INDIANA UNIVERSITY SOUTH BEND

Master of Public Affairs Student Handbook

Updated August 2024

Table of Contents

General Information

Welcome to the Master of Public Affairs (MPA) program at Indiana University South Bend. The MPA program is a professional degree program housed in the Department of Political Science. The IU South Bend MPA degree is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA).

The MPA program promotes a course of study that engages students in the study of public policy and public affairs while teaching professional management skills such as budgeting, data analysis, and strategic management in the context of contemporary political, economic, and social issues. Across all four of the program's concentrations, students will gain content-area expertise and the management skills necessary to lead public, criminal justice, nonprofit, and health sector organizations. The MPA program provides a foundation for equipping managers to excel in their jobs and to become leaders in their workplaces and communities.

This handbook serves as a guide to the policies, requirements, and expectations of students within the program. Students should take the time to read this handbook in its entirety as they begin their graduate school career and keep it as a reference throughout their time in the program. Students should feel free to contact their faculty advisor or the MPA Director should they have any question that is not adequately addressed in the handbook.

MPA/Political Science Office: 2188WiekampHall
MPA/Political Science Office Phone Number: (574) 520-4334
MPA Program Email Address: MPAInfo@iusb.edu

Additional information about the MPA program is available on the MPA webpage located at: https://clas.iusb.edu/public-affairs/index.html.

Program Mission

The mission of the MPA program is:

> "We prepare students for careers as leaders in administration and policy within government, criminal justice, nonprofit, and healthcare organizations."

The mission of the program is achieved through three goals:
- Understand key principles of effective management
- Develop evidence-based public policy
- Develop an appreciation for the public service perspective

Program Requirements

Admission

Applicants to the Master of Public Affairs (MPA) program and its certificate programs come from a variety of educational backgrounds, including from the social sciences, criminal justice, education, social work, medicine, nursing and the humanities. Students are admitted to the program by the MPA Graduate Admissions Committee, which meets on a regular basis during the academic year to review applications for admission. Students may begin the program in any semester (Fall, Spring, or Summer). The following deadlines should be noted to be considered for full admission to the program:

> June 30 for admission to the Fall semester
> October 31 for admission to the Spring semester
> March 31 for admission to the Summer sessions
>
> (If an applicant misses a deadline, they should
> contact the director about the possibility of a
> late application review)

Applications must be completed within one year from the date they were begun. Applications not completed within this time frame will be denied; however, interested students can restart their application process at a later date.

Requirements for admission in full standing in the MPA program include:

1. A complete application to Indiana University – South Bend with a paid application fee.
2. A bachelor's degree, or its equivalent, from a regionally accredited college or university.
3. An undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of at least a 3.0 on a 4-point scale.
4. Applicants with a bachelor's degree granted by Indiana University South Bend within the past five years, and at least a 3.0, may elect to pursue direct admission to the MPA program.
5. Applicants who have a GPA lower than 3.0 may be admitted conditionally with a requirement to complete a semester meeting requirements relating to GPA designated by the Admissions Committee.
6. A personal statement explaining the applicant's interests and goals in pursuing an MPA degree.
7. Three letters of recommendation from references who are familiar with the applicant's academic and/or work abilities.
8. Submission of official transcripts from all postsecondary education institutes in which the applicant has been enrolled.

The MPA program has the following prerequisite requirements within the past six (6) years: Completing courses in two of the following three areas with a grade of "C" or better.

1. A course in statistics
2. A course in political science or public affairs
3. A course in economics

Applicants who have not taken at least one course in two of the three areas may be required to enroll in a course from the subject areas not covered before or at the time of application to the program. This will be decided in consultation with the MPA program director.

Under certain circumstances (such as relevant work experience), students may be admitted on a provisional basis. This provisional status is removed upon fulfillment of stipulated conditions. Generally, applicants admitted on a provisional basis must enroll in certain courses and must obtain a 3.0 GPA in all provisional course work before they are granted full admittance to the degree program.

