Public Administration

Departmental goals and objectives

The School of Public Management and Policy recognizes the growth and complexity of public problems. We are committed to inspiring a new generation of public service professionals through cutting-edge scholarship and training. We equip our students with the knowledge and skills to lead and to advocate for change.

The MPA degree offers professional graduate education accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) both on campus and online. Doctoral studies through the Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) are also available and targets experienced professionals looking to bridge the worlds of scholarship and practice. A practitioner-oriented program, the DPA seeks to educate social sector leaders in public management and public policy.

MPA curricular requirements are designed to impart knowledge and skills essential to meet pressing public problems and to succeed in professional and administrative employment in public and nonprofit sectors. The knowledge and abilities address understanding of legal, political, and managerial processes, organizational structures, the context of public and nonprofit organizations, the development of leadership capabilities, and knowledge of governmental and nonprofit sectors.

Students may elect to pursue a graduate certificate along with their MPA degree. Options include the Graduate Certificate in Management of Nonprofit Organizations, the Graduate Certificate in Community Planning, the Graduate Certificate in Public Procurement Management, or the Professional Certificate in Child Advocacy Studies (CAST). UIS CAST courses are certified by the National Child Protection Training Center and lead to professional certification through the Center.

In addition to the MPA degree, the UIS Public Administration Department and the UIS Public Health Department have established a joint degree, MPA/MPH.

Students entering our degree programs without significant professional work experience in the public or private sector are encouraged to undertake internships as part of their program of study through the UIS Graduate Public Service Internship (GPSI) Program, the Illinois Legislative Staff Internship Program (ILSIP), or departmental internship programs.

The Master's Degree

Advising

Students will be assigned an advisor upon admission to the program and may request an advisor of their choice among faculty of the School of Public Management and Policy.

Grading Policy

Public Administration students may apply up to six credit hours of C work toward the MPA Degree (grades of C- or lower will not be accepted). A maximum of six hours of C (2.0) grades is applicable to the degree (grades of C- or lower are not accepted), provided that a minimum GPA of 3.0 is reached at the time of graduation and a Student Petition is on file in the Office of Records and Registration. All course work applied toward the MPA under this arrangement must be earned at the University of Illinois Springfield while the student is enrolled in a graduate degree at UIS.

Students also should refer to the campus policy on the Grades Acceptable Toward Master's Degrees section of this catalog.

Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the MPA degree program will be able to understand and demonstrate knowledge and skills in the following competencies:

1. Lead and manage in public governance.

   a. Communicate in a clear and concise manner.

   b. Apply relevant theories, knowledge, and skills to manage resources and programs effectively.

2. Participate in and contribute to the public policy process.

   a. Describe the public policy process and the role of the various participants and stakeholders.

   b. Identify problems, frame the issues, and identify and evaluate alternatives for addressing a problem.

3. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions.

   a. Demonstrate the ability to collect, analyze, and interpret data for use in decision-making, and drawing conclusions.

   b. Critically read and apply findings from studies and reports.

4. Articulate and apply a public service perspective.

   a. Articulate the importance of and operate in a manner that facilitates democracy, equity, transparency, efficiency, and ethics.

5. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

   a. Demonstrate a sensitivity to and respect for differences in culture.

Writing Competence

Faculty may identify writing deficiencies during courses and refer students to the Learning Hub.

Students pursuing the MPA typically follow one of two advanced professional development patterns. One pattern involves course work chosen from PAD offerings, often including personnel, budgeting, policy analysis/program evaluation, or organizational change/ development. The second pattern consists of completing advanced course work in PAD offerings in conjunction with course work offered by other UIS academic departments, such as legal studies (administrative law), management information systems, environmental studies, accounting (public financial management), or human services (social services).

Requirements

The 36-hour curriculum of the MPA degree requires the following courses.

