



Department of

Public Administration

Master of Public Administration

Student Handbook

NC State University
School of Public and International Affairs

This handbook is intended to provide up-to-date information regarding the requirements for the Master of Public Administration degree program at NC State University. In addition to reading this document, all graduate students should refer to the Graduate Handbook, which contains the official policy of the University, and the [Graduate School website](#).

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Points of Contact

Public Administration Department Chair

The Department Chair oversees all faculty and programs in the Department of Public Administration. Any questions or concerns not addressed by the MPA Director can be brought to the chair's attention.

The current PA chair is:

Jerrell Coggburn
209 B Caldwell
jdcoggbu@ncsu.edu

MPA Director

All aspects of the MPA program are overseen by its director. All questions that cannot be addressed by the Graduate Academic Advisor Coordinator or the Internship Director can be answered by the MPA Director.

The current MPA director is:

Amanda J. Stewart (Mandi)
Caldwell 206
ajstewa5@ncsu.edu

Graduate Academic Advisor Coordinator

The program advisor is the student's day-to-day contact for the MPA program. The advisor works with students to select their courses and is the principal administrative liaison between the student, the graduate program, and the Graduate School.

The current graduate academic advisor coordinator is:

Meggie Romick
222 Caldwell Hall
mromick@ncsu.edu
(919) 515-5159

External Relations and Internship Director

The External Relations and Internship Director works with students to find internships and prepare for the job market.

The current External Relations and Internship Director is:

Tracy Appling
113 Winston Hall
tracy_appling@ncsu.edu
(919) 513-0232

Mission and Goals

The mission of NC State's MPA program is

To develop principled and skilled public service professionals who fulfill leadership roles within governmental and nonprofit organizations. We focus on practical and problem-solving skills and emphasize public service values -- including efficiency, effectiveness, equity and accountability.

The mission of the program is achieved through six goals:

1. Provide a generalist management education that develops mission-relevant competencies enabling graduates
 - a. to lead and manage in public governance;
 - b. to participate in and contribute to the public policy process;
 - c. to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions;
 - d. to articulate a public service perspective; and,
 - e. to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.
2. Recruit and serve a diverse set of talented students committed to public service careers, including
 - a. pre-service and in-service students;
 - b. students from historically underrepresented groups; and,
 - c. students with interests in public (local, state, federal) and/or nonprofit sectors.
3. Provide opportunities for students to tailor public service specialties consistent with their interests and abilities, the university's strengths and labor market needs.
4. Provide internships for pre-service students that use and extend the skills they have developed in the MPA program and prepare them for the professional job market.
5. Prepare students to be successful in competition for post-graduate internships and public service jobs.
6. Prepare in-service students to advance in the public or nonprofit sector.

Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the MPA Program

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

We, the faculty of the Department of Public Administration at NC State University, affirm the inherent dignity of all people. We are committed to creating an inclusive and engaging working and learning environment, free from discrimination on the basis of age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender orientation, racial/ethnic background, and/or religion.

While the Department of Public Administration works to ensure an environment of mutual respect, one that is free from intolerance, and one that offers equal opportunity for all, we do not always rise to this challenge. As concerns or issues arise, the MPA director is available to talk and be of any assistance possible. All conversations are confidential. Students may also wish to contact [Student Ombuds Service](#), which also serves as a confidential resource to help resolve situations on campus.

Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with the [Disability Resource Center](#). For more information on NC State's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the [Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation](#) (REG 02.20.01).

NC State University Policies, Regulations and Rules (PRR)

Students are responsible for reviewing the PRRs which pertain to their course rights and responsibilities. These include: [Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy](#), [Office of Equal Opportunity](#), [Code of Student Conduct](#), and [Grades and Grade Point Average](#).

Program Description

Admission

Applicants to the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program and its graduate certificate programs come from a variety of educational backgrounds, including the social sciences, education, social work, medicine, nursing and the humanities. Students are admitted to the program by the MPA Graduate Admissions Committee, which reviews applications on a regular basis during the academic year. Students may begin the program in either the fall or spring semester. The following deadlines should be noted to be considered for admission to the program:

	Application Deadlines	
	<u>Fall Admission</u>	<u>Spring Admission</u>
Domestic Students	March 15	November 1
International Students	March 1	July 15

Fall applicants wishing to be considered for an assistantship, scholarship, or other departmental funding opportunities must have their completed applications submitted by February 1.

Requirements for admission in full standing to the MPA program include:

1. a complete application to North Carolina State University with a paid application fee;
2. possession of a bachelor's degree, or its equivalent, from a regionally accredited college or university;
3. submission of transcripts from all postsecondary education institutes in which the applicant has been enrolled, which indicate a minimum 3.0 GPA;
4. applicant's resume;
5. statement explaining the applicant's interests and goals in pursuing an MPA degree at NC State;
6. three letters of recommendation from references that are familiar with the applicant's academic and work abilities; and
- 7.

The MPA program requires the following prerequisite courses, of which an applicant must have earned a "C" or better.

1. An introductory course in statistics
2. A course in microeconomics

Admitted applicants that have not met the prerequisite requirements must arrange with their advisor to take the courses prior to taking PA 511 for the microeconomics prerequisite and/or PA 515 for the statistics prerequisite in the MPA program. If these courses are taken at the graduate level while enrolled in the MPA program, they may be counted towards the MPA degree as electives.

Applicants who satisfy the admissions criteria may be considered to be fully admitted to the MPA program. A provisional admission into the program may be offered to applicants at the discretion of the MPA Director in consultation with the MPA Admissions Committee. This provisional status is removed upon fulfillment of stipulated conditions. Generally, applicants admitted on a provisional basis must enroll in certain courses and must maintain a 3.5 GPA in all preliminary course work before they are granted full admittance to the degree program.

General Requirements

The program requires the completion of forty-two (42) credit hours of graduate coursework. Students complete program coursework in two areas: core coursework and elective coursework.

Of the forty-two (42) credit hours of graduate work required for the degree, up to twelve (12) credit hours of appropriate graduate work may be transferred from other universities and graduate programs and applied toward the program requirements. Approval of transfer credit is at the discretion of the MPA Director and the MPA Admissions Committee.

Core Courses

The core curriculum of twenty-four (24) credit hours of courses is required of all students. Students should take the core courses at the beginning of their matriculation in order to prepare themselves for the materials in their elective coursework and research projects. All MPA core courses are offered at least twice during an academic year. Students earning a grade of “C” or less in a core course must retake it the next semester in which the course is offered. Core courses include the following:

- PA 510: Public Administration Institutions and Values
- PA 511: Public Policy Analysis
- PA 512: The Budgetary Process
- PA 513: Public Organization Behavior
- PA 514: Management Systems
- PA 515: Research Methods and Analysis
- PA 516: Effective Communications for Public Administrators
- PA 517: MPA Capstone

The MPA Capstone course should be taken in the last semester of a student’s MPA career, after they have taken all of the other required core courses. If necessary, students may take the MPA Capstone course alongside one core course, but only if it is the last core course the student needs to complete.