General Requirements

The program requires the completion of thirty-nine (39) credit hours of graduate coursework. Students complete program coursework in three areas: core coursework, concentration coursework, and elective coursework.

Of the thirty-nine (39) credit hours of graduate work required for the degree, up to six (6) credit hours of appropriate graduate course work may be transferred from other universities, including other Indiana University campuses, and applied toward the program requirements. Approval of credit transfer is at the discretion of the MPA Director and the MPA Admissions Committee.

Core Courses

The core curriculum of eighteen (18) credit hours of courses is required of all students pursuing the MPA degree. Students should take the core courses (with the exception of POLS-Y 615) closer to the beginning of their matriculation in order to prepare them for the materials in their elective coursework and research projects. Students earning a grade of "C-" or less in a core course must retake it the next semester in which the course is offered. Core courses include the following:

POLS-Y 501: Fundamentals of Public Management
POLS-Y 524: Research Design for Public Affairs
POLS-Y 503: Statistics for Public Management
     (POLS-Y524 is a prerequisite for this course)
POLS-Y 505: Personnel Management in Public Organizations
POLS-Y 509: International Public Affairs
POLS-Y 615: Capstone in Public Affairs
     (POLS-Y503 is a prerequisite for this course)

Concentrations

All students in the MPA program choose a concentration within the MPA degree framework. Concentrations give students an educational foundation and skill set in a substantive area of interest. The course of study in each concentration is determined in conjunction with an advisor. Currently, the MPA program offers concentrations in Government Administration and Policy, Criminal Justice, Nonprofit Administration, and Health System Administration.
Students wishing to tailor the MPA program around their career goals may also choose a Generalist Option. The Generalist Option allows the student to select twelve (12) credit hours of public affairs courses with the approval of the advisor.

Government Administration and Policy

The government administration and policy concentration consists of twelve (12) credit hours within the MPA curriculum. Students are required to take the follow course:

POLS-Y 513: Public Policy

Additionally, students must complete nine (9) credit hours from the following list of courses:

POLS-Y 507: Public Law
POLS-Y 511: Public Economics
POLS-Y 517: Civic Groups and Public Policy
POLS-Y 521: Comparative Public Management and Affairs
POLS-Y 522: Public Budgeting and Finance
POLS-Y 582: Financial Management for Public Affairs
POLS-Y 625: Topics in Public Affairs

Other appropriate courses can be taken within the concentration upon approval of the student's advisor and the MPA Director.

Criminal Justice

The criminal justice concentration consists of twelve (12) credit hours within the MPA curriculum. Students are required to take the following course:

CJUS-P 510 Criminal Justice Policy and Practice

Additionally, students must complete nine (9) credit hours from the following list of courses:

CJUS-P 521 Policing Policy and Management
CJUS-P 524 Race, Class, and the Criminal Justice System
CJUS-P 525 Victim Advocacy and Victimology
CJUS-P 526 Corrections, Practice, Policy, and the World of Incarceration
POLS-Y 507 Public Law

Other appropriate courses can be taken within the concentration upon approval of the student's advisor and the MPA Director.

Non-Profit Administration and Policy

The non-profit administration and policy concentration consists of twelve (12) credit hours within the MPA curriculum. Students are required to take the follow course:

POLS-Y 515: Nonprofit Management

Additionally, students must complete nine (9) credit hours from the following list of courses:

POLS-Y 507: Public Law
POLS-Y 511: Public Economics
POLS-Y 517: Civic Groups and Public Policy
POLS-Y 519: Resource Development for Nonprofits
POLS-Y 582: Financial Management for Public Affairs
POLS-Y 635: Topics in Non-Profit Management

Other appropriate courses can be taken within the concentration upon approval of the student's advisor and the MPA Director.

