



Program Requirements for Cohort 6

Please direct any questions to:

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Disclaimer: The information in this document is subject to change without notice.

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Program Description

As AHEC Scholars, the students, who are already invested in healthcare as a career, increase their knowledge of pertinent issues to apply to their future workplace or community. While completing their own health professions training, AHEC Scholars participate in a longitudinal curriculum created by Colorado Area Health Education Center, as well as educational trainings and experiential learning activities provided uniquely by Southwestern Colorado Area Health Education Center. The purpose is to apply their AHEC Scholars training and knowledge in their future healthcare settings in urban and rural areas that are medically underserved. The program is, at a minimum, a one-year investment by the Scholars who submit a formal application, participate annually at a minimum in 40 hours of experiential learning activities in a rural or underserved setting, participate annually at a minimum in 40 hours of educational training focused on the eight core topic areas, and complete surveys during the program and the one-year follow-up period.

Eligibility

The following are criteria for accepting students into the AHEC Scholars Program:

- Students currently enrolled in a health professions certificate or degree program below,
- Students from rural or urban underserved communities, and
- Students who indicate a desire to serve in a rural or underserved area.

Following is a list of approved health professions certificate or degree programs*:

- Associate Degree in Nursing
- Associate of Applied Sciences in Emergency Medical Services
- Associate of Applied Sciences in Medical Assistant
- Associates of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene
- Associates of Applied Science in Integrated Health Professions (Holistic Health)
- Associates of Applied Science in Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
- Associates of Applied Sciences in Dental Assistant
- Associates of Applied Sciences in Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
- Associates of Applied Sciences in Medical Laboratory Technician
- Associates of Applied Sciences in Paramedics
- Associates of Applied Sciences in Physical Therapy Assistant
- Associates of Applied Sciences in Radiology Technician (RTA)
- Associates of Applied Sciences in Respiratory Care
- Associates of Applied Sciences in Surgical Technician
- Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training
- Bachelor of Science in Dietetics
- Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science, Health Promotions, Recreation
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Bachelor of Science in Nutrition
- Certificate in Dental Assisting

- Certificate in Nurse Assisting / Nurse Aid Certificate (CNA)
- Certificate in Practical Nursing / Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
- Certificate in Practical Nursing in Addiction Counseling
- Certificate in Phlebotomy
- Doctor of Dental Medicine
- Doctor of Medicine
- Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
- Doctor of Pharmacy
- Doctor of Physical Therapy
- Master of Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- Master of Physician Assistant Studies (PA)
- Master of Public Health
- Master of Science in Dietetics
- Master of Science in Exercise Science
- Master of Social Work
- Physicians (MDs/Dos and remember that psychiatrists are MDs),
- Physician Assistants
- Nurse Practitioners
- Nurse Midwives
- Dentists
- Psychologists (which are PhDs)
- Pharmacists
- Optometrists
- Community Health Workers
- RN
- Social Work
- Public Health

*Programs with similar titles should be approved, i.e., Practical Nursing Certificate would be the same as a Certificate in Practical Nursing or CNA.

Program Requirements

AHEC Scholars is a one- or two-year program designed to supplement and broaden a student's healthcare training in rural and underserved populations. In order to become an AHEC Scholar, students are required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of both educational training and experiential learning activities for a cumulative total of 80 hours over the course of the AHEC Scholars Program. The AHEC Scholars Program has provided many pathways to meet these program requirements, which are discussed below.

Educational Training

AHEC Scholars requires educational training in eight core topic areas including: Practice Transformation, Behavioral Health Integration, Interprofessional Education, Social

