

# **GRADUATE MANUAL**

## **MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM**

Department of Government  
Heritage Hall 402  
University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Birmingham, Alabama 35294-3350  
2.5.934.9680, Fax 205.975.5712  
<http://www.uab.edu/mpa>



# **MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Welcome to UAB's Master of Public Administration (MPA) program. The field of public administration focuses on the work of public and not-for-profit organizations. Through their role in policy formulation and implementation, public administrators markedly affect the success or failure of public programs and do much to shape who gets what. The field of public administration seeks not only to study policy and management; it also explores the normative and ethical issues that intersect with operations. Issues related to accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, representation, and democracy are among those considered.

## **The MPA Program Mission at UAB**

In line with the mission of the University, the MPA program is committed to excellence in graduate education through teaching, research and service. The program focuses on building the next generation of responsible decision makers by enhancing their intellectual capacities through knowledge and skills provided within the [NASPAA](#)-based MPA curriculum.

## **Program Objective**

As an essential component of an urban research university, the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham provides a department-based multi-disciplinary faculty dedicated to the advancement of the public service through teaching, research, and service. The Master of Public Administration Program prepares individuals for positions of leadership in the public and nonprofit sectors. It is a professional graduate degree for both pre-career students and in-service administrators. The program is designed to develop the insights and skills needed to plan and formulate policy, and to organize, manage, and implement programs and operations. Graduates tend to cluster in three general areas managers, analysts, and policy specialists.

The MPA curriculum is designed to ensure that students: (1) understand the political, economic, social and legal context of the public service; (2) understand and appreciate the transcending values of ethics/morality and diversity in the public service; (3) achieve substantial competence in (i) policy-making processes; (ii) administrative theory and behavior, (iii) human resource management; (iv) budgeting; (v) urban development and community planning; (vi) research design and statistical methods, and (vii) information management in the public and nonprofit sector. To accomplish these objectives, students complete an eight-course core curriculum that provides a foundation for more specialized coursework as well as long-term development and advancement in public service management and leadership positions.

## **Degree Requirements**

Students in the MPA program must complete a total of 52 semester hours or the equivalent, with an overall grade average of at least B. Six of those hours are earned in an internship placement, although that requirement may be waived for students who have full-time paid work experience in public or nonprofit agencies. Previous graduate work at UAB or another NASPAA accredited MPA program may be credited toward the degree if it is directly applicable. Students may select the thesis option or the non-thesis option. For students who are interested in both public administration and the delivery of public health services, a coordinated [MPA/MPH dual degree](#) is offered; for students who are interested in both public administration and the law, a coordinated [MPA/J.D dual degree](#) is offered. For non-traditional students interested in managing non-profit organizations the program offers a [Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management](#).

## **Admission Requirements**

Because of its multi-disciplinary nature, persons from all undergraduate majors are considered for admission to the program. The program adheres to a standardized admission score based on candidates GPA (times 100) and GRE (average of verbal and quantitative sections) for admission. A combined score of 800 is required for full admission. For full admission applicants are expected to have achieved an undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 and an average score of 500 or better on each of the two sections (verbal and quantitative) of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) [score:  $3.0 \times 100 + 500 = 800$ ]. Persons failing to meet these admission standards may be considered for admission on probation. Candidates may be accepted on probation if the standardized admission score is between 700 and 799. Candidates whose standardized admission score fall between 650 and 699 will need majority of the MPA faculty approval to get admitted to the program on probation. Candidates whose score fall below 650 are not accepted in the program. Three letters of reference are also required to enter the program. Application for admission should be made to the UAB Graduate School (UAB, Birmingham, Alabama 35294-1150; telephone 205-934-8227) or online <http://www.uab.edu/graduate> Admissions will be made each semester.

## **Financial Aid**

The Department of Government has four graduate assistantships, which can be awarded during any semester as vacancies occur. The MPA program also has a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide up to three two-year fellowships based on financial need. In addition, every year at least one MPA student is awarded a cash award for academic excellence from the MPA Alumni Association. Other financial resources are available through the Office of Student Financial Aid.

## **Thesis versus non-thesis option**

Students may elect to take either the thesis option or the non-thesis option. In the non-thesis option (Plan II), students complete 45 hours of coursework in addition to the 6

credit hour internship and one (1) hour of Graduate Research Paper (GRP). Students generally take GRP in the last semester. In the thesis option, students complete 36 hours of coursework in addition to the internship, four (4) hours of independent study for (proposal defense) and 6 hours of thesis credit. An oral defense of the thesis is required. Students who are interested in pursuing the thesis option should notify their advisors as early in the course of study as possible.

## Internships

An internship is required to provide students an experiential basis for linking their class work to practical experience. Students with prior experience in a managerial position may be exempt from the internship requirement. Students desiring to exempt the internship requirement should make their request in writing, stating the grounds for the request to the Graduate Director of Public Administration. The Graduate Director will decide whether the applicant's experience meets the department's requirement. Student resume should be attached to the request.

Students who must complete an internship should consult with the Graduate Internship Coordinator, Dr. Donna Handley. The Coordinator should be notified at least one semester in advance about internship placements. The Graduate Director will serve as preceptor during the internship and will set forth the basic requirements of the internship assignment. **See Internship Guidelines for more information.**

## Assistantships and Scholarships

The department awards four graduate assistantships on a competitive basis according to applicants' academic record. To be eligible students must be fully admitted and not be employed. The assistantship includes a monthly stipend and tuition assistance. The total yearly stipend (2000-01) is \$10,000 plus one-half of the cost of tuition and fees. In return, the student is assigned to work with one or more professors in the department and will assist them with projects. Generally, students in this position will work 20 hours per week.

The MPA program also has a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide up to four two-year fellowships based on financial need. In addition, every year at least one MPA student is awarded the *Ron Casey Fellowship* based on his/her academic performance. Also, the MPA Alumni Association provides scholarship to the outstanding student of the year. Other financial resources are available through the Office of Student Financial Aid.

## **Advising**

PLAN THOROUGHLY AND CAREFULLY. Each student is assigned with a Faculty Advisor once they are admitted in the program. Students should carefully study the Graduate Bulletin and course schedules in order to be thoroughly acquainted with courses related to their fields of interest. Students should see their advisors during their first quarter for assistance and comments regarding job opportunities and specific courses, and for help in planning their program. Students should schedule a meeting at least once per semester with their faculty advisors to pre-register, update plans and course program. At least one semester prior to graduation students should contact the Administrative Associate and the Director of the MPA program to complete the required graduation forms.

## **Course Load**

A full-time course load is 9 semester hours. A student is considered part-time when enrolled for less than 9 hours. All MPA classes are offered from 7:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Since the majority of MPA students work full-time, this schedule makes it possible to complete the graduate program without having to leave work.

## **Course sequence**

All core courses should be finished before taking electives or specialization. However, for summer this rule does not apply. Variation to this rule is possible with permission from the faculty advisor. See the course sequence attached to this document.

## **Withdrawal from a Course**

If withdrawal from a course is necessary, you must obtain a withdrawal form from the Registrar's Office, complete the required information, and have the instructor sign it. Depending on the time of withdrawal, you may be required to pay for a part or all of the class. The deadline for withdrawing without having to pay full tuition and fees is usually at the beginning of the quarter. If you withdraw before the midterm, the transcript will show only a "W" for the course, which will not affect the Grade Point Average.

