



Atlantic Regional Training Centre

**Master of Applied Health Services
Research Program - Thesis
Stream**

Student Handbook

2024-2025

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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 2024 Semester
September 6 2024	Orientation for First Year Students (virtual), 1:00-3:00PM
September 9 2024	Fall Semester Start Date: All campuses See Table 2 for the start date for your individual course
December 9-10 2024	MAHSR-P Graduate Student Workshop (virtual), 10:00AM - 4:00PM (both days)
Date	Winter 2025 Semester
January 8, 2025	Winter Semester Start Date
April 11-12, 2025	MAHSR-T Graduate Student Workshop (in-person)

Table 2: Class Schedule*

Fall Semester			Winter Semester		
Day	Course	Instructor	Day	Course	Instructor
Mon 4:00-7:0 0pm	AHS 6005/MED 6288 Policy and Decision Making Starts Sept 9 2024	Rick Audas (MUN)	Mon 6:00-9:0 0pm	AHS 6009/MED 6295 Advanced Quantitative Methods	Timur Ozbilir (UNB)
			Mon 2:00-5:0 0pm	AHS 6801/MED 6013: Special Topics: Leadership Fundamentals in Applied Health Services	Steven Smith/ Tom Brophy (SMU)
			Tues 1:00-4:0 0pm	AHS 6012/MED 6283 Big Data Research and Analytics in Health Care	Instructor: Rick Audas (MUN)
Tues 2:00-5:0 0pm	AHS 6001/MED 6282 Canadian Health System Starts Sept 10 2024	Emily Doyle (MUN)	Tues 4:00-7:0 0pm	AHS 6011/MED 6136 Indigenous Health	Katelynn Carter- Rogers (SMU)
			Wed 9:30am- 12:30pm	AHS 6008/MED 6294 Advanced Qualitative Methods	(UPEI)

			Wed 2:00-5:0 0pm	AHS 6001/MED 6282 Canadian Health System	Emily Doyle (MUN)
Wed 12:30-3: 30pm	AHS 6000/MED 6285 Introduction to Health Services Research Starts Sept 11 2024	Bill Montelpare (UPEI)	Wed 3:30 – 6:30 pm	AHS 6008/MED 6294 Advanced Qualitative Methods	(UPEI)
*Thurs 11:00-2: 00pm *if second section needed	AHS 6004/MED 6290 Determinants of Health Starts Sept 12 2024	Summer Wood (UNB)	Thurs 2:00-5:0 0pm	AHS 6007/MED 6293 Knowledge Transfer and Research Uptake	Lucie Kocum (SMU)
Thurs 4:00-7:0 0pm	AHS 6004/MED 6290 Determinants of Health Starts Sept 12 2024	Summer Wood (UNB)	Thurs 4:30-7:3 0pm	AHS 6011/MED 6136 Indigenous Health	Katelynn Carter- Rogers (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 20/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #2:	Conducting an effective literature search (Each seminar will be conducted through your university library.) (Required for first-year students only; optional for second-year students)	Oct 18/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m: Date to be finalized. We will arrange with your campus librarian
Seminar #3:	Research Data Centre (RDC)	Nov 15/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #4:	AI and Chat GPT in Graduate School: Opportunities and Pitfalls: Heather Sanderson	Jan 17/25 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #5:	Writing your thesis: Dr. Jennifer Taylor	Feb 14/25 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Seminar Schedule - Year 2 - All times in Atlantic Standard Time		
Seminar #1:	Research Presentations	Sept 27/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #2:	Research Presentations	October 25/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #3:	Research Presentations	Nov 29/24 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #4:	Research Presentations	Jan 31/25 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #5:	Research Presentations	Feb 28/25 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminar #6:	Research Presentations	March 28/25 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.

University of Prince Edward Island

Dr. Jennifer Taylor

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Memorial University

Dr. Rick Audas

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Dr. Steven Smith

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University of New Brunswick

Dr. Jonathon Edwards

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MAHSR Program Manager

Nenyo Kwasitsu

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

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 Manager for more information.

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

- Five online courses
- Spring and winter online seminars (September-April- approximately 12 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, Quality Leader, Mental Health and Addictions Program, Nova Scotia Health Authority
- Allison Holland, Regional Manager of Population Health, Horizon Health
- Mercy Winsor, Senior Researcher, Health Research Unit, Memorial University
- Jan Jensen, Director, Analytics and Health Information,, Nova Scotia
- Laurissa Handren, Quality and Risk Consultant, Health PEI
- Tamara Vessey, Primary Care Renewal Lead Consultant, Health PEI
- Olukorede Esan, Health Promoter, Nova Scotia Health Authority
- Keri Harvey, Harvey Safety Culture Consulting
- Ghader Dargahi Abbasabad, Public Health Researcher
- Adrienne Gulliver, MSSU Clinical Research Assistant
- Tanisha Wright-Brown, PhD Pharmacy student
- Queen Jacques, PhD student
- Kate Tucker, Medical Student

Section 4: MAHSR-T: 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 is outlined below:

MAHSR Courses	
Semester 1 (Fall)	<p>Required: AHS 6000/MED 6285: Introduction to Health Services Research AHS 6004/MED 6290: Determinants of Health</p> <p>1 elective from: AHS 6001/MED 6282: Canadian Health System AHS 6005/MED 6288: Policy and Decision Making</p>
Semester 2 (Winter)	<p>Required: AHS 6008/MED 6294: Advanced Qualitative Methods OR AHS 6009/MED 6295: Advanced Quantitative Methods</p> <p>1-2 electives from the following: AHS 6007/MED 6293: Knowledge Transfer and Research Uptake AHS 6011/MED 6136: Indigenous Health AHS 6801/MED 6013: Special Topics: Leadership Fundamentals in Applied Health Services AHS 6012/MED 6283 Big Data Research and Analytics in Health Care 2-day in-person workshop</p>
Semester 3 (Spring/Summer)	<p>AHS 6120/MED 6298: Optional Practicum Placement OR AHS 6099/MED 6299 Optional Capstone Project</p> <p>AHS 6997: Thesis</p>
Semester 4 (Fall)	AHS 6997: Thesis
Semester 5 (Winter)	AHS 6997: Thesis
Semester 6 (Spring/Summer)	<p>Thesis defence Program completion</p>

Part-time Status: The MASHR program (thesis option) was initially designed to be *full-time*. With the current program, students will 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, it 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 term), and all first-year students will complete the workshop in the Spring of their first year. If you have any questions about your program, please contact Nenyó Kwasitsu (nenyo.kwasitsu@smu.ca) or Jennifer Taylor (jtaylor@upei.ca) (Chair).

Section 4.1: MAHSR Courses

All MAHSR courses are 12 weeks long and 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 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. Courses 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 AHS 6801: Special Topics: Leadership Fundamentals in Applied Health Services AHS 6012: Big Data Research and Analytics in Health Care 2-day workshop			MED6295: Advanced Quantitative Methods MED6293: Knowledge Transfer and Research Uptake MED6294: Advanced Qualitative Methods MED6136: Indigenous Health MED 6013: Special Topics: Leadership Fundamentals in Applied Health MED 6283: Big Data Research and Analytics in Health Care
Semester 3	AHS6120: Optional Residency Placement OR AHS 6099 Optional Capstone Project AHS6997: Thesis			MED 6298 (Practicum) or MED 6299 (Capstone Project) 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 spring and winter semesters of Year 1, six online seminars are 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.

Section 4.4: Graduate Student Workshop

The MAHSR-T workshop is held in the Spring in person. Attendance and participation is mandatory. The workshop brings students together to offer additional training. It features guest speakers from the health research and policy field, emphasizing practitioners. There are opportunities to network with previous program graduates and critical stakeholders in the sector.

Section 4.5: Practicum Placement or Capstone Project

In the third semester, students can have either a practicum placement with an approved decision-making organization or work on a capstone project. Students are required to communicate their choice with their program lead and the manager. The goal of the practicum 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, Veterans Affairs Canada in Prince Edward Island, McGill University, and Saint Mary’s Hospital in Halifax. Practicum placements must be a minimum of 240 hours in duration. Students should communicate with their program leads and the program manager as indicated in the Practicum Handbook by early December.

A capstone project is a multifaceted academic experience typically undertaken by students in the final year of their academic program. This comprehensive and interdisciplinary project

requires students to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired throughout their studies to address real-world problems or issues.

Capstone projects vary widely in form, including research papers, special topics, case studies, creative works, internships, and field placements. They are designed to challenge students to think critically, solve complex problems, and demonstrate their readiness for professional work in their field. Often considered a highlight of a student’s academic journey, capstone projects provide valuable experience and skills for future endeavors.¹

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 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
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¹ <https://www.nu.edu/blog/what-is-a-capstone-project/>

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 the withdrawal of any funding and the removal of the student 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.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a powerful tool that is being used within academia. It is crucial for you to understand the ethical implications of using AI, particularly when it comes to avoiding plagiarism. While AI can assist you in creating reference lists and outlines, it is essential to ensure that you use it ethically and responsibly.²

Here are a few key points to keep in mind:

1. **Understanding AI Tools:** Before utilizing AI tools for your research or assignments, it is important to familiarize yourselves with how they work. Knowing the capabilities and limitations of these tools can help you use them effectively while avoiding unintentional plagiarism.
2. **Proper Citation and Attribution:** Whenever you use information or ideas from external

² McAdoo, T. (2023, April 7). How to cite ChatGPT. APA Style. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

sources, whether human-authored or AI-generated, it is imperative to provide proper citation and attribution. This includes citing sources correctly and acknowledging any AI assistance you may have received.

3. **Critical Thinking and Originality:** While AI can assist you in generating papers, it is essential to maintain your critical thinking skills and strive for originality in your work. You should use AI as a tool to enhance your ideas and understanding, rather than relying solely on it to produce papers.
4. **Plagiarism Detection:** You should also be aware that institutions often use plagiarism detection software to ensure academic integrity. These tools can identify similarities between your work and existing sources, including content generated by AI. Therefore, it is essential to be transparent about the use of AI in your assignments and properly cite any AI-generated content.

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

[2022-2023 MSSU Studentship Awards competition](#)

[Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation \(hallfoundation.ca\)](#)

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/student-services/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 per student.

Section 5.9: 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 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; 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 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 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 defense will include an oral presentation of the student's 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 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 Schedule: 2023-2024](#)

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.