Core Courses

PAD 501	Introduction to the Profession	3
PAD 502	Organization Dynamics	3
PAD 503	Analytical Tools	3
PAD 504	Budget And Finance	3
PAD 505	Human Resource Management	3
PAD 506	Public Policy for Managers (Public Policy for Managers)	3
PAD 507	Information for Decision Making (Information Decision Making)	3

Elective Courses [1]

At least six hours of elective courses must be selected from Public Administration (PAD) courses. Any combination of PAD 400- or 500-level courses may count toward the MPA degree. Only one 400-level elective from a program outside the Department of Public Administration may be counted toward the MPA	12

Masters Closure

PAD 571	Capstone Seminar	3
PAD 572	Capstone Seminar Continuing Enrollment	0
Total Hours		**36**

[1] Courses that essentially duplicate or cover prerequisite-level material, even though such courses may be offered by other programs at the 500-level or higher, do not count. A total of four hours of internship credits are creditable toward the MPA and are considered inside elective credits.

Master's Closure

MPA degree candidates are expected to fulfill the campus closure requirements by earning a grade of B- or better in PAD 571. PAD 571 is open only to MPA majors who have completed core degree courses. The MPA faculty strongly recommends that majors enroll in the Capstone Seminar after completing PAD 501 through PAD 507; however, majors may enroll in the Capstone Seminar while simultaneously completing their final core course. Generally, the capstone course is taken in the last semester of study.

Campus policy requires that PAD majors, who enroll in PAD 571 but who do not complete the course in one semester, must enroll in PAD 572 (zero credit hours, one billable hour), each fall and spring semester until the course work is completed.

Graduate Certificates

- Graduate Certificate in Community Planning
- Graduate Certificate in Management of Nonprofit Organizations
- Graduate Certificate in Public Procurement Management
- Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Labor Relations

Doctoral

The Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) program is specifically designed to meet the educational needs of experienced practitioners in administrative and governmental positions at the state and local levels and in the nonprofit community. Bridging the worlds of scholarship and practice, the DPA equips students with the advanced analytical skills and knowledge of public management and public policy necessary to lead impactful organizations and solve complex problems.

The DPA Program requires students to complete core and elective course work, a qualifying exam, and a dissertation. As a part-time program, the length of time to complete the DPA Program may vary based on the amount of time available for academic study. The program has, however, developed a series of benchmarks supporting a 4-year time-to-degree from which students can work with their advisors to build a personalized timeline.

Advising

A doctoral program faculty advisor will be assigned when a student is admitted to the DPA program. The advisor will assist the student in creating a formal plan of study. Students may switch advisors to ensure the best match as their research interests develop or evolve.

Each student must complete at least 40 hours of course work plus 12 hours of dissertation credit. Students may submit a Student Petition for up to 12 hours of transfer credit for post-master's graduate work deemed appropriate for the DPA.

Examination

After completing PAD 651, PAD 652, PAD 653, PAD 654, PAD 655 ,and PAD 656, the student will be required to complete a qualifying exam to demonstrate competence in the required core fields. The exam contains both oral and written components, and each student's exam will be conducted and evaluated by a committee of faculty members, which includes core teaching faculty. Students who have not passed the qualifying exam after two attempts will not be allowed to progress toward their degree, and future enrollment will not be permitted.

Leave of Absence

If a student cannot maintain reasonable progress toward completing the doctoral degree, the student may request a leave of absence from the program by completing a Student Petition requesting such leave and submitting it to the student's advisor and the director of the DPA program for approval. A leave of absence may be granted up to one semester. At the end of the leave of absence, the student may apply for additional leave. If a leave of absence is not approved, there is

no guarantee that the student will be able to progress because of the cohort nature of the program.

Program Learning Outcomes

Students who complete the DPA Program should be able to:

1. Evaluate and integrate the theoretical literature and methodological approaches from a range of public affairs disciplines, thereby establishing a repertoire of new problem-solving skills and analytical strategies.

2. Apply their new problem-solving skills and analytic strategies to understand and appropriately address complex problems in public management and public policy.