## **Mentoring**

The MPA program enjoys the support of an active MPA Alumni Association that works to bring scholars to speak as well as to make contributions to the program. Alumni serve as mentors for current MPA students. The mentor program links a student with a professional in the field who offers advice and guidance about career paths, and helps the

student learn what skills and experience they will need in order to advance in their chosen field.

## **Newsletter**

The MPA program, in concert with the Department of Government and Public Service publishes a newsletter that is sent to all MPA students. In the Newsletter a student can find out about what is new in the department, any speakers or classes of interest, class offerings, updates on graduates, as well as what professors are working on.

## **Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society for Public Administration**

Students maintaining the highest academic standards may be inducted into the UAB Chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha, the honor society for public administration. Inductions are held each year in conjunction with a spring reception. Contact Pi Alpha Alpha faculty advisor Dr. Michael Howell-Moroney for more information.

## **MPA Student Association**

The UAB MPA Student Association is a forum for students to enhance their educational experience and the MPA program at UAB through student contribution and networking. The MPA Student Association will meet once a month from 6:00pm – 6:50pm. Meetings will offer an opportunity to host guest speakers, provide an outlet for feedback regarding the program, and provide an opportunity for improvement to the MPA program. Additionally, the Student Association meetings will provide an opportunity for networking both among students, and among students and professionals in the public service. Student networking will be notably of value as many students of the UAB MPA program are working professionals. Other possible activities of the Student Association will include group community service projects and informal mixers. Join MPA Student Discussion site at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UAB\\_MPA](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UAB_MPA).

## **General Assumptions and Expectations**

The MPA faculty assumes that graduate students have accepted the fact that much more is expected of them than was true in their undergraduate days. The "more" as used here is not quantifiable, but perhaps can best be expressed by example. The responsibilities of the undergraduate tend to be framed by limits of the particular classes in which he/she is enrolled. The student is generally told what to read and when to read it, has research topics assigned, and meets obligations by successfully passing a written examination at the end of the semester.

Graduate students, on the other hand, have a field of study and it then becomes their responsibility -- with guidance from their faculty advisors -- to explore that field in depth.

The student has the responsibility for framing questions and locating relevant materials. In effect, the burden shifts from the instructor to the student -- the student must learn the field.

Finally, the faculty assumes a level of maturity on the part of the graduate student that makes unnecessary the type of oversight that directs the relationship between faculty and undergraduates. In a very particular sense this new relationship can be demonstrated by the fact that it is you -- not your professor -- who is responsible for seeing to it that all the requirements of the Graduate School are met.

This sense of responsibility works in both directions: Graduate students have a right to expect advice and consultation from each member of the faculty in regard to coursework or professional and academic matters in general.

In shortly after each class begins, students should be informed of their responsibilities (class attendance, examinations, research papers, etc.). The student also has the right to expect the instructor to maintain reasonable office hours for the purpose of consultation in regard to coursework. For more information about your rights and responsibilities consult [policies and procedure manual](#).

## **Administration of the Graduate Program**

The Graduate Director in Public Administration assumes primary responsibility for directing, monitoring, and evaluating the graduate program in Public Administration. The director is the official representative of the program to the Graduate School. The MPA faculty plays a particularly critical role in administering the MPA program. In this regard, the Director and the MPA faculty participates in curriculum planning and is responsible for recruiting MPA students, ensuring advising on their programs of study, monitoring internships requirements, finding job placements and generally assuring that the MPA program operates in each student's best interest. The Graduate Director as the Principal Representative also makes sure that the MPA program is in compliance with standards promulgated by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA).

## **Academic Honesty**

No graduate student may submit the same term paper to more than one professor without the explicit knowledge and permission of the professors concerned. Joint term papers may be written and submitted if the professors involved grant explicit and prior approval.

Perhaps the most important problem that arises with regard to ethical standards is that the student must be careful to distinguish his/her own work and ideas from those of others. If such care is not exercised, plagiarism, whether intentional or not, is often the result. In writing a research paper, the greatest danger occurs when one cites the ideas or interpretations of another without proper documentation. In general, it is not necessary to

document events or occurrences which are common knowledge; however, it is necessary to footnote any interpretations of these events which are not your own. Perhaps at times it is not always easy to distinguish original ideas from those of others, but in general, a good rule to follow is when in doubt, give credit to other sources.

In addition to the standards specified above, students should also exercise care when sharing examination questions. If the questions are of a privileged nature, i.e., those examinations that will be administered to other students on a subsequent date, students violate the norms of academic honesty by sharing the questions. Examinations used in the past may frequently be used as study guides, but instructions regarding privilege must be respected.

Other branches of academic honesty include altering or effecting the altering of grade reports, grade-change forms, or any other grade record device. Similarly, no student should claim a degree that has not been earned or for which requirements have not been completed. Such invention or falsification of academic credentials will be met with the most severe disciplinary measures.

## **Graduate School Probation**

If students fail to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 for any semester, they will receive a warning letter from the Graduate School. If the grade point average remains below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters, the Graduate School will place them on academic probation. Students on probation must then make a 3.0 or better quarterly average for each succeeding quarter that their overall cumulative average is below 3.0. Students are no longer on probation when their cumulative average is 3.0 or above. If they make below a 3.0 average while on probation, they are dismissed. When students repeat a course, the last grade will be utilized to calculate their cumulative grade point average.

## **Incompletes**

Grades of "Incomplete" must be removed before the end of the next semester. If the work is not completed by the end of the next quarter, the "I" converts to an "F."

## **Student Loans**

Any query on student loans should be directed to the Student Financial Aid Office in Hill University Center, Room 250, located at the corner of 14th Street and University Boulevard (8th Avenue South). The phone number is 934-8223.

### Course Offerings

Course	Fall	Spring	Summer
Required (core)	<b>600</b> <b>602</b> <b>605</b> <b>606*</b>	<b>601</b> <b>603</b> <b>604</b> <b>607**</b>	
<b>Specialization</b>			
Nonprofit Management	<b>689 (JH)</b>	<b>678 (JH)</b>	672 (Grady) 676 (DH)
Available Electives	<b>671 (DH), 691 (JH), 677 (AH), 675 (JS), 668 (DH)</b>	<b>690 (Leadership-DH), 690 (Faith-based-JS), 674 (AH), 662 (JH), 683 (HM)</b>	690 (E-Gov-AH) <sup>§</sup> , 695 (Grant writing-JH), 667 (Intoccia), 681 (HM), 695-(Find Jobs-JS)
Community Planning and Development	<b>691 (JH) 677 (HM)</b>	<b>674 (AH)</b>	681 (HM)
Available Electives	<b>671 (DH), 689 (JH), 675 (JS), 668 (DH)</b>	<b>690 (Leadership-DH), 690 (Faith-based-JS), 678 (JH), 662 (JH), 683 (HM)</b>	690 (E-Gov-AH) <sup>§</sup> , 695 (Grant writing-JH), 667 (Intoccia), 672 (Grady), 676 (DH), 695-(Find Jobs-JS)
Public Management and Policy	<b>675 (JS) 668 (DH)</b>	<b>662 (Gaston) 683 (HM)</b>	
Available Electives	<b>671 (DH), 691 (JH), 677 (HM), 689 (JH)</b>	<b>690 (Leadership-DH), 690 (Faith-based-JS), 674 (AH), 678 (JH)</b>	690 (E-Gov-AH) <sup>§</sup> , 695 (Grant writing-JH), 672 (Grady), 676 (DH), 681 (HM), 667 (Intoccia), 695-(Find Jobs-JS)