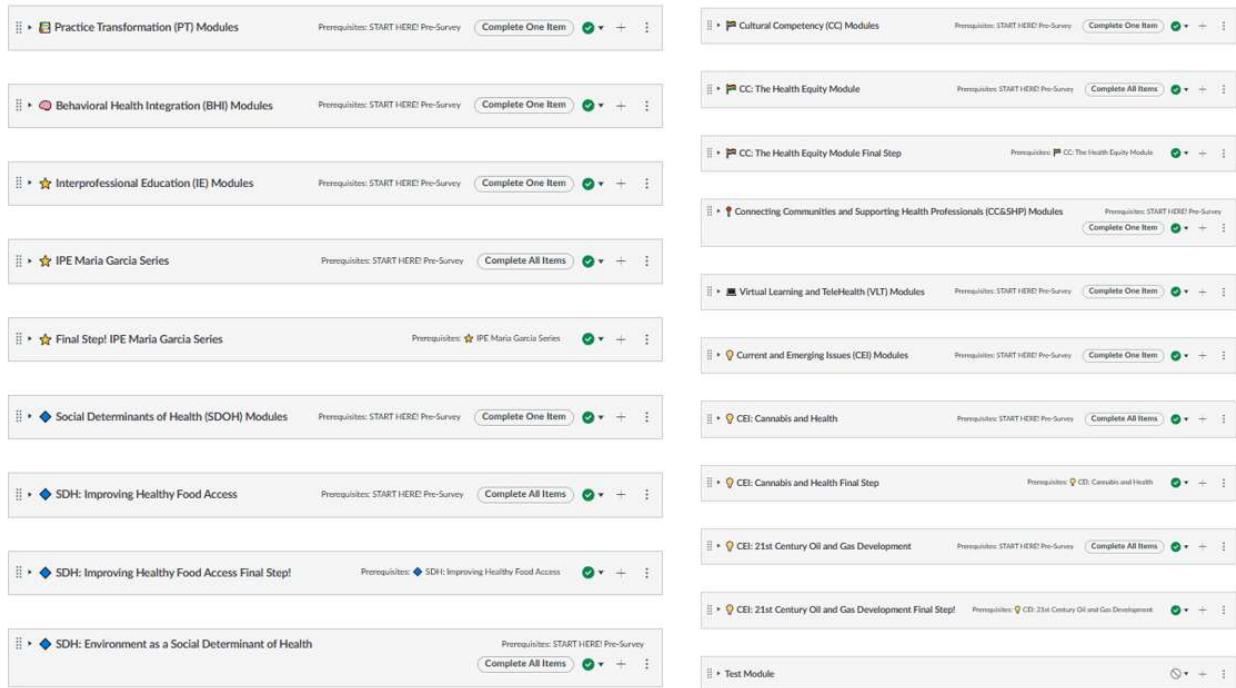
Determinants of Health, Cultural Competency, Connecting Communities & Supporting Health Professionals, Virtual Learning & Telehealth, and Current and Emerging Health Issues.

The descriptions below provide details about each core topic area.

- Practice Transformation (PT) aims to fully support quality improvement and patient-centered care through goal setting, leadership, practice facilitation, workflow changes, measuring outcomes, and adapting organizational tools and processes to support new team-based models of care delivery. Training activities in this content area target the specific skills and competencies needed to prepare students and practicing health professionals to effectively practice in a transforming health care system.
- Behavioral Health Integration (BHI) which promotes the development of integrated primary and behavioral health services to better address the needs of individuals with mental health and substances use conditions.
- Interprofessional Education (IE) which supports a coordinated, patient-centered model of health care that involves an understanding of the contributions of multiple health care professionals.
- Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of life outcomes and risks. SDOH can be grouped into five domains: economic stability, education access, quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context.
- Cultural Competency (CC) seeks to improve individual health and build healthy communities by training health care providers to recognize and address the unique culture, language, and health literacy of diverse consumers and communities.
- Connecting Communities and Supporting Health Professionals (CC & SHP), which aims to increase training and development of community health workers and paraprofessionals to be the connectors who are able to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health professionals and the community to facilitate access to service and improve health equity, community/population health, and social determinants of health.
- Virtual Learning and Telehealth (VLT), which seeks to improve virtual learning and telehealth curricula and community-based experiential training. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced all health care systems, hospitals, and clinics to rapidly implement telehealth services, simulation-based technology, and virtual trainings to continue delivering patient care.
- Current/Emerging Issues (CEI) are topics Colorado Area Health Education Center has chosen as especially relevant to those entering the healthcare field in our state: Colorado's response to the opioid epidemic, marijuana, oral health, mental health, suicide prevention, and health effects of oil and gas extraction.

Access and complete the educational training in eight core topic areas through the [AHEC Scholars Training Portal](#). The [AHEC Scholars Training Portal](#) utilizes a learning-management system

called Canvas. In the self-paced training portal, you will have access to online learning opportunities meeting the program objectives within the eight core topic areas, listed in "Available Trainings" tab.



