

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

PUBHHMP 7680

OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT FOR HEALTH SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS

Spring Semester, 2026 - 3 credit hours

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:45 to 2:05, Cunz Hall Room 160

Instructor: Debra R. Zevallos, DBH, MHA, FACHE

E-mail: zevallos.2@osu.edu

Office: Cunz Hall, Room 200C

Office Hours: I am available directly after class most days and by appointment.

Teaching Assistants: Thomas Elton assisting with this class.

Course Description: This course is designed to build your understanding of the operations function in organizations and develop your skills in addressing process management and performance improvement applications in health services organizations. The field of operations management continues to evolve as organizations pursue greater levels of quality, safety and efficiency. To improve performance in the areas of cost, throughput, clinical quality, service quality, and safety, health services managers must focus on the design and execution of operational processes, engage the work force in improvement initiatives, and successfully introduce and sustain operational change. This course provides a working knowledge of current operations innovations while focusing on fundamental operations management concepts, skills, and techniques.

Class Format: The class format will be in-class (unless changes are needed) and will consist of lecture, case study analysis and discussion, small group work, and class discussion.

Course Objectives & Competencies: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

Objective	MHA Competency
Explain the primary operations challenges in a service organization	4
Diagram a process and critically examine process flow within an operational unit	4, 22
Select and develop measures to assess process performance in administrative and clinical settings.	4
Recognize the relationship between operations decisions and the broader organizational and environmental context.	10
Design operational processes to address the perspective of patients and other customers, both internal and external to the organization	1, 4, 5, 22
Use quality improvement methods to plan and carry out clinical and administrative improvement projects	4, 5, 14, 22
Select and apply appropriate methods for analyzing and improving operational performance of service delivery systems.	4, 14, 22, 24, 25
Explain core components of effective project management (PM) and common PM tools	23

Develop skills for working in teams to solve a problem	17
Reinforce skills in writing, presentation and small group communications	17, 20, 21

Required Text and Readings: This class uses various sources of readings.

Harvard Business School Publishing (HBSP) cases are available for purchase (using a credit card; cost is \$47.45 through the HBSP web site (www.hbsp.harvard.edu). If you have never downloaded an HBSP coursepack, you will need to register at the HBSP site before downloading the cases. This coursepack is listed with my name as instructor (**Debra Zevallos**) and titled “**Operations Management for Health Service Organizations Spring 2026**”.

Go to: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1375578>

Articles and Other Readings/Cases: Required journal articles, as well as selected cases, are posted on Carmen in the module in which they will be discussed.

IHI Open School courses (www.ihl.org): The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is a health care quality and patient safety advocacy and education organization. The IHI website contains a series of online education courses called the IHI Open School. Selected Open School courses are required in this course that will allow you to earn the Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety. To register, go to the IHI website and follow these steps:

1. Create your MyIHI account
2. Login to the Education Platform
3. Click the “Browse Catalog” section
4. Submit organization access code: 98521
5. On the left menu bar title “Browse by” choose Basic Certificate Catalog (No CEs)
6. Click Enroll (then Launch to complete the course)

Required Course Computing Resources: You will need a computer with Microsoft excel and a calculator. Microsoft excel and/or a calculator will be used during case analyses, brief assignments, and optional homework assignments. You will need a calculator for exams.

Carmen: This course uses Carmen extensively. Most course materials and assignments (apart from the HBS cases and IHI Open School courses) are available on Carmen. Be sure to check the website frequently for new postings. Materials not available on Carmen at the beginning of the semester will become available closer to the class sessions and assignments. *Do not hesitate to email me if you cannot find what you are looking for on Carmen.*

Assignments and Exams: This course includes a variety of graded student assignments and exams to enhance and assess learning. These are briefly described below.

Exams: There will be two exams. Exams will cover the lectures, cases, class discussions, and assigned readings. Exams are primarily non-cumulative. The format of the exam will be problems, mini cases, and short answer questions. You are responsible for all material covered in class, even if you miss a class session and have an absence excused. All students must take the exam according to the class schedule. Exceptions to the exam schedule will be granted on a case-by-case basis in which the student can show a legitimate reason for the change in exam schedule.

General details on assignments: Written assignments for this course include group case reports, a group course project and individually completed brief assignments. Details on

assignments are in this syllabus or posted on Carmen. All assignments are due on the day and time shown on Carmen. Submit all assignments in Carmen unless I also ask for a hard copy.

