

Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Program Guide

PennState
Harrisburg
School of Public Affairs

Welcome

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I welcome you to the MPA program in the School of Public Affairs at the Pennsylvania State University Harrisburg.

Our MPA program prepares students with the 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, madding evidence-informed decisions, analyzing policy, and applying analytical methods to understand the dynamics of economic, organizational, political, and societal environments. As the students customize their focus areas based on their particular interests, the elective course selections are focused on 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.

This program guide provides an overview of the program requirements, policies, and other necessary information for the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree. This program guide intends to describe how the MPA program assists you in success in your academic journey and professional public service. The program objectives clearly state the program expectations from you and your opportunities from us.

This program guide has the most up-to-date information, and you can also find newly updated information on our website. As the MPA program offers two modes of delivery, detailed general information on graduate education is available: for the residential mode delivered through Penn State Harrisburg, visit the Student Activities Office at SEC for the Student Handbook, and for the online mode delivered through Penn State World Campus, visit the student recourses and orientation for new students.

The faculty and staff in the Master of Public Administration Program are pleased to support your educational goals to make your experience rewarding and challenging through graduate education. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,
Michele Tantardini, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Professor-in-Charge of the Master of Public Administration

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1. Introduction

1.1 About the School of Public Affairs

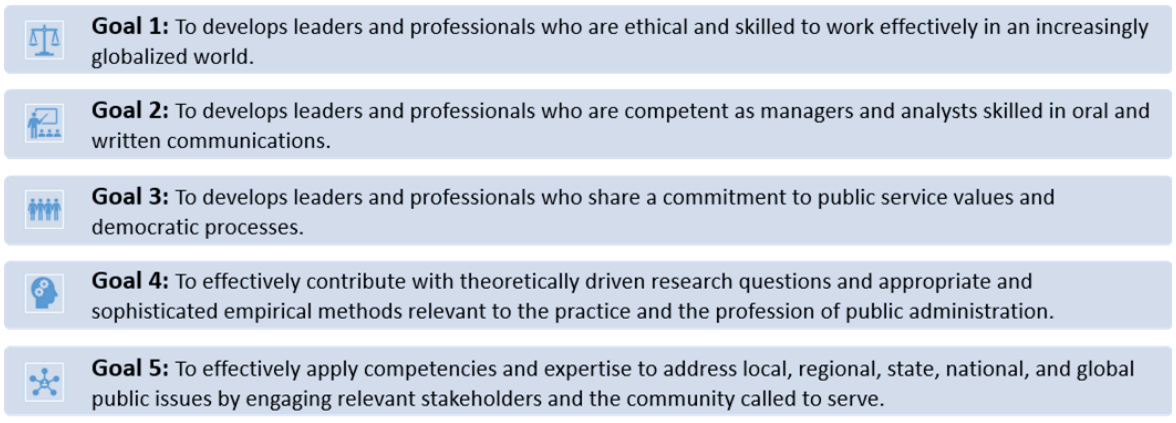
The School of Public Affairs (SPA) at Penn State Harrisburg is a comprehensive unit. We offer programs ranging from bachelor's degrees in criminal justice (also offered online), political science, and public policy, to master's degrees in public administration (also offered online), homeland security, and criminal justice, to a Ph.D. in public administration. We also offer the base program in a multi-college online program, a Master of Professional Studies in Homeland Security, and an online graduate certificate in homeland security and defense. The school also offers several post-baccalaureate certificate programs, in policy analysis and evaluation, non-profit management, public sector human resource management, and public budgeting and financial management, as well as an online undergraduate minor in homeland security

The **Master's Program in Public Administration** is nationally ranked in the U.S. It is the sole program in public administration for Penn State, one of the largest and most widely recognized institutions in the nation. Our students work and study side-by-side with nationally respected faculty and in productive internship opportunities. Residential instruction offers proximity to the state capital and the region's hub of business and commerce; online instruction allows students from around the nation and the world to build a vibrant learning community.

1.2 MPA Mission

Mission: The Penn State Harrisburg Master of Public Administration program seeks to advance the knowledge and skills necessary to manage and lead organizations engaged in public service in democratic and diverse societies.

Goals:



1.3 About the MPA Program

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program is a NASPAA accredited program, that is intended for those persons with public service career interests in public management, public policy, and nonprofit fields. The curriculum blends theoretical and applied concepts with real-world experiences.

An important goal of the MPA program is to assist students in developing their abilities to understand, analyze, and control their organizational environments to manage more effectively and to promote positive change in the public and nonprofit sectors. Courses are offered in residence via Penn State Harrisburg and online via Penn State World Campus. Students have the option of taking elective courses in the following focus areas: government administration, human resources management, policy analysis and evaluation, nonprofit organization management and policy, public budgeting and financial management, State-local government and administration.

MPA program also offer 4 graduate certificates offered through residential and online platforms:

- Policy Analytics and Evaluation (offered residentially and online through Harrisburg Campus)
- Public Budgeting and Financial Management (offered residentially through Harrisburg Campus and online through World Campus)
- Public Sector Human Resources Management (offered residentially through Harrisburg Campus and online through World Campus)
- Nonprofit Administration (offered residentially and online through Harrisburg Campus)

Please note that the courses required by these Graduate Certificates can be double counted both towards MPA degree and the certificates. It is advisable that with the help of your academic advisor, you could graduate with the MPA degree and one or two Graduate Certificate(s).

The Dickinson School of Law of the Pennsylvania State University and the School of Public Affairs of Penn State Harrisburg offer a cooperative program leading to the dual degrees of Juris Doctor to be granted by Dickinson, and Master of Public Administration to be granted by Penn State Harrisburg. This program is only open to matriculated Dickinson students approved by the Dickinson School of Law.

Penn State Harrisburg also offers a Ph.D. program in Public Administration.

1.4 Accreditation

The MPA program is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), which is a professional education association dedicated to the advancement of education, training, and research in public policy and administration. The Association's membership consists of nearly 300 member

institutions. The PSH program is one of 210 accredited programs that are members of NASPAA, and one of only four in Pennsylvania.

2. Program Requirements

Course schedules for the current and upcoming semesters are available here.

2.1 Student Scheduling

Full-time Students: Full-time students usually begin with the fall semester; however, they may begin in spring or summer as well. A student is considered full-time if he or she takes nine to twelve credits a semester. A student enrolled on a full-time basis should expect to complete the program in 12 to 18 months. The actual time required to complete the program varies depending on (1) whether a student takes courses during the summer, and (2) whether the student is required to do an internship. Most of the core courses are offered during the Fall and Spring semesters.

Part-time Students: Part-time students may begin the program in any semester. Part-time students typically take fewer than 9 credit each semester, including summer, and complete the program in 2-4 years of study.

Certificate Students: Students only in Graduate Certificates may begin the program in any semester. Each certificate requires different courses, but a certificate student typically takes two semesters to finish the certificate courses.

Non-Degree Students: A few students, returning to school after years of working full-time, start the program as non-degree students. This provides time for the student to re-acclimate to class work and the additional stress on family and work schedules, while once again becoming a student. The new student may take up to 15 credits of public administration courses in a non-degree mode to decide if this is the right time to return to school. After that time, the student must apply to and be formally accepted into the program. If the student is accepted, the non-degree credits will be transferred into the degree program provided the student earned a grade of B or better in the courses.

2.2 Degree Requirements

The MPA degree program requires 39 graduate credits (3 credits per course): 21 credits in core courses, 12 credits in electives, 3 credits for a capstone course, and 3 credits for Internship.

- Up to 6 credits of 400-level courses may be taken as electives, with the approval of the academic advisor.
- The 3-credit internship may be waived at the discretion of the program for students who have the relevant work experience that consists of supervisory, managerial, or professional work, or who gain this experience while enrolled in the program. The internship is waived for students with this experience before they enter the

program or who gain it by working full-time or part-time during their enrollment in the program. If this occurs, students must apply for the waiver.
- All course work and requirements must be completed within a five-year period from the time of first enrollment in the program.

2.2.1 Core Courses (21 credits, required)

PADM 800 Foundations of Public Administration
PADM 502 Government Fiscal Decision-Making
PADM 503 Research Design
PADM 504 Data Analysis for Policy and Administration
PADM 505 Human Resources in the Public and Nonprofit Sector
PADM 507 Introduction to Public Policy Analysis
PADM 510 Organizational Behavior

Note on CITI Training

The Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (RECR) Training for the Master's in Public Administration program requires students in this program to complete the following two training courses and submit the completion report to the department as a record for their graduation file. This is a graduation requirement of Penn State University for every student and must be completed.

