



*Training tomorrow's  
public and nonprofit leaders today.*

**MPA Program Student Handbook\***

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College of Arts and Sciences  
Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville**

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\*Note: In any discrepancy between this handbook and the Graduate Catalog, the latter will prevail.

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## **Section I: The MPA Program at SIUE**

### **A. Welcome to the Master of Public Administration (MPA)**

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) is a graduate-level professional degree focused on preparing individuals for careers or career advancement in public service and nonprofit management. The degree is offered through the Department of Public Administration and Policy Analysis in the College of Arts and Sciences. The MPA is often characterized as the MBA for government and the nonprofit sector. The curriculum is designed to prepare the 21st-century public administrator with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for making rational decisions under conditions of uncertainty and within dynamic external and internal environments.

### **B. Basic Information on Our MPA Program**

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) at SIUE is a graduate program designed to explore the structure and operation of public and nonprofit organizations. The curriculum provides a strong foundation in public administration, with areas of study including public policy, human resources, local government, nonprofit management, leadership, public safety, and more.

The program is available fully online and can be completed in as little as 12 months. All classes are offered asynchronously. Asynchronous learning allows students to access course materials and complete assignments on their schedule, making it easier to balance education with work, family, and other responsibilities. With the ability to study anytime and from any location with internet access, students can progress at their own pace. Students can spend more time on challenging topics and move more quickly through familiar ones. This self-directed approach can enhance comprehension and retention. Without the pressure of scheduled meetings or commuting, students often experience reduced stress, greater focus, and more time to reflect and prepare thoughtful responses to discussions and assignments.

Students can now complete the MPA in as few as 12 months, with most completing the degree within 12 to 24 months. Courses are offered during two eight-week terms in the fall and spring semesters, two five-week terms in the summer semester, and three-week terms during December/January and in May. Flexible course scheduling is available to accommodate both full- and part-time students. Students can adjust their class schedules to accommodate professional and family commitments. A sample of a 12-month schedule for completing the MPA degree may be viewed online at:

<https://www.siue.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/degrees-programs/sample-curriculum.shtml>

MPA students pursue diverse career paths in federal, state, and local government, as well as in the nonprofit sector. The MPA degree serves as both a credential for entry-level positions and a stepping-stone for career advancement. It can also provide a foundation for terminal degrees in public administration or public policy and is offered in conjunction with concurrent degree options in law and pharmacy. Those candidates just beginning a career path in the field may seek to participate in the professional internship program:

<https://www.siue.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/student-resources/internships.shtml>

In addition to the MPA, PAPA offers a post-baccalaureate certificate in *Professional Leadership Strategies*, which can be completed in just 15 credit hours. A combined accelerated degree option with the SIUE Department of Political Science is also available, along with concurrent degree programs with the SIU School of Law and the SIUE School of Pharmacy.

The SIUE MPA program is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), the global standard in public service education. This recognition reflects the dedication of our exceptional faculty and staff.

### **C. Mission of the MPA Program**

To train and develop competent and effective public administrators, and through teaching, scholarship, and service create an environment in which students and faculty actively serve as a resource to public and nonprofit organizations and a culture through which behaviors associated with respect, equity, integrity, diversity, ethical behavior, accountability, and transparency are transferred to students and the profession.”

#### **1. The accomplishment of this mission hinges on the achievement of three primary goals:**

- a. To train and develop competent public administrators through the offering of a curriculum of courses that reflects the breadth and depth of the discipline and meets the professional needs and interests of students and the field.
- b. To create an environment in which faculty and students are encouraged to serve as a resource to public and nonprofit organizations through an application of the knowledge of the discipline, to analyze issues of concern and think critically, to advance the quality of the profession through scholarship and service, and to protect the public trust.

- c. To create a culture in which the behaviors associated with respect, equity, integrity, diversity, ethical behavior, transparency, accountability, and the best practices of the discipline are demonstrated, valued, and transferred to students and the profession through teaching, scholarship, and service.

## **2. Related Goals:**

### **a. Incorporated into these goals are the goals set by the Graduate School at SIUE:**

- 1) Demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge in the discipline
- 2) Effectively communicate knowledge in the discipline
- 3) Demonstrate an ability for analytical thinking in the discipline
- 4) Exhibit the best practices, values, and ethics of the profession
- 5) Apply knowledge of the discipline

### **b. The goals also reflect the NASPAA requirements for the achievement of universal competencies:**

- 1. Lead and manage in public governance
- 2. Participate in and contribute to the public policy process
- 3. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions
- 4. Articulate and apply a public service perspective

## **D. Degrees and Certificates**

**The Public Administration and Policy Analysis Department is proud to offer several degree and certificate opportunities.**

### **1. Master of Public Administration**

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) at SIUE is offered through the Department of Public Administration and Policy Analysis (PAPA) in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). The MPA program is the largest graduate program in CAS and the largest MPA program in the region. Our program is designed to develop analytical and administrative skills. While the program is rigorous, it is also sufficiently flexible. The faculty is committed to the highest quality of teaching and works closely with each student.