Unless I approve a late submission, late assignments will be penalized by at least a half-letter-grade.

Group assignments - Case reports and final project: The case reports and the final project will be prepared and written by groups of three to four students. Groups will be assigned by the instructor. All group assignments are designed to be worked on *collaboratively* with your group members and require that you set aside time outside of class to work together. Collaborative work means that the product that you hand in to me is expected to be a joint effort, not a combination of individual efforts. A single grade will be assigned to each group assignment, unless otherwise warranted. Cases provide students with the opportunity to apply concepts and skills learned in class to a real organizational problem. Report guidelines for each case will be available on Carmen. The final project provides a means for students to apply concepts learned in this course to a real operations problem of their own choosing. Details on this project are found in this syllabus and on Carmen.

Individual Assignments - Brief assignments: The purpose of these assignments is to challenge you to apply a concept from the class sessions and develop your operational analysis skills. **See the Carmen assignment page for information on whether you may discuss your assignment with other students.** You will learn the most if you begin working on these assignments alone before conferring with your classmates. **For all individual assignments each student must write up their own submission.**

Preparation for assigned cases: This class uses case studies as a learning vehicle for most of the topics we cover. Although only a few of the case studies entail a formal case report, assignment questions will be provided to help you prepare for almost all cases. **It is important for you to read the case carefully and complete the assignment questions on your own so that you are prepared to contribute to small group work and class discussions pertaining to the cases.**

Class participation and engagement: Due to the importance of class participation in student learning, this course relies heavily on student’s active participation. Active participation requires a classroom community conducive to learning. This class is a community of learners, which means that we will depend on each other to create and maintain a positive learning environment.

Grading: Course grades are determined according to the following weights (420 total points):

Assignment Type	Assignment	Grade Percent
Group	Shouldice Case Study; KP No-Wait ED Case Study; Visual Board; KP Reducing Mortality Sepsis Case Study; Project Scheduling; Final Operations Project (155 pts)	37%
Individual	Kristin’s Cookies Case Study; CCHMC Case Study; KP Reducing Western Ontario Paediatric Hospital Case Study; Reflections; Lean Vaccine Terms; QI tools; Escape Fire; IHI Certificate; Discussion Boards (155 pts)	37%
	Two exams (80 pts)	19%
	Class participation & engagement in class (class, surveys) (30 pts)	7%

Final course grades are based on a weighted average of the components listed above, using the following scale shown below. I reserve the right to adjust the grading scale if it appears necessary due to overall class performance. These adjustments will only raise a student's grade, not lower it.

Letter Grade	Range
A	100% to 93%
A-	< 93% to 90%
B+	< 90% to 87%
B	< 87% to 83%
B-	< 83% to 80%
C+	< 80% to 77%
C	< 77% to 73%
C-	< 73% to 70%
D+	< 70% to 67%
D	< 67% to 60%
E	< 60% to 0%

The following descriptive statements are guidelines for letter grades assignment:

A	Outstanding performance for a graduate student; consistently shows <i>exceptional depth of understanding and/or capacity for creative application</i> of course concepts
A-	Better than expected performance for a graduate student, <i>with instances demonstrating additional depth of understanding and/or ability to apply</i> course concepts
B+	Expected performance for a graduate student; <i>work is complete and shows solid understanding and application</i> of course concepts
B	Adequate performance for a graduate student; work is complete, but <i>shows some limitations in grasp or ability to apply</i> course concepts
B-	Marginally acceptable work for a graduate student; needs improvement, and is below the acceptable average standard of performance
	Grades below B- indicate significant problems in understanding and/or ability to apply course concepts and/or a failure to meet stated course requirements

Class Policies and Expectations: The policies below define a core set of policies for this class and the classroom experience. Please speak with me if you have any questions or concerns about these policies.

- Students are expected to attend all classes, read articles and prepare cases prior to class, and participate actively in class discussions (without dominating the discussions).
- Every assigned reading may not be discussed directly in class, however all readings provide foundational material or applications of concepts covered in class. An article does not have to be discussed in class to be relevant to exams and other assignments.
- **Laptops and tablets are to be used for note-taking only (no email, web browsing, etc.)** If I see you using your laptop for non-class purposes, I will ask you to stop using a laptop in class. Be

warned: I will call you out in class if I see you texting, emailing, etc. – especially when guests or other students are presenting.