1. Social and Behavioral Human Subjects Research (IRB) Course
2. Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Course

These courses are offered through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program. This training is included in the PADM 503. Students who are enrolled in the PADM 503 will complete this training as a part of the course work. Please send completion reports to the Administrative Support Assistant of the MPA Program.

2.2.2 Capstone Course (3 credits, required)

PADM 594 is the capstone course for Master's degree students in the MPA Program. This class builds on the knowledge, components, and skills students have gained in prior classes. The purpose of PADM 594 is to enhance competencies in problem identification, problem solving, professional writing, oral presentation, and group research and presentation skills. Note: This course is to be taken in your last semester of course work and has a prerequisite of PADM 503. To enroll in this course please contact the Administrative Support Assistant of the MPA program.

2.2.3 Electives (12 credits. Non-PADM courses require advisor approval)

With approval from their faculty advisors, students select 12 credits of electives courses. These electives may be chosen to obtain a broad base in general public administration or to concentrate in one of the following focus areas offered by the MPA. Please note that **if you are interested in any non-PADM courses as an elective, you will need to receive written permission from your academic advisor**

in order to do so. The only "pre-approved" electives are PADM courses listed below.

Students **are not required** to select a focus area. More importantly, students may customize their focus areas by choosing courses that are of special interest to their career. The focus area does not appear on a transcript; however, it can be noted on a resume. Examples of focus areas with relevant course selections are provided below:

- Human resources and Leadership (also offering Graduate Certificate)
- Nonprofit management (also offering Graduate Certificate)
- Policy analytics and evaluation (also offering Graduate Certificate)
- Public budgeting and financial management (also offering Graduate Certificate)
- State-local government and administration

Please note that not all of the following courses are offered in MPA online delivery mode through World Campus (WC) or in MPA residential delivery mode through Harrisburg Campus (HB). Students in WC mode or in HB mode should choose the ones that are available in either WC or HB as their electives. Please also note that there are many other courses offered by Penn State University, so a student could customize their focus area by exploring possible courses offered by Penn State University and get their academic advisor's approval on whether or not those courses are appropriate as electives for the MPA degree.

Human Resources and Leadership (also offering Graduate Certificate)

This focus area provides professional development for students interested in human resources. Topics covered include management, planning, policy analysis, and consulting. Possible relevant courses are suggested bellow:

PADM 511 Organizational Change and Development
PADM 516 Strategic Planning
PADM 521 Performance Measurement and Management (prerequisite: PADM 800)

Nonprofit Management (also offering Graduate Certificate)

This focus area is designed to provide professional development opportunities to students interested in management and leadership positions in the nonprofit sector. It aims at developing an understanding of the functioning of the nonprofit sector for social and economic development in collaboration with government agencies and local community. Possible relevant courses are suggested below:

PADM 516 Strategic Planning
PADM 517 Nonprofit Organizations: History and Evolution
PADM 518 Nonprofit Organizations: Management and Leadership
PADM 519 Nonprofit Organizations: Resource Development and Management

Policy Analytics and Evaluation (also offering Graduate Certificate)

The focus area is designed to provide students with an understanding of the policy process, the politics of that process, and the skills of conducting policy analysis and evaluation. Possible relevant courses are suggested below:

PADM 535 Policy Analysis and Planning (prerequisite: PADM 503)
PADM 550 Policy and Program Evaluation (prerequisite: PADM 503)

Public Budgeting and Financial Management (also offering Graduate Certificate)

This focus area is designed to provide professional development opportunities to students interested in government and nonprofit budgeting, financial management and accounting. Possible relevant courses are suggested below:

PADM 522 Government Financial Management
PADM 523 Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting

National-State-Local Government and Administration

This focus area provides professional development for students interested in management, planning, policy analysis, and consulting at the local, regional, state, and-or national levels, and professional development in private firms and associations emphasizing governmental relations. Possible relevant courses are suggested below:

PADM 511 Organizational Change and Development
PADM 516 Strategic Planning
PADM 532 Urban Government
PADM 533 Local Planning Law and Administration
PADM 556 State Government Administration
PADM 557 Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations

2.2.4 Independent Study

Independent Study (PADM 596, 3-credit) provides students the opportunity to obtain recorded credit for academic achievement beyond that recognized through the formal, approved course offerings.

An Independent Study course should not be used in place of an established catalog course. If an established course is to be given independently, even if only to one student, it should be offered under the official course name and number. At the discretion of the instructor, two or more students may participate in a cooperative independent study project.

A petition for an Independent Study must be completed and returned to the program office for the necessary signatures. Jurisdiction for an Independent Study course lies with the Professor-in-Charge of the program in which the course resides. The signature of the Professor-in-Charge indicates approval of the Independent Study

offering within his or her jurisdiction and of the instructor. The signature of the instructor serving as the study director indicates an agreement to be involved in the Independent Study. The signature of the student's assigned faculty advisor indicates approval of the student's participation. Once all signatures are acquired, the form will be forwarded to Enrollment Services. Registration cannot be processed without a completed form.

3. Program Policies

3.1 Graduation Procedures

After completion of all requirements for the MPA Degree it is your responsibility to notify the University of your intent to graduate. This should be done by using the Intent to Graduate tab in LionPATH at the beginning of the semester in which you plan to graduate. Check the semester calendar for the dates when you can activate your intent to graduate. After the graduation activation period expires, you must contact the office of your major to request any changes to your graduation status.

3.2 Transfer of Credits from an External Institution

A student can transfer up to 15 nondegree PADM credits from Penn State or 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 requests (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 of any credits to transfer and count toward the MPA degree must be granted by the student's academic advisor, the Professor-in-Charge, and the Graduate School.

3.3 Time Limitation

All requirements for a master's degree (including acceptance of a thesis, paper, or project report as may be specified), whether satisfied on the University Park campus or elsewhere, must be met within eight years of admission to degree status. Individual programs may set shorter time limits, which the MPA program has. Our students are required to meet all requirements for the Master of Public Administration degree **within five years of admission**. Extensions may be granted by the Director of Graduate Enrollment Services in appropriate circumstances.

3.4 Resume Study

If you drop out of the program for more than one semester, you must complete a "Permission to Resume Graduate Study" form for the semester you wish to return. This form can be found here. Credits earned more than five years before resuming study will not be considered for graduation requirements.

3.5 Student GPA Requirement and Grade Requirement

Based on the Penn State University Graduate Education Policy GCAC-44, “D” and below is a failing grade at the graduate level courses. The policy (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-400/gcac-401-grading-system/) indicates:

The following grading system applies to graduate students:

a. A (EXCELLENT) indicates exceptional achievement;
b. B (GOOD) indicates substantial achievement;
c. C (SATISFACTORY) indicates acceptable but substandard achievement;
d. D (POOR) indicates inadequate achievement and is a failing grade for a graduate student.
    i. A course in which a D has been obtained cannot be used to meet graduate degree requirements and will not count toward total credits earned.

Please note if a student receives “D” or below grades in the Core Courses and/or in PADM 594, they have to re-take that course to get a pass grade (A, B, or C). If a student received “D” or below grades in an elective course, he/she can choose either to retake that failed elective course,or take another elective course to satisfy the credit requirement for electives.

A minimum grade-point average of 3.00 for work done at the University is required for graduation and to maintain good academic standing. The MPA program utilizes a one letter Academic Warning Letter policy. The first Academic Warning letter is your notice of a GPA lower than 3.0. After you receive this Academic Warning letter, you are required to prepare an improvement plan with your faculty advisor. This plan will serve as a general guide for raising your GPA. The program will give you sufficient time to raise your cumulative GPA to the 3.0 threshold which will be determined between you and your advisor. If your *semester* GPA is below a 3.0 while you are in this academic warning status, you will receive a second letter outlining two options for you going forward. These options are as follows: either you can temporarily withdrawal from the program and take courses as a nondegree student until your cumulative GPA rises to a 3.0, or you can choose to permanently withdrawal from the program. If you choose the first option, you will have the opportunity to apply for resume study to the program after raising your cumulative GPA above 3.0 and may continue your pursuit of your MPA degree. If you choose the second option, you will be terminated from the program with no option to return to finish your degree.

3.6 Graduate Internship

Every student who does not have enough relevant professional or managerial experience is required to complete a three-credit internship (PADM 595) of 150 hours of service. The internship has a prerequisite of PADM 503. The internship experience provides students with a dynamic, professional forum in which to apply the analytical

and managerial knowledge they acquired in the MPA program. During the internship, students may also develop a professional network important to their career. The purpose of the internship requirement is to provide students who lack real-world professional experience in public service organizations with: (1) opportunities for career exploration; and (2) a realistic exposure to the environment, management systems, and internal operations of public service organizations.