<https://www.siu.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/degrees-programs/index.shtml>

### **2. Accelerated Combined Degrees – MPA with BA or BS in Political Science**

This accelerated combined degree program allows students to complete two degrees in just five academic years.

- **BA or BS in Political Science**
- **Master of Public Administration (MPA)**

Students receive the same benefits of both curricula and move seamlessly from the undergraduate program to graduate studies. You will save time and money, as well as jump-start your career.

<https://www.siu.edu/academics/undergraduate/degrees-and-programs/political-science/accelerated-combined-degrees.shtml>

### **3. Doctor of Pharmacy and Master of Public Administration (PharmD/MPA)**

The School of Pharmacy and the Department of Public Administration and Policy Analysis within the College of Arts and Sciences offer students the opportunity to earn a Master of Public Administration (MPA) while also working toward completion of the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD). PharmD students who are admitted to the MPA program will use selected pharmacy courses to meet some requirements within the MPA curriculum and use selected MPA courses to meet some requirements for the PharmD program. The MPA program will offer PharmD graduates the opportunity to engage in active roles of policy development and leadership in organizations and communities.

<https://www.siu.edu/academics/graduate/degrees-and-programs/pharmd-public-administration/>

### **4. Juris Doctorate/Master of Public Administration (JD/MPA)**

The Southern Illinois University [School of Law](#) and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville have joined to offer a JD/MPA program, which allows students to earn both degrees simultaneously with fewer courses, in turn providing enhanced career opportunities for leadership in public agencies and other fields. The School of Law and the SIUE [Department of Public Administration and Policy Analysis](#) have entered into the first memorandum of understanding for concurrent degrees across the two campuses, both of which are within the SIU System. Prospective post-baccalaureate students can attend law school classes in Carbondale to pursue their Juris Doctor while earning a [Master of Public Administration degree online](#) from SIUE.

<https://law.siu.edu/programs/concurrent-degree.php>

### **5. Professional Leadership Strategies Post-Baccalaureate Certificate**

The Department of Public Administration and Policy Analysis offers a post-baccalaureate certificate program leading to the certificate in professional leadership strategies. The certificate is designed to prepare administrators for

leadership roles in the public and nonprofit sectors at all levels of an organization and has been designed to serve those who have been or will be called upon to serve as leaders in public and nonprofit organizations or community and regional service activities. The certificate recognizes that leadership is a valuable tool available to all employees at all levels of the organization and is designed to extend the knowledge, skills, and abilities of all individuals into the realm of leadership.

<https://www.siu.edu/academics/graduate/degrees-and-programs/certificates/professional-leadership-strategies-pbc.shtml>

## **Section II. ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. Admission Procedures**

1. Admission applications for the MPA program and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Professional Leadership Strategies may be obtained through the following link:

<https://www.siu.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/student-resources/index.shtml>

2. Alternatively, you may also access at application through the Graduate School:

<https://www.siu.edu/apply/graduate.shtml>

### **B. Additional Application Information**

Students interested in becoming candidates for the SIUE MPA degree are encouraged to review the application procedures described in the Graduate Catalog.

<https://www.siu.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/student-resources/index.shtml>

<https://www.siu.edu/apply/graduate.shtml>

1. Applications for admission to the MPA program must be accompanied by a \$40.00 application fee. This fee is valid if the student enrolls within one calendar year of the initial application. The fee is not refundable and is not applicable toward any tuition or fees. Checks should be made payable to “Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville”. The application is available at the SIUE Service Center in Rendleman Hall, Room 1309, or online at:  
<https://www.siu.edu/graduate-admissions/>.



2. Applicants have full responsibility for requesting that official transcripts from the institution granting the baccalaureate degree and from all institutions at which post-baccalaureate coursework has been completed or is in progress be sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions at SIUE.
3. Applicants assume full responsibility for supplying any additional credentials or data required by either the Graduate School or the Department of Public Administration and Policy Analysis.
4. THE PAPA Department will consider applications up until the beginning of classes for a given semester. However, the student should be aware that in order to enroll as a classified (degree-seeking) graduate student in the MPA Program, an applicant must have completed all requirements for admission to the Graduate School. The Graduate School, in order to process all required documents, has recommended dates of August 1st for Fall, December 1st for Spring, and May 1st for Summer. For exact dates, please see:

[www.siu.edu/graduate-admissions/apply/deadlines.shtml](http://www.siu.edu/graduate-admissions/apply/deadlines.shtml).