Electives

Each student is required to take an additional eighteen (18) credit hours of graduate course offerings to complete the forty-two (42) credit hour requirement. The internship and prerequisite classes taken at the graduate level are considered elective credits. In order to maximize the flexibility of the program to meet the career needs of students, the MPA program may accept courses from other departments at NC State and through other members of the Interinstitutional Registration program. Students should investigate courses that interest them and fit their schedules and then consult their advisor if they have questions about such courses. Students must seek approval prior to taking courses outside of the Department of Public Administration in order

for the course to be counted towards completion of the MPA degree.

Specializations

In addition to the generalist management education, which is the core of the MPA program, the curriculum is designed to enable students to pursue more specialized courses in areas of interest to their professional public service careers. Students are encouraged to work with their advisor to develop a specialty around their career goals by taking electives in public administration, other departments at NC State and/or through the Interinstitutional Registration program.

Students may also develop a specialization by pursuing the MPA degree simultaneously with the department's Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management or Graduate Certificate in Policy Analysis. Students may also pursue another degree as a dual-degree student. Students under this designation work with their advisor to build a program of study across multiple programs that meets their career needs and professional interests. Examples of the dual master's approach include the MPA/JD program with Campbell University, the MPA/Master of International Studies (MIS), and the MPA/Master of Social Work (MSW).

Students interested in pursuing another graduate degree or a graduate certificate alongside the MPA degree are encouraged to speak with both the Graduate Academic Advisor Coordinator and the MPA Director.

Program Administration

Advisor

Upon admission into the MPA program, students will meet with the Graduate Academic Advisor Coordinator to discuss their goals for the program and plan courses for the upcoming semester. The Coordinator's primary responsibility is to assist students in developing their Plan of Work for their path through the program. Students work with the Coordinator to select courses in key areas of interest to fulfill their concentration requirements. After a student's initial communication with the Coordinator, they are required to meet with the Coordinator at least twice per year, in October and March, when course enrollment for the upcoming semester takes place. The Coordinator must clear students for course enrollment before they can register for classes. The advisor is also available at other times when course questions or academic difficulties arise.

Students are also free to contact any MPA faculty member or the MPA director with substantive questions about their studies.

Course Loads

At the graduate level, a full-time course load is considered to be nine (9) credit hours per semester. During the summer sessions, a full course load is considered to be one (1) credit hour as students are not required to be enrolled during the summer 1 or summer 2 terms. The program is designed to be completed in a two-year period of full-time enrollment. The two-year plan requires full-time enrollment during fall and spring semesters and enrollment in six (6) credit hours during the summer between the first and second year. However, students that maintain employment during the program should consult with the Coordinator before attempting a full course load. It is common for students to enroll part time, attempting only one or two courses during a semester.

Students should use the following as a guide in planning their course schedule and when registering: if working full time, one or two courses is appropriate; if working 20 to 30 hours per week, two or three courses; and, if working less than one-half time, three courses. Students should consult with the Coordinator concerning the number of courses to take each semester.

It should also be noted that a student must take at least four and a half (4.5) credit hours to be eligible for financial aid.

Time Limit for Degree Completion

All requirements for the MPA degree must be completed within six (6) years from the date a student takes their first graduate course applicable to the MPA degree, including any Post-Baccalaureate Studies (PBS) coursework (i.e. the clock starts with the first course approved for inclusion in the Plan of Work is taken or the date of admission to the program, whichever comes

first).

Students who are transferring courses from another graduate degree must complete all requirements within the same six (6) year period. Courses transferred from another master's degree must meet the criteria outlined in the transfer credit section of this handbook. See the Time Limit section in the Graduate Handbook for information on exceptions to this rule.

Continuous Registration

After a student is admitted to the Graduate School and enrolls for the first time, they are required to maintain continuous registration (i.e. be enrolled each semester, excluding summer sessions) until they have either graduated or their graduate program at NC State has been terminated. All students who graduate during the second summer session must be registered for either the first or second summer session.

Grades

In order to receive graduate degree credit, a grade of “C” or higher is required. Courses in which a student receives an unacceptable grade (i.e., C-, D, F, or U) must not be entered into the Plan of Work and must be formally deleted prior to taking the PA 517 Capstone course. The Graduate School automatically terminates the admission of all students who do not have a 3.0 average after completing 18 hours of graduate course work. PBS courses are not included in the calculation of the grade point average until the courses are approved as part of the Plan of Work.

A student may take up to 6 hours of 400-level courses for graduate credit provided that they are outside the student’s degree program. No more than one 400-level course of up to 4 credit hours may be used for a graduate certificate. All 400-level courses must be approved by the MPA Director prior to the student enrolling in the course.

500- and 700-level courses cannot be taken for a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) grade. Any 500- or 700-level course taken as S/U only will not count toward the 42 credit hours required for the MPA degree¹.

Electives in Other Departments or Universities

Students may include up to 18 credit hours of graduate-level electives from programs outside of the Department of Public Administration. These electives can come from other departments at NC State or from universities that are part of either the Interinstitutional Registration program or the Cooperating Raleigh Colleges organization. The Interinstitutional Registration program includes UNC Chapel Hill, UNC Greensboro, UNC Charlotte, NC Central University, and Duke University. The Cooperating Raleigh Colleges organization includes, at the graduate level, Meredith College. Grades via the Interinstitutional Registration program will be calculated in the student’s overall GPA, but grades from Meredith College will not.

To count towards the MPA degree, any course taken outside of the Department of Public Administration must directly relate to some aspect of public administration and must be approved by the MPA Director prior to registering for the course. Upon receiving approval, a comment will be placed into the student’s Plan of Work indicating such.

Directed Studies

The program offers two Directed Study courses, which allow students to design a course around extensive readings, research and writing in a subject of particular interest to them under direct, individual faculty supervision. These are:

¹ This excludes those grade changes that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PA 580: Independent Study

PA 635: Readings and Research

The distinction between the two courses is based on how the student is graded in the course. Students enrolled in PA 580 will receive a course letter grade that will count towards both the student's total credit hours and their GPA. Alternatively, students enrolled in PA 635 will receive a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) grade that will count towards the student's total credit hours but not their GPA.

Students must get approval from the faculty member they wish to study under and the MPA Director prior to enrollment. A course contract must be submitted to the MPA Director before the start of the semester for approval. Once the course contract is approved, the department will enroll the student in the appropriate course. Contract forms may be obtained from the department's MPA Moodle page.

MPA students may include up to six (6) credit hours of PA 580 or PA 635 or a combination of the two on their Plan of Work, but students can only take up to three (3) credit hours of directed studies credit per semester. Enrollment in Directed Studies courses is available, but students are encouraged to participate in scheduled courses whenever possible.

