to this admission criteria, for selection, candidates will be expected to have achieved a weighted average mark of 60% in that degree or,

- hold an appropriate four year bachelors degree. (According to this admission criteria, for selection candidates will be expected to have achieved a weighted average mark of 65% in that degree) or.

- have prior experience which has provided him or her with a level of competence which is deemed by the Senate to be adequate for the purpose of study in the MPH degree.

5.4 Assesment of student performance

The theoretical papers involve a formal examination and/or project work. All modules are year modules with examinations written in January/February of the following year. The dissertation of limited scope will be guided by a supervisor and a joint supervisor (in the case of students from outside of South Africa this will preferable be a person from the relevant country where the candidate conducts the research) and will be examined by two examiners from outside of the University of South Africa.

5.5 Selection

Applicants shall be subjected to a selection and may be required to comply with further conditions for admission, such as their professional experience in a relevant field. Consideration will also be given to academic merit, work experience, future career plans,
employer support, commitment to public health and equity targets. Applicants who cannot prove competency in basic computer and Internet skills will be required to complete a module “Introduction to public Health”. This module carries no credits.

Please note that there is only one intake per year.

Your application should therefore be submitted not later than 15 November prior to the year of your registration consideration by a selection committee. Documents to be submitted are:

- Registration form
- Verified copies of qualifications
- Official transcripts of the qualifications related to MPH
- Curriculum vitae
- Reasons for pursuing the MPH if not clearly obvious from previous experience and qualifications
- Minimum registration fee.

Note: Candidates selected for the MPH should take at least 3 modules in the 1st year of study. IF CANDIDATES DO NOT PASS AT LEAST 2 MODULES IN EACH YEAR OF STUDY, THEY MAY NOT CONTINUE WITH THE DEGREE.
5.6 **Language of offering**

This programme is offered in English only. However, candidates who wish to do so may correspond with the Department in Afrikaans and may also answer examination papers in Afrikaans.

5.7 **Duration**

The duration of the programme is a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 5 years.

**NB:** Students have to pass at least 2 modules per year to be allowed to continue with their studies

To pass, the student must obtain 50% per written paper, and to pass with a distinction the student must obtain an average of 75%.

5.8 **Outlay of Curriculum A (General MPH)**

The MPH programme consists of three core papers with a total credit value of 48 credits and elective modules chosen from a list of approved electives, with a total value of 80 credits.

The completion of the theoretical part of the programme is followed by completion of a research project/dissertation of limited scope (MPHPRO-9) with a credit value of 64 credits. The dissertation of limited scope/research project will be in the field of the student’s own choice and students are encouraged to address critical issues in their own working environment with the aim of utilising research results to
improve the quality of health care and to have a positive impact on the quality of life of their communities.

**Core Modules**
- Health measurement (descriptive) 16 credits (MPHHMD-N)
- Health measurement (analytic) 16 credits (MPHHMA-K)
- Principles and methods of health research 16 credits (MNURS1-E)

**Elective modules**
A list of elective modules already approved by the Senate of UNISA and/or University of KwaZulu-Natal and available in distance education format will be provided to prospective students at the beginning of each academic year. Currently the following elective modules are offered.

- Health systems management I (8 credits) MPHHS1-V
- Health systems management II (8 credits) MPHHS2-W
- Health systems (8 credits) MPHH5Y-P
- Health policy, planning and legislation (8 credits) MPHHPO-A
- Health promotion (8 credits) MPHHPR-D
- Epidemiology of infectious diseases (8 credits) MPHEID-4
• Mother to child transmission of HIV (8 credits) MTCHIV-Y
• Introduction to population studies (8 credits) INTPOP-J
• Maternal and Newborn Health (8 credits) (MPHMNH-E)

The total credits of the programme are 192 credits of which 64 credits are allocated to the research project.

Public Health related modules which form part of the course work requirements for the Master of Public Health degree and which have been previously passed by the candidate whilst registered for non-degree purpose for another qualification could be credited with the permission of the Head of the Department.

5.9 Outlay of Curriculum B (Medical Informatics)

The MPH programme consists of five core papers with a total credit value of 80 credits and elective modules chosen from a list of approved electives, with a total value of 80 credits. The total credits of the programme are 192 of which 64 credits are allocated to the research project.