### **C. Describing the Approval Process for the MPA Program**

When the admission file is complete, the applicant's record is evaluated in the Graduate Admissions Office. If minimum requirements are met, the file is submitted for review to the Director of the MPA program. The MPA Program Director will review the file and formally communicate the decision of the Department to the Graduate Admissions Office. Applicants will be considered for admission to the MPA program based on the following factors:

1. A commitment of the Department to accept only those students who the Department feels have a reasonably good chance of completing the program.
2. The necessity of maintaining an enrollment that is not too large to be adequately served by the Department's resources. Every effort is made to select the best-qualified applicants. As the number of applicants fluctuates and student performance is reevaluated, the precise standards applied will change.
3. The applicant has successfully met all of the stated requirements for admission to the MPA program.

### **D. Admission Status**

1. A student who has met all criteria for admission into the Graduate School and the MPA program may be accepted under the regular admission requirements:

- a. Admission to the MPA program requires that candidates have a minimum overall undergraduate grade-point average of at least 2.7 (A=4.0), or a grade-point average for the last 60 semester hours in their undergraduate program of at least 3.0.
  - b. The undergraduate degree earned must be from an accredited institution as recognized by the SIUE Graduate School.
  - c. Students with an earned master's degree from a regionally accredited United States university may also qualify for admission to the MPA program.
  - d. As in any competitive program, these standards reflect minimum admission standards.
2. Students who do not meet the criteria of having a minimum eligible grade point average may be recommended for admission by meeting certain conditions:
- a. Applicants with an overall undergraduate grade-point average between 2.5 and 2.7 may seek admission by providing letters of recommendation from individuals capable of assessing academic potential, a resume summarizing their professional experience over the past ten years, and a 1–2-page statement describing why they are pursuing the MPA degree. All of the documents will be assessed by the Department for admission.
  - b. Students admitted in this manner will be expected to earn no grade lower than a “B” in the first 12 hours of MPA coursework. Other conditions may also be required of students in this category, including the MPA Program Director may also specify courses that the student must take during the first 12 hours of study.

## E. International Students

The Public Administration and Policy Analysis program can no longer accept International Students as candidates for the MPA degree. Immigration regulations require international students in F-1 status to register for and complete a full course load each semester during each academic term (except for summer). F-1 students can only count **ONE online class** toward their minimum number of credits during the spring and fall semester, and the MPA program only offers online classes:

<https://www.siu.edu/isss/enrollment-requirements/online-enrollment-policy.shtml>

## **F. Non-Degree, Classification Pending, and Unclassified Status**

Students should check the Graduate Catalog for specific requirements and limitations in these categories. Students in this category should understand that hours completed in this status require special approval from both the MPA Program Director and the Graduate School before they will be counted as part of the MPA degree program. Students in these categories should understand that the PAPA Department gives course registration preference to those students admitted in “Regular” and “Conditional” status.

1. **Unclassified Graduate Student Status:** Under certain circumstances, students may be allowed to register as unclassified graduate students for PAPA courses before all admissions materials have been reviewed. There is no guarantee that courses completed in this status will be automatically counted as part of the MPA degree program.
2. Should a student continue in this status for second or additional semesters, they must be aware that no more than 12 hours of course credit will be transferred from this status to the MPA program. Any hours taken in this status require the specific approval of the MPA Program Director and the Graduate School before they will be counted toward the MPA degree.

## **G. Alumni Returning for Additional Coursework**

1. An alumnus of the MPA program is welcome to take additional classes. Often, an alumnus may find that they could use additional training and development in a specific area, but have no desire to pursue an additional degree. Such an individual is welcome to register for classes as an unclassified graduate student through the MPA Program Director. Alumni desiring to pursue such courses may apply as unclassified graduate students.
2. An alumnus may also return to participate in a certificate program offered by PAPA. Currently, the PPA Department offers only a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Professional Leadership Strategies, but additional certificates are in the development stages. Courses making up the certificate program that were taken by an alumnus as part of the MPA may count toward the certificate, thereby reducing the additional courses needed to complete the certificate. Some of these courses may have been taken under the 555 or 599 course numbers. Interested individuals should contact the PAPA offices for more information.

## **SECTION III: FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

### **A. Costs**

**The cost of completing the MPA graduate program fluctuates over time. Prospective students are encouraged to visit the following website for costs related to tuition and fees:**

<https://www.siue.edu/paying-for-college/estimator.shtml>

### **B. Paid Professional Internships**

An internship option is available but not required. A student may receive 3 semester hours of credit toward the MPA degree for the internship experience. Internship credit is available to those students without significant full-time work experience in public organizations. In no case will a student who is employed in a permanent position be allowed to use that experience for internship credit.