Course Audits

Graduate students wishing to audit a course must have the approval of the Coordinator and of the department and instructor offering the course. While auditors receive no course credit, they are expected to attend class regularly. The degree to which an auditor must participate in class beyond regular attendance is determined by the instructor. Any auditing requirements should be clearly explained in writing to the student at the beginning of the semester. Should an instructor conclude that an auditor has failed to fulfill the stipulated requirements, the instructor is justified in marking NR (no recognition given for an audit) on the final grade report.

Graduate students may audit one course a semester tuition free; additional audits will require tuition payment.

Academic Difficulties

Graduate students may be terminated from the program at any time if, in the judgment of the Department of Public Administration and the Graduate School, a student fails to make satisfactory progress towards the completion of the degree (regardless of grades).

Students who receive notification of academic warning or probation should meet with the MPA Director as soon as possible. Graduate students will be terminated from their program of study if they have accumulated more than 18 hours at the 400-level or above and have a GPA below 2.667, or if they have accumulated 30 or more hours and have less than a 3.0 GPA. A student may also be terminated for violation of the NC State Code of Student Conduct. In cases of program termination, no further registration in a graduate classification will be permitted.

The MPA Director, based on the recommendation of the Coordinator and evidence that the student's performance should improve, may request that a terminated student be reinstated. More details can be found in the Academic Difficulty section of the Graduate Handbook.

Grievances

Most problems encountered by graduate students can be resolved through communication between the student and the instructor. If, however, a matter arises which cannot be resolved through student-instructor or student-advisor interaction, then the matter should be brought to the attention of the MPA Director. If the MPA Director cannot resolve the matter, or if they are the subject of the matter, it should then be brought to the attention of the PA Chair.

More details can be found in the Discipline and Grievance Procedures section of the Graduate Handbook.

Leave of Absence

A student in good academic standing who must interrupt their graduate program for good reason may request a Leave of Absence from graduate study for a definite period of time, not to exceed one year (two academic semesters) within a given graduate program. The request must be made at least one month prior to the term involved. Upon endorsement of the request by the student's advisor and the MPA Director, and approval by the Graduate School, the student would not be required to be registered during the leave of absence. The time that the student spends on an approved leave of absence will be included in the time allowed to complete the degree (i.e. six years for a master's degree).

Students who fail to get prior permission and do not register will have their graduate admission terminated and will have to apply for readmission to graduate school. There is no guarantee that readmission will be granted.

Withdrawal from University

Students who wish to drop all their semester or summer-session courses must officially withdraw from the university. A student who had pre-registered and prepaid is considered registered and must officially withdraw unless they have notified the university prior to the beginning of the semester.

Students considering withdrawal should consult their advisor and refer to the Withdrawal from the University section of the Graduate Handbook for policies and procedures on officially withdrawing from the university.

Students enrolled via the Interinstitutional Registration program must also contact the NC State Department of Registration and Records to initiate the paperwork necessary for withdrawing from the class at the other institution.

Graduate Plan of Work

Every MPA student must file a Plan of Work in the automated Student Information System (SIS) within MyPack Portal. This should be done upon completion of 18 graduate credit hours. Students cannot take PA 517: MPA Capstone or graduate without having a fully updated Plan of Work submitted in SIS and approved by the Coordinator, the MPA Director, and the Graduate School.

An acceptable Plan of Work for the MPA degree indicates the student's advisor as their only committee member, lists a minimum of 42 total credit hours and includes all MPA core courses. Any elective that is taken outside of the program must also have a corresponding comment in the Plan of Work from the Coordinator that approves the course as an elective. This comment must predate the start of the semester in which the course is taken. For MPA students that are required to complete an internship, the plan should include three credits of PA 650: Internship in Public Affairs.

Changes in the Graduate Plan of Work

After discussing proposed changes with the Coordinator students can have the Coordinator reset the Plan of Work in SIS. Once the student has input their revisions, they should resubmit the Plan of Work for the Coordinator, the MPA Director, and the Graduate School to approve.

Designating Your Committee Chair

The MPA program is an "Option B" (no thesis) master's degree. As an Option B program, students do not have an advisory committee. When completing the Plan of Work, students should list who their advisor is as their committee chair. Additional committee members are not needed and should not be listed.

PBS Course Work

A maximum of (9) credit hours taken as a Post-Baccalaureate Studies (PBS) student prior to admission to the MPA program may be applied towards degree requirements.

Transfer Credit

At least 30 credit hours must be taken after the student is enrolled in the NC State MPA program. A maximum of twelve (12) credit hours of graduate course work, including work taken for another master's degree and classes taken as a PBS student, may be transferred to the MPA degree. Courses can be transferred only if: 1) they were classified as graduate courses and completed while the students was in a graduate or post-baccalaureate classification; 2) they were taken at a college or university accredited by one of the six U.S. regional accrediting agencies; 3) a grade of "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) or better was earned; 4) the courses were completed within the six (6) year window for degree completion; and, 5) they are related to public administration or public policy. The granting of transfer credit is given at the discretion of the MPA Director, in consultation with the student's advisor. Students seeking transfer credit are encouraged to speak

to the MPA Director upon entering the program.

Completing MPA with less than 42 credit hours.

Students that have completed certain public or nonprofit certification programs prior to starting the MPA program may be eligible to complete the degree with fewer than 42 credits. Several certification programs have been pre-approved by the Department of Public Administration for reducing the credit hour requirement of the program. Students who have completed the North Carolina Certified Public Managers (CPM) program are only required to complete 33 hours in the MPA program; students who have completed Duke University's Certificate in Nonprofit Management Program can receive their MPA degree after completing 39 credit hours of course work; and, students who have completed UNC School of Government's Municipal and County Administrators course can complete the MPA with 39 credit hours. Certifications must have been completed within three years of starting the MPA program.

Graduates of the Administrative Officers Management Program (AOMP) can transfer nine graduate credit hours (earned in PBS status) into the MPA program and must complete a minimum of 33 additional graduate hours, including the 24-hour core curriculum, to satisfy the MPA degree requirement.

Other certification programs may be eligible for similar credit toward the MPA. When applying for admission to the MPA program, interested applicants should contact the MPA Director about having their certifications reviewed for a potential reduction in the required credits. Regardless of the amount of transfer credits from these certification programs, the 24-hour core curriculum is required to be completed. In determining if such coursework/certification is appropriate for outside credit, the MPA Director and the admissions committee use the following criteria:

1. Are the courses clearly oriented to public/nonprofit management or to specific public/nonprofit policy areas?
2. Do the courses provide broader analytic tools and concepts rather than just practical applications?
3. Are the courses clearly at the professional or graduate level? Using the "Courses, Curricula, and Academic Standards" established by NC State University, a number of factors will be considered in making this overall determination. These factors include:
 - a. How many hours of classroom teaching?
 - b. Do the courses clearly require graduate-level work assignments, including a graduate-level reading load?
 - c. Is student performance evaluated rigorously, based on meaningful research assignments or tests?
 - d. Are the courses already granted academic credit by other universities?

When submitting the Plan of Work through SIS, students who have approved outside coursework should list the appropriate number of transfer credits and request that the MPA Director add a comment to the Plan of Work indicating that the credits derive from having attained a recognized certification.