\*Should be taken in the first term

\*\*Pre-requisite 606

§ Alternate with 695 (Decision making GIS-AH)

AH: A. Haque; DH: D. Handley; HM: M. Howell-Moroney; JH: J. Hall (replacement for Jeremy Hall); JS: J. Slack



Master of Public Administration Graduation Checklist PLAN II  
University of Alabama at Birmingham

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT # \_\_\_\_\_ Term \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE	DESCRIPTION	Date Completed	Grades	Hrs
<b>MPA Core 25 Hours</b>				
MPA 600	Environments of Public Service	Fall		
MPA 601	The Public Policymaking Process	Spring		
MPA 602	Administrative Theory and Behavior	Fall		
MPA 603	Public and Nonprofit Budgeting	Spring		
MPA 604	Human Resource Management	Spring		
MPA 605	Managing Information in the Public Sector	Fall		
MPA 606	Research Design	Fall		
MPA 607	Statistical Analysis	Spring		
MPA 697	Capstone Project/Graduation Research (not required for thesis option)			
<b>Nonprofit Management Option 12 Hours</b>				
MPA 672	Nonprofit Management	Summer		
MPA 689	Program Evaluation	Fall		
MPA 678	Strategic Planning	Spring		
MPA 676	Financial Management in the Nonprofit Sector	Summer		
<b>Community Planning and Development Option 12 Hours</b>				
MPA 681	Local Government Planning	Summer		
MPA 691	Economic Development	Fall		
MPA 674	Geographic Information Systems	Spring		
MPA 677	Urban Policy and Administration	Fall		
<b>Public Policy and Management Option 12 Hours</b>				
MPA 662	State and Local Government Administration	Spring		
MPA 675	Ethics and Morality in Public Service	Fall		
MPA 683	Public Economics	Spring		
MPA 668	Intergovernmental Relations	Fall		
<b>Plus three electives from other specializations or from the following listed courses 9 hrs</b>				
MPA 667	Administrative Law	Summer		
MPA 671	Marketing and Fundraising	Fall		
MPA 690	Seminar in Public Service Issues (three separate courses):			
	Administrative Leadership	Spring		
	E-Government	Summer B		
	Faith-based Nonprofit Organization	Spring		
MPA 696	Independent Study (thesis option only)			
MPA 695	Grant Writing & Management	May session		
	Decision making using GIS	Summer A		
<b>Internship (Waived for students with non-profit or public agency experience. Contact Internship coordinator or program director for waiver) 6 Hours</b>				
MPA 698	Internship in Public Administration	Term		
Circle this box if waived	Position Title:	Agency Title		
	TOTAL PENDING CREDIT HRS	TOTAL COMPLETED CREDIT HRS		

Circle One: The Student has completed the total number of credit hours to complete the degree in MPA, MPA/MPH, MPA/JD

Program Director \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

46-52 Credit Hrs MPA

**Course Syllabus (MPA 697)**  
**Graduate Research Paper (GRP)**  
**Master of Public Administration Program**

Course Objective

The Graduate Research Paper is a tangible demonstration of student competence in the MPA program. The research work shows the student has the skill and decision-making knowledge to apply the core areas of public administration.

Course Requirements

A completed research paper as outlined below is required at the end of the course work. All students enrolled in the GRP course must have already taken MPA 606: Research Methods and MPA 607: Statistical Analysis. All students enrolled in GRP for the current semester will present a proposal to the MPA faculty at the beginning of the semester. This proposal must be approved before students can commence with their GRP.

If a student's proposal is not sufficiently developed to warrant faculty approval at the beginning of the term, this may result in the student receiving an "I" for the GRP in the current semester and the proposal will be delayed until the following semester.

Therefore, it is very important that you develop a sound, detailed, neat and professional proposal.

**Proposal Requirements:** Your research proposal should be 1-2 pages in length. It should be typed and double-spaced. You need to make sure that your proposal has impeccable grammar and spelling. Do not think of this as "just a draft," the appearance and content of your proposal will ultimately decide whether you can pursue the GRP in the current semester, so you need to do your best work on this.

Your GRP proposal should include the three major sections below.

- I. Proposed GRP Title
- II. Research question/hypothesis- Write a paragraph or two that provides your research question and justifies its importance.
  - Provide a written research question and hypothesis (if applicable)
  - Why is this question an important one to the field of public administration?
  - How does this research fit into existing research in the area?
  - What is the theoretical framework that guides your research?
  - What is the usefulness of this research? How will it aide decision makers or public managers? Why is investigating this question useful to public administration?
- III. Research Design- Write a paragraph or two that explains your proposed research design for the project.
  - What data will you use? What are the units of analysis? Will you be collecting the data or are you using and existing data sources? Remember collecting new data almost always involves IRB approval.
  - What methods to you propose to use in analyzing the data?
  - What are the variables in your model?
  - What do you expect to find? Why would these findings be important?

**Expectations for GRP Drafts and Final Papers**

Students wanting to earn credit for their GRPs need to take this project seriously. That means that even the earliest draft of the GRP handed into a faculty member for review should be of the highest quality, meaning that it contains impeccable grammar and spelling and is professional in appearance. If your paper is seriously deficient in terms of quality, you may have to wait until the next semester to complete the GRP. Good projects take time to produce. You should not expect that a “rush job” will be sufficient. In addition to high standards of quality, students must turn their papers in by the prescribed deadlines below. If students do not adhere to these dates, their projects will not be approved for the current semester and they will have to wait until the following semester to complete their GRP.

You will effectively have about 11 weeks to write your GRP before the final draft is due for submission to your committee Chair. Therefore, you will need to allocate your time wisely in order to get the project done on time.

#### Spring 2009 Timetable

Date	Event/Deadline
January 2009	Preliminary meeting to evaluate student proposals. You must bring your typed proposal to this meeting for evaluation. Only approved proposals can move forward in the current semester.
January to April	You and the committee chair will work out an individualized work schedule. While there may be some flexibility here, the deadlines for you to get your final papers to the chair and committee are not flexible.
April 2009	Final copy of paper due to chair
April , 2009	Final paper out to committee

Guidelines for the Graduation Research Paper (GRP)  
*Approved by MPA Faculty May 2007*

The Graduation Research Paper (GRP) is the capstone project for the MPA degree. This paper has an applied focus on a problem relevant to the practice or study of public administration.

We suggest using one of the four following formats as approaches to your paper.

**Format 1: A “Traditional” Original Research Paper**

This format is the one that you were taught in Research Design class. A student writing this paper would ask a specific research question, design a study and gather original data (or secondary data), and analyze the data in order to answer the question. Your research question should focus on a topic area of importance in public administration. An example of this approach would be a paper focused on examining attitudes toward the Americans with Disabilities Act in Alabama using survey data.

*Suggested Outline*

I. Introduction

This section gives an overview of the main themes in the paper and gives a brief preview of what the essay will cover. This section also clearly states the research question(s) that the paper will address. As a general rule, you should write your introduction LAST.

II. Literature Review

This section provides an organized exposition of the ideas and scholarly sources that the student used to develop his/her own ideas for the paper. The literature review should provide a summary of what scholarly work has been done on the student’s area of research and also should demonstrate *how* the student’s work compliments or fits into this existing body of knowledge.

