

**VCU**

Health Administration

College of Health Professions

## MSHA Program Structure

In 2000, several changes were made to the Program's structure to lessen time away from home and work and enhance the off-campus sessions. First, the schedule of on-campus sessions and classes was revised to reduce on-campus time to six one-week sessions. Second, enrollees take fewer courses at a time than previously and in a somewhat shorter semester. Third, in recognition of the growing importance of information technologies, more course work in information systems was added.

Full-time students enroll for 22-months and participate in four semesters of study with six on-campus sessions. Each semester is comprised of both on and off-campus sessions. The mix of on-campus and off-campus study is designed to minimize time away from employment and home as well as travel expenses. During the six one-week on-campus sessions, students attend classes on the Medical College of Virginia Campus of Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

### **On-Campus Study**

During on-campus sessions, students attend lectures, participate in seminars, and use the Department's learning laboratory, computer facilities and library. Students have ample opportunity to interact with fellow classmates, faculty, and visiting scholars and practitioners. Organized class sessions are typically held during the day and are designed to facilitate effective and efficient learning. Evenings are reserved for study, group project work, informal interaction with fellow students, and social events.

### **Off-Campus Study**

During each off-campus semester, students continue course work at their home/work site using a carefully planned array of distance learning technologies. The Program uses the World Wide Web as the primary mode of communication during off-campus periods. This technology allows students and faculty to communicate with one another asynchronously through personal computers equipped with Internet access. Thus, courses can be accessed anywhere via a local Internet provider or online service.

Each course has its own separate "electronic classroom" which serves as the primary channel to conduct seminars and discuss assignments and projects. These electronic classrooms are also used to distribute announcements, hold meetings, and facilitate informal communication among faculty and students.

There is a heavy emphasis on computer communications. Proficiency with the use of personal computers is necessary. Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint are used extensively throughout the program. Training on the Program's communications and other software is done during the initial on-campus session.