Students who have the relevant professional or managerial experience when they apply for admission usually are granted an internship waiver upon admission. Students who gain the experience through working full-time while enrolled in the program can request a waiver by describing the details of their experiences in a resume and letter addressed to the Professor-in-Charge. A student requiring an internship must complete 18 hours of credit with a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher before he or she is eligible for an internship.

Optimally, an internship should be taken during the course of a single semester. Generally, a 15-week semester on a half-time basis meets the time requirement as well as the total credits (3) required. However, a full-time internship (40 hours per week, 150 hours in total) over the course of 4 weeks satisfies the requirement. This may be most useful for summer placements.

Locating an internship is the responsibility of the student with assistance from the Internship Advisor. The School of Public Affairs has an Internship Coordinator who works with the Faculty Coordinators to help students of all education levels locate and obtain an internship. The balance and degree of academic and administrative supervision varies greatly depending upon the nature of the assignment, prior training of the student, the location of the internship, and other factors. The student has the primary responsibility for maximizing the educational experience of the internship, while the Internship Advisor and agency supervisor are expected to guide and assist throughout the entire internship.

Faculty coordinators work closely with students to place them in state and local government agencies, community and economic development organizations, government-related businesses, and non-profits. Specific placements may include the state legislature, state agencies, public affairs and lobbying firms, and policy advocacy organizations in areas such as economic development, human rights, and environmental policy. The program also seeks new internship sites to match students' interests. MPA students have had internships with agencies of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including the Governor's Office of Administration-Office of Information Technology, Office of the Budget, Department of Treasury, and the Department of Transportation. Students have also interned with Highmark, Inc. (PA Blue Shield), Pennsylvania Transportation Institute, the House of Representatives, including the Majority Whip's Office, as well as many local and county government offices, and a variety of nonprofit organizations as well as federal agencies in Washington, DC.

3.7 Academic Integrity

The Capital College academic integrity policy is consistent with the existing policies, practices, and procedures of The Pennsylvania State University as explained in the C-7 Academic Integrity Policy and the Academic Administrative Policies Manual, Section G-9.

Penn State Harrisburg faculty, academic administration, staff, and student body, share the values expressed by the Deans and believe that integrity is the cornerstone of all academic activities.

Faculty are expected to demand high standards of integrity, protect the rights of honest students, and ensure that acts of dishonesty are deterred. The individual course instructor is responsible for providing students with a statement explaining the behaviors that are academically inappropriate for the particular course.

All students are expected to act with personal integrity in order to create and sustain an atmosphere where all can succeed through their own honest efforts. While it is expected that students will maintain the highest academic standards and submit only work they have produced honestly, others may violate the academic integrity policies. For further information on academic integrity, please visit the web site here.

3.8 Courses and Credits Per Semester

The MPA program recommends a full-time student taking no more than 9 credits per semester (3 courses per semester). If a student plans to take more than 9 credits in a semester, he/she must get approval from his/her academic advisor beforehand with a solid rationale.

The PADM courses have been designed to broaden and deepen the knowledge base of Public Administration master students, thus the MPA program recommends a MPA student taking PADM courses as their electives so that they have a full spectrum of public administration related knowledge with a focus in public administration sub-field. If a student plans to take courses outside of PADM, he/she must get approval from his/her academic advisor beforehand with a solid rationale.

4. Certificate Programs

Four certificate programs are offered to degree and non-degree students residentially or via online platforms. Please note that the courses required by these Graduate Certificates can be double counted both towards MPA degree and the certificates. It is advisable that with the help of your academic advisor, you could graduate with the MPA degree and one or two Graduate Certificate(s).

1. Policy Analytics and Evaluation
2. Public Budgeting and Financial Management
3. Public Sector Human Resources Management
4. Nonprofit Administration

Detailed information on these programs may be found online at Penn State Harrisburg or Penn State World Campus.

Tuition for the certificate programs may be reimbursed by your employer - check with your Human Resources office.

5. Financial Assistance

The MPA Program offers financial assistance to a limited number of full-time graduate students each year. Descriptions of the types of financial assistance available appear below.

World Campus Scholarships

A number of scholarships are available for World Campus students. Information on these are available here.

Penn State Harrisburg Scholarships

A number of scholarships are available for Penn State Harrisburg students. For each upcoming academic year, all incoming and current students with a 3.0 GPA or higher will automatically be considered for the majority of the scholarships listed on the site below. Information on these are available here.

High Mark Blue Shield Fellowship

A Blue Shield Fellowship is awarded to full-time or part-time students in either the Master of Health Administration, Master of Public Administration, or Ph.D. in Public Administration program at Penn State Harrisburg who demonstrate strong interest and potential for success in the health care field, who have achieved positive academic records, and who have exhibited a strong commitment to a career in health care.

HealthAmerica Fellowship

A HealthAmerica Fellowship is awarded to full-time or part-time students in either the part-time or full-time graduate students for Master of Health Administration or Master of or Doctorate in Public Administration with a concentration in health care at Penn State

Harrisburg. The purpose of the HealthAmerica Fellowship is to recognize and support outstanding graduate students enrolled or planning to enroll in the School of Public Affairs, concentrating in health care.

Graduate Assistantships

General graduate assistantships (research) may be available to students at Penn State Harrisburg. Assistantships consist of a stipend plus payment of tuition. Sometimes, pending availability of funding and satisfactory academic performance, these can be continued for an additional semester(s). Appointments are made subject to the student's admission to the MPA program as a full-time degree student. GRE scores are also required. Application deadline: January 15.

Irving and Mildred Hand State, Urban, and Regional Affairs Award

The Irving and Mildred Hand State, Urban, and Regional Affairs Award is to honor and recognize the achievement of a graduate student at the Penn State Harrisburg. Annually, a full- or part-time graduate student, living in Dauphin, Cumberland, Lancaster, York, or Lebanon County, who has displayed interest and excellence in the study of state, regional, and local affairs is selected by the School of Public Affairs as the recipient of this endowed award.

University Awards

Several academic scholarships are available for Penn State Harrisburg students through the Financial Aid Office. Applicants must complete an Academic Scholarship Application (obtained from the Financial Aid Office), as well as a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and furnish a personal biographical essay. FAFSA forms are available here. The deadline for the FAFSA form is February 15. Note: Applications are not considered unless the results of the FAFSA have been received at Penn State by April 1st. Students receive an award notification during the month of May.

A 3.0 cumulative grade point average is the absolute minimum for consideration. In addition to grade point average and demonstrated financial need, the scholarship committee considers the student's service to college and-or community. Call the Financial Aid Office at (717) 948-6307 or visit the appropriate financial aid web site – Harrisburg or World Campus with questions.

STEPS Scholarships

Students can search, read about, and apply to scholarships in 9 different public service fields, including teaching, criminal justice, public health, and social work. Students can review the full scholarship list at the link below. There is also a link to the companion financial aid guide, which covers other funding options for public service students, including earning money through programs such as AmeriCorps, the Peace Corps, and the TEACH grant.

30 Top Scholarships for Public Service Students:
https://www.publicservicedegrees.org/financial-aid/scholarships/

How to Get Financial Aid for Your Public Service Degree:

https://www.publicservicedegrees.org/financial-aid/

The goal with these guides is to help more students afford college so they can go on to make a difference in a public service career.

Supporting MPA Students:

6.1 Penn State Harrisburg Supporting Functions:

(Please note: The Harrisburg supporting functions are available for BOTH residential and online MPA students.)