Students already enrolled in the MPA program that pursue a certification program will not receive a reduction in the number of credit hours required for the MPA degree. However, the

certification program will be reviewed using the established Graduate School and MPA program policies for transfer credit and for courses taken outside of the Department of Public Administration.

Assistantships and Scholarships

The Department of Public Administration has a limited number of graduate assistantships available to incoming full-time students in the fall. Assistantships provide a stipend, a tuition waiver, and health insurance in exchange for working as a research or teaching assistant in the department. All full-time students whose applications to the MPA program are submitted by February 1st are considered for assistantships when they are admitted to the program. The department also has a limited number of scholarships for full and part-time students. Students whose applications to the MPA program are submitted by February 1st are considered for these scholarships when they are admitted to the program. All assistantship and scholarship decisions are made on a competitive basis.

Typically, the MPA makes up to five (5) offers for a MPA student assistantship, referred to as the “Graduate Student Support Plan” or GSSP. Students receiving the GSSP are provided with tuition benefits for up to two (2) fall and spring semesters, Graduate Student Health Insurance, and a stipend. Students on the GSSP are required to work as a graduate research assistant for 20 hours of work per week. As a condition of the GSSP assistantship, students must maintain his/her status as a full-time student, and therefore, should not be otherwise employed. The reason for this position is to encourage students to work on their graduate MPA degrees rather than part-time or full-time jobs.

Periodically, other scholarship opportunities arise throughout the academic year. As these opportunities present themselves, MPA students will be made aware of them through the program’s Google Group or MPA Moodle page.

The Internship Director will work with students who do not receive financial aid to identify temporary jobs.

Internships and Career Services

Upon admission students will be designated as an in-service or pre-service student. Pre-service students must complete both an internship and an internship course (PA 650: Internship in Public Affairs) to provide a bridge between academic education and professional practice.

In designating pre-service or in-service status, the program will consider the duration, roles and responsibilities of previous work experience. Students lacking at least one year of administrative experience in a public organization or policy-related work will normally be designated as pre-service students.

No more than 3 credit hours of PA 650 may be included on the graduate Plan of Work, but additional internships may be taken. Per NASPAA accreditation standards, students completing a required internship course must work the equivalent of 300 hours (e.g. 20 hours per week over the standard 15-week semester or 30 hours per week over the 10-week summer session).

To ensure that students have an opportunity to apply what they have learned in the MPA program, students must complete the equivalent of one year of full-time MPA study before registering for PA 650. Requirements of the course include at least the following: signed contracts among students, agency sponsors and program advisors; attendance at all meetings conducted by the Internship Director for MPA interns; submission of internship essays and projects for grading; and, oral and written performance evaluations by the agency supervisor.

For in-service students who wish to change fields of employment or who need administrative experience, PA 651: Advanced Practical Training may be arranged.

For job placement success, students should attend all Public Administration Alumni Society events, GAPA Alumni Speaker events, local government conferences and nonprofit workshops. Connecting with alumni and professionals in the public sector field allows students to begin creating a network in their chosen area. Students should also register with the [NC State Career Development Center](#) and utilize the [ePack](#) system and meet with the [Accelerate to Industry A2i](#) Graduate School Career Center. Internship positions are posted on the Moodle MPA Project Space. Full-time positions are posted on the [NC State Public Administration Alumni](#) LinkedIn group.

Requests for Reclassification

Requests from pre-service students to be reclassified as in-service students will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request reclassification, a student should write a memorandum outlining why they believe they qualify as an in-service student. The memorandum, along with an updated copy of the student's resume, should then be submitted to the MPA Director. The request for

reclassification will then be reviewed by the MPA director, in consultation with the student's advisor, for final determination.

MPA Group

New MPA students will automatically be added to the MPA Group, which sends out emails regarding opportunities within the department, upcoming events and job/internship opportunities. Students are encouraged to remain subscribed to the group throughout the duration of their degree and for up to a semester after graduation.

Dual Degree Opportunities

Students pursuing the MPA degree may also pursue a second graduate degree that is earned in tandem to the MPA degree. Students pursuing a dual degree can choose from any other master's program offered at NC State University. University policies governing the transfer of courses in graduate programs require students to take a minimum of 48 credit hours to receive two unique degrees.

To complete a dual degree in which one of the degrees is an MPA, students must complete the 24 credits of core MPA courses. The remaining 18 credit hours needed to complete the degree can be shared credit with the second program. The requirements for the second degree are determined by the individual programs themselves, though students should expect to complete at least another 18 hours that are specific to that degree (alternative credit requirements may be in place for the pre-established dual degree programs discussed below). Students pursuing two master's degrees must meet all Graduate School requirements and the requirements of each degree program. Student's interested in adding the MPA degree as a secondary degree to their current studies or MPA students looking to add a second master's degree are encouraged to speak with their advisor and the MPA Director regarding the process and the requirements.

The Department of Public Administration offers three pre-established dual degree programs. These include the opportunity to earn a Juris Doctorate (JD), a Master of International Studies (MIS), or Master of Social Work (MSW) degree alongside the MPA.

MPA/JD

The MPA/JD dual degree program allows students to earn their JD from Campbell University's Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law. The dual program allows both degrees to be completed in four (4) years, where students complete the JD curriculum and take an additional 27 credit hours of MPA courses to complete the requirements. Of the courses from the MPA program, 24 of the credit hours must be earned by completing the program's core courses. Students interested in the dual program are encouraged to speak to the admissions counselors at the School of Law regarding admission into the JD program. Law students wanting to add the MPA degree typically apply for admission to the program during the first year of law school and complete most of their MPA core courses during their second year of graduate study.

MPA/MIS

The MPA/MIS dual degree program allows both degrees to be earned from within the School of Public and International Affairs at NC State University, where the Department of Public Administration is located. To earn both degrees students must complete a total of 60 credit hours across both programs. Students in the dual degree program will take 24 credit hours of the MPA program's core courses and will also take 18 hours of credit from the MIS program, including 15 hours from the MIS program's core courses. An additional 18 credit hours can be taken from MPA or MIS classes to complete the total credit requirement. The dual MPA/MIS can be added to a student's Plan of Work at any point prior to their graduation from the program they initially matriculated into.

MPA/MSW

The Department of Public Administration and the Department of Social Work at NC State allow students to complete both the MPA and the MSW programs simultaneously. To be considered for the dual degree program, students must be accepted into the Advanced Standing option of the MSW program.

To complete the dual program, students take a total of 54 credit hours. Twenty-four (24) of these credit hours come from the core courses of the MPA program. The remaining 30 credit hours are taken from the MSW program. To enroll in the dual MPA/MSW program, students must first be accepted into the MSW's Advanced Standing program and then apply for the MPA to be added as a secondary degree. For more information about the dual program, students are encouraged to speak to both the director of the MSW and MPA programs.