1. Students may request consideration for placement as an intern through the department's Internship Coordinator. The Department will evaluate the academic and professional qualifications and may decide that the student does not qualify for placement as an intern.
2. The number of internships available varies from semester to semester, and the Department does not guarantee placement to all applicants. All internships are awarded on a competitive basis. A student will be expected to interview competitively for the internship position. The MPA Program does not guarantee that every student seeking an internship will receive said internship.

Additional information regarding the internship program is available through:

<https://www.siue.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/student-resources/internships.shtml>

### **C. Graduate Assistantships**

1. Graduate Assistantships, in which recipients assist the Department with research, teaching, and other tasks, are available. Recipients are granted monthly stipends and tuition waivers. Admission to the MPA program is preferred but not necessary for a student to be considered for an assistantship in PAPA. Successful applicants are required to maintain an overall 3.00 grade point average to retain the assistantship. PAPA Graduate Assistants are expected to exhibit the attributes of motivated and dedicated graduate students

to both the faculty and other graduate students. Additional information concerning assistantships is available from the PAPA Department.

2. Graduate Assistantships are also available in units other than the Department of Public Administration and Policy Analysis. Interested students are encouraged to investigate the availability of these assistantships through:

<https://www.siue.edu/graduate-students/assistantships/postings.shtml>

#### **D. Financial Aid Available Through Other Units**

Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Financial Aid for information about other financial aid programs available to students attending SIUE.

<https://www.siue.edu/financial-aid/>

### **SECTION IV: REGISTERING FOR COURSES**

#### **A. Registration for New, Continuing, and Returning Students**

1. New students are encouraged to arrange an appointment with the MPA Program Director to discuss the program and the various options available to them. The Program Director can advise on the number of hours to be taken, how the program can help them achieve career goals, blending courses to create a schedule to meet their needs, and other issues. The advising can be done in person, over the phone, or through email.
2. New and continuing students are urged to complete a course request form prior to registering for each semester. The form and instructions for completing the form are available through:

<https://www.siue.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/student-resources/forms.shtml>

The completed form will be used by the MPA Program Director for assistance in determining which courses will meet the career needs of the individual student, remain for them to complete program requirements, would best create a balanced course load, and avoid repeating any course already taken.

3. Returning students, after an absence of one year or longer, must apply to the Graduate School to have their status reactivated. After their file has been reactivated, the student should contact the MPA Program Director for assistance with course registration.

**B. Course Registration Requirements**

1. MPA students are required to complete 39 hours to meet the program requirements. The 39 hours include 21 hours of required core courses (See Section V of the Graduate Catalog) and 18 hours of approved elective credit (See Section V of the Graduate Catalog). Please note that students pursuing the MPA in a concurrent program with the SIUE School of Pharmacy or the SIU Law School should refer to specific requirements related to the concurrent degrees.
2. All students must complete the required core courses. The core courses may be taken in any order. It is recommended that PAPA 500 or PAPA 550 be taken early in the program to provide a foundation for other courses taken in the program. Students may take any non-core PAPA course as an elective in their program of study. Students are encouraged to consult with the MPA Program Director, Section V of this document, or other PAPA faculty to select electives that best meet their career needs.
3. Students may transfer graduate-level courses from other SIUE programs or other universities into their SIUE MPA program of study with the prior approval of the MPA Program Director and the SIUE Graduate School. No more than 12 hours of course credit may be transferred into the MPA degree, and it is imperative that they also fit the career aspirations of the student.
4. Graduate students may enroll in a maximum of 15 hours in fall semesters, 15 hours in spring semesters, and 12 hours in summer terms. Graduate students with assistantships may enroll in a maximum of 12 hours in fall semesters, 12 hours in spring semesters, and 9 hours in summer terms.

**C. Change in Registration, Including Course Withdrawal**

1. Students who fail to participate in an online course during the first week of class may be dropped from the course.
2. Students desiring to drop a course have the responsibility to ensure that they have been dropped from the course. If a student fails to do so, a grade of "F", "NS", or "UW" may be given in the course. A grade of "UW" will count the same as a grade of "F" in the calculation of the student's grade point average.
3. Students who leave the University voluntarily before the end of the semester must officially withdraw from all courses in which they have registered, or they

will receive a grade of “F”, “NS”, or “UW” in those classes. A grade of “UW” will count the same as a grade of “F” in the calculation of the student’s grade point average.