Job Support and Placement: The Career Services Office at Penn State Harrisburg helps to create networking opportunities with relevant employers, locate current employment opportunities and resume workshops with alumni. Link: Student Resources | Penn State Harrisburg (psu.edu) Resources of the Career Services Office include:

Nittany Lion Career Network (NLCN): The primary online resource for connecting students with employers. All students have a free account. The Graduate Student Success Specialist guides students to the following resource page. Link:http://nittanylioncareers.psu.edu/

LionLink: Offered through Alumni Career Services, is a professional networking program that links Penn State students and alumni with alumni volunteer Career Coaches. The Graduate Student Success Specialist guides students to the following resource page. Link: https://psulionlink.peoplegrove.com/hub/lionlink/home

Career Guidance: Information on Resumes, advice on interviews and tips on how to market yourself to employers and more. The Graduate Student Success Specialist guides students to the following resource page. Link: Networking | Penn State Student Affairs (psu.edu)

Resumes and Cover Letters: Students are able to schedule a meeting with a Career Counselor to have their resume and/or cover letters reviewed. Career Services provides examples and information on how to write resumes, cover letters, thank you letters, acceptances letters, etc. The Graduate Student Success Specialist makes the connection for students to work with a Career Counselor. Link: Resume, Cover Letter, and Correspondence | Penn State Student Affairs (psu.edu)

Interview Skills: Career Services also offers interviewing skills resources. The Graduate Student Success Specialist guides students to the following resource page. Link: Interviewing | Penn State Student Affairs (psu.edu)

Alumni Relations: The Alumni Relations Office at Penn State Harrisburg has offered the Master of Public Administration program to test a pilot alumni connection project this semester. The Associate Director for Alumni Relations at Penn State Harrisburg will reach out to alumni with an information about the pilot program, provide a form for

alumni to complete about themselves to match students with the interested alumni and work with the Graduate Student Success Specialist to see what students are interested in being paired with an alumni. The alumni will be able to work with their paired student to offer the student resume review, networking opportunities, a mentor, etc. The pilot program will determine if the Alumni Relations Office will open the program to other majors.
Link: https://harrisburg.psu.edu/alumni-relations

Counseling Services: Crisis, consultation, and mental health counseling services.
Designated Point of Contact: Eileen Haase – email: erh145@psu.edu, phone: 717-948-6025

Student Care and Advocacy Committee: helps students facing adverse events (eg., housing/ financial distress, mental health/medical/family emergencies) and coordinates care across campus. Designated Point of Contact: Kelly Weaber- email: krw5476@psu.edu, phone: 717-948-4396

International Student Support: support for international students, how to prepare, advice on visas, and immigration issues. Designated Point of Contact: Cindy Domingo- email: cbd4407@psu.edu, phone: 717-948-6463
Link: https://harrisburg.psu.edu/international-student-support-services

Diversity/ Multicultural Resources: Provides support, advocacy, and education for underrepresented populations. Designated Point of Contact: Cynthia Daniels – email: clj15@psu.edu, phone: 717-948-6297

Office of Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response (OSMPR): report sexual or gender based harassment or misconduct (e.g., sexual assault, exploitation, stalking, dating/domestic violence), investigates concerns; provides resources, support, and accommodations. Call: 717-948-4381.
Link: titleix.psu.edu

Student Disability Resources: Provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Designated Point of Contact: Colleen Livingston – email: crm227@psu.edu phone: 717-948-6025

Penn State is committed to providing access to students with disabilities to the university's graduate programs. The Office for Student Disability Resources (SDR) offers support specifically tailored to the needs of graduate students. The office considers the need for accommodations in the following areas: 1) graduate assistantship accommodations; 2) coursework accommodations; 3) lab, fieldwork, and clinical work accommodations; 4) qualifying / comprehensive exams accommodations; 5) thesis / dissertation accommodations. An overview of disability resources specific to graduate students can be found here:

https://equity.psu.edu/offices/student-disability-resources/graduate-students-with-disabilities
To be considered for reasonable accommodations, students **are required** to contact the SDR office, participate in an intake interview, provide documentation, and complete the registration process. Students should be aware that it may take time to go through the intake process, and that they may not know in advance whether accommodations will be needed either for their coursework or for their milestone exams. We thus recommend that students register with SDR for any eligible disabilities in advance, ensuring that all documentation is in place should accommodations be needed at any point during their graduate program. Students can register with SDR and choose not to request accommodations once registered.
Once registered, students can approach course instructors (for course accommodations) and/or the DGS or PIC (for accommodations to other program requirements, including benchmark examinations) to request accommodations. For milestone examinations, this process is **required** for **each** milestone examination for which you request accommodations. Specific accommodations are determined through an interactive process and tailored to each student's needs with the goals of upholding rigor and disciplinary expectations in each of the distinct components of graduate education.
Students who would like accommodations for academic events (such as non-course-based department colloquia or seminars) that are not covered under the official SDR categories are encouraged to express these needs to the program leadership (e.g. DGS, PIC, or program head) and/or SDR.

Office of Student Life: provides Adult Learner Support which includes child care subsidy options as well as programs such as Continuing Education. Call: 717-948-6273 or Email: hbgstudentlife@psu.edu. Designated Point of Contact: Deb Lerchen- email: dxl451@psu.edu, phone: 717-948-6647
Links: https://harrisburg.psu.edu/office-of-student-life, https://harrisburg.psu.edu/office-of-student-life/adult-learner-support, https://harrisburg.psu.edu/continuing-education-home.

Russell E. Horn Sr. Learning Center: Provides tutoring options in subject areas including: writing, speeches, Academic Success Coaching, American and academic literacy and many math, science, and business courses. The center supports students' self-management of academic and professional goals through collaboration, guidance, and practice in an environment of inclusive excellence.

1. Writing: assists with brainstorming, drafting, revising, and polishing your papers. Designated Point of Contact: Andi Carter (https://harrisburg.psu.edu/faculty-and-staff/andi-carter)
2. Academic Success Coaches: assists with improving test or quiz results, how to make sense of difficult concepts, and memorization strategies. Designated Point of Contact: Samantha LaFlame (https://harrisburg.psu.edu/faculty-and-staff/samantha-laFlame)

3. Academic support for speakers of English as a second language. Designated Point of Contact: Andi Carter (https://harrisburg.psu.edu/faculty-and-staff/andi-carter)

Harrisburg Library: Provides print and online resources and research services. Resources include print books in the Harrisburg Library stacks (books can be requested from any PSU Library location), loanable equipment and technology, desktop computers in the library, access to online proprietary research databases, online research guides, and course reserves. Services include reservable study rooms, virtual and in-person research assistance, and interlibrary loan. Link(s):

University Libraries website: https://libraries.psu.edu/
Harrisburg Library website: https://libraries.psu.edu/harrisburg Public Administration

Research Guide: https://guides.libraries.psu.edu/padm School of Public Affairs librarian: Emily Reed, emilyreed@psu.edu, (717) 948-6373.

6.2 Penn State World Campus Supporting Functions:

Career Services: World Campus Student Affairs offers a variety of career services and tools are available to you as a student.
Link:https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/student-services/career-services
Email: studentaffairs@outreach.psu.edu

Career Counselors: The career counselors are professionals who assist people with career and personal development concerns. They can help you develop a meaningful career path by empowering you with the tools and resources you need to make educated decisions about your career, or help you consider what personal issues may influence your career.
Link:https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/a-z-index/why-seek-career-counseling
How to make an appointment:
https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/career-counseling-referral-directions

Nittany Lion Career Network (NLCN): The primary online resource for connecting students with employers. All students have a free account.
Link:http://nittanylioncareers.psu.edu/

Career Resources: Enhance your career decision making with information on jobs, majors, how to interview, networking, and strategies for making career changes.
Link:https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/a-z-index/resources-on-jobs-salaries-and-graduate-school
Email: studentaffairs@outreach.psu.edu

LionLink: Offered through Alumni Career Services, is a professional networking program that links Penn State students and alumni with alumni volunteer Career Coaches. The Graduate Student Success Specialist guides students to the following resource page. Link: https://psulionlink.peoplegrove.com/hub/lionlink/home

Connect with Employers: Through online and in-person career fairs, you can network and build professional connections with potential employers.
Link: https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/fairs
Email: studentaffairs@outreach.psu.edu

Mental Health Services: If you are experiencing personal circumstances that feel overwhelming, Penn State World Campus can provide an assortment of valuable mental health resources.
Link: https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/student-services/mental-health-services and Red Folder | (psu.edu)
Email: studentaffairs@outreach.psu.edu

Diversity and Inclusion: Provides diversity and inclusion services and programming to students in a virtual, convenient format.
Link: https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/student-affairs/diversity-and-inclusion
Email: studentaffairs@outreach.psu.edu

Office of Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response (OSMPR): report sexual or gender based harassment or misconduct (e.g., sexual assault, exploitation, stalking, dating/domestic violence), investigates concerns; provides resources, support, and accommodations. Call: 717-867-6025.
Link: titleix.psu.edu

Student Disability Resources: provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities.
Link: https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/student-services/students-with-disabilities
Email: academicsupport@worldcampus.psu.edu

Penn State is committed to providing access to students with disabilities to the university's graduate programs. The Office for Student Disability Resources (SDR) offers support specifically tailored to the needs of graduate students. The office considers the need for accommodations in the following areas: 1) graduate assistantship accommodations; 2) coursework accommodations; 3) lab, fieldwork, and clinical work accommodations; 4) qualifying / comprehensive exams accommodations; 5) thesis / dissertation accommodations. An overview of disability resources specific to graduate students can be found here:
https://equity.psu.edu/offices/student-disability-resources/graduate-students-with-disabilities
To be considered for reasonable accommodations, students **are required** to contact the SDR office, participate in an intake interview, provide documentation, and complete the registration process. Students should be aware that it may take time to go through the intake process, and that they may not know in advance whether accommodations will be needed either for their coursework or for their milestone exams. We thus recommend that students register with SDR for any eligible disabilities in advance, ensuring that all documentation is in place should accommodations be needed at any point during their

graduate program. Students can register with SDR and choose not to request accommodations once registered.
Once registered, students can approach course instructors (for course accommodations) and/or the DGS or PIC (for accommodations to other program requirements, including benchmark examinations) to request accommodations. For milestone examinations, this process is **required** for **each** milestone examination for which you request accommodations. Specific accommodations are determined through an interactive process and tailored to each student's needs with the goals of upholding rigor and disciplinary expectations in each of the distinct components of graduate education.
Students who would like accommodations for academic events (such as non-course-based department colloquia or seminars) that are not covered under the official SDR categories are encouraged to express these needs to the program leadership (e.g. DGS, PIC, or program head) and/or SDR.