Filing for Graduation

Students will fill out a graduation application through their MyPack Portal to apply for graduation. Instructions can be found on the [Apply for Graduation page](#). The graduation application should be filled out at the start of the semester the student intends to graduate.

Graduation application deadlines are listed on the [Graduation page](#). A student must submit their graduation application by the deadline in order to be considered for that semester's graduation. Late applications will not be considered.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they complete their coursework during the semester they apply to graduate, have no incompletes on their record, and have no library fines or other outstanding fees. Failure to pay attention to these details may result in the Graduate School placing a "hold" on the student's diploma.

A graduate student who establishes a graduation date by enrolling in the last course on their Plan of Work and who does not complete all the requirements (incomplete grades) by the graduation date is put on "hold" for a period of thirty days following graduation. The Graduate School will notify the student and the MPA Director of this action by letter. If the student does not complete the outstanding requirement(s) within thirty days after the graduation date, their name is removed from the graduation list and added to the next graduation list following the removal of the outstanding requirement(s). If the student's time limit for the degree expires before the outstanding requirement is met, their graduate program will be terminated unless a request for extension is submitted to and approved by the Graduate School.

Graduate Certificate Options

The Department of Public Administration offers two Graduate Certificates, one in nonprofit management and one in policy analysis. Both certificates may be completed in conjunction with the MPA program. The Certificate programs are designed for individuals to develop a career specialization. Students interested in specializing in nonprofit management or policy analysis during their MPA studies are encouraged to add the appropriate Graduate Certificate alongside their degree. The certificate specifics and courses required are listed below and would be considered as part of a student's Plan of Work for the MPA program.

To apply to one of the PA certificate programs, students should first speak with the Coordinator and then download and complete the application for currently enrolled NC State graduate students, as found on the department's website. Completed forms should then be submitted to the MPA Director.

The rules for maintaining good academic standing in the MPA program also apply to the certificate programs. Students will also need to submit a separate graduation application to graduate from the certificate program.

Students are also able to pursue other graduate certificate options at NC State, a list of which can be found here: <https://www.grad.ncsu.edu/catalog/default.asp#CERT>. Students should always consult with their advisor prior to adding a graduate certificate to their degree plan.

Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management

To complete the Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management, the student must take 12 credit hours and meet the substantive experience requirement.

Students are required to take these two courses (6 credit hours):

PA 536: Management of Nonprofit Organizations
PA 539: Fund Development

Certificate students must also take six elective credit courses from the course list below. Students may also elect to use the remaining course from the above list as one of their electives. Nonprofit-oriented classes from other departments at NC State may be used to fulfill the elective credits. Courses taken outside of the list below must be approved by the student's advisor prior to registering for the course.

COM 546: Nonprofit Marketing and Public Relations
PA 510: Public Administration Institutions and Values
PA 514: Management Systems
PA 516: Effective Communications for Public Administrators
PA 531: Human Resource Management in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
PA 532: Contract Negotiation and Mediation in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors
PA 535: Problem Solving for Public and Nonprofit Managers
PA 540: Grant Writing for Public Administrators

PA 538: Nonprofit Budgeting and Financial Management
PA 546: Seminar in Program Evaluation

The substantive experience requirement can be met by:

- Prior (or continuing) Experience:
 - Full-time employment with a nonprofit (at least one year by completion of certificate program)
 - Serving on a nonprofit board or chairing a nonprofit's standing committee (at least one year by completion of certificate program)
- In-program Work:
 - Internship or independent study with a nonprofit (at least 1 credit hour)
 - Completing a course with a field component (e.g., PA 546 or PA 525)

Graduate Certificate in Policy Analysis

To complete the Graduate Certificate in Policy Analysis, students are required to take the following three core courses:

PA 507: The Public Policy Process
PA 509: Applied Political Economy
PA 511: Public Policy Analysis

Certificate students must also take six (6) elective credit courses. Policy-oriented classes from other departments at NC State may be used to fulfill the elective credits. Courses taken outside of the list below must be approved by the student's advisor prior to registering for the course.

GIS 510: Fundamentals of Geospatial Information Science and Technology
PA 512: The Budgetary Process
PA 515: Research Methods and Analysis
PA 530: Financial Management in the Public Sector
PA 550: Environmental Policy
PA 552: Science and Technology Policy
PA 553: Disaster, Crisis, and Emergency Management and Policy
PA 598: Special Topics - Energy Policy

Transferring into the Ph.D. Program

Occasionally, MPA students seek to transfer into the department's Ph.D. in Public Administration program. Students wishing to be considered for admission into the Ph.D. program should make their interests known to the Coordinator and the Director of the doctoral program as soon as possible, ideally by the end of their first semester of their MPA. Admission into the Ph.D. program is competitive and applications for admission in the fall are reviewed the preceding February of each year by the Ph.D. Admissions Committee. There are no spring admissions into the Ph.D. program. Competitive applications for the Ph.D. program are evaluated based on 1) evidence of scholarly aptitude (GREs, GPA, letters of recommendation); 2) research experience; and, 3) research interests that are supported by our graduate faculty. It is feasible for students admitted to the Ph.D. program without an MPA to complete both their MPA and Ph.D. in about five years.

Full-time students admitted to the Ph.D. program are eligible for funding through NC State's Graduate Student Support Plan (GSSP). However, GSSP eligibility is based on a four-year time clock that starts at the point at which a student matriculates into *either* the MPA or Ph.D. program – regardless of whether they receive funding through the GSSP or not. In other words, years spent in the MPA program count against the GSSP eligibility timeline even if you are not receiving support through the GSSP. It is for this reason that it is imperative that MPA students considering the Ph.D. make their intentions known early and discuss the pros and cons with their advisor.

Students pursuing the MPA en route to Ph.D. will be required to complete all core classes required for the MPA except for PA 517: MPA Capstone. In lieu of the capstone course, the Ph.D. written comprehensive exam will serve as the culminating examination for the MPA program. In order to streamline program requirements, MPA-en-route-to-Ph.D. students will also be cleared to enroll in 700- and 800-level public administration courses for their specialization/elective credits. For students who maintain continuous enrollment at NC State as they transfer into the PhD program, they are able to share 36 credits between their MPA and PhD programs, 18 of which must be at the 700- and 800-level. Per NC State Graduate School policy, a student with a break in enrollment between their MPA and PhD programs is allowed to transfer only 18 credits from the MPA degree towards the required 72-credits needed to complete their PhD degree. MPA students who apply to the department's Ph.D. program in Public Administration before graduation from the MPA program do not have to pay the graduate school application fee. Students should consult with the MPA Director before initiating the Ph.D. application process

Student and Professional Organizations

The public administration field is focused on the development of an individual's managerial skills during the pursuit of the MPA degree and throughout their career. To assist in this manner, there are several organizations with which students may choose to get involved.

Professional Organizations

American Society of Public Administration

The American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) is the largest, most prominent association for public administrators. As a national association, ASPA provides opportunities for networking, conferences and a public administration focused career website. Additionally, it promotes professionalism and training through its chapters and sections. ASPA also sponsors regular webinars on topics of interest to public managers. For more information about ASPA, students are encouraged to visit the ASPA website (www.aspanet.org). Students receive many of the benefits from membership at a greatly reduced price while in student status.