4. A student may use his or her “eID” to withdraw from a course online through the CougarNet before a set deadline. A student may also withdraw from a class in person at the Student Services Center. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the course withdrawal dates:

<https://www.siue.edu/registrar/calendars/>

#### **D. Students on Academic Probation, with a GPA Deficiency, or in Need of a Retention Plan**

1. A student who has been placed on academic probation or has received a failing grade in a class (D, F, or UW) will be required to remove the academic deficiency and should seek assistance with registration through the MPA Program Director. This will enable the Program Director to work with the student to create a plan of action to remove any grade point average deficiencies. A student must maintain a grade point average of 3.0 in the core courses for the program and the program overall to avoid being deficient.
2. A retention plan will be developed with the MPA Program Director for any student with a GPA deficiency in the program or in the core of the program. This plan will outline courses that must be taken and the semester in which they must be taken. The retention plan should be followed until the grade point deficiency is remedied. The retention plan will be filed with the Graduate School and will require the acknowledgement of the student.

### **SECTION V: COURSEWORK**

#### **A. MPA Required Courses**

All MPA students must complete seven core courses (21 semester hours). The common core requirements emphasize administrative and managerial knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with day-to-day administration within public and nonprofit organizations; the foundation from which these have emerged, and directions in which they appear headed.

Students in the MPA program are required to take each of the courses listed in this section. It is recommended that either PAPA 500 Fundamentals of Public and Nonprofit Administration or PAPA 550 Public Policy be taken as the first core course in the program. The remaining core courses may be taken in any order. However, the student should consider taking core courses specifically related to his or her

chosen field of study early in the program of study (i.e., a student interested in the field of human resources should take PAPA 540 in his or her first or second semester).

1. PAPA 420-Quantitative Analysis: This course is designed to provide graduate students with a solid foundation in the application of quantitative statistical analysis. Attention is given to manual computations, but emphasis is placed on computer-based solutions to a variety of problems. The course is structured in such a manner as to provide students with the ability to evaluate and operationalize appropriate statistical procedures in a range of applied problems. The course also provides an introduction to research design issues.
2. PAPA 500- Fundamentals of Public and Nonprofit Administration: This course is designed to introduce students entering the MPA program to the discipline and profession of public administration. It provides an introductory overview of the field. The student will examine and analyze the application and relationship of management policies to the contemporary economic, political, and social institutions and ethical dilemmas faced in today's society.
3. PAPA 501-Public Organizations: The course involves a set of interconnected concepts, definitions that explain the behavior of individuals or groups that interact with each other to perform activities intended to assure the accomplishment of an organization's mission and goals. For public administrators, the demand to create greater efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness in organizations is a constant. The course will provide the opportunity to develop an understanding of the myriad of theories and concepts that have been developed concerning the structure and management of organizations. This foundation will serve as a base from which to analyze the many components that go into the operation of the organization. The course has been designed to provide students with an introduction to those characteristics and variables that play a role in the functioning of public organizations. Students will be introduced to such topics as the components of the environment of organizations, the diverse designs available in structuring organizations, appropriate decision making, planning, and coordinating strategies to produce organizational goals, behavior within the organizations, and strategies for leadership and implementing change within organizations.
4. PAPA 510-E-Government and Cybersecurity: This course has been designed to introduce Public Administration students to the foundations and development of E-Government and Cybersecurity. The previous two decades have seen significant increases in the number of public and nonprofit organizations adopting information and communication technologies as a means of service delivery. As the number of citizens and clients using the Internet and mobile technologies increases, the public sector and nonprofit sectors are attempting



to keep pace with the changing technologies and citizens' expectations. The course will explore service delivery mechanisms that range from providing basic information describing the unit and its functions through interactive democracy. E-government sites will be compared along a variety of variables, including breadth of coverage, departments and services, level of information ranging from basic information to access to databases and fiscal information, and access varying from static information to 24/7 interactive service delivery. The course will also explore the factors and determinants that drive development and the latest innovations.

5. **PAPA 530-Public Budgeting:** This course is designed to provide a comprehensive review of aspects of public budgeting. Emphasis is placed on the processes and politics of governmental budgeting. The student will become acquainted with key issues surrounding the budget process in federal, state, and local governments, with an emphasis on local governments and nonprofit agencies. This course provides a framework for evaluating the economic and social benefits and costs of public budgetary decisions and introduces students to forecasting revenue, administering debt, procurement, and budget analysis.
6. **PAPA 540- Public and Nonprofit Human Resources Administration:** This course is designed to acquaint students with the values and techniques of personnel administration for the public and nonprofit sectors. The course exposes students to the evolution of personnel management in the public sector and the actual practices currently in use in public and nonprofit agencies. Students are exposed to the societal, political, and legal environments that affect the personnel function. The course includes a brief historical overview of the evolution of PPM, addresses unique issues facing public personnel administration, and examines the technical areas of personnel such as recruitment, selection, equal employment opportunity, performance management, training and career development, compensation and benefits, and labor relations.
7. **PAPA 550-Public Policy: Context, Process and Analysis:** Public administrators, whether in the public sector or nonprofit sector, must be familiar with the workings of the policy process to be able to respond to, interact with, and even direct the creation of public policy. Government exists to control behaviors, and public policy is the mechanism used to create and direct those behaviors. There is no agency, public, private, or nonprofit, that does not find its mission, goals, and functions being influenced by public policies. The purpose of this course is to examine the processes and issues involved in the development and implementation of public policies and programs in the public organizational setting. The public policy process in both theory and application will be discussed throughout the semester. The process will be approached both from a systematic, orderly process and a fragmented, politically driven approach. The

foundation of public policy, the structural context of policy making, the actors in the process, the tools and methodologies, and the implementation of policy are subjects to be explored. Also, to be examined at some length within the course will be the creation and implications of “errors” within the public policy process.