Student Organizations: There are a variety of clubs and organizations available for students.
Link: https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/get-involved/student-organizations

Student Engagement Events: Current social and academic events that let you connect with faculty, staff and fellow students.
Link: https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/calendar

World Campus Student Advisory Board: The World Campus Student Advisory Board is an extension of Student Affairs whose members provide advocacy on behalf of students, through collaborative partnerships with administrators and faculty.
Link:
https://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/get-involved/world-campus-student-advisory-board

7. Professional and Student Organizations

Pi Alpha Alpha

Pi Alpha Alpha is a national honor society for the field of public affairs and public administration. The purpose of the society is to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in public affairs and administration.

The society seeks to promote the advancement of quality in education and practice of the art and science of public affairs and administration. The objectives foster integrity, professionalism, and effective performance in the conduct of government and related public service activities. Membership identifies those with the highest performance levels in educational programs preparing them for public service careers. Students with a minimum 3.7 GPA are notified of acceptance into Pi Alpha Alpha. A one-time fee is required of students.

MPA Club

The MPA Student Club at Penn State Harrisburg is a student run organization that provides students of Public Affairs and other community members with a venue to engage in discussions, exchange ideas, and participate in activities that nurture their academic, personal, and professional development.

The MPA Club designs exciting activities for its members promoting interaction and networking opportunities through academic and research symposium, guest speakers, social events, community service, and fundraising activities. Explore topics, career pathways, and trends in Public Administration, Public Affairs, and Nonprofit Management by joining the MPA Club.

Alumni Society

The Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Society is part of the University-wide Penn State Alumni Association. The purpose of the society is to support the University and the College by promoting Penn State in the community and by fostering alumni participation, interest and support in related activities and events. The society sponsors such events as Alumni Fellow-Awards Dinners, TV tailgates, a mentor program, and service projects for National Service Week. Membership in the Alumni Society is open to all those who are members of the Penn State Alumni Association. For more information, contact Associate Director of Alumni Relations, Laurie Dobrosky at (717) 948-6715, email hbgalumni@psu.edu. The Society also has a web site: https://harrisburg.psu.edu/alumni-relations

Keystone State Chapter of ASPA

Penn State Harrisburg students are eligible for membership in the Keystone State Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). The chapter brings together students, practitioners and academics, organizing a range of professional development activities. Additionally, the chapter sponsors several awards recognizing student achievement.

8. Faculty

Upon admission to the program, each student is assigned a faculty advisor (academic advisor). One way to make academic life run smoother is by getting to know your Advisor. Your Advisor is likely to be your best resource in academic and career planning **(see Section 10 of this program guide for answers to frequently asked questions about the MPA Program).**

To prevent problems, obtain approval in advance for anything you wish to do in our program that is out of the ordinary (transfer credits, non-public administrative electives, etc.). You will want to contact your Academic Advisor to discuss your course selections before registering.

8.1 School Director

Dr. Ahlin, a Professor of Criminal Justice, joined Penn State Harrisburg in 2013. Since July 2025, she has served as Interim Director of the School of Public Affairs. She previously served as chair of both the Harrisburg and World Campus Criminal Justice programs and the Master of Professional Studies in Criminal Justice Policy and Administration, a partnership with the College of the Liberal Arts. Dr. Ahlin's research focuses on violence and corrections, using an ecological framework to examine risk and protective factors within communities and institutions. She has authored or co-authored five books, 45 peer-reviewed journal articles, and 10 book chapters, in addition to co-editing three volumes and contributing to numerous technical reports. Her work has earned national recognition, including being named a W.E.B. DuBois Fellow of the National Institute of Justice. She also contributes her expertise by testifying as an expert witness, serving as a reviewer for Crime Solutions (Office of Justice Programs), and participating in the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency's Supporting Youth Success Subcommittee. Dr. Ahlin holds a Ph.D. in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Maryland, College Park, an M.A. in Sociology from George Mason University, and a B.A. from Penn State, where she completed a dual major in Administration of Justice and Sociology.

8.2 MPA Faculty Profiles

Jane Beckett-Camarata, Ph.D., MPA, Teaching Professor, is a nationally and internationally recognized expert in public financial management, budgeting, and infrastructure finance. She is the author of "Public-Private Partnerships, Capital Infrastructure Project Investments, and Infrastructure Finance: Public Policy for the 21st Century" (Emerald Publishing, 2020), which explores the intersection of budgeting and infrastructure development.

Dr. Beckett-Camarata has received numerous honors, including the Penn State Harrisburg Outstanding Research and Scholarly Activity Award, the Chancellor's Global Engagement Award for collaborative research with Darmstadt University in Germany, and the Lilly Foundation Scholar Award for excellence in teaching. She developed an innovative Pandemic Simulation for Capstone students, connecting theory with real-world policy challenges.

Her international teaching experience includes government finance courses at three Russian universities and serving as a Fulbright Scholar at Kharkiv National University in Ukraine, where she taught Economic Development Finance. She has authored numerous articles and book chapters published in leading journals and edited volumes, including *Public Productivity and Management Review; Journal of Budgeting, Accounting and Financial Management, Municipal Finance Journal, International Journal of Public Administration, American Review of Public Administration, Journal of Business Research, Handbook of Public Sector Economics, Handbook of Globalization, Governance, and Public Administration Review.*

She received the Baruch College, CUNY Distinguished Municipal Leadership and Finance Award, which supported her 2005 summer research on changes in New York City's pension fund assets during the fiscal crisis.

Dr. Beckett-Camarata previously served as Chief Finance Officer in the Commonwealth of Virginia, where she managed operating and capital budgets, financial accounting and

reporting, and revenue forecasting. She played a key role in integrating strategic planning into budget and accounting systems, and in establishing financial performance measures.
She holds a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration from Virginia Commonwealth University (1998), a Master of Public Administration from American University (1989), and a Bachelor of Science in Finance from Syracuse University (1983).

Younhee Kim, Ph.D., Associate Professor, has her research interests in the areas of public and performance management, focusing on performance measurement, public entrepreneurship, e-governance, information technology, and citizen participation. Her recent work has appeared in numerous journals, including Administration & Society, International Journal of Health Planning and Management, Public Performance & Management Review, Public Money & Management, and Journal of Technology Transfer. Dr. Kim has served as a managing editor of International Journal of eGovernance and Networks, a symposium editor of Public Performance & Management Review and International Journal of Public Administration, and an editorial board member of numerous academic journals and edited books. She is very active in service to the profession y being involved in national and international outreach as a treasurer, a member of various committees, and an advisory board member for the American Society for Public Administration and other professional associations in the U.S. and Korea.

Daniel Mallinson, Ph.D., Associate Professor, specializes in state and local government, public policy, and research methods. His research centers on major policy theories including policy diffusion, agenda setting, implementation, and punctuated equilibrium. In terms of policy topics, his research focuses on drug policy (mainly medical marijuana and opioids), health policy, energy policy, and environmental policy. He also conducts research on the science of teaching and learning. His work has been published in a variety of national and international journals, as well as has been presented at many national and regional conferences (American Political Science Association, American Society for Public Administration, and the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management). Dan also works with the undergraduate Bachelor students in Public Policy and is the advisor for Pi Sigma Alpha (the National Political Science Honor Society) and the undergraduate advisor for Pi Alpha Alpha (the National Public Administration and Policy Honor Society).

