A Shorter Path ...

Master’s degrees aren’t the only option for those seeking advanced education in health and medical policy. George Washington University (Gwu.edu) offers a seven-month certification in corporate health-care compliance.

The degree prepares students to help develop compliance plans, which are required by the new health-care law. Hospitals, universities and other organizations need specialists in health-care policy to write the plans.

“Corporate compliance is a critical aspect of our health-care system, and there’s a significant demand for education for individuals working in the field,” says Jane Thorpe, director of the GW program, which is jointly run by the College of Professional Studies and the School of Public Health and Health Services.

The new compliance rules are accompanied by stiffer consequences for those who don’t comply.

“We’re moving from an environment where having a corporate compliance program is voluntary to an environment where it is mandatory,” Thorpe says.

Like the master’s programs, the certification program has seen a steady increase in applicants every year as more companies have a need for health-policy experts.