## **B. Elective Courses**

The student is advised to select a block of 18 semester hours or elective credit that reflects career needs or aspirations. Advising is available to assist the student in determining what collection of electives may most closely provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed. Each student, in concert with the MPA Program Director, is encouraged to design a program of study that is tailored to his or her professional needs or interests.

This portion of the MPA program has been purposefully designed to provide great flexibility in course selection. Students may consult the PAPA Department, the graduate catalog, the department’s web page, or CougarNet for listings of elective offerings. Listed below are electives offered by the PAPA Department. The frequency with which an elective is offered will vary. Typically, electives are offered only once a year, and some less frequently based on demand, instructor availability, and previous offerings.

*Please note that some course titles are listed under the PAPA 555 and PAPA 599 course numbers. These are seminar courses and are offered only periodically.*

There are no formal specializations in the MPA program, but there are bodies of coursework that center on subfields within Public Administration. The following groups are only offered as general guidance for students interested in certain career areas.

### **1. Nonprofit Administration**

- PAPA 575 Nonprofit Administration
- PAPA 576 Strategic Planning
- PAPA 577 Needs Assessment
- PAPA 578 Fundraising
- PAPA 579 Grantsmanship
- PAPA 580 Public and Nonprofit Leaders
- PAPA 581 Leadership with Public and Nonprofit Boards
- PAPA 582 Leading in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
- PAPA 583 Leading Innovation in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
- PAPA 584 Leadership in the Community and Region
- PAPA 599 Administration of Volunteer Programs

## 2. Human Resources

- PAPA 506 Public Law
- PAPA 545 Public Sector Labor Relations
- PAPA 546 Performance Appraisal
- PAPA 548 Public Supervisory Practices
- PAPA 555 Managing Problem Employees
- PAPA 555 Employee Onboarding
- PAPA 599 Professional Development
- PAPA 599 Administration of Volunteer Programs

## 3. General Administration

- PAPA 506 Administrative Law
- PAPA 507 Values and the Practice of Public Administration
- PAPA 545 Public Sector Labor Relations
- PAPA 546 Performance Appraisal
- PAPA 576 Strategic Planning and Organizational Development
- PAPA 577 Needs Assessment
- PAPA 580 Public and Nonprofit Leaders
- PAPA 581 Leadership with Public and Nonprofit Boards
- PAPA 582 Leading in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
- PAPA 583 Leading Innovation in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
- PAPA 584 Leadership in the Community and Region
- PAPA 585 Local Government Administration

## 4. Public Safety and Security

- PAPA 506 Public Law
- PAPA 507 Values and the Practice of Public Administration
- PAPA 576 Strategic Planning
- PAPA 599 Homeland Security I
- PAPA 599 Homeland Security II
- PAPA 599 Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
- PAPA 599 Administration of Criminal Justice

## 5. Leadership (Professional Leadership Strategies)

- PAPA 580 Public and Nonprofit Leaders
- PAPA 581 Leadership with Public and Nonprofit Boards
- PAPA 582 Leading in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
- PAPA 583 Leading Innovation in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
- PAPA 584 Leadership in the Community and Region
- PAPA 576 Strategic Planning

- PAPA 577 Needs Assessment

#### **D. Elective Offerings from Outside PAPA (Transfer Courses)**

Students may also work with the MPA Program Director to develop a program of electives that targets a specific area of interest offered outside the MPA program but related to public administration. Electives taken from other departments within the university must be at the graduate level and must have the prior approval of the MPA Program Director.