Göktuğ Morçöl, Ph.D., Professor, areas of his research interests are metropolitan governance, with a particular focus on business improvement districts; complexity theory applications in public policy and policy analysis; and research methods. He has authored, edited, and co-edited eight books, including: Complex Governance Networks (Routledge, 2023), Challenges to Democratic Governance in Developing Countries (Springer, 2014), A Complexity Theory for Public Policy (Routledge, 2012), and Business Improvement Districts: Research Theory and Controversies (CRC Press, 2008). His articles have appeared in several journals such as Administration and Society, Administrative Theory and Praxis, International Journal of Public Administration, Journal of Urban Affairs, Policy Sciences, Public Administration

Quarterly, Public Administration Review, and Urban Affairs Review. He served the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration in various capacities. He was the founding chair of the Section on Complexity and Network Studies of the American Society for Public Administration and the founding co-editor-in-chief of the journal *Complexity, Governance and Networks*. He served as the professor-in-charge of the Ph.D. program in public administration between 2012 and 2019 and between 2021 and 2026.

Bing Ran, Ph.D., Professor, researches the dynamic interactions between society's complex infrastructures and human behavior, focusing on topics such as governance and collaborative governance networks, social entrepreneurship and hybrid organizations, organizational identity and images, knowledge management and knowledge integration. He is an active member of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), Academy of Management (AOM), and the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC). Since 2001, he has been a frequent reviewer, presenter, session chair, and mentor for their annual conferences. He was the Division Chair, Organizational Theory Division, ASAC (2015 – 2016) after serving as the Division Coordinator and Division Editor, Organizational Theory Division, ASAC, between 2013 -2015. He is currently serving as the immediate past chair of the Northeast Conference on Public Administration (NECoPA) after serving as the Chair from 2017 – 2019. At the college, he served as the President (2016 – 2017) of the Faculty Senate, Penn State Harrisburg, after serving as the Chair, the Strategic Planning Committee at Penn State Harrisburg Senate, and Co-Chair, Penn State Harrisburg Strategic Steering Committee (2011 – 2015).

Glenn L. Silverstein, Ph.D., Assistant Teaching Professor, is the recipient of the Dan Rich Prize for Difference for Delawareans and his areas of expertise are education policy, education leadership and decision making, public policy and human resource management. He has presented at the Pennsylvania Educational Research Association and published in *Public Performance & Management Review*, the *Encyclopedia of the City* and the *Journal of Urban Affairs*. Dr. Silverstein has the unique experience of having taught in every level of education from middle school to graduate school.

Odd Stalebrink, Ph.D., Associate Professor, is active in the Association for Budgeting and Financial Management; ASPA; the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; and the European Accounting Association. He has consulting experience in areas of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and Transportation Asset Management and has been a research associate at the Center for Transport Policy and Logistics at George Mason University. His service efforts have covered a broad range of activities, including, but not limited to, involvement in several continuing education workshops targeting state and local government officials; serve as president-elect of a state ASPA chapter; and served the academic community as a referee for a large number of peer-reviewed academic journals. He has also served on the Transportation Research Boards Task Force on Asset Management and has been Workshop Coordinator and Co-developer for programs of the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments, the Virginia Department of Transportation Technology Transfer Center,

the Maryland Technology Transfer Center, and the District of Columbia Department of Public Works Office of Transportation.

Michele Tantardini, Ph.D., Associate Professor, earned an undergraduate and master's degree in economics and management of public administration at Bocconi University (Milan, Italy). He earned his Ph.D. in Public Affairs at Florida International University (Miami, FL) with a dissertation on the relationship between performance information use and organizational social capital. Dr. Michele Tantardini has spent time researching the following topics: performance information use, social capital, and public service motivation. Among the others, his publications appeared in the following journals: Public Performance and Management Review, International Public Management Journal, Review of Public Personnel Administration, International Journal of Public Administration, Public Administration Quarterly, State and Local Government Review, and Teaching Public Administration. He is currently focusing his research efforts on exploring the manifold relations between religion, faith, spirituality, and public administration. His work on religion and public administration has been published in Public Policy and Administration, Administration & Society, Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Administration, and Public Money & Management. The monograph "Religion and Public Administration: An Introduction" was published by Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

Triparna Vasavada, Ph.D., Associate Professor, has research interests in disaster management, nonprofit management, gender and leadership, and social network analysis. She has published in various national and international journals such as Administration & Society, Public Administration Review and Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly. She has presented her work at numerous national and international conferences, including the Association for Research in Nonprofit and Voluntary Association (ARNOVA), Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM), American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) and International Society of Third Sector Research (ISTR). As a Ford Foundation Fellow, she has worked as co-managing editor for a leading journal in women studies–'Gender & Society'. She was assistant editor for Book News section in Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly News Letter. She has received numerous grants and awards including ARNOVA's emerging scholar award. She has served as session chair, panel coordinator, and a reviewer for various journals and conferences. She also serves as the Program Coordinator, Certificate Program in Nonprofit Administration, School of Public Affairs, Penn State Harrisburg.

8.3 School of Public Affairs Faculty & Staff Directory

School Director

Eileen M. Ahlin, Ph.D., Professor, Criminal Justice, Interim Director, School of Public Affairs
ema105@psu.edu

Staff

Autumn Wise

Administrative Support and Student Success Assistant, MPA Program
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717-948-6773

MPA Faculty

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Glenn Silverstein, Associate Teaching Professor of Public Administration (W159)
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OJS10@PSU.EDU, Office Tel. 717-948-6319

Michele Tantardini, Associate Professor of Public Administration (W159), Professor-in-Charge, MPA Program & Professor-in-Charge, Certificate Program in Policy Analysis and Evaluation
MUT98@PSU.EDU, Office Tel. 717-948-6350

Triparna Vasavada, Associate Professor of Public Administration (W160), Professor-in-Charge, Certificate Program in Non-Profit Administration
TBV1@PSU.EDU, Office Tel. 717-948-6363

Fax Number

School of Public Affairs
717-948-6320

9. Course Descriptions

Includes the course number followed by number of credits, description, and prerequisites if applicable

PADM 800 **Foundations of Public Administration** (3) Development of basic concepts and issues in public administration; administrative theory and public policy processes.

PADM 502 **Governmental Fiscal Decision Making** (3) Nature, function, and technique of governmental budgeting viewed as mechanism for allocating resources among alternative public uses.

PADM 503 (HADM 503) **Research Design** (3) Examination of research methodologies relevant to administration, planning, and public policy.

PADM 504 **Data Analysis for Policy and Administration** (3) The foundations of statistics, including summarizing and visualizing a single variable, testing bivariate relationships, and multiple regression as applied in policy and administration. It will prepare students to conduct their own independent research in PADM 594 and will provide students with analytical and evaluative skills valuable for a career in public administration.

PADM 505 **Human Resources in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors** (3) Concepts and approaches contributing to effective use of human resources in public and non-profit organizations; legal issues and requirements.

PADM 507 **Introduction to Public Policy Analysis** (3) Introduction to the analysis of public policy within its organizational and political contexts, including an emphasis on an economic perspective.

PADM 510 (HADM 510) **Organizational Behavior** (3) Examination of concepts of human behavior in formal organizations, systems analysis, conceptual models, and decision processes.

PADM 511 **Organizational Change and Development** (3) Theory of organizational change and development; case analysis of applications in actual situations.
Prerequisite: HADM 510 or PADM 510.

PADM 512 **Issues in Human Resources** (3) A survey of major human resource issues such as job stress, burnout, and the many forms of discrimination in organizations.
Prerequisite: PADM 505, and HADM 510 or PADM 510

PADM 514 **Public Organization and Managerial Consultation** (3) This course will review the theories, approaches, methods, and expected outcomes of organization and management consultation.
Prerequisite: PADM 800 or HADM 510 or PADM 510

PADM 515 (MNGMT 515) **Labor Management Relations** (3) Labor relations issues; collective bargaining agreement, negotiations, and administration; legal framework of collective bargaining; labor relations in larger social context.
Prerequisite: admission to MBA-MSIS Program

PADM 516 **Strategic Planning** (3) A survey of strategic planning purposes, approaches and methods, and expected outcomes in small and large organizations.

PADM 517 **Nonprofit Organizations: History and Evolution** (3) A study of the history, development and current role of nonprofit organizations as a distinguishing feature of American society.

PADM 518 **Nonprofit Organizations: Management and Leadership** (3) A study of the theoretical and practical issues involved in management and leadership of nonprofit organizations.

PADM 519 **Nonprofit Organizations: Resource Development and Management** (3) Process by which nonprofit organizations assure that resources are obtained and used effectively and efficiently toward the achievement of objectives.