North Carolina Affiliations of Professional Organizations

North Carolina is home to several professional associations that bring together professionals specific to field and career profiles:

North Carolina Public Administration Alliance (<https://ncpaalliance.com/>)

North Carolina Local Government Budget Alliance (<https://www.nclgba.org/>)

North Carolina City County Managers Association (<https://www.ncmanagers.org/>)

North Carolina Center for Nonprofits (www.ncnonprofits.org)

Association of Fundraising Professionals - Triangle Chapter (<https://www.afptriangle.org/>)

Other Professional Organizations

Other organizations whose membership is beneficial to students during their academic and professional careers include:

Government Finance Officers Association (www.gfoa.org)

International City/County Management Association (www.icma.org)

Society for Human Resource Management (www.shrm.org)

Professional and Academic Conferences

Attending and presenting work at professional and academic conferences can help with a student's

professional network and presentations skills. The University's Graduate Student Association (GSA) has an application process to receive funds to support travel to conferences.

Professional conferences to consider attending include:

North Carolina Center for Nonprofits Annual Conference

(<https://www.ncnonprofits.org/events/conference>) -- *Fall*

North Carolina City & County Management Association Winter Seminar

(www.ncmanagers.org)

Academic conferences to consider attending include:

- Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) - *Fall*
- American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) - *Spring*
- Southeastern Conference on Public Administration (SECoPA) - *Fall*
- Northeastern Conference on Public Administration (NECoPA) - *Fall*
- Midwest Public Affairs Conference (MPAC) - *Spring*
- Association for Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) - *Fall*
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management (ABFM) - *Fall*
- Public Management Research Association (PMRA) - *Spring*

Student Organizations

Graduate Association of Public Administration

The Graduate Association of Public Administration (GAPA) sponsors professional, social and community service activities during the academic year. GAPA offers students opportunities to discuss issues surrounding public administration and provide faculty with input about the MPA and Ph.D. programs. GAPA also encourages networking between public administration practitioners, faculty, alumni and other students through various events. GAPA is an affiliate of the Graduate Student Association at NC State University. More information about GAPA may be found on their website <https://orgs.ncsu.edu/gsa/>.

City/County Management Association Student Chapter

The Department of Public Administration hosts a student chapter of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The mission of the ICMA is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional management to build better communities. Involvement with the student chapter provides students with access to the resources, scholarships, job postings and other opportunities that the ICMA provides for its members. Membership in the chapter is free for students in the department and includes free membership in the ICMA. Students interested in the chapter should contact the MPA Director.

Pi Alpha Alpha

Pi Alpha Alpha is the Global Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration. The purpose of Pi Alpha Alpha is to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in public affairs and administration. The local chapter sponsors projects to increase communications among currently enrolled MPA students, alumni, faculty and the public service community. Information detailing the organization is available on the NASPAA website (<https://www.naspaa.org/>).

Each fall, the Nominations Committee will select from students who have completed at least 18 hours of coursework in either the MPA or Ph.D. curriculum, who have a GPA of no less than 3.7, and who have an approved Plan of Work. The Committee will select up to 10 students, or the top 30% of the class, whichever is larger.

Students who meet the eligibility qualifications are notified by the department. Students who decide to accept membership pay a one-time membership fee and are expected to take part in a community service project during the academic year. New members are honored at an induction ceremony during the fall semester.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of education. The free exchange of ideas depends on the participants' trust that others' work is their own and that it was done honestly. Intellectual progress in all disciplines demands the truthfulness of all participants. Plagiarism and cheating are attacks on the very foundation of academic life and cannot be tolerated within universities.

For greater clarification, students are strongly encouraged to seek advice from their individual professors, contact the MPA Director or the Office of Student Conduct on campus and read the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

What is Academic Misconduct?

The [Code of Student Conduct](#) does not provide a single, broad definition that encompasses all aspects of academic misconduct. Instead, the Code provides a listing of several behaviors that fall into four basic categories of misconduct:

Cheating

Plagiarism

Artificial Intelligence Departmental Policy

Aiding and Abetting another to Cheat or Plagiarize

Destruction or Removal of Academic Materials

Generally, academic misconduct can be thought of as any behavior that involves the giving, taking or presenting of information by a student that unethically or fraudulently aids the student or another on any work which is to be considered in the determination of a grade or the completion of academic requirements or the enhancement of that student's record or academic

career.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined under the Code of Student Conduct as either (a) representing the work of others as their own; or (b) submitting written materials without proper attribution or acknowledgment of the source.

The free exchange of ideas depends on the participants' trust that they will be given credit for their work. Everyone in an academic community must be responsible for acknowledging when they have used others' words and ideas. Since the intellectual work of others constitutes a kind of property, plagiarism is like theft.

In addition, as a reader you may want to follow other writers' paths of research in order to make your own judgements about their evidence and arguments. In doing so, you will depend on those writers' accuracy and honesty in reporting their sources. In turn, your readers will depend on yours. This is frequently the case with professors as they grade and provide feedback to students on papers. Faculty are more easily able to evaluate and assess the arguments contained in a paper if they are provided an honest and thorough "road map" for where the ideas came from.

When reviewing the definitions of plagiarism in the Code, it is important to consider the following:

Not only does plagiarism include borrowing someone else's direct language, plagiarism can also include using others' ideas, thoughts or actions and representing them in a way that leads others to believe they are your own. An example includes reading someone else's interpretation of a poem and incorporating it into a paper you are writing about the poem, but without acknowledging where you got the idea. In order to avoid plagiarism, you must acknowledge where that specific idea came from (ideally using the style manual required by your instructor – MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.)

Whether a student acted intentionally or "meant" to plagiarize is not a relevant factor that is considered when deciding if the student is actually responsible for this allegation.

Cheating

Cheating is defined by a number of behaviors, all of which tend to provide an unfair advantage to the student involved. The most common behaviors include copying from another assignment or test, collaborating with others on an assignment when the professor has required independent work, using outside resources when completing an assignment or test and falsifying test answers or grades. For a more complete listing of the behaviors involved, please see the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Cheating prevents students from attaining the most important goals of higher education: learning and critical thinking. By cheating to gain answers or a higher grade, students fail to obtain the critical thinking skills necessary to learn future lessons. In addition, they put into practice a habit that will ultimately disadvantage themselves by allowing them to take shortcuts.

More practically, cheating breaks down the trust that exists between teachers and students.

Professors who have been impacted by cheating often report the additional effort they must go through to root out unethical behavior and that cheating behavior affects their willingness to form close bonds with students.

Also, cheating affects other students whose grades in the class are often impacted by the unfair advantage a single student has achieved. Contrary to popular opinion, students care deeply about and look negatively upon cheating behavior.