#### **D. Internship**

1. Students interested in the internship component of the MPA degree program are encouraged to contact the PAPA Internship Director and to visit the following webpage:

<https://www.siue.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/student-resources/internships.shtml>

2. The professional internship component of the MPA program is highly recommended for all MPA students who lack professional experience. The internship option is available but not required. A student may receive 3 semester hours of credit toward the MPA degree for the internship experience. The student must register for the course each semester in which they are participating in the internship. The 3 credit hours for the course will count only once toward the MPA degree, but may be taken multiple times.
2. Internship credit is available primarily to those students without significant full-time work experience in public organizations. In no case will a student who is employed in a permanent position be allowed to use that experience for internship credit.
3. Students may request consideration for placement as an intern through the department's Internship Coordinator. The Department will evaluate the academic and professional qualifications and may decide that the student does not qualify for placement as an intern.
4. Student Interns may be placed in either half-time (20 hours per week) or quarter-time (10 hours per week) internships. Paid internships carry compensation equivalent to that of a Graduate Assistant in the Department and also include a waiver of most fees.
5. The number of internships available varies from semester to semester, and the

Department does not guarantee placement to all applicants. All internships are awarded on a competitive basis.

6. During the internship experience, the student will be required to meet with the internship director and with other interns to discuss their experiences. Other written and oral presentations will be required as determined by the internship director.

## **E. Transfer of Credit**

1. Transfer Credits: Course credit may be transferred to a student's MPA program from coursework taken at other accredited institutions, from other SIUE programs, or unclassified status at SIUE. Such work must have been taken for graduate credit, passed with a grade of "B" or better, and be approved by both the Graduate School and the MPA Program Director. A maximum of 12 semester hours may be transferred into the M.P.A. degree program.
2. It is the responsibility of the student to complete a transfer request to formally request that transfer credit be applied to the MPA degree program. This request must be approved by both the MPA Program Director and the Graduate School. The form (called Graduate Student Request Form) is available online through:

<https://siue.kualibuild.com/build/space/>

3. Credit earned by correspondence or by proficiency will not be accepted by either the MPA degree program or the Graduate School. Credit earned in the dissertation, thesis, or any other concluding elements at another university is not accepted for transfer.
4. Credits Earned While in Unclassified Status: Credits earned while in unclassified status may be transferred into the MPA if the student has received no grade lower than "B" for the course. It is in the student's best interest to consult with the MPA Program Director regarding the courses to be taken before registration if he or she intends to request the course be credited toward an MPA degree. Transfer of these credits may be requested by the student through:

<https://siue.kualibuild.com/build/space/>

## **F. Other**

1. Communication with the MPA Program and Faculty

The department and faculty will make contact with students through the student's SIUE e-mail account. The student should regularly monitor that e-mail account for

such communications. A faculty member may also send communications via the SIUE e-mail account or through the Blackboard system. The student is responsible for monitoring these sources of communication. University closures and emergencies will be communicated through the e-alert system. A student may subscribe to this service through:

<https://www.siue.edu/emergency/elert.shtml>

## 2. Syllabus

The student is responsible for all information included in the syllabus for a course. Please read each syllabus carefully and ask the professor any questions concerning material not understood. Pay careful attention to class dates, readings for a given date, and any assignments, papers, or exams scheduled for the course.

## 3. Blackboard

All MPA courses are offered online through Blackboard. The Blackboard shell for each course is typically available on the Friday preceding the opening of the course. Information regarding Blackboard is available through:

<https://www.siue.edu/its/bb/students/tutorials.shtml>

# SECTION VI: GRADING SYSTEM

## A. Course Grades

The marks of “A”, “B”, “C”, “D”, and “F” will be used for final grades in the MPA program. The grade of “A” will be earned by students who reflect outstanding performance in the class. This grade is reserved for truly excellent scholars. The grade of “B” is for superior achievement. It is a quality grade and reflects the performance expected of all graduate students. The grade of “C” represents achievement levels below that expected of graduate students. The grade of “D” represents an inferior and minimally passing performance. The grade of “F” represents failure and is given for unsatisfactory work.

The Graduate Catalog provides additional information on these and other grades used in the MPA program:

<https://www.siue.edu/policies/table-of-contents/1j1.shtml>

## **B. MPA Program Grade Standards**

MPA students are required to present an overall minimum grade point average of 3.00 in courses taken for graduate credit. Graduate credit is allowed for courses completed with grades of A, B, and C. Grades of D and F are counted in computing the grade point average but carry no credit toward the MPA degree. Graduate students may repeat a course in order to change their grade. When a student repeats a course previously taken at SIUE, only the grade earned in the more recent attempt will be used in computing the student's grade point average, but both grades will appear on the transcript. See the Graduate Catalog for more information on the Course Repeat Policy.

## **C. Incompletes**

Incompletes will be allowed at the discretion of the instructor and require the student to have completed a majority of the work in the class. Guidelines for awarding incomplete grades may be established by the instructor or may follow the outline given in the Graduate Catalog. After one year, the grade of "I" will be converted to the failing grade of "F" if the student has not completed all course requirements.

## **SECTION VII: PLAGIARISM, WRITING STANDARDS, AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. University Policy on Academic Ethics and Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, or dismissal from the University, per the SIUE academic dishonesty policy. Students are responsible for complying with university policies about academic honesty as stated in the University's Student Academic Conduct Code.