III. Data and Methods

In this section, the student writes a description of the data that she gathered for the project along with a description of the methodology used to analyze the data and sampling procedure.

NOTE: Remember, if you will be using any data from interviews with human subjects or observations of human subjects in your analysis, you must first get IRB approval.

#### IV. Empirical Findings

This section is the heart of a traditional research paper. Here you will report the findings from your data analysis. In this part of the paper, you need to draw clear connections between your original research question and the empirical findings. What is the result? How do these empirical findings answer your question?

In this section you also should address any conflicting evidence or limitations in your study. While students think that this weakens their work, it actually strengthens it. By humbly acknowledging the limitations of your work, the reader gets a “truer” picture of your research.

#### V. Conclusion

This section should summarize your paper and its major findings. You should also speculate about the directions future research ought to take in light of your findings. **\*\*IMPORTANT:** Your conclusion should also devote some significant space to a discussion of the implications of your work for decision makers or decision making in the topic area. For example if your paper found that there is a relationship between civic engagement and economic development what implications does that have for decision makers interested in promoting economic development? What implications does it have for policy designed to enhance civic engagement? What are the broader implications for the field of public administration?

### **Format 2: An Applied Organizational Case Study**

Students that wish to use their coursework knowledge and apply it to a real organizational context would use this format. An example of this approach might be an application of Mintzberg’s model of organizational structure to a public agency.

#### *Suggested Outline*

##### I. Introduction

This section gives an overview of the main themes in the paper and gives a brief preview of what the essay will cover. This section also clearly states the research question(s) that the paper will address. As a general rule, you should write your introduction LAST.

##### II. Literature Review

This section provides an organized exposition of the ideas and scholarly sources that the student used to develop his/her own ideas for the paper. The literature review should provide a summary of what scholarly work has been done on the student’s area of research and also should demonstrate *how* the student’s work compliments or fits into this existing body of knowledge.

### III. Description of Organizational Context

In this section, the student writes a detailed description of the organization that is the object of the analysis. This section should describe the organization broadly and then delve into the specific dimensions of the organization that are the focus of the student's research.

NOTE: A student may choose to use some formal data gathering method, such as semi-structured interviews, in order to gain better understanding of an organization. Remember, if you will be using any data from interviews with human subjects or observation of human or organizational behavior in your analysis, you must first get IRB approval.

### IV. Application of Theory to Organization

This section of the essay should contain the meat of your argument. Here you should draw linkages between the theoretical discussion in your literature review and this specific organization. Does this organization help us to understand how some theory operates? Does it show that there are important caveats to a theory?

You must develop a structured and logical argument in this section. Usually in essay of this type, a student chooses between 3-5 "major points" that they wish to support. A common tool used for presenting ideas about an organization in the public administration literature is to call them "lessons learned."

### V. Conclusion

This section should summarize your paper and its major findings. You should also speculate about the directions future research ought to take in light of your findings. **\*\*IMPORTANT:** Your conclusion should also devote some significant space to a discussion of the implications of your work for decision makers or decision making in the topic area. For example if you paper found that there is a significant issue in an organization, what do you recommend in terms of steps needed to address the issue? Are there broader implications that can be gleaned by managers and decision makers in other organizations? Are there broader implications for the field of public administration?

### **Format 3: An Applied Program Evaluation or Policy Analysis**

This paper format is best for students that wish to analyze a particular program or policy. While it has some similarities to the other formats, there are some important differences as well. Students that choose this format to do a program evaluation should have already taken the Program Evaluation course. For students doing a policy analysis, the Public Policy course should already be completed. An example topic for this format might be,

“Are AIDS Services Organizations in Alabama as effective as those in other Southern states?”

### *Suggested Outline*

#### I. Introduction

This section gives an overview of the main themes in the paper and gives a brief preview of what the essay will cover. This section also clearly states the research question(s) that the paper will address. As a general rule, you should write your introduction LAST.

#### II. Description of Program or Policy

This section should include a rich and detailed description of the program or policy that you are going to study. There should be a programmatic history, a description of the major components of the program and a discussion of the evaluation problem that you plan to address.

#### III. Literature Review

This section provides an organized exposition of the ideas and scholarly sources that the student used to develop his/her own ideas for the paper. The literature review should provide a summary of what scholarly work has been done on the student's area of research and also should demonstrate *how* the student's work compliments or fits into this existing body of knowledge. For this particular format, the literature review needs to include a discussion of the program evaluation/policy analysis literature from which the student is drawing his/her approach. In addition, the lit review should include any scholarly work that has already analyzed this particular program or policy.

#### IV. Data and Methods

Here you will describe your data and methods that you will use to evaluate this program. You must pay particular attention to justifying the validity of your evaluation measure. Why is this good measure to evaluate this program?

#### V. Empirical Findings

This is the heart of your analysis. In this section you need to present your empirical findings in such a way that they shed light on your evaluation question.

In this section you also should address any conflicting evidence or limitations in your study. While students think that this weakens their work, it actually strengthens it. By humbly acknowledging the limitations of your work, the reader gets a “truer” picture of your research.

## VI. Conclusion

This section should summarize your paper and its major findings. You should also speculate about the directions future research ought to take in light of your findings. **\*\*IMPORTANT:** Your conclusion should also devote some significant space to a discussion of the implications of your work for decision makers or decision making in the topic area. For example if you paper found that a particular program was effective or ineffective, what is your diagnosis? What can decision makers learn from your analysis? Are there some findings that have broader applicability to the field of public administration?

### **Format 4: A “Traditional” Theoretical Scholarly Essay**

Students that choose this format will be writing an essay that advances knowledge about a theory in public administration. In many ways, this format is the most difficult one for which to suggest a specific structure, but there are clearly some core elements that any theoretical piece should have. An example of a theoretical essay topic might be, “Do private sector principles have a place in public management?”

#### I. Introduction

This section gives an overview of the main themes in the paper and gives a brief preview of what the essay will cover. This section also clearly states the question(s) that the paper will address. As a general rule, you should write your introduction LAST.

#### II. Literature Review/Argument

This section provides an organized exposition of the ideas and scholarly sources that the student used to develop his/her own ideas for the paper. The literature review is really not a separate section in such a paper, but is an extended discussion of what is “missing” or lacking in the current theoretical approach. This is absolutely critical in establishing that your work is making a contribution.

In a theory-based essay, you will not be relying on data to make your point; you need to develop an intriguing, cohesive and well written set of arguments to demonstrate your contribution to public administration theory.

Generally, in essays of this type, the student will pick 3-5 major points to make in their argument. But you may have only one “big” point. This is okay too, but you need to make sure that your discussion is organized. Here too you must be careful to note the limitations of your own theory.

### III. Conclusion

This section should summarize your paper and its major findings. In a theoretical piece, you also must really emphasize how this change in ideas may affect the field of public administration.

**\*\*IMPORTANT:** Your conclusion should also devote some significant space to a discussion of the implications of your work for decision makers or decision making in the topic area. For example what implications does your theory have for decision making in public policy or for public managers?

