



# **Master of Applied Health Services Research Program**

## **Student Handbook**

**2021-2022**

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## **Section 1: Important Dates and Information**

**\*Dates for the last class and when courses must be dropped varies 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**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Fall 2021 Semester</b>
September 2	Orientation for First Year Students (virtual), 3:00-4:00PM
September 9	Fall Semester Start Date: All campuses <b>See Table 2 for the start date for your individual course</b>
December 13 – 15	Graduate Student Workshop (virtual): Dec 13 (Afternoon); Dec 14 (10-4) Dec 15 (morning)
<b>Date</b>	<b>Winter 2022 Semester</b>
January 11	Winter Semester Start Date

**Table 2: Class Schedule\***

Fall Semester			Winter Semester		
Day	Course	Instructor	Day	Course	Instructor
Mon 14:00-17:00	AHS 6005/MED 6288 Policy and Decision Making  Starts Sept 13 2021	Dr. Rick Audas (MUN)	Wed 14:30-17:30	AHS 6009/MED 6295 Advanced Quantitative Methods	TBA
Tues 15:30-18:30	AHS 6000/MED 6285 Introductio n to Health Services Research  Starts Sept 14 2021	Dr. Bill Montelpare (UPEI)	Thurs 16:00-18:00	AHS 6007/MED 6293 Knowledge Transfer and Research Uptake	Mehboob Reza (UNB)
Wed 14:00-16:30	AHS 6001/MED 6282 Canadian Health System  Starts Sept 15 2021	Dr. Rick Audas (MUN)	Wed 14:30-17:30	AHS 6008/MED 6294 Advanced Qualitative Methods	Dr. Debbie MacLellan (UPEI)
Thurs 13:00-16:00	AHS 6004/MED 6290	Tricia Morris (UNB)	TBA	AHS 6011 Indigenous Health*	Dr. Julie Bull

	Determinants of Health  Starts Sept 9 2021				(SMU)
*MUN Course Code TBA					

<b>Table 3: Draft Seminar Schedule</b>		
Seminar #1:	Welcome and Welcome Back: Meet some Grads	Sept 21/21 1:00 - 2:30 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: Date to be finalized. We will arrange with your campus librarian
Seminar #3:	Research Data Centre (RDC)	Nov 16/21 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
Seminar #4:	Publishing in Health Services Research: Dr. Sarah Hewko	Jan 18/22 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
Seminar #5:	Writing your thesis: Dr. Jennifer Taylor	Feb 15/22 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
Seminar #6:	The Covid Misery Index: Dr. Rick Audas	Mar 22/22 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

**Note: All times are Atlantic Standard Time**

## **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, University of New Brunswick, 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. Lucie Kocum serves as Chair. For 21/22 Jennifer Taylor is acting Chair.

### **Memorial University**

Dr. Rick Audas

[raudas@mun.ca](mailto:raudas@mun.ca) / (709) 864-6616

### **Saint Mary's University**

Dr. Lucie Kocum (on sabbatical)

Contact:

[nenyo.kwasitsu@smu.ca](mailto:nenyo.kwasitsu@smu.ca) / (902) 877-9602

### **University of New Brunswick**

Dr. Lisa Keeping-Burke

[lkeeping@unb.ca](mailto:lkeeping@unb.ca) / (506) 648-5685

### **University of Prince Edward Island**

Dr. Jennifer Taylor

[jtaylor@upei.ca](mailto:jtaylor@upei.ca) / (902) 388-0843

## **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 the Canadian healthcare system. 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 (**effective September 2021**) consists of:

- Five online courses
- Fall and winter online seminars (September-April- approximately 6 seminars)
- Graduate student 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 include:

- Aaron DeRosa, Coordinator, Primary Health Care, Nova Scotia Health Authority

- Allison Holland, Regional Manager of Population Health, Horizon Health
- Mercy Winsor, Senior Researcher, Health Research Unit, Memorial University
- Jan Jensen, Performance Manager, 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 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	<a href="https://smu.ca/academics/master-applied-health-services-research.html">https://smu.ca/academics/master-applied-health-services-research.html</a>
Memorial University	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	<a href="https://www.med.mun.ca/CommunityHealth/Academic-Programs/M-Sc-Med-(AHSR).aspx">https://www.med.mun.ca/CommunityHealth/Academic-Programs/M-Sc-Med-(AHSR).aspx</a>
University of Prince Edward Island	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	<a href="https://www.upei.ca/programs/master-applied-health-services-research">https://www.upei.ca/programs/master-applied-health-services-research</a>
University of New Brunswick	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	<a href="https://www.unb.ca/gradstudies/programs/mahsr.html">https://www.unb.ca/gradstudies/programs/mahsr.html</a>

### 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, University of New Brunswick, or 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.

Application Forms - Prospective students interested in the MAHSR program should complete an application for admission to graduate studies at their chosen university site.