<https://www.siu.edu/policies/table-of-contents/3c2.shtml>

### **B. Writing Standards**

1. Students in the MPA program or taking MPA classes are expected to demonstrate professional writing standards. As such, all writing assignments in this course will be expected to meet a minimal standard. These standards address spelling, punctuation, format, and basic grammar. A failure to meet these standards will result in a loss of points on the final grade for the assignment. Proofreading and correcting assignments and discussions before submission is highly recommended.

2. Each faculty member may designate his or her own rules with regard to writing in the course. These rules will often include avoiding first person, avoiding imperatives, and complying with a writing style such as the APA (American Psychological Association) or the Chicago Manual of Style.
3. Common Errors in Assignments
  - Lack of conformity with the assignment (i.e., answering questions as posed, structuring the answer properly)
  - Misspelling
  - Correctly spelled, but inappropriate words (i.e., a word that spell check approves, but is incorrectly used: two for too)
  - Run-on sentences
  - Lack of capitalization at the beginning of a sentence
  - Serious errors in punctuation
  - Other serious grammatical errors
  - Improper citation or failure to use citations
  - Failure to properly use paragraph breaks

## **SECTION VIII: GRADUATION**

### **A. Procedures for Graduation**

#### **1. Graduation Process**

As an MPA student enters the final phase of study, the student is responsible for completing all procedures for graduation. A graduation calendar and all relevant forms are available from the Graduate School:

<https://www.siue.edu/registrar/services/graduation/index.shtml>

#### **2. Application for Graduation**

It is the responsibility of each student to file the “Application for Graduation” form with the Graduate School. To avoid any delay in graduating, the student should apply to graduate at least two semesters before the expected date of graduation, no later than the first day of the term preceding the one in which the student plans to graduate. This form is available in the Graduate School.



## **B. Completing MPA Graduation Requirements**

### **1. Comprehensive Examination**

Candidates for the Master of Public Administration Degree must pass a “Comprehensive Written Examination” which covers the MPA core curriculum. In the Comprehensive Exam, the student is required to demonstrate mastery of the concepts of the MPA curriculum and the ability to integrate and apply these concepts. The student will be expected to exhibit the goals set by the Graduate School at SIUE and NASPAA universal competencies (see Section I: C: 2).

Information regarding qualifying for taking the exam, signing up to take the exam, and the exam itself is available through:

<https://www.siue.edu/arts-and-sciences/papa/student-resources/forms.shtml>

The MPA Comprehensive Exam is administered once in the fall, spring, and summer semesters. It is typically scheduled three to four weeks before the final exam week of each semester.

It is the obligation of the student to register with the Department their intent to take the Comprehensive Exam in a given semester. Students who have not registered to take the Comprehensive Exam may be denied the opportunity to participate in the exam for that semester. The registration form is available in the PAPA offices or online at the program’s web page. Registration for an examination typically closes 4-5 weeks before the examination. The student must contact the PAPA offices to determine the actual closing date for a given semester.

Students who fail the exam may retake the exam at its next offering. A student is allowed to take the examination multiple times within the following framework:

A student failing the exam a second time is advised to participate in a vigorous review of previous coursework and texts. The student is also encouraged to consult with the MPA Program Director. A student failing the examination for a third time is encouraged to repeat course areas where they are having difficulty or register for 3 hours of PAPA 596, Independent Readings. The student will be required to participate in and complete an independent reading course designed to facilitate a more structured preparation for the examination.

## 2. Portfolio Documents

Candidates for the MPA must place a “clean” copy (without written comments) of two of their best papers completed in the MPA program in their student file before they will be allowed to take the MPA Comprehensive Examination. The student’s name and the course for which each paper was written must be included.

## **PART IX: OBTAINING EMPLOYMENT**

MPA students have access to the SIUE Career Resource Center. The Center provides a full range of career planning and placement services. The Center provides resume preparation services, interviewing skills workshops, job search techniques workshops, informational interviewing workshops, workshops on how to use the Internet to conduct job searches, and hosts on-campus interviews. The University also sponsors career fairs during the Fall and Spring semesters, where students have the opportunity to meet directly with potential employers.

The Department provides no formal placement service. However, the faculty of the Department does attempt to assist students in the placement process. Faculty will regularly counsel students on career questions, processes for seeking employment, and resume creation. Further, the faculty will notify students of positions that may come to their attention, and the Department maintains a bulletin board listing job openings that come to the attention of the Department.

Pre-service students who engage in the internship program are able to gain considerable and invaluable employment experience. Such experience contributes significantly to the student’s marketability. The interns, along with graduate assistants, participate in a series of monthly meetings that are designed to assist them in growing professionally, provide advice on career development, address issues of being an employee, and develop their interview skills.