*How will the faculty evaluate my paper?*

On the following page is a rubric that we will use to evaluate your GRP. You should carefully read over the rubric as these are the criteria that we will be using to evaluate your work. We realize that with a general rubric like this, that not every paper will have all of the elements contained therein. Nevertheless, you should keep this rubric in mind as you write your paper, making sure it contains the elements that pertain to your paper

## GRADUATE RESEARCH PAPER CHECKLIST

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ MPA Faculty Initials \_\_\_\_\_

MPA Specialization \_\_\_\_\_ Semester/Year \_\_\_\_\_

### Graduate Research Paper Checklist

**Scoring Key: Yes—3 Partially—2 No—1 N/A**

1. The introduction informs the reader why the research work was initiated and how it connects to pertinent theories in public administration and policy.	3	2	1	N/A
2. All statements of fact apply to the core areas of public administration and are referenced.	3	2	1	N/A
3. Themes or thesis of research/scholarly work is clearly identifiable and ties to one of the core areas of public administration.	3	2	1	N/A
4. The research work or statement follows logically from the introduction.	3	2	1	N/A
5. The methods/primary sources are clearly described.	3	2	1	N/A
6. The argument ties together the introduction, thesis, reasons, and evidence in a logical argument.	3	2	1	N/A
7. Counter-evidence from other areas or schools of thoughts in public administration are addressed in the discussion.	3	2	1	N/A
8. Limitations of research/scholarly work are addressed in the discussion.	3	2	1	N/A
9. The conclusions follow logically from the reasons and evidence.	3	2	1	N/A
10. Recommendations for future research/scholarly work follow logically from the conclusions.	3	2	1	N/A
11. All writing is clear, concise, and grammatically correct.	3	2	1	N/A
12. The research work shows the student has the skill and decision making knowledge to apply the core areas of public administration in a real public or nonprofit management context	3	2	1	N/A

# MPA Internship Guide

University of Alabama at Birmingham

**University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Master of Public Administration Program  
MPA Internship Guide**

**This guide has been compiled to provide you with essential information about the process of obtaining and conducting an internship within the UAB MPA program.**

**Contents:**

- Standards for Internships
- Basic Requirements
- Hours and Scheduling the Internship
- The Internship Agreement
- The Centerpiece Project
- The Administrative Journal
- The Internship Portfolio
- Internship Waivers
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Forms
- Internship Contact Worksheet
- Internship Agreement
- The Student's Internship Evaluation Form
- The Agency's Internship Evaluation Form
- Completion of Internship Requirements Form
- Request for Waiver of Internship Form
- Internship Opportunities

**STANDARDS FOR THE UAB MPA INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

The public administration internship is designed to provide students with practical, hands-on experience of the challenges, complexities, and rewards of working in the public sector. Students should be presented with opportunities in which they can apply what they have learned in the classroom within a professional workplace setting. The internship is required prior to completion of the MPA degree. Graduate interns are equipped to provide research support, policy analysis, budgeting experience, and/or program evaluation skills to a public or nonprofit organization. Interns are prepared to provide professional assistance to existing staff members, to provide expertise and resources for projects and activities in which the agency is involved, and contribute skills on analytic methods of program and/or policy evaluation. During the internship, MPA students should have the opportunity to gain knowledge and expertise in the skills, knowledge and resources often utilized by public administrators. The student should gain experience through the completion of tasks and projects in accordance with the core courses offered by the MPA program, which include:

- Public policy and management skills
- Research Design and computer-based skills to enhance decision-making abilities
- Budgeting expertise

Program evaluation and strategic planning  
Ethics-based decision-making

## **BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MPA INTERNSHIP**

### **Hours and Scheduling the Internship**

The MPA program requires that interns have a minimum of 300 hours experience in order to receive 6 hours of graduate credit. Minimum requirements for the internship would therefore be the equivalent of working approximately 20 hours per week during each of the 15 weeks of a semester. If student scheduling requires a part-time internship, they can break the internship into two semesters with 3 credit hours per semester (total 6 credit hrs). The two semesters do not have to be consecutive. Interns are encouraged that when they are in need of additional work experience, it is to their advantage to arrange an internship that exceeds the minimum hourly requirement.

The internship is usually taken in the summer after the majority of your core courses have been completed. (First summer after starting the program – full time students; second summer after starting the program – part-time students).

### **The Internship Agreement**

Interns are responsible for initiating an Internship Agreement with their agency of choice. Interns are encouraged to identify agencies in their area of interest (ex: nonprofit agency, local/state/federal government agency, regional planning agency, etc.). After choosing an area of interest and identifying several agencies of interest, the intern works with the MPA Internship Coordinator to establish a relationship and internship opportunity. Once an agency has been identified and approved by the MPA Internship Coordinator, the Intern is responsible for completing the Internship Agreement with the agency contact. The Internship Agreement outlines expectations for both the Intern and the agency regarding the projects and skills that are to be developed and utilized during the Internship.

### **The Centerpiece Project**

Internships should be negotiated so that the participating agency engages the intern in at least one substantial project that is represented in one of the core curriculum components. This project or projects will serve as the centerpiece of the internship experience. Examples of the internship project may include (but are not limited to):

- A policy or program analysis
- Direct involvement writing a grant
- A cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the potential of a new project or activity
- Research to identify potential funding sources
- A program evaluation to examine the implementation of a policy

The student should also be given the opportunity to learn about the organizational

structure and culture of the organization. This will enhance his or her ability to both work directly with a project and understand the larger scope and mission of the organization. Within this environment, it will benefit both the intern and the agency in that the intern is required to display a range of written and oral communications and exercise decision-making skills.

### **The Administrative Journal**

Interns are responsible for submitting a total of 5 journal entries. Submit one journal entry every three weeks of internship experience. During the final week of your internship, submit a comprehensive journal entry that summarizes the overall experience. The Internship Coordinator will provide feedback on your entry after the first and second submission to ensure the proper format is being used.

Each journal entry will consist of several items: an event, personal reflection and response, summary, and conclusion. **Event:** You should focus on a specific event that has taken place, such as a meeting, project event, or a personal interaction in which you were involved. **Reflection:** Reflect subjectively on how you experienced the event, emphasizing your emotions, mindset, and how this contributed to the outcome of the event. Did this make you feel proud, upset, or terrified? Retrospectively, do you see the situation differently? **Summary:** Examine how this experience relates to other occurrences, and evaluate the broader lessons that may be associated with your past experience as well as the larger scope of public administration. How did your MPA coursework influence your response? The focus here is to connect the event with concepts from public administration. **Conclusion:** This section should discuss the implications of your experience and the event for the future. How would you handle this in the future? What tips or advice would you keep for yourself to handle similar situations? For example, if you participated in an unproductive meeting, you might identify specific things you would change for the future meetings. What lessons have you learned? \* Journal entries should be typed and double-spaced, written in clear grammatically correct English. Suggested length is one to three pages per entry.