PADM 521 **Performance Measurement and Management** (3) This course provides a foundation in performance measurement and management in the public sector. It is designed to enhance the ability of students to develop and use performance measurement systems for purposes of improving the management and performance of government programs; and to enhance their ability to think critically about result-oriented governance and managing for results.
Prerequisite: PADM 800

PADM 522 **Government Financial Management** (3) Theories and techniques of financial planning and control, with emphasis on their application in government and nonprofit agencies.
Prerequisite: PADM 502

PADM 523 **Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting** (3) Accounting, reporting, and auditing principles and procedures for public sector agencies and nonprofit organizations.
Prerequisite: PADM 502

PADM 532 **Urban Government** (3) Administrative processes and policy problems associated with managing urban communities; political, intergovernmental, fiscal, structural, and analytical concepts in urban government.

PADM 535 **Policy Analysis and Planning** (3) The course will cover the theoretical issues in and basic methods of policy analysis and planning (prospective policy analysis).
Prerequisite: PADM 503

PADM 550 **Policy and Program Evaluation** (3) The course will cover the theoretical issues in and basic methods of policy and program evaluation (retrospective policy analysis).
Prerequisite: PADM 503

PADM 556 **State Government Administration** (3) Study of structures, systems, processes, problems, and issues affecting state government administration; case studies, field observations, and research.

PADM 557 **Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations** (3) Study of the impact of a federal system of government on the administration of public functions. National-state-local dimensions.

PADM 558 **Legislative Processes** (3) Legislatures in American government, emphasizing comparative state legislatures: constitutional patterns; organization, administration; interaction with bureaucracy, constituencies, and organized interests.

PADM 570 **Scope and Methods of Public Administration** (3) Examination of theoretical approaches to public administration and the role of theory in the field.
Prerequisite: PADM 800

PADM 571 **Seminar in Organizational Theory** (3) Selected theories of organizations and their applications to the study of public organizations.
Prerequisite: PADM 510 or PADM 570

PADM 573 **Research and Theory in Public Policy and Governance** (3) An introduction to policy analysis, the stages of the policy process, key theoretical issues, and applications to real world problems.
Prerequisite: PADM 570 or permission of program

PADM 574 **Research and Theory in Public Management** (3) Theoretical and empirical bases for selected functions of public managers.
Prerequisite: PADM 570

PADM 575 **Advanced Research Design** (3) Experimental, quasi-experimental, survey, aggregate, and other research designs applied to organizational, managerial, and policy analysis research problems.
Prerequisite: PADM 503

PADM 576 **Multivariate Statistical Methods** (3) Multivariate statistical methods, with special emphasis on their use in organizational, managerial, and policy analysis research settings.
Prerequisite: PADM 575

PADM 591 **Readings in Public Administration** (3) Directed readings in selected areas of public administration.
Prerequisite: PADM 570 and permission of program

PADM 594 **Research Topics** (3) Supervised student activities on research projects identified on an individual or small-group basis.
Prerequisite: PADM 503

PADM 595 **Internship** (3) Supervised off-campus, nongroup instruction, including field experiences, practicums, or internships. Written and oral critique of activity required.
Prerequisite: PADM 503

PADM 596 **Individual Studies** (1-9) Creative projects, including nonthesis research, that are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.

PADM 597 **Special Topics** (1-9) Formal courses given on a topical or special interest subject which may be offered infrequently; several different topics may be taught in one year or term.

PADM 600 **Thesis Research** (1-15) No description.

PADM 497 **Special Topics** (1-9) Formal courses given infrequently to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject that may be topical or of special interest.

PADM 897 **Special Topics** (1-9) Formal courses given on a topical or special interest subject which may be offered infrequently; several different topics may be taught in one year or term.

10. Frequently Asked Questions about the MPA Program

10.1 Must I take the GRE? What are the admission requirements?

If you have a successful undergraduate record with a GPA of 3.0 or better (either as the cumulative GPA or for the last 60 hours of relevant course work), you do not have to take the GRE. However, GRE scores are required for some forms of financial aid, such as graduate assistantships, fellowships, etc. There is no fixed minimum score needed on the GRE. The Admissions Committee is looking for evidence that you are likely to be successful in a graduate program. A strong undergraduate transcript, along with strong letters of recommendation and statement of purpose, provides such evidence.

10.2 Will any of the credits count toward my degree if I am later admitted?

The graduate courses will count toward your MPA degree if you are admitted to the program. A student can take up to 15 credits of graduate courses at Penn State as a non-degree student and have them count toward a degree. Students may also petition for the transfer of up to 10 graduate credits from an accredited university. These credits may not have been counted towards an earned degree or certificate. Pre-admission screening of transfer credits is not possible.

10.3 When and where are classes delivered?

Classes are offered in residence at Penn State Harrisburg as well as online through World Campus. All residential Penn State Harrisburg graduate classes are scheduled in the evenings. Not all courses are offered on each campus every semester; please consult the course schedules for each campus.

10.4 How often is each course offered?

All core courses are scheduled at least once every academic year, both in residence and online. Classes are also sometimes scheduled in the summer. Elective courses are usually offered at least once a year, some are offered once every three semesters, and some are given once every two years.

10.5 How often does each class meet?

Residential classes meet one night per week (Monday-Thursday) from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. in spring and fall. In summer session, classes meet two nights a week. Online courses follow Penn State's semester schedule, with weekly lessons. All online courses are asynchronous. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in class activities throughout the week.

10.6 I travel a lot, what happens if I miss a class?

If you know ahead of time that you are going to be traveling, inform your instructor before you travel. If you will miss several classes in a given semester, meet with the instructor to see whether he or she would advise that you not take the course in that particular semester.

10.7 If I am a part-time student, how long will it take to finish the program?
We encourage part-time students to take three to five courses per year, including summers. At this rate a student will take three to four years to complete the program. Please note that the program requests a student to finish the whole program within 5 years.

10.8 If I am a full-time student, how long will it take?
Full-time students typically take 9 - 12 credits per semester and complete the program within 12 months to 18 months.

10.9 I can take only one course a semester, and I can't take any summer courses because my spouse travels a lot. I don't want to spend forever getting a master's degree. What can I do to finish in two to three years?
Penn State MPA students enjoy the flexibility of taking courses at either our Harrisburg campus or through World Campus. Online courses may offer you the ability to complete your degree in a timely manner.

10.10 How many credits are required for the program?
The program requires 39 credits which includes a 3-credit internship. Students who have had the relevant professional experience are not required to take the internship, so the program for them requires just 36 credits.

10.11 Is there a capstone course?
Yes. The capstone course in PADM 594 which is offered in residence and on-line each semester, but not typically during the summer.

10.12 Can I take courses outside the MPA program?
With the approval of your Advisor, you may take some elective courses outside the MPA program.

10.13 Is there a particular order in which I should be taking courses within the MPA program?
All students are required to take PADM 800 first and PADM 594 last. It is recommended that you take core courses first. Please refer to the Course Road Map and course checklist to plan and track your progress (both are included with your welcome email and in the appendix of this document).

10.14 May I take 400-level courses?
The MPA program allows up to six credits at the 400-level, with advisor approval, but graduate courses are preferred.

10.15 It's been 10 years since I took any course at all, and I am apprehensive about course work.
We recognize that students may be concerned about returning to the discipline of studying and preparing papers. Many of our students have been away from courses for 10 years or more. After an initial adjustment period, most of them do quite well.

10.16 Should I plan on taking the required courses in order and then take the electives?

We recommend that you start with PADM 800. After that it is all right to take a mixture of required courses and electives. Be sure to be attentive to prerequisites. Please refer to the Course Road Map in the appendix of this document.

10.17 Tell me about the capstone course.

PADM 594 is the capstone course for Master's degree students in the MPA program. The class builds on the knowledge components and skills students have gained in prior courses. The purpose of PADM 594 is to enhance additional competencies in problem identification and problem solving, professional writing and oral presentation, and group research and presentation skills.

10.18 When should I take PADM 594?

During your last semester of the program.

10.19 How do I register?

You can enroll through LionPATH (https://tutorials.lionpath.psu.edu/public/S_AddClass/).

10.20 How do I drop a course?

You can drop courses through LionPATH (https://tutorials.lionpath.psu.edu/public/S_DropClass/).

10.21 Will I get a refund if I drop a course?

https://www.registrar.psu.edu/registration/adding-dropping-auditing-courses.cfm
Important Financial Considerations

Changing your overall number of credits after your course begins can have financial implications. When you drop a course and change your overall number of credits during the drop/add period or the late drop period, it can impact your tuition, fees, student aid, and refunds. Additionally, during the late drop period, the University assesses a $6 per course processing fee for any course dropped or added.
During the pre-semester period, you can add and drop courses as many times as needed to create a suitable schedule without financial implications.
After classes begin, if you drop and then add the same number of credits you still may be assessed a tuition penalty. Only if you drop and add the same number of credits on the same day before midnight Eastern Time, will you receive $0 in tuition adjustments.