- Our class time together is short, and the expectation is that you will be engaged and use technology only to support your classroom engagement. **Screens (phones, laptops, iPads) are a distraction; you are expected to find a way to avoid this distraction. This is especially important when other students are presenting and when we have a guest speaker. Screens also tend to inhibit a collaborative and engaged classroom atmosphere.**
- Silence your cell phone during class and refrain from texting. This is important for classroom engagement of all students.

Academic Integrity Policies: Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University, the College of Public Health, and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understood the University's *Code of Student Conduct* and the College's *Student Handbook*, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. The *Code of Student Conduct* and other information on academic integrity and academic misconduct can be found at the COAM web pages (<http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html>). Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, the *Student Handbook*, and in the syllabi for their courses may constitute "Academic Misconduct." The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Please note that the use of material from the Internet without appropriate acknowledgement and complete citation is plagiarism just as it would be if the source were printed material. Further examples are found in the *Student Handbook*. Ignorance of the *Code of Student Conduct* and the *Student Handbook* is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct.

If I suspect a student of academic misconduct in a course, I am obligated by University Rules to report these suspicions to the University's Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that the student has violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in the course and suspension or dismissal from the University. If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Services and Accommodations for Students

Office of Disability Services: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in Room 098 Baker Hall (113 12th Avenue) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Mental Health Services: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns

or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766 and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Religious accommodations for schedule conflicts

Our inclusive environment allows for religious expression. Students requesting accommodations based on faith, religious or a spiritual belief system in regard to examinations, other academic requirements or absences, are required to provide the instructor with written notice of specific dates for which the student requests alternative accommodations at the earliest possible date. For more information about religious accommodations at Ohio State, visit odi.osu.edu/religious-accommodations.

Course Schedule: Please note that this schedule is subject to minor timing adjustments; see Carmen announcements and announcements made in class for updates.

Date	Weekly Topic	Items to Prepare Before Class	Items Due In/After Class	Key Tools & Concepts
Week 1 Tues 1/13	Course Introduction & Foundations	Review syllabus; Faculty & Student introductions	Introductory Discussion Board due 1/21	Course Expectations; Foundational Concepts
Week 1 Thurs 1/15	Service Operations; Service Package	Read Article: Clueing in Customers (HBS)	Discussion Board due 1/21	Goods vs. Services; Customer Contact; SIPOC
Week 2 Tues 1/20	Process Types; Process Mapping; Process Flow	Review Case Studies: Midwest Facilities and ED Ophthalmology (Carmen)	Midwest Case Study In-Class Assignment; ED Ophthalmology Case Study due 1/26	Job Shop; Production Line; Product-Process Matrix
Week 2 Thurs 1/22	Process Flow; Capacity Management; Utilization	Review Case Study Kristin's Cookies (HBS) Suggested Look Ahead: Shouldice Hospital Case Study – Review and Discuss with Group	Kristin's Cookies Case Study due 1/28	Work Measurement; Bottlenecks; Process Flow Diagram; Gantt Chart
Week 3 Tues 1/27	Customer Participation; Customer Co-Production	Read Articles: Inviting Families to Participate in Care; Engaging Patients at the Front Lines of Primary Care Redesign (Carmen) Suggested Look Ahead: Shouldice Hospital Case Study – Review and Discuss with Group	Discussion Board due 2/2	Patient Engagement; Patient-Centered Care; Self-Service
Week 3 Thurs 1/29	Capacity; Culture; Service Package Framework; Process Types	Read Article: The Four Habits of High-Value Health Care Organizations;	Shouldice Hospital Group Case Study due 2/4	Capacity Analysis Worksheet