A few important points to consider when reviewing these definitions in the Code include:

When students submit an assignment to the professor, the student is providing an assurance that the work is the result of the student's own thought and study, produced without assistance and stated in that student's own words, except when quotation marks, references or footnotes acknowledge the use of other sources.

In most cases, whether a student acted intentionally or "meant" to cheat is not relevant when deciding if the student is actually responsible for the allegation.

Artificial Intelligence Departmental Policy

The Artificial Intelligence Departmental Policy can be viewed [here](#):

Aiding and Abetting Others to Cheat or Plagiarize

Aiding and abetting others to cheat or plagiarize is defined by a number of behaviors, all of which tend to unfairly advantage another student. The most common violations include providing portions of an academic evaluation to another student, providing unauthorized aid to another student and sharing academic materials. As with cheating, a student should always consult with the professor prior to aiding another student. In addition, students should never make assumptions about the appropriateness of providing aid to others.

Destruction of Academic Materials

Destruction of academic materials is defined under the Code as either (a) Removing or attempting to remove, destroy, steal, or make inaccessible library or other academic material without authorization; or (b) Willfully damaging the academic work or efforts of another.

Consequences for Violations of Academic Integrity

Students found to be in violation of the expectations of NC State and the MPA program for academic integrity will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. More information here: <https://studentconduct.dasa.ncsu.edu/reporting-an-incident/>

Campus Resources

African American Cultural Center

The African American Cultural Center promotes awareness of and appreciation for African American and other African descent experiences through activities and events that enhance academic excellence and strengthen cultural competence for the campus and surrounding communities. The African American Cultural Center stays actively engaged in the academic life of NC State with programs, resources and services that facilitate the cultural, intellectual and social growth of the entire university community. For more information, see <https://aacc.dasa.ncsu.edu/>

Career Development Center

The Career Development Center is here to help students become standout job candidates by providing a variety of resources: resume reviews, interview preparation and practice, and networking opportunities. For more information, see <https://careers.dasa.ncsu.edu/>.

Counseling Services

The Counseling Center is trained to address academic, emotional, and social concerns that are common to college students and may impact overall well-being. Counseling services available to students include the following counseling types: personal, addictive behaviors, academic, group, career, psychiatric, and veteran services. Any enrolled student who has paid their student fees may visit the Counseling Center at no additional cost. For more information, see <https://counseling.dasa.ncsu.edu/>.

Disability Resources

The Disability Services Office determines eligibility for accommodations for students with disabilities and serves as a resource to faculty (and TAs) in helping them understand their obligation in providing equal access. For more information, see <https://dro.dasa.ncsu.edu/>.

LGBTQ+ PrideCenter

The LGBTQ+ Pride Center serves students of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. The Center strives to increase the NC State campus community's understanding of diversity by working collaboratively to raise awareness, promote respect, and create a culture of equity, inclusion, and social justice. For more information, see <https://pridecenter.dasa.ncsu.edu/>

Graduate Writing Center

The Graduate Writing Center is committed to a peer-centered model of writing support. Peer consultants are trained to provide feedback for writers based on clarity, structure and organization. The goal is to ensure the writer's ideas are communicated clearly and effectively to the intended audience. For more information, see <https://asc.dasa.ncsu.edu/undergraduate-writing-center/graduate-writing-center/>.

Financial Aid

NC State offers several types of financial aid including scholarships, grants, loans and fellowship opportunities. You can use the following sites to navigate the university aid opportunities:

- Graduate Student Funding <https://grad.ncsu.edu/student-funding/fellowships-and-grants/>
- Financial aid homepage: <https://studentservices.ncsu.edu/your-money/financial-aid/>
- Financial aid counselors: <https://emas.ncsu.edu/units/scholarships-and-financial-aid/>

Multicultural Student Affairs

Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) researches, designs and implements unique programs that promote the pursuit of academic success, retention and graduation of students, with an emphasis on African American, Native American, and Hispanic/Latino students. Their programs and services expand students' cultural horizons while honoring their respective cultural experiences. They work to bring academic enhancement opportunities, cultural awareness activities and student leadership development to all students on campus. For more information, see <https://msa.dasa.ncsu.edu/>.

NC State Cares

NC State Cares case managers work collaboratively with campus resources to provide support for students who are in crisis or who are identified as exhibiting concerning or worrisome behaviors. For more information, see <https://prevention.dasa.ncsu.edu/nc-state-cares/about/>.

Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity

The Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity (OIED) is committed to fostering an inclusive, accessible, and diverse intellectual and cultural campus experience. OIED offers a number of trainings and workshops that promote diversity and inclusion. For more information, see <https://equalopportunity.ncsu.edu/>.

Office of International Services

The Office of International Services (OIS) assists future and current international students on campus. Along with hosting the International Student Orientation, OIS provides international students with information and guidance as they transition to NC State. For more information, see <https://internationalservices.ncsu.edu/>.

Pack Essentials

Pack Essentials provides assistance to students experiencing food and housing insecurity at NC State. Basic need resources available for NC State students include: food, housing, financial, education, and more. For more information, see <https://dasa.ncsu.edu/support-and-advocacy/pack-essentials/>.

Student Health Services

Student Health Services is designed to meet the health needs of NC State students. As a part of tuition and fees, the health fee covers routine visits to providers (physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners). Services with a charge are offered at prices competitive with the community. For more information, see <https://healthypack.dasa.ncsu.edu/>.

Transportation

Parking permits are required for campus parking between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. You can find information on the types of parking available, the Wolfline bus system (free), and alternative means of transportation here: <https://transportation.ncsu.edu/>. Students can also purchase a [GoPass](#) bus pass for \$5 annually, which allows them to ride any city (GoRaleigh) and regional (GoTriangle, GoCary, and GoDurham) buses.

University Recreation

University Recreation (URec) works to inspire a culture of wellness by providing quality, innovative, and inclusive collegiate recreation programs, services, and facilities. Access to URec facilities is available with a Wolfpack ONE card to students who paid their student fees. Graduate students are also able to participate in league sports. For more information, see <https://wellrec.dasa.ncsu.edu/>.

Veteran Affairs

NC State Veterans Education Benefits supports student veterans and veterans' dependents in applying for and managing their VA Education Benefits and GI Bill. For more information, see <https://veterans.ncsu.edu/>

WolfAlert Emergency Notifications

The university uses its homepage for alerts, but active students are also eligible to receive WolfAlert text messages in case of emergencies or adverse weather conditions. These messages allow for direct notifications to campus though there may be delays before they are received by individual devices. To sign up to receive these messages, see <https://www.ncsu.edu/emergency-information/textsignup>.

Wolfpack Clothing Closet

The Wolfpack Styled Professional Clothing Closet is operated by the NC State Career Development Center and provides students with the professional clothing needed for an interview, a career fair, a conference, or for the first week of work. The attire is generously donated by faculty, staff, alumni, and employers to help students succeed. For more information, see <https://careers.dasa.ncsu.edu/about/wolfpack-styled-professional-clothing-closet/>.