Bursar Office (WC): Monday-Friday 8a-5p EST Phone:814.863.8300
Email: bfo@outreah.psu.edu
Bursar Office (HB): Monday- Friday 8a- 4:30p EST Phone: 717-948-6009
Email: hbgbursar@psu.edu

10.22 The semester hasn't started yet, how do I drop a course or change my Schedule?

Course Drop Periods
Penn State maintains three periods relating to course drops: the pre-semester period, the drop/add period, and the late drop period. At any time you can discuss dropping a course with your Academic Adviser. The drop periods are always available on the academic calendar: http://registrar.psu.edu/academic_calendar/calendar_

Pre-Semester Drop Period
The pre-semester period for dropping a course begins on the first day of scheduling and ends the day before the semester starts. Students use the same Registration form to make changes to their schedule. Course registration form

10.23 I am taking too many courses and need a withdrawal form for one of them:

Withdrawal will terminate enrollment in all instruction for current and future semesters. This scenario is a Course Drop. See #2 above. Many people confuse Withdrawal with Drop.

10.24 I have a change in schedule with my work or family and need to take a semester off but plan to return very soon (this prior to semester starting):

You can simply refrain from registering for classes and you will become inactive. To start taking classes again, submit a Resume Study form.
https://gradschool.psu.edu/admissions/change-or-resume-study

10.25 I have a major crisis or change in my personal-professional-family life and must withdraw from the program. I am unsure if I will return:

The Withdrawal Process for Graduate Students

The process of a withdrawal is defined as dropping all registered courses for the current semester or session. Officially withdrawing from the university will also cause a cancellation of scheduled and registered courses for any enrollment- readmission is not necessary.

Do not confuse withdrawal with

- Dropping courses – dropping SOME but not all of your currently enrolled courses.
- Not Returning next semester - finishing the current semester with no definite plans to return to the Penn State.
- Retroactive Withdrawal – initiating the withdrawal process after the last day of classes.

When a Student May Withdraw
A withdrawal may be processed beginning with the first day of classes and through the last day of classes (before the final exam period begins). If the semester has not begun and you have decided that you will not be attending the University, you should cancel your registration. If the final exam period has begun, you will need to initiate a retroactive withdrawal request.

What to Consider before Initiating the Withdrawal Process
A withdraw will delay normal degree progress, may affect academic programming and may have financial implications for students with loans or receiving assistantship, etc. Therefore, it is suggested that a degree seeking student contact his-her academic advisor to discuss alternatives to withdrawing before proceeding.
Indicating “Spring”, “Fall” or “Summer” as a effected semester on the withdrawal form will result in the student’s status changing to non-degree status(regardless of whether that student was attending as a degree student or a non-degree student) for the following and future semester.to return to degree status, a student who withdraws must seek readmission to the graduate degree program by submitting a complete Resume Study-Change of Graduate Degree or Major Foam to Graduate Enrollment Service.

Indicating “Summer-only” as the effective semester on the withdrawal form will retain all courses a student as scheduled or registered for the upcoming fall semester. Readmission is not required following a “summer-only” withdrawal.
Ph.D. candidates who have passed the comprehensive examination must registered continuously for each fall and spring semester (beginning with the first semester after passing the comprehensive examination and ending with the passing of the final oral defense)in order to comply with the Graduate School Policy of continuous registration.

How to Withdraw
Graduate students must initiate a withdrawal by submitting a Withdrawal Form.

- Students attending other campuses should submit withdrawal form to their respective campus Registration’s office.

Retroactive Withdrawal Requests
If the final exam period for the current semester has begun, or if you are seeking to withdrawal from a previous semester, you will need a initiate a retroactive withdrawal request. **Please make the request as early as possible.**Follow the appropriate instructions below to do so.

Degree students – Contact your academic advisor of study to discuss the possibility of petitioning the office of Graduate Enrollment Services for a retroactive withdrawal. Graduate Enrollment Services requires the following documentation in order to consider the request:

- A complete Withdrawal Form. Complete this online and print: http://registrar.psu.edu/student_forms/withdrawal_form.cfm
- Strong, documentation justification from the department head-graduate officer supporting the request for retroactive withdrawal.
- Supporting documentation from each instructor of the course(s) from which you are withdrawing.
- The graduate program staff will staple this documentation together and send it to the office of Graduate Enrollment Services for consideration.

10.26. I am interested in Financial Aid, who should I contact?

Students should contact the World Campus Bursar's office. The MPA program is not in any way affiliated with tuition payments, aid applications or disbursement, financial holds on account or tuition refunds.
Bursar office (WC): Monday-Friday 8a-5p EST Phone: 814.863.8300
Email: bfo@outreach.psu.edu
Fax: 814.863.1385
Bursar Office (HB): Monday- Friday 8a- 4:30p EST Phone: 717-948-6009
Email: hbgbursar@psu.edu

10.27. When will I receive my tuition bill?

Bursar office (WC): Monday-Friday 8a-5p EST Phone: 814.863.8300
Email: bfo@outreach.psu.edu
Fax: 814.863.1385
Bursar Office (HB): Monday- Friday 8a- 4:30p EST Phone: 717-948-6009
Email: hbgbursar@psu.edu

10.28. How long do I have to pay my tuition bill?

Bursar office (WC): Monday-Friday 8a-5p EST Phone: 814.863.8300
Email: bfo@outreach.psu.edu
Fax: 814.863.1385
Bursar Office (HB): Monday- Friday 8a- 4:30p EST Phone: 717-948-6009
Email: hbgbursar@psu.edu

Appendix:

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM
COURSE REQUIREMENT CHECK LIST

Name:

REQUIRED COURSES (7 courses, 21 credits)

____ PADM 800 Foundations of Public Organization
____ PADM 502 Governmental Fiscal Decision Making
____ PADM 503 Research Methods __*RECR Program/CITI Online Training
____ PADM 504 Data Analysis for Policy and Administration
____ PADM 505 Human Resources in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors
____ PADM 507 Introduction to Public Policy Analysis
____ PADM 510 Organizational Behavior

FOUR ELECTIVE COURSES (4 courses, 12 credits)
Courses outside of PADM must get advisor approval.

____ PADM 511 Organizational Change and Development
____ PADM 516 Strategic Planning
____ PADM 518: Management and Leadership
____ PADM 519 Nonprofit Organizations: Resource Development and Management
____ PADM 521 Performance Measurement and Management
____ PADM 522 Government Financial Management
____ PADM 523 Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting
____ PADM 535 Policy Analysis and Planning
____ PADM 550 Policy and Program Evaluation

MASTERS PROJECT/CAPSTONE COURSE (3 credits)

____ PADM 594 Research Topics (To be taken during the last semester in the program)

INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENT (3 CREDITS)

____ Waived
____ PADM 595 Internship

Total Credits for MPA:
Waived Internship: 36 credits
Required Internship: 39 credits

MPA program recommends a full-time student taking no more than 9 - 12 credits per semester (3 - 4 courses per semester). If a student plans to take more than 12

credits in a semester, they must get approval from their academic advisor beforehand.

Master of Public Administration

Course Road Map

Fulltime (9 credits per semester)			
Semester 1	PADM 800	PADM 502	PADM 503
Semester 2	PADM 504	PADM 505	PADM 507
Semester 3	PADM 510	Elective 1	Elective 2
Semester 4	Elective 3	Elective 4	PADM 594

Part-time, 6 credits per semester		
Semester 1	PADM 800	PADM 502
Semester 2	PADM 503	PADM 505
Semester 3	PADM 504	PADM 507
Semester 4	PADM 510	Elective 1
Semester 5	Elective 2	Elective 3
Semester 6	Elective 4	PADM 594

Part time 3 credits per semester	
Semester 1	PADM 800
Semester 2	PADM 502
Semester 3	PADM 503
Semester 4	PADM 504
Semester 5	PADM 505
Semester 6	PADM 507
Semester 7	PADM 510
Semester 8	Elective 1
Semester 9	Elective 2
Semester 10	Elective 3
Semester 11	Elective 4
Semester 12	PADM 594

1. MPA students must take PADM 800 in the first semester. PADM 594 must be taken during the last semester.
2. The above tables are only suggestions. Courses may be taken in any order, with the exception of PADM 800 and 594. It is recommended that you take core courses early in the program. It is also recommended that you take core courses in the Fall and Spring semester, since not all courses are offered in the Summer semesters.
3. Non-PADM Elective courses must get written approval from your Academic Advisor.
4. If you plan to take more than 12-credits in a semester, you must get written approval from your Academic Advisor.