### **The Internship Portfolio**

Prior to the culmination of the Internship, students are required to prepare a portfolio that includes the following items:

- Cover Page: List Student's Name, Agency (and contact info), Dates of Internship Internship Agreement
- Copies of reports, articles, memos, procedures you completed as an Intern.
- Internship Administrative Journals: complete collection of submissions including comprehensive summary at the end of the semester
- Revised Resume: should include listing of internship on resume
- Student's Internship Evaluation Form
- Completion of Internship Requirements Form: this will be blank, to be used by the MPA Internship Coordinator

## **Internship Waivers**

Waivers for the MPA Internship must be approved by the MPA Program Director on a case-by-case basis. Professional students who are employed full-time interested in applying for the waiver should submit, a) The Request for Waiver of Internship Form; b) A letter showcasing professional experience; and c) A current resume. Email it to [dhandley@uab.edu](mailto:dhandley@uab.edu) or [ahaque@uab.edu](mailto:ahaque@uab.edu)

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERN**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Initiate contact and establish agency relationship for Internship
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete the Internship Contact Sheet
- \_\_\_\_\_ Check with the Administrative Assistant about enrolling (and graduation requirements if you are graduating).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Negotiate your Internship Agreement within the first two weeks of your internship. Mail or Fax it to the MPA Internship Coordinator.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit the first two Administrative Journals to the MPA Internship Coordinator for a critique. The second entry is not due until you have feedback on the first submission.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Throughout your internship, collect information for the Internship Portfolio
- \_\_\_\_\_ Regularly submit Administrative Journal entries throughout your Internship. One is due at the end of every three week period.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Remind your Agency Internship Contact/Coordinator to complete the Agency Internship Supervisor's Evaluation Form prior to concluding your Internship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete the Student Internship Evaluation Form prior to concluding your Internship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be sure to compile all required documents for the Internship Portfolio, which is due to the MPA Internship Coordinator two weeks prior to graduation.

## **FORMS NOTE: ALL FORMS ARE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PORTFOLIO WHICH IS SUBMITTED TO THE INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR.**

**These forms can be found at the [www.uab.edu/mpa](http://www.uab.edu/mpa) website. Look for the Internship Page under "student resources".**

Internship Contact Worksheet  
Internship Agreement  
The Student's Internship Evaluation Form  
The Agency's Internship Evaluation Form  
Completion of Internship Requirements Form  
Request for Waiver of Internship Form

## **INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Students are encouraged to identify agencies of interest in making their selection, especially in the field in which they plan to work after graduation (such as health-care;

youth services; social services; government sector). However, the following agencies have previously provided internships– please check this regularly to see additional partnerships between public and nonprofit agencies and the MPA program.

1. A Family Place (developing the community of Sayre)
2. AIDS Alabama
3. Alabama Policy Institute
4. Birmingham Area PATH
5. Birmingham Department of Planning and Engineering
6. Birmingham Museum of Art
7. Birmingham PATH Homeless Shelter for women
8. Birmingham Police Department
9. Child Care Resources, Incorporated
10. City Attorney's Office, City of Birmingham
11. City of Bessemer Community and Economic Development Office
12. City of Birmingham, Office of Community Enterprises
13. City of Birmingham, Planning Department
14. City of Dothan, AL
15. City of Hoover, Finance
16. City of Hoover, Police
17. City of Mountain Brook, AL
18. City of Prattville
19. Community Development Office, City of Birmingham
20. Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham
21. Coosa, Cahaba, Warrior River Water Conservation Council
22. First Light Homeless Shelter
23. Gateway, Inc.
24. Girls, Incorporated of Central Alabama
25. Housing Authority of the Birmingham District
26. Jefferson County Community Health Department
27. Jefferson County Department of Risk Management
28. Jefferson County Emergency Management Association
29. Jefferson County Housing Authority
30. Jefferson County Office of Community and Economic Development
31. Listening to Heal, National Coalition Building Institute
32. Metropolitan Development Board
33. Neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham
34. Nonprofit Resource Center of Alabama
35. North Alabama Fair Housing Authority
36. Operation New Birmingham
37. Operation Pride, West End
38. Region 2020 (A regional visioning organization)
39. Regional Planning Commission
40. Shelby County Planning Department
41. The Birmingham Urban League
42. The Nature Conservancy
43. The United Way of Central Alabama
44. YWCA, Domestic Violence Division

# MPA Graduate Catalog

## Public Administration (MPA)

Degree Offered: M.P.A.

Director: Dr. Akhlaque Haque

Phone: (205) 934-9680

E-mail: [mpa@uab.edu](mailto:mpa@uab.edu)

Web site: [www.uab.edu/mpa](http://www.uab.edu/mpa)

## *Faculty*

**Janet M. Bronstein** , Professor (Health Care Organization and Policy): Health Services Utilization, Health Policy, Community-Based Organizations; Co-coordinator of M.P.A.-M.P.H. degree program, School of Public Health

**Jeremy L. Hall** , Assistant Professor (Government): Public Policy, Performance Management, State and Local Government; Economic Development; Program Evaluation

**Akhlaque U. Haque** , Associate Professor (Government): Public Administration Theory, Geographic Information Systems, Information management, technology and governance, health policy.

**Michael Howell-Moroney** , Associate Professor (Government); Urban Planning, Microeconomics, Research Methods and Advanced Statistics

**James D. Slack** , Professor (Government); Human Resource Management, Ethics and Morality, Workplace Diversity Policy, Faith-based Management

**Donna M. Handley** , Assistant Professor (Government); Public and nonprofit budgeting, nonprofit management, intergovernmental relations, leadership in public administration.

## *Adjunct Faculty*

**Sam Gaston**, MPA. City Manager, Mountain Brook. (City-County Management)

**Ellyn Grady**, MPA. Senior Vice President, Agency Impact and Resource Development, United Way of Central AL (Nonprofit Management)

**Raymond Goolsby**, MPA. Recruitment Representative, Personnel Board of Jefferson County (Financial Management for Nonprofits, Leadership in Public and Nonprofit Sectors)

**Vincent Intoccia** , Federal EEOC Judge (Public & Administrative Law)

**Karen S. McCoy**, MPA. Housing Planner, Jefferson County Office of Community and Economic Development (Nonprofit Marketing and Planning)

**Ray Morris**, MPA. Director of Operations and Information Technology, Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (Information Technology in the Public Sector)

**Sarah Newell**, MPA. Vice President, Agency Impact Operations, United Way of Central Alabama (Program Evaluation)

## ***MPA Program Mission***

In line with the mission of the University, the MPA program is committed to excellence in graduate education through teaching, research and service. The program focuses on building the next generation of responsible decision makers by enhancing their intellectual capacities through knowledge and skills provided within the NASPAA-based MPA curriculum. The Master of Public Administration Program prepares individuals for positions of leadership in the public and nonprofit sectors. It is a professional graduate degree for both pre-career students and in-service administrators. The program is designed to develop the insights and skills needed to plan and formulate policy, and to organize, manage, and implement programs and operations. The MPA program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration ([NASPAA](#)). Its Board of Advisors consists of internal and external stakeholders comprised of MPA Faculty, community members, Alumni and students (See recent presentation to the Board regarding [UAB MPA Mission Building Process](#)).

The MPA curriculum is designed to ensure that students: (1) understand the political, economic, social and legal context of the public service; (2) understand and appreciate the transcending values of ethics/morality and diversity in the public service; (3) achieve substantial competence in (i) policy-making processes; (ii) administrative theory and behavior, (iii) human resource management; (iv) budgeting; (v) research design; (vi) statistical methods; and (vii) information management in the public and nonprofit sector. To accomplish these objectives, students complete an **eight-course core curriculum** that provides a foundation for more specialized coursework as well as long-term development and advancement in public service management and leadership positions. UAB MPA Graduates tend to cluster in three general areas managers, analysts, and policy specialists

## ***Degree Requirements***

Students in the MPA program must complete a total of 52 semester hours or the equivalent, with an overall grade average of at least B. Six of those hours are earned in an internship placement, although that requirement may be waived for students who have full-time paid work experience in public or nonprofit agencies. Previous graduate work at UAB or another NASPAA accredited MPA program may be credited toward the degree if it is directly applicable. Students may select the thesis option or the non-thesis option. For students who are interested in both public administration and the delivery of public health services, a coordinated [MPA/MPH dual degree](#) is offered; for students who are interested in both public administration and the law, a coordinated [MPA/J.D dual degree](#) is offered. For non-traditional students interested in managing non-profit organizations the program offers a [Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management](#).

