

Public Administration, M.P.A.

DEPARTMENT

MN in Political Science, Minor
BA in Political Science, B.A.
MN in Public Administration, Minor
MPA in Public Administration, M.P.A. - Continuing & Global Education
MPA in Public Administration, M.P.A.

REQUIREMENTS

Department

Master of Public Administration Program

Kurt Cline, Graduate Advisor

The M.P.A. Program builds on the belief that effective leadership of public agencies requires a basic set of abilities and public values irrespective of the particular characteristics of an organization. Courses in the program focus on the development of critical thinking and analytical skills, as well as an appreciation for ethical decision making.

All students in the program complete a core program of 21 units within the 36 units required for the M.P.A. In consultation with their advisers, students will select the remaining units from graduate public administration courses and courses offered by other departments and programs. These units can be used to further develop a general competence in public administration or to provide students with an opportunity to pursue additional topics of interest. The M.P.A. student can meet the university Graduate Writing Requirement by passing the writing component of the course MPA 210. Please see program director for the written policy. To finish the program students may elect to write a thesis or to take a comprehensive examination.

The curriculum of the program follows the guidelines established by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and was designed following consultation with senior public administrators in the Fresno area. Consistent with the NASPAA guidelines, the program seeks to prepare administrative specialists who understand the place and role of public agencies and their staffs in the political, social, and economic systems of the United States; who have the analytic tools, both quantitative and qualitative, to diagnose problems and analyze alternative courses of public action; who have the leadership abilities to develop and make effective use of the talents and abilities of agency staffs; who have the abilities required to formulate, implement, and evaluate public policies which are responsible and effective; and who are able to manage an agency in such a way as to make responsible and effective use of its resources now and in the future.

Master of Public Administration

Degree Requirements

Core (18 units)

MPA 200, 201, 210, 230, 245, 260

Additional core (3 units)

MPA 215, 240, 250, or 280T

Approved electives (3-15 units)

Practitioner's Seminars (0-6 units)

MPA 289T

Internship (0-3 units)

MPA 287

Comprehensive examination (0 units)

Thesis (0-3 units)

MPA 299

Minimum Total (36 units)

All students will be required to take 21 core units; 18 of these core units are prescribed for students. The remaining 3 core units must be selected from the courses listed under the "Additional Core" heading. Students may take more than one course listed under the "Additional Core" heading. If they do, these courses will count towards meeting their "Approved Electives" requirement. MPA students may also choose to take units offered as Practitioner Seminars (MPA 289T). Pre-service or in-service students with less than six months of experience in the public or non-profit sector will be advised to take MPA 287. This will provide them with both a valuable learning and working experience. To culminate their MPA experience, students may choose either the comprehensive exam or thesis. The comprehensive exam does not count for any units towards the degree, but does satisfy the requirement that students be provided with a culminating experience to their program. The thesis (MPA 299) is worth 3 units toward the degree and also satisfies the culminating experience requirement.

Approved elective courses may be used to build on the foundation of the program's core offerings. The courses to be used as electives in the MPA program are to be chosen in consultation with the student's advisor and must be approved by the MPA director. The students' selection of electives should be guided by their interest in a particular course/topic and its relationship to the practice of public administration.

Admission. Applicants may qualify for admission to the program and thereby take program courses by achieving classified graduate standing. Classified standing requires:

1. An acceptable baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association;
2. Good standing at the last college attended;
3. Submission to the university of transcripts of college work; scores from the Graduate Record Examination Aptitude Test (GRE) or the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT); a written statement indicating why the applicant wishes to pursue an M.P.A.; and, if any, evidence of work performance in a public or nonprofit agency (see 4d below); and
4. Recommendation for admission by the Admissions Committee of the Graduate Public Administration Program. Candidates will be recommended on the basis of the promise they show for successfully completing the program and achieving a successful career in public management and administration. Candidates will be evaluated using a combination of: (a) grade point average (those with averages of less than 2.75 overall or 3.0 on the last 60 semester units attempted must have compensating strength in other areas); (b) aptitude for academic work (those with scores of less than 475 on either part of the GRE or on the GMAT must have compensating strength in other areas); (c) professional goals of the applicant; (d) successful performance in public or nonprofit agency employment as demonstrated by the character of work accomplished, distinctions achieved, and letters of recommendation from persons who can knowingly and comparatively evaluate the on-the-job performance of the candidate over a period of time (this basis for evaluation may be waived for candidates showing great strength in (a) or (b) above). Applicants whose native language is not English must also achieve a minimum score of 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language.

FACULTY

Our full-time faculty are experts in their fields and hold doctoral degrees and/or law degrees. Prolific researchers, they have published numerous articles and books, and often bring to their courses prior practical experience from their work in government, the private sector, and nonprofit organizations.

Courses typically provide a mixture of lecture and class discussion and encourage the expression of a variety of viewpoints. Our faculty are dedicated to working closely with students to engage them in learning about politics and advise them throughout their college careers.

For faculty phone numbers and e-mail, see the campus directory.

For more on the faculty, see the faculty pages.

The faculty pages are updated by the department or program.