In each core topic area page contains its description, trainings, training description, and details how to access the training. Remember, you can complete the available trainings in the core topic areas, in any order you choose. Be sure you complete 5 hours of training in each of the core topic areas. Most trainings will lead to a third-party site. When you complete the training on a third-party site you must return to the training portal to either upload your certificate of completion or submit a reflection. Else, the training is built within the training portal, and you will be prompted to complete a 'final step' to receive credit for your time.

You should have already been enrolled in the Training Portal. Check your inbox for a "Welcome to the CO AHEC Scholars Training Portal!" email which holds your username and password. If you have problems logging in or forgetting your log-in information, please email your regional coordinator.

Before the thought of 40 additional hours causes you stress, we have good news! There are a variety of pathways you can take to meet this requirement. Scholars can explore credit and non- credit options, and even combine the two pathways in order to meet the educational requirements while accommodating a busy academic schedule.

- Non-Credit Options

- Throughout the academic year, the AHEC Scholars Program holds monthly learning collaborative seminars that correspond to a core topic area. Taking part in these seminars allows you to accumulate hours that can be counted towards your educational training.
- Alternative learning event hours may include community health events, in-person health trainings, webinars, and trainings either offered or not offered by the Center. The alternative learning event must be approved by your regional coordinator PRIOR to the event and submitting the hours. You will need to confirm with the regional coordinator what will qualify as proof (generally an image of you at the event counts as proof) of attending the event as well as how many hours the event will be approved for. You can also refer to the [AHEC Scholars Event Calendar](#) for a list of pre-approval events.
- Credit Option
 - Submit your course syllabus for any credit courses that cover the core topic areas to your regional coordinator for approval. Please note, if the course credit was part of your health discipline curriculum, the program will not be approved. The regional coordinator will review each submission and inform you if the course is approved and can be counted towards your educational training requirements.

Learning Collaborative Seminar

Throughout the academic year, the AHEC Scholars Program hosts monthly hybrid learning collaborative seminars that have a significant purpose - to facilitate meaningful connections among students, health professionals, higher education institutions, and additional organizations in the domain of health and healthcare. These seminars delve into the core topics explored within the AHEC Scholars Program. Make sure to mark your calendars every month on the first Tuesday, until April 2, 2024, on the following dates:

Oct 3 2023 4:00 PM	Topic: Human Trafficking training for healthcare providers
Nov 7, 2023 4:00 PM	Topic: Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health
Dec 5, 2023 4:00 PM	Topic: Native American Cultural Awareness in Perinatal Care
Jan 2, 2024	There will be no seminar due to the Holiday Season.
February 2024	Topic: To Be Announced
March 2024	Topic: To Be Announced
April 2024	Topic: To Be Announced

Most seminars will be held in a hybrid format, which means you have the option to attend either in-person or online. Please see below for more details regarding each option:

- In-Person: For those attending in-person, we will be gathering at the SWCAHEC office. The office is located on the third floor of the [Commons Building, at 701 S Camino Del Rio, Durango, CO 81301, in Suite 320.](#)

- Online: If you prefer to attend online the meeting ID is located below. If you haven't already, you may want to download [Zoom](#) from the [Download Center](#). For those joining online via Zoom, you might be asked to enter the meeting ID in Zoom. Here is the link to the Zoom meeting where seminars are taking place:
<https://ucdenver.zoom.us/j/98627473731> Meeting ID: 986 2747 3731

Experiential Learning Activities

For most academic programs, clinical or internship hours are embedded within the curriculum for health professions students and far exceed 40 hours a semester. If your program requires at least 40 hours per academic year of interprofessional clinical or community-based work, then you do not need to serve an additional hours of experiential learning activities. In situations where your academic program does not already require clinical or community-based work where a service is provided, then you will need to arrange that opportunity with the regional coordinator to apply to the AHEC Scholars Program.

Below are the criteria for what can count towards clinical or community-based work hours:

- The experiential learning activities must take place in a rural and/or underserved setting
- All experiential learning activities counted towards the AHEC Scholars program must be in a team based interprofessional setting, meaning that you must interact with at least one other health professional or health profession student.
 - Community-based-experiences such as practicums, internships, job shadows can also be counted as experiential learning activities.
- If you choose to set up your own activities or if you already have activities as part of your academic program, then you should get approval from your regional AHEC Scholars Coordinator

At the end of each semester all Scholars are required to submit a timesheet log through in [Experiential Hours page](#) of the AHEC Scholars Online Platform.

Timesheet Log

Experiential learning activities are to be documented with some form of a timesheet log that holds to the following:

- Must indicate the total hours completed over the academic semester. Please list the actual hour amount, even if exceeds the 40-hour experiential learning activities requirements for AHEC Scholars.