3. Assess and critique the analytic techniques and conclusions of scholarly articles and practitioner communications.

4. Prepare and produce high-quality, independent research that systematically analyzes real-world phenomena resulting in a meaningful contribution to practice.

Reasonable Progress Standard

Students must maintain reasonable progress toward the completion of the doctoral degree. The DPA program defines reasonable progress as follows:

- Completing all core course work within five semesters (fall and spring) once a student begins the program,

- Completing the dissertation proposal within two semesters of passing the qualifying exams and completing all course work.

- Enrolling in and receiving credit for a minimum of one dissertation credit (PAD 690) each fall and spring semester until the dissertation is completed, defended, and accepted for at least 12 hours.

Requirements

Core Courses

PAD 651	Leading Social Sector Change and Innovation	4
PAD 652	Public Management Seminar: Connecting Practice and Theory	4
PAD 653	Public Policy Seminar	4
PAD 654	Research Design	4
PAD 655	Qualitative Research Methods	4
PAD 656	Quantitative Research Methods	4
Electives		
Students must complete 13 hours of elective course work as outlined below		
Advanced Content Area: Choose 1 [1]		**4**
PAD 657	Advanced Public Management Seminar	
PAD 658	Advanced Public Policy Seminar	
Advanced Method: Choose 1 [2]		**3**
PAD 507	Information for Decision Making	
PAD 525	Informatics for Public Policy	
PAD 526	Advanced Analytical Tools: Forecasting, Time Series Analysis, and Predictive Analytics	
ENS 404	Fundamentals of Geographic Information Systems	
Topical Electives [3]		**6**
Students must complete 6 hours of elective course work at the 500-level or above approved by the doctoral program faculty.		
Dissertation		
PAD 659	Dissertation Proposal Seminar	3
PAD 690	Dissertation	12
Total Hours		**52**

[1] Students may take a second advanced content course for topical elective credit.

[2] Students may take another 500-level methods course or higher with the approval of their advisor.

[3] Students may take up to 3-credit hours of electives as an independent study under the direction of a DPA faculty member.

Since the program admits students in cohorts, the core courses are offered once per cohort and will not repeat until the entire cycle has been completed.

Closure Exercise: Dissertation Work

A Doctoral degree will be awarded to students who have satisfactorily completed all dissertation closure requirements, as prescribed by the student's academic program.

Entry into closure will occur after the student has passed qualifying exams, completed all course work, and complied with any other programmatic requirements, thereby permitting the student to enter the proposal and dissertation phases of study. Students must be continuously enrolled from this point forward. Generally, this is accomplished by enrolling in the Proposal Writing Seminar (PAD 659) followed by dissertation hours (PAD 690). If a student is unable to maintain continuous enrollment, he or she may apply for a leave of absence. If a leave of absence is granted for particular semester, the student will be exempt from this requirement for that semester. Failure to obtain a leave of absence will, in most cases, require retroactive registration in at least one dissertation credit hour for each semester in which the student was out of compliance.

For more information on the doctoral closure guidelines, please refer to the Doctoral Closure Guidelines in this catalog's Academic Information for Doctoral Students section.

Joint Degrees

- MPA/MPH Joint Degree

Online

The online degree allows students to participate in dynamic, diverse, and interactive online learning communities and to complete their degrees via the Internet. The online format enables students to obtain course work using the latest networked information technologies for increased access to educational resources, advisors, and materials with no on-campus visits required. The 36-hour MPA online degree follows the same curriculum as the on-campus degree, with a few exceptions. The Graduate Certificate in Management of Nonprofit

Organizations and the Graduate Certificate in Community Planning are offered online. In addition, the joint degree in MPA/MPH is available online. Electives may vary.

- Public Administration (p. 1)

- Public Administration Doctoral (p. 2)

- Public Administration/Public Health (MPA/MPH) Joint Degree
- Graduate Certificate in Community Planning
- Graduate Certificate in Management of Nonprofit Organizations
- Graduate Certificate in Public Procurement Management