## ***Admission Requirements***

Because of its multi-disciplinary nature, persons from all undergraduate majors are considered for admission to the program. The program adheres to a standardized admission score based on candidates GPA and GRE scores for admission. A combined score of 800 or higher (GRE times 100 plus average verbal and quantitative in GRE) is required for full admission. [See admission criteria for details on the combined standardized score: Criteria](#). . Candidates may be accepted on probation if the standardized admission score is between 700 and 799. Candidates whose standardized admission score fall between 650 and 699 will need majority of the MPA faculty approval to get admitted to the program on probation. Candidates whose score fall below 650 are not accepted in the program. Three letters of reference are also required to enter the program. Application for admission should be made online through the UAB Graduate School website <http://www.uab.edu/graduate> (UAB, Birmingham, Alabama 35294-1150; telephone 205-934-8227) Admissions will be made fall and spring semester.

## *Financial Aid*

The Department of Government has four graduate assistantships, which can be awarded during any semester as vacancies occur. Graduate assistantships are competitive and awarded on a first-come-first basis according to merit. The MPA program also has a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide up to four two-year fellowships based on financial need. In addition, every year at least one MPA student is awarded a cash award for academic excellence from the MPA Alumni Association. Other financial resources are available through the Office of Student Financial Aid.

## *Curriculum*

**Core Courses** All students are required to take the following eight courses:

MPA 600	Environments of Public Service
MPA 601	The Public Policymaking Process
MPA 602	Administrative Theory and Behavior
MPA 603	Public and Nonprofit Budgeting
MPA 604	Human Resources Management
MPA 605	Information Technology in the Public Sector
MPA 606	Research Design
MPA 607	Statistical Analysis*
MPA 697	Graduate Research Paper (Capstone)**

\*Pre-requisite MPA 606 (Research Design)

\*\*Should be taken last term

Students must complete four (4) courses in one of the following specializations: Nonprofit Management, Community Planning and Development, Public Management and Policy, or Generalist. In addition to four specialization courses students in non-thesis option must take three electives. Students taking the thesis option (Plan I) must take two (2) Independent Study (MPA 696, 1 hr and 3 hr) under the guidance of the thesis chair and six thesis hours. For non-thesis option (Plan II) students take three (3) electives and one hour Graduate Research (MPA 697). Total of 46 hrs would be required to complete the program. For pre-career students additional 6 hrs of internship (20 hrs/week) is also required. A full-time student taking nine hrs (3 courses) per semester should spend three to four semesters (2 years) to complete the program. The sequence of course offerings can be found here: [Sequence of Course Offerings](#).

### **Specializations**

Students should select a specialization based upon their career goals and interests. The specializations that are available are **Non-Profit Management, Community Planning & Development** and **Public Management & Policy**. There are four specialization requirement courses for each track.

### **Nonprofit Management**

The majority of students who choose this specialization are mid-career and wish to improve their organizational management skills in the nonprofit sector including healthcare management areas.

**Specialization requirements (four courses)**

MPA 672	Nonprofit Management
MPA 689	Program Evaluation
MPA 678	Strategic Planning
MPA 676	Financial Management in the Nonprofit Sector

**Community Planning and Development**

Students interested in city management or planning should select this specialization. Relevant positions include policy development and implementation, budget development, public works management, and economic and community development.

**Specialization requirements (four courses)**

MPA 681	Local Government Planning
MPA 691	Economic Development
MPA 674	Geographic Information Systems
MPA 677	Urban Policy and Administration

**Public Management and Policy**

Those who plan to work as management, budget, or research policy analysts should choose this specialization. Other relevant professions include planning and development, human resource and productivity enhancement, and program evaluation.

**Specialization requirements (four courses)**

MPA 662	State and Local Government Administration
MPA 675	Ethics and Morality in Public Service
MPA 683	Public Economics
MPA 668	Intergovernmental Relations

**Plus three electives from other specializations or from the following listed courses:**

MPA 667	Administrative Law
MPA 671	Special Topics: Marketing and Fundraising
MPA 690	Seminar in Public Service Issues (three separate courses): <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Administrative Leadership</li><li>2. E-Government</li><li>3. Faith-based Nonprofit Organization</li></ol>

MPA 695 Special Topics in Public Administration (three separate courses)

1. Grant Writing & Management
2. Decision making using GIS
3. Finding Jobs In PA

MPA 696 Independent Study in Public Administration\*

\* Permission of the Program Director required

**Generalist MPA Degree.** An alternative to selecting one of the above specializations exists. Students may pursue a generalist MPA degree. This degree should be chosen if the student desires a broadly based degree and some familiarity with subjects in each of the specializations. Students who desire a public administration education transferable to many different public or nonprofit settings may want to take this course of study. To complete this degree, students must take the core curriculum and at least two (2) required courses from each of the three specializations, and one elective course.

**Information Management** An alternative to selecting one of the above specializations students may pursue an open specialization in Information Management. This specialization should be chosen if the student desires a broader understanding of the information management, technology and e-applications in the public sector and nonprofit sector. Program directors permission is required to enroll in this specialization. To complete the specialization students must take four technology-based specialization courses and three electives.

**Coordinated MPA/MPH Program.** The MPA/MPH is designed to train individuals for administrative positions in public health and related health organizations. The Master of Public Administration degree prepares students for careers as administrators in public and nonprofit agencies, and the Master of Public Health provides a background in public health principles and programs. Students must apply to, and enroll in, both programs, meeting each program's entry requirements.

### **MPA/MPH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Students are required to complete a total of 55 semester hours for the coordinated degree (includes 6 hours of internship). Core requirements of 18 hrs from the MPA program and 19 hrs from the MPH program is required. Students can specialize in the Health Care Policy or Health Care Management track. The full-time students should be able to complete all degree requirements within three years. For more information go to [MPA/MPH program](#).

### **Coordinated MPA/JD Program**

The M.P.A. program at UAB and the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University offer a coordinated MPA/JD program. The offering of this dual degree reflects recognition of the complex interrelationship between the legal system, public policy analysis, and public management. It will be particularly applicable to those pursuing careers in government and/or public interest law. For more information go to [MPA/J.D program](#)

Students must apply and be admitted to the M.P.A. and JD programs separately. The requirements for each degree must be met. Close communication with both programs is required. Depending on prior experience, a field placement may be required. A thesis is optional.

### **Graduation Research Paper**

During the last semester of study, students opting the non-thesis (Plan II) must register for MPA 697, Graduation Research (1hr), and successfully complete a graduation research paper. Such a paper will

require the student to synthesize material learned over the course of the program and apply that to a practical setting (area or agency). Should the student need to rewrite any part of the paper, he/she may be required to enroll again in MPA 697 for the subsequent term. Guidelines for writing the GRP can be found in the following link [GRP Guidelines](#)

## *Course Descriptions*

### **Public Administration (MPA)**

Unless otherwise noted, all courses are for 3 semester hours of credit.

600. **Environments of Public Service.** Introduction to the environmental forces that shape the nature and direction of the public service. Examination may include philosophical, historical, intellectual, constitutional, social and cultural, and ethical and moral environmental forces. 3 hours.