The completion of the theoretical part of the programme is followed by completion of a research project/dissertation of limited scope (MPHPRO-9) with a credit value of 64 credits. The dissertation of limited scope/research project will be in the field of the student’s own choice and students are encouraged to address critical issues in their own working environment with the aim of utilising research results to
improve the quality of health care and to have a positive impact on the quality of life of their communities.

Core modules (compulsory):

- Health measurement (descriptive) 16 credits MPHHMD-N
- Health measurement (analytic) 16 credits MPHHMA-K
- Principles and methods of health research (16 credits) MNURS1-E
- Medical Coding and Electronic Records MPHMCE-J (16 credits)
- Medical Artificial Intelligence MPHMAI-J (16 credits)

Elective modules for curriculum B offers specialisation in either Information Systems or Computer Science. Choose one of the following academic streams:

Information Systems

- Introduction to business information system INF105-9 (8 credits)
- Introduction to visual programming COS114-X (8 credits)
- Computer networks COS226-9 (8 credits)
- Principles of databases (8 credits)
- Database design and implementation (8 credits)
Computer Science

- Computer systems: Fundamental concepts COS113-W (8 credits)
- Introduction to programming 1 COS111-U (8 credits)
- Introduction to new programming 2 COS112-V (8 credits)
- Computer networks 1 (8 credits)
- Principles of databases (8 credits)

Elective modules

A list of elective modules already approved by the Senate of UNISA and/or University of KwaZulu-Natal and available in distance education format, will be provided to prospective students at the beginning of each academic year.

The elective modules currently available are:

- Health systems management I (8 credits) MPHHS1-V
- Health systems management II (8 credits) MPHHS2-W
- Health systems (8 credits) MPHH5Y-P
- Health policy, planning and legislation (8 credits) MPHHPO-A
- Health promotion (8 credits) MPHHPR-D
- Epidemiology of infectious diseases (8 credits) MPHEID-4
• Mother to child transmission of HIV (8 credits) 
  MTCHIV-Y
• Introduction to population studies (8 credits) 
  INTPOP-J
• Maternal and Newborn Health (8 credits) 
  (MPHMNH-E)

Public health related modules with a total credit value of not exceeding 64, which form part of the coursework requirements for the Master of Public Health degree and which have been previously passed by the candidate who registered for non-degree purposes for another qualification, will be credited.

6. DOCTOR OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY IN HEALTH STUDIES (DLitt et Phil) 
  (degree code: 0890-7)

6.1 Purpose of the doctor’s degree

The purpose of the doctor’s degree is to enable candidates to, based on their research, contribute towards evidence based scientific body of knowledge.
6.2 Admission

The DLitt et Phil in Health Studies follows on a health related master's degree or equivalent.

6.3 Curriculum

The curriculum comprises of a thesis (DIS890-B) on an approved topic dealing with any health related aspect.

6.4 Duration

The duration of the degree is at least two years with a maximum of five years. Candidates should note that they will not be allowed to continue with the degree if the research proposal has not been accepted by the supervisor within the first year of registration for the degree. A maximum of three attempts to submit the research proposal will be granted within the first year of study.

6.5 Scientific article

When students submit the thesis for examination, they must together with the examination copies thereof, submit at least one scientific article (based on the research) for publication in a journal.
7 REGISTRATION FOR ALL POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Registration forms can be obtained on request in writing from:

The Registrar (Academic)
UNISA
PO Box 392
UNISA
0003

or directly from the UNISA Webpage:
www.unisa.ac.za

For administrative and financial enquiries:

Telephone: 0861 670 411
Fax: 012 429 4150
E-mail (Hons enquiries): artes@unisa.ac.za

E-mail (Master’s and Doctor’s enquiries): post-artes@unisa.ac.za

8 COMMUNICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STUDIES

Specific lecturers will be assigned to each programme. You are welcome to contact the lecturers concerned with your studies on a regular basis to discuss any problems you may have with your studies or proposed studies.
9. PREPARATORY RESEARCH COURSE

A research seminar will be offered annually at the main campus in Pretoria. The main objective of this course is to introduce prospective Masters and Doctoral students to the practical application of various research approaches and techniques. Specific attention will be given to the development of an acceptable research proposal. The course extends over a period of five days, and although attendance of this course is optional, prospective students are strongly advised to consider attendance thereof.