Please submit EACH site you completed hours at, along with your best guess for the number of hours you completed there. Necessary information to have on hand__ about your site, including name of site, site address (street, city, state, zip code will be filled in individually), site's phone number, site setting, number of hours completed, dates you were at the site, and type of site--choose all that apply from the following list:

- Academic Institution
- Aerospace operations setting

- Assisted Living community
- Community-Based Care Programs/ Organization
- Day and Home Care Programs (e.g. Home Health)
- Dentist Office
- Federal Government Office of Agency
- Geriatric Behavioral or Mental Health Unit
- Hospital
- Indian Health Service (IHS) Site
- Local Health Department
- Nurse Managed Health Clinic
- Nursing Home
- Community Health Center
- Ambulatory Practice Sites
- Community Mental Health Center
- Emergency Room
- Federally Qualified Health Center
- Veterans Affairs Healthcare
- State Government Office or Agency
- Tribal Organization or Government
- Specialty Clinic
- Oral Health Facility
- Non Profit/ Nongovernmental Organization
- Long-Term Care facility
- Mobile Clinic/Site
- Senior Center
- Residential Living Facility
- Other (Please specify below)

At the end of each semester all Scholars are required to submit a timesheet log through in [Experiential Hours page](#) of the AHEC Scholars Online Platform.

AHEC Scholars Hub

The [AHEC Scholars Hub](#) webpage is a centralized resource for both new and current AHEC Scholars. It offers access to important documents, ongoing training and event dates, tutorial videos, program information, and more. This convenient location houses everything you need for the AHEC Scholars program.

Progressive Reports

Your regional coordinator communicates monthly progressive reports which reflect your progression in the program. The time and dates when the regional coordinator will provide you with a progressive report is the date of the learning collaborative seminars. However, you are welcome to email the regional coordinator a request for an updated progressive report. Below is an example of the report.

Your progressive report as of --/--/202- @ --:--									
AHEC Scholars Resource Hub: https://swcahec.org/ahec-scholars-hub/									
Core Topic Areas	Practice Transformation	Behavioral Health Integration	Interprofessional Practice	Current & Emerging Issues	Social Determinants of Health	Cultural Competency	Virtual Learning & Telehealth	Connecting Communities & Supporting Health Professionals	Experiential Learning Activity Hours
Number of hours required to complete that core topic area:	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	40 Hours
Number of hours you been approved for that core topic area:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Remaining number of hours to complete that core topic area:	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	5 Hours	40 Hours

Questions? Contact your Regional Coordinator either by email at dyllon.mills@swcahec.org or phone at 970-426-4284

Surveys

When applying to AHEC Scholars Program, applicants are required to complete the [AHEC Scholars Pre-Survey](#). The survey assesses your attitudes, knowledge and skills related to the content of this program before participating in the program.

Scholars will also need to complete an [AHEC Scholars Follow Up Survey](#) and a contact form PRIOR to graduating from the program. The survey reassesses your attitudes, knowledge and skills related to the content of this program, after participating in the program. The unique contact form -the following form link is only an example: <https://formstack.io/17BCE> --helps the regional coordinator keep in contact with the graduate of the program for an additional [AHEC Scholars Follow Up Survey](#) upon completion of the one-year required follow-up period.

Chain of Communication

If you have any questions or suggestions, please follow the chain of communication outlined below to ensure that any issues or concerns are addressed promptly and effectively:

1. Start by contacting your AHEC Scholars Regional Coordinator for Southwestern Colorado AHEC. This person will usually have the most information and can assist you in resolving your question or suggestion.

Contact information for the AHEC Scholars Regional Coordinator is as follows:

- Name: Dyllon Mills
- Email Address: Dyllon.mills@swcahec.org
- Office Phone Number: 970-426-4284

If your question or suggestion is not resolved after contacting the Regional Coordinator, proceed to step 2.

2. Contact the Executive Director of Southwestern Colorado AHEC. This person has a broader scope of knowledge and can help address more specific or complex situations.

Contact information for the Executive Director is as follows:

- Name: Kate Hartzell
- Email Address: kate.hartzell@swcahec.org
- Office Phone Number: 970-426-4284

By following this chain of communication, you can promote direct, open, and respectful interaction, ensuring that your questions and suggestions are dealt with efficiently.