

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, M.P.A.

The Master of Public Administration degree program strives to provide a broadly focused professional degree in the essential management and analytical elements of public administration and public policy analysis. The program attracts a sizable number of both pre-career and mid-career students with a variety of academic and professional backgrounds. Moreover, the program draws students who want to pursue a diverse range of professional careers in both the public and nonprofit sectors, as well as those who are interested in finding employment at the local level, in state agencies, in federal regional offices, and in Washington, D.C. The program gives students the requisite skills and knowledge to become more intelligent consumers of policy issues and more capable actors in their chosen professional careers.

Learning Outcomes

- Master of Public Administration graduates will be able to lead and manage in public governance.
- Master of Public Administration graduates will be able to participate in and contribute to the policy process.
- Master of Public Administration graduates will be able to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.
- Master of Public Administration graduates will be able to articulate and apply a public service perspective.
- Master of Public Administration graduates will be able to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

Applicants to the M.P.A. program are expected to have combined GRE verbal and quantitative scores of 300, an undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.00, and a TOEFL score of 600 (computer score of 250) or a comparable score on the IELTS Intl. Academic Course Type 2 exam, if applicable.

Applicants that meet all other requirements with five years or more of exemplary professional, managerial experience, as evidenced by letters of recommendation, may be granted a GRE exception at the discretion of the MPA admissions committee.

The M.P.A. program admits new students for the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Prospective students are encouraged to submit their applications early. This will enable the M.P.A. Admissions Committee and the UofSC Graduate School to process all materials in a timely fashion so that students can be considered for admittance during the requested academic terms. The deadlines for completed applicant files to be received at UofSC are:

- May 1: Admittance for the summer semester
- July 1: Admittance for the fall semester
- December 1: Admittance for the spring semester

For more detailed information on the M.P.A. program, visit <http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/poli/welcome-mpa-program-usc/> (<http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/poli/welcome-mpa-program-usc/>)

Degree Requirements (39 Hours)

The M.P.A. degree requires 39-48 semester hours of credit, depending on the prior preparation of the student. The program curriculum can be broken down into five components.

Prerequisites

Students must possess a basic proficiency in statistics and a basic understanding of American government. Students who lack such skills/expertise are required to take prerequisite courses in one or both of these areas, preferably at the beginning of their program of study.

Core Courses

All students must take classes in organizational theory and practice, human resource management, public finance, public policy-making, public data analysis, and public ethics and accountability. Taken together, these courses give students a comprehensive overview of the major elements of public administration and public policy-making.

Electives

All students must take a set of elective courses that will further their knowledge of, and administrative competency in, a particular area. The electives must constitute a coherent set of courses. But this component of the curriculum is left flexible so that students can pursue more specialized interests in a variety of relevant fields of study.

Internship

An internship in a public organization or nonprofit agency is required of all students who lack significant administrative experience. The internship is an integral part of the curriculum, as it gives students an opportunity to experience the real world of public service.

Capstone Seminar

The capstone seminar is taken by all students, preferably during their last semester in the program. In the capstone seminar, students complete a project in which they integrate the material from other M.P.A. courses in their analyses of contemporary public problems. The M.P.A. program participates in two dual-degree programs with other academic units at the University of South Carolina, and two joint degree programs with other institutions in the state.

Information on dual degree opportunities can be found at Graduate Dual Degree Programs (<https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/graduate/dual-degree-programs/>).

Concentration

Students have the option of declaring a concentration in Emergency Management and Planning. Courses taken as part of the concentration count toward program elective requirements.

Emergency Management and Planning Concentration Requirements (9 Hours)

Course	Title	Credits
GEOG 530	Environmental Hazards	3
GEOG 535	Hazards Analysis and Planning	3
GEOG 563	Advanced Geographic Information Systems	3
Total Credit Hours		9

Dual Degrees

The M.P.A. program participates in three dual-degree programs with other academic units at the University of South Carolina, and two joint degree programs with other institutions in the state.

- Health Services Policy and Management/Public Administration, M.P.H./M.P.A
- Public Administration/Social Work, M.P.A./M.S.W
- Public Administration/Law, M.P.A./J.D.