

## Master of Public Administration

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program is intended for those with career interests in public management, health and human services, government, and other public service and nonprofit organizations. The curriculum blends theoretical and applied concepts and assures “real-world” experiences for the novice administrator. In addition, it requires that students devote attention to general professional development. The MPA program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration.

Students may begin the program in any semester. Three courses (or 9 credits) per semester are considered a normal course load for full-time students. Part-time students typically take one or two 3-credit courses each semester and one or two courses during the summer session to maintain steady progress toward the degree.



### Contact

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*Professor-in-Charge*

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Content reviewed and approved Friday Oct. 13, 2023 16:08:58 pm



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Harrisburg

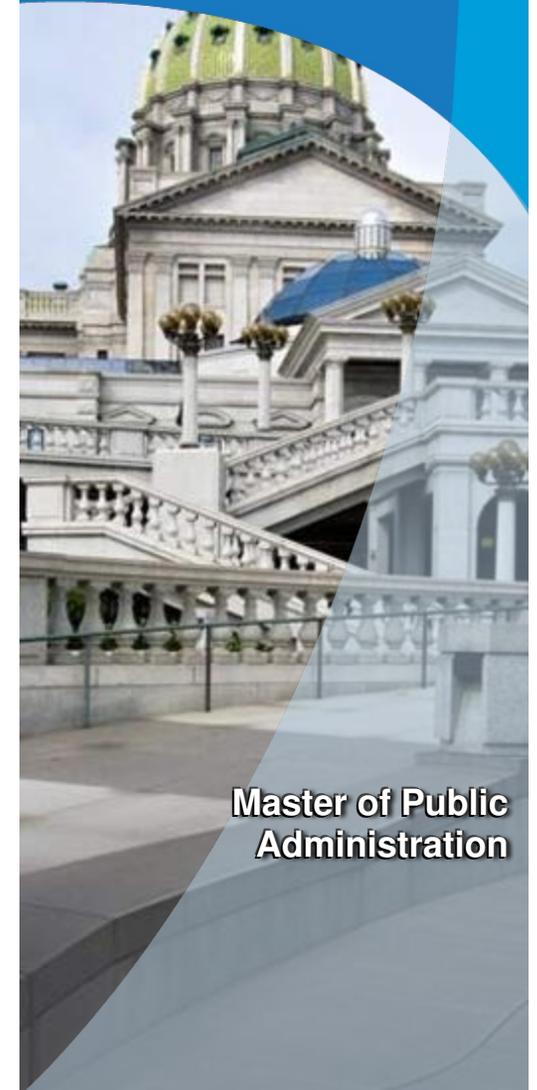
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**PennState**  
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**School of Public Affairs**



**Master of Public  
Administration**

## Curriculum

The MPA degree program requires 36 graduate credits (3 credits per course): 21 in core courses, 12 in electives and 3 for a capstone course. Up to 6 credits of 400-level courses may be taken as electives, with the approval of an advisor. In addition, a 3 credit 150 hour internship is required of students who do not have at least two years of full-time relevant work experience, which consists of supervisory, managerial or professional work. The internship is waived for students with this experience before they enter the program or who gain it by working full-time during their enrollment in the program. If this occurs, students must apply for the waiver.

## Transfer Credits and Course Substitutions

A student can transfer up to 15 nondegree PADM credits and up to 10 credits from an external institution. Students should read the [Graduate School Policy GCAC-309 on Credit Transfer](#) before submitting request. Credit Transfer request (rationale on why this request satisfies the Policy GCAC-309, transcripts, and corresponding course syllabi) should be submitted to the Administrative Support Assistant, the student's academic advisor, and the Professor-in-Charge. Approval to any credits transfer toward the MPA degree must be granted by the student's academic adviser, the Professor-in-Charge, and the Graduate School.

## Grade-Point Average and Time Limit

The program, including an internship in a public agency or nonprofit organization, requires 18 to 24 months of full-time study, or three to five years on a part-time basis. Students must have a 3.00 grade-point average to graduate. All course work and requirements must be completed within an five-year period from the time of first enrollment in the program.

## Courses Overview

### Core Courses (21 credits)

The MPA program prepares students with fundamental foundations in public management and policy analysis to empower their knowledge and skills into action across the public, nonprofit, and private sectors. The range of the core courses is balanced in the areas of managing organizations, making evidence-informed decisions, analyzing policy, and applying analytical methods to understand the dynamics of economic, organizational, political, and societal environments. A two-course sequence, PADM 503 and PADM 504, introduces research design and data analysis. Students learn how to interpret research as public managers and use evidence to make data-informed decisions. The capstone course, PADM 594, offers students the opportunity to demonstrate competencies in problem identification, problem solving, professional writing, oral presentation, group research, and presentation skills.

As the students customize their focus areas based on their interests, elective course selections include human resources, nonprofit management, policy analytics and evaluation, public budgeting and financial management, and state-local government and administration. Students interested in the focus areas of health administration, leadership, homeland security, and criminal justice should consult with their academic advisor to personalize their electives. Electives are also aligned with the four MPA certificate programs.

Students who do not have two years of relevant professional or managerial experience in public and nonprofit organizations are offered career development opportunities through internships for course credit.

## Program Requirements for Admission

Requirements	More Information
GPA	a successful undergraduate record with a GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (either as the cumulative GPA or for the last 60 hours of relevant course work)
Supporting Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ a statement of career and educational goals</li><li>✓ all applicants to provide recommendations from three references</li><li>✓ a resume</li><li>✓ satisfactory scores on the <a href="#">Graduate Record Examination (GRE)</a>, <a href="#">Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT)</a>, or <a href="#">Law School Admission Test (LSAT)</a> are required if the GPA is less than 3.0</li></ul>

## Application Deadline

This program has rolling admission, that is, no specific deadline. Note that it may take 4-6 weeks to receive transcripts and process an application.