Women's Center

The mission of the Women's Center is to build and create a community of authentic and engaged allies and leaders to pursue gender equity and social justice; enhancing the campus climate through education, advocacy, support and leadership development. For more information, see <https://womenscenter.dasa.ncsu.edu/>.

Course Descriptions

Core Requirements

PA 510: Public Administration Institutions and Values

Exploration of the critical roles public administration plays in the American constitutional system of government with emphasis on public institutions, policy making and implementation, intergovernmental and intersectoral relations, public service values, administrative discretion, and ethical responsibilities and decision-making.

PA 511: Public Policy Analysis

Methods and techniques of analyzing, developing and evaluating public policies and programs. Emphasis given to benefit-cost and cost-effectiveness analysis and concepts of economic efficiency, equity and distribution. Methods include problem solving, decision making and case studies. Examples used in human resource, environmental and regulatory policy.

PA 512: The Budgetary Process

Examination of generalized budgetary process used at all levels of government in the U. S. Understanding of the process based upon comprehension of institutions involved, roles of politicians and professionals and the objectives of budgetary systems. Focus also upon budgetary reforms and on Planning-Programming-Budgetary and Zero-Based Budgeting as management tools.

PA 513: Public Organization Behavior

Major conceptual frameworks developed to understand organization behavior. Motivation, leadership, group dynamics, communication, socio-technical systems, work design and organizational learning. Application of theories and concepts to public sector organizations.

PA 514: Management Systems

Use of management systems by public and nonprofit organizations to monitor and manage their programs. Results-based management approaches, including strategic planning, goal setting, and output/outcome measurement. Ways of increasing managerial effectiveness through the use of structural changes, process improvements, project planning tools, performance-based budget systems, and individual and group rewards.

PA 515: Research Methods and Analysis

A focus on behavioral approach to study of political and administrative behavior. Topics including philosophy of social science; experimental, quasi and non-experimental research design; data collection techniques; basic statistical analysis with computer applications.

PA 516: Effective Communications for Public Administrators

Focus on professional written and oral skills and the applications needed by public and nonprofit administrators. This includes drafting, editing, and presenting factual and persuasive materials. Use of visual aids, handling question and answer sessions, dealing with media, and holding effective meetings. Composing memos, position papers, and press releases. The course develops competency to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

PA 517: MPA Capstone

Students will demonstrate their achievement of core competencies developed through their MPA course of study. The course will include three key components: [1] Academic Portfolio; [2] Capstone Project; and [3] Reflection Essay. Students will develop a professional academic portfolio in which they identify activities and assignments from their course of study that demonstrate their attainment of the program's expected learning outcomes. Students will complete a hands-on, supervised course project focusing on a major public service problem or issue and that demonstrates practical application of core competencies. Students will prepare a reflection essay of what they learned in the MPA program during their preparation for a public service career.

Electives:

Additional electives can be found in the [course catalog](#).

PA 507: The Public Policy Process

Application of current theories of the public policy process to current issues in public policy and management. Emphasis on the dominant theories of the process, including policy streams, advocacy coalitions, punctuated equilibrium, institutional and rational choice models.

PA 509: Applied Political Economy

Principles governing the interaction of politics and markets, and their application to public policy and public administration. Economic and political market failure, dilemmas of public choice and effects of political institutions. Case studies of public policy-making.

PA 520: Seminar in Urban Management

A seminar focusing on analytical techniques and managerial principles required for policy formulation and implementation in a complex urban governmental environment. Specific topics include urban planning and community development, housing, intergovernmental relations, organizational roles and decision making, budgeting and selected urban services [for example: police, transportation].

PA 523: Municipal Law

A focus on the legal nature of cities as municipal corporations and the legal context in which local governments operate. Specific topics covered including incorporation, ethics, public access to meetings and records, annexation, land use, development, planning, liability, financing, contracting, and personnel actions.

PA 531: Human Resource Management in Public and Nonprofit Organizations

Analysis of major Human Resource practices used by public and nonprofit organizations. Techniques examined include organization [strategy, job analysis, job evaluation, and

compensation], staffing [recruitment, retention, testing, and hiring], performance management [appraisal and training & development], and employee relations [grievance & discipline mediation & negotiation, and labor relations].

PA 532: Contract Negotiation and Mediation in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors

Three interrelated leadership skills - negotiation, contracting, and mediation-essential for achieving organizational success. Skills for negotiating with partners, for facilitation among colleagues, for crafting and monitoring contracts for equipment, services, or performance, and for using alternate dispute resolution techniques, primarily mediation.

PA 536: Management of Nonprofit Organizations

Strategies for developing board leadership, staffing, and managing volunteers, working in multi-cultural environments, developing partnerships with other organizations, conducting government relations. Legal requirements and constraint on nonprofits: incorporation, lobbying, and tax policies.

PA 539: Fund Development

Identifies and assesses techniques and best practices of fund development, annual giving, capital campaigns, endowments. Topics include setting achievable goals, organizing and staffing a fund development campaign, and identifying donors. Discusses links between fund development and organization mission and governance, ethical issues, and government regulations.

PA 540: Grant Writing for Public Administrators

Survey of funding environment; how to identify foundations, corporation and government funding sources; write proposals, and evaluate proposals.

PA 541: Geographic Information Systems for Public Administration

Introduction to management of spatial data in relation to public administration databases, including preparation of maps, tables, and data graphics related to geographic information systems in the public sector. Use of ArcView and a variety of other GIS computer applications.

PA 546: Seminar in Program Evaluation

Combination of seminar and field research techniques to study evaluation of public programs. Focus on political and administrative problems associated with program evaluation. Examination of availability and appropriateness of various quantitative methodologies. Seminar concepts applied through evaluative projects conducted for public agencies.

PA 550: Environmental Policy

Focus on formation and impact of environmental policy in the U. S. Examination on decision-making processes at all levels of government. Comparisons between political, economic, social and technological policy alternatives. Emphasis upon application of policy analysis in environmental assessment and consideration of theoretical perspectives on the nature of the environmental crisis.

PA 580: Independent Study

Independent research or readings by graduate students under direct supervision of individual faculty members. Students' work is evaluated, based on reports, papers and exams.

PA 598: Special Topics in Public Administration

Detailed investigation of contemporary topics in fields of public administration. Topic and mode of study determined by program faculty.

PA 635: Readings and Research

To enable graduate students to pursue a subject of particular interest to them by doing extensive readings or research in that subject under direct, individual faculty supervision.

PA 650: Internship in Public Affairs

Exposure of the student to the environment and value systems of the public organization through a supervised work experience. Involving application of substantive knowledge and analytical skills to organizational problems. Credit will vary with the nature of the work experience.

PA 651: Advanced Practical Training

Substantive knowledge and analytical skills applied to projects under agency supervision. Participation in monthly on-campus meetings. Credit will not be given for placements in current or previous work units. Credit will not be given for both PA 650 and PA 651. Credit will vary with the number of work hours. Must have MPA, current or previous professional work experience.