601. **The Public Policymaking Process.** Public Policy as a decision-making process. Examines environmental and organizational factors, the choice of alternatives, and the implementation and evaluation of public policy, with applied references to specific functional areas, e.g., housing, pollution, energy, and transportation. 3 hours.

602. **Administrative Theory and Behavior.** Theories of organization, management, and administration. Examines both institutional and behavioral elements of organizations as they apply to public, private, and nonprofit agencies. Covers administrative and organization behavior, decision-making and democratic values, along with a treatment of bureaucratic practices and behavior. 3 hours.

603. **Public Budgeting.** Examines the institutions, principles and techniques of governmental budgeting, including the practices and fundamental concepts of public budgeting, the budgeting process and financial management. Includes an interactive laboratory format which applies budgeting fundamentals to a hands-on budget experiment. 3 hours.

604. **Human Resources Management.** Examines the major concepts, theories, procedures and themes needed for effective management of human resources in the public and nonprofit sectors. Emphasis is on the urban and sub-national settings. Topics may include merit and civil service systems, organized public labor, recruitment, classification, performance appraisal, disciplinary and grievance procedures, training and staff development, diversity and anti-discrimination policy and strategies, ethics/morality and personnel law. 3 hours.

605. **Managing Information in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors.** Theory and applications of information management, technology applications and policy. Focus is on social, organizational, political and constitutional impacts of information today. Emphasizes policy and applications related to building knowledge economy, E-government applications and geographic information systems. 3 hours.

606. **Research Design.** Quasi-experimental and experimental research design, including exposition of several qualitative and basic quantitative methods. 3 hours.

607. **Statistical Analysis.** Using a pragmatic and applied approach, this course introduces more advanced statistical techniques including simple and multiple regression and techniques to analyze categorical data. Pre-requisite MPA 606. 3 hours.

662. **State and Local Government Administration .** This course is designed to introduce students to the study of state and local government administration. Introduces keys concepts related to state and local government political structures and institutions; regional, state and county economic performance and state/local government finance. 3 hrs.

667. **Public and Administrative Law.** Explanation of law in society and the legal setting of public administration. Examination of substantive areas of the study of law including regulatory process,

administrative adjudication, the administrative procedures acts, administrative due process, judicial review, liability, and citizen's rights. 3 hours.

668. **Intergovernmental Relations.** The various relations among governments in the U.S. system. Focuses on understanding the interactions, attitudes, and behavior of elected officials and bureaucrats of two or more units of government functioning in their public capacities. 3 hours.

671. **Special Topics in Public Management: Marketing and Fundraising.** The use of marketing and fundraising strategies for nonprofits. Incorporates both theory and practice as students learn the fundamentals of marketing and resource development and apply them to hands-on projects in local nonprofit agencies.

672. **Nonprofit Management.** The day-to-day challenges faced by managers of nonprofit agencies, including the challenge of fund raising, balancing competing values as related to efficiency, effectiveness, and equity. 3 hours.

674. **Geographic Information Systems.** Examines the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) using GIS software. It integrates theory and socioeconomic applications of GIS in the public and nonprofit sector. 3 hours.

675. **Ethics and Morality in Public Service.** Ethical and moral foundations to public service behavior. 3 hours.

676. **Financial Management for Nonprofits.** Emphasis on the financial management systems used in the nonprofit sector. Topics include nonprofit leadership, financial budget analysis, accounting and operations techniques, and fundraising. The application of these concepts to the nonprofit sector is also conducted through group and/or individual projects working with local nonprofit agencies. 3 hours.

677. **Urban Policy and Management.** Examines American urban settings in historical and contemporary contexts. The course includes a broad examination of social forces and policies that affect urban places. 3 hours

678. **Strategic Planning.** Presents the strategic planning process as it is utilized in contemporary settings. Focuses on how the strategic planning process is applied in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors and the extent to which there is substantial variation. 3 hours.

681. **Local Government Planning.** Overview of theories, methodologies, and political aspects of municipal planning. 3 hours.

683. **Public Economics.** Application of microeconomic theory to the public sector problems and policy analysis. 3 hours.

689. **Program Evaluation.** Analytic tools for evaluating public and nonprofit programs and services. 3 hours.

690. **Seminar in Public Service Issues.** Special topics focusing on current pressing issues in government and governance, and the non-profit sectors. Students should contact instructors to get details on individual course-topics offered. 3 hours.

691. **Economic Development.** Develops an understanding of the impact of market and non-economic forces on local and regional economic development. 3 hours.

695. **Special Topics in Public Administration.** Special topics seminar based on the research and substantive interests of the MPA faculty and students. 3 hours.

696. **Independent Study in Public Administration.** One-on-one learning experience between student and an instructor with permission of the program director. 1 - 6 hours.

697. **Graduation Research.** The thesis or Graduation Research Paper (GRP) is the capstone project for the MPA degree. Every student is required either a thesis or GRP at the end of their course work. **GRP Guidelines.** 1 hour.

698. **Internship in Public Administration.** Supervised field placement in public or nonprofit agency for directed work experience arranged by the internship coordinator and as per the guidelines in the internship manual. 3-6 hours.

699. **Thesis Research.** Credit for research and writing of thesis. 3-6 hours.

## ***MPA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION***

An active alumni association welcomes graduates of the program into membership. The association makes both advisory and financial contributions to the program and seeks to elevate the level of professionalism in public administration through a variety of projects and services. For more information go to **MPA Alumni**

## ***INTERNSHIPS AND PLACEMENT***

Students may apply for an internship placement at any time following completion of MPA 600. You need to contact the MPA Faculty Internship Coordinator and register for MPA 698 (one to six credit hours). Several paying opportunities exist, although the majority of internships are non-paying. Typical placements are in city and county government, planning departments, public health agencies, social service agencies, state government agencies, and various nonprofit organizations. For more information about placement agency names please view the Internship Manual and other resources available **online at Internship Page** on MPA Program website. The Department has placed several students in the prestigious Presidential Management Internship Program, which provides an excellent opportunity for eventual employment in the federal government.

Students are encouraged to use the services of the UAB Student Development Office in the University Center for career planning and placement. The faculty in the program also assists students in job placement.

### ***Additional Information***

Deadline for Entry Term(s):	Each semester
Deadline for All Application Materials to be in the Graduate School Office:	Six weeks before term begins
Number of Evaluation Forms Required:	Three
Entrance Tests	GRE (TOEFL and TWE also required for international applicants whose native language is not English.)
Comments	None
Graduate Catalog Description	<b><u><a href="http://main.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=95290">http://main.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=95290</a></u></b>

## ***Contact Information***

For additional information refer to the web site of the UAB M.P.A. program: [www.uab.edu/mpa](http://www.uab.edu/mpa). Also detailed information can be found in the M.P.A. graduate manual available at the program office. Questions concerning enrollment in the M.P.A. program should be directed to Dr. Akhlaque U. Haque, Director, MPA Program, Department of Government and Public Service, U 238, 1530 3rd Avenue South, Birmingham, Alabama 35294-3350. Telephone (205) 934-9680 or email: [mpa@uab.edu](mailto:mpa@uab.edu)

## Graduation Forms

The following forms must be submitted one semester prior to graduation. Without submitting the forms on time, your graduation will be delayed.

1. Graduate Study Committee Letter
2. Application for Degree
3. Application for Candidacy

[Link to Graduation Forms](#)

<http://main.uab.edu/Sites/gradschool/students/current/forms/>