		Review Shouldice Case Study (HBS); Discuss with Group prior to class		
Week 4 Tues 2/3	Guest Lecturer Culture of Continuous Improvement; Intro to Lean Operations	Read Article: Kaiser Permanente – Creating a No-Wait ED (HBS)	Guest Lecturer Eval; <i>KP Lean Group Assignment due 2/9</i>	5S Lean Methodology; Value Stream Map; 8 Wastes; Spaghetti Chart
Week 4 Thurs 2/5	Lean Thinking and Process Stability	Read Article: The Lean Service Machine (Carmen)	IHI Progress Check; Discussion Board due 2/11	Leadership styles; Change models
Week 5 Tues 2/10 Virtual Class	Lean Processes at OSUWMC	Watch Video: Lean Process Vaccine at OSUWMC; Read OSU “How Lean Thinking and Practice Helped Put Shorts in Arms” (parts 1 & 2) before completing assignment (Carmen)	Lean Vaccine Terms due 2/16	Assembling Teams; Process Mapping; Team Huddles; PDCA (PDSA)
Week 5 Thurs 2/12	Visual Management; Team Huddles	Watch Video: Cleveland Clinic Article and Huddles in Action Video (Carmen)	<i>Visual Board Group Assignment due 2/18</i>	Communication; Visualization
Week 6 Tues 2/17 No Class	Exam #1 Review	Review prior course materials	None	All prior tools & concepts
Week 6 Thurs 2/19	Exam #1	Review Exam #1 Prep Material	In-Class exam	All prior tools & concepts
Week 7 Tues 2/24	Guest Lecturer Team Collaboration; Quality Management Frameworks; CQI Principles	Read Article: An Equity Agenda for the Field of Health Care Quality Improvement (Carmen)	Guest Lecturer Eval; IHI Progress Check due 3/2	PDSA; Six Sigma; DMAIC; Deming’s 7 Improvement Tools

Week 7 Thurs 2/26	Guest Lecturer Green Belt; Project Charter	None	Guest Lecturer Eval; QI Tools in Practice due 3/4	Gemba Walk; Process; Root Cause Analysis
Week 8 Tues 3/3 No Class (ACHE Congress)	--	--	IHI Progress Check due 3/9	--
Week 8 Thurs 3/5 Virtual Class (ACHE Congress)	Organizational Transformation; Change Management; Stakeholder Engagement	Review CCHMC Case Study (HBS); Watch CCHMC Supplemental Video (HBS); View CCHMC Faculty Lecture	CCHMC Case Study due 3/11	Performance Benchmarks; Transformation Frameworks
Week 9 Tues 3/10	QI Collaboratives; Process Variation		Control Chart Assignment due 3/16	Control Charts; Red Bead Experiment
Week 9 Tues 3/12	Patient Safety; Medical Errors; Just Culture	Read: IHI Statement on Criminalizing Medical Error (Carmen)	Escape Fire Video Assignment due 3/18	Classification of Medical Errors
3/17 – 3/19 No Class	Spring Break	--	--	--
Week 10 Tues 3/24	Capacity Management; Waiting Line Management	Read Article: Breaking the Trade-Off Between Efficiency and Service (Carmen)	Discussion Board due 3/30	Capacity Utilization Analysis; Queuing Models
Week 10 Thurs 3/26 No Class (LDS)	--	--	--	--
Week 11 Tues 3/31	Reducing Mortality; Change Management; Collaboration; Sustainability	Review KP Reducing Mortality: Sepsis Case Study (HBS)	KP Sepsis Mortality Case Study In-Class Group Assignment due 3/31	4-Wheel Drive Model; Professional Bureaucracy Model
Week 11 Thurs 4/2	Process Analysis; Variability in Health Care Operations	Review Paediatric Orthopaedic Clinic Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario (HBS)	Paediatric Orthopaedic Clinic Western Ontario Group Case Study due 4/8	Process Flow Diagram; Performance Metrics; Capacity Utilization; Productivity Ratios

Week 12 Tues 4/7	Guest Lecturer Project Management		Project Scheduling Assignment due 4/13	
Week 12 Thurs 4/9 (Tour Day)	Supply Chain Management and Logistics	Suggested Look Ahead: Final Project Planning and Exam #2 Prep	Supply Chain Tour Eval; due 4/15	Supply Chain Process Improvement
Week 13 Tues 4/14	Supply Chain; Supply and Demand		Competency Self-Assessment due 4/20	Supply Chain Strategy
Week 13 Thurs 4/16	Exam #2	Review prior course materials	In-Class Exam; MHA Student Experience Survey due 4/16	All prior tools & concepts
Week 14 Tues 4/21	Group Project Presentations		In-Class Presentation Assigned Groups	All prior tools & concepts; presentation skills
Week 14 Thurs 4/23	Group Project Presentations		In-Class Presentations Assigned Groups	All prior tools & concepts; presentation skills
Final: IHI Module	IHI Basic Certificate Completion		Upload Basic certificate by 4/30	Quality Improvement; Patient Safety; Leadership; Patient-Centered Care; Triple Aim