Supporting Documentation - In addition to the appropriate application form, prospective students are also required to 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 NEW students starting September 2021 is outlined below:**

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

**Students who began their program in September 2020 at Memorial University, St Mary's University or the University of New Brunswick (and are now in the second year of the program) should follow the program outlined in last year's handbook (e.g. they should take both AHS 6005 and 6007 for a total of seven courses; residency is required). AHS 6000 is not required.**

**Students who began their program in September 2020 at UPEI (and are now in the second year of their program)** should follow the UPEI calendar <https://www.upei.ca/programs/master-applied-health-services-research#section21354> (e.g. 6005 and 6007 are included as electives; residency is an elective). AHS 6000 is not required.

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

## Section 4.1: MAHSR Courses

All MAHSR courses are 12 weeks in duration and are delivered 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 students' responsibility to ensure they have internet access, a computer/laptop, a mic and speakers/headphones to fully participate in weekly lectures. Brightspace will also be used for assignment submission and student presentations. Courses are found here: <https://online.mun.ca/d2l/loginh/>. 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 <http://www.artc-hsr.ca/>.

## Section 4.2: MAHSR – Course Information and Registration

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

The content of each course, however, will be accessed through Brightspace, located at Memorial University. Program leads at each university will submit your name to staff at Brightspace 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			MED6288: Policy and Decision Making

	AHS6001: Canadian Health System AHS6005: Policy and Decision Making 2-day workshop	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	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  Program completion	Thesis completion  Program completion

### Section 4.3: Online Seminars

During the fall and winter semesters, a total of six online seminars will be held. These seminars are mandatory and will include information about thesis writing, professional development, and health research in action. All seminars will be recorded such that students who are unable to attend can watch them later. Seminars will take place under the course "ARTC Seminar Series" on Brightspace.

### Section 4.4: Graduate Student Workshop

In December of semester one, the ARTC organizes an annual student workshop for first year students in the program. This virtual workshop is mandatory. The workshop will bring students together to offer additional training and will feature guest speakers from the health research

and policy field, with an emphasis on trying to bring in practitioners. There will also be opportunities to network with previous graduates of the program and key stakeholders in the sector.

### **Section 4.5: Residency Placement**

In the third semester, students have the option of 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 placements organizations have included the Eastern Health in St. John's, the New Brunswick Department of Health and Wellness, Veterans Affairs Canada in Prince Edward Island, McGill University, and Saint Mary's Hospital 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 their 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.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://smu.ca/webfiles/th023_mastersphdformat_procedures.pdf)

[https://files.upei.ca/science/graduatestudies/science\\_thesis\\_guidelines.pdf](https://files.upei.ca/science/graduatestudies/science_thesis_guidelines.pdf)

## **Section 5: ARTC (MAHSR) Program Policies & 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:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>UNB</b>	<b>UPEI</b>	<b>SMU</b>	<b>MUN</b>
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 is B. Students who fail to achieve these minimum grades for any MAHSR course will be required to successfully re-take that course in order to complete the program. Failure to pass a re-take will result in the withdrawal of any funding and removal of the student from the program.

### **Section 5.3: Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence which could have serious consequences ranging from loss of credit to 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.

## **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, who can assist you with accessibility solutions tailored to your needs:

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

Accessibility Centre at University of New Brunswick  
<https://www.unb.ca/fredericton/student-services/academics/accessibility/>

Blundon Centre 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 a visiting graduate student 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 leave per student.

## **Section 5.9: Thesis Guidelines**

All MAHSR students must successfully complete a master's thesis which 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 a publishable research manuscript. In either case, the thesis will conform to the Graduate Studies standards and regulations in place at the student's home university; student should consult with their academic supervisor. Examples of appropriate guidelines for preparation of a publication/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](https://files.upei.ca/science/graduatestudies/science_thesis_guidelines.pdf)
- SMU: <http://www.smu.ca/academics/archives/masters-thesis.html>

## **Section 5.10: Thesis Supervision**

Each student 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 in the preparation of the thesis itself. 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 5.11: Thesis Defence**

All MAHSR students (except MUN students) will be required to successfully defend their thesis in front of their examination committee to successfully pass their thesis and complete the program. 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 students' research followed by questions from the supervisory committee and, if applicable, members of the public in attendance.

### **Section 5.12: Continuance Fees**

Students who do not complete their thesis and graduate from the program within the designated two years of study are required to 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 are applicable to continuing students as well. Continuance fees for the MAHSR program vary by institution and can be found here:

UNB

[Master's & PhD Tuition & Fees | UNB](#)

SMU

[Annual Program Fee Schedule - 2021/2022](#)

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](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/defended their thesis they must apply to graduate with their home university's School of Graduate Studies. Each university will have specific deadlines when students can apply for graduation to attend convocation. Students should refer to their home university's academic calendar for more information.