Health Systems Management and Policy

The health systems management and policy concentration consists of twelve (12) credit hours within the MPA curriculum. Students are required to take the follow course:

POLS-Y 502: Health Care Delivery Issues

Additionally, students must complete nine (9) credit hours from the following list of courses:

POLS-Y 504: Management and Governance of Health Services Organizations.
POLS-Y 514: Political Economy of Health Care
POLS-Y 516: Legal Aspects of Health Care Delivery
POLS-Y 582: Financial Management for Public Affairs

POLS-Y 5**: Geographic Information Systems
POLS-Y 6**: Topics in Healthcare Management

Other appropriate courses can be taken within the concentration upon approval of the student's advisor and the MPA Direct

Electives

Each student is required to take an additional nine (9) credit hours from the other graduate course offerings within the MPA program to complete the thirty-nine (39) credit hour requirement. In order to maximize the flexibility of the program to meet the career needs of students, the MPA program may accept courses from other departments and students may find it useful to take an online course from another IU campus. Students should investigate courses that interest them and fit their schedules and then consult their assigned advisor or the MPA Director if they have questions about such courses. Students should seek approval prior to taking outside courses to be counted towards completion of the MPA degree.

Directed Readings

Students may undertake individual study through Directed Readings (POLS-Y594). Such studies are not intended to substitute for scheduled courses, but rather supplement areas of interest or study that the student would like to expound upon. Prior to registration, interested students must approach the professor they would like to work with to oversee the readings project. When approaching a professor, students should have a proposal for what they would like to study and accomplish. Students are limited to three (3) credit hours of directed readings credit. Proposal forms are available from the MPA Director or any MPA professor.

Internships

Although not required for graduation, an internship is highly recommended for MPA students with little or no professional experience in their desired career. Internships provide students with an applied exposure to the works of a government or nonprofit organization. Opportunities for internships are frequently posted on the program's webpage and the program's LinkedIn group page. Up to three (3) credit hours of practicum/internship credit may be awarded to a student engaged in an off-campus internship or professional work experience. Students generally arrange their own internships/practica and work with an advisor to determine the academic requirements for obtaining credit prior to beginning the experience. Course credit can only be accumulated for internships completed while enrolled in the MPA program. Internships/practica must be approved by a faculty advisor and the MPA Director.

Midcareer Credit

Individuals applying to the MPA program may be eligible to receive up to six (6) credit hours for relevant work experience in a professional setting. Experience in managerial or in program or policy development with a public, quasi-public, or private agency can be petitioned for graduate credit towards the degree. It is rare for students to receive six (6) credits unless they were in a significant leadership position in an organization, such as director.

It is strongly recommended that individuals wishing to pursue this option contact the MPA Director for consultation.

Review Process

All applications for the mid-career credit options are reviewed and evaluated by the Admissions Committee to the MPA program. Time served in a managerial position does not automatically qualify itself for mid-career credit. Decisions on the granting of mid-career credits are at the discretion of the MPA Graduate Admissions Committee.

If the application of mid-career credit is granted, the MPA Graduate Admissions Committee will determine how many credits will be awarded. Credits awarded are normally applied to the elective credits in the MPA program. If successful applicants for mid-career credits wish to apply the credits to specific courses, they must consult with the MPA Director before they begin their graduate program.

Career Services

Some students seek their MPA degree as a means of advancing a current career; however, many others pursue the degree as a tool for changing their career paths. A resource provided to all MPA students and alumni is the Career Services Office. The mission of the Career Services Office is to support students and alumni in their career development. This is accomplished by offering a number of services and activities to students and alumni, including resume and cover letter workshops, interview preparation sessions, and the development of job search strategies. The office also assists in locating internships and full-time employment using a number of available resources, including a comprehensive career database. The Career Services Office regularly hosts employment recruitment opportunities where employers interested in hiring individuals with the skill set acquired during the MPA are invited.

For more information about these opportunities or additional questions, please contact the Career Services Office at:

> Career Services Office
> Administration Building 104
> 1700 Mishawaka Avenue
> Post Office Box 7111
> South Bend, IN 46634-7111
>
> Phone: (574) 520-4425
> E-Mail:sbcareer@iusb.edu
> Website: https://southbend.iu.edu/students/career-services/index.html

Academic Integrity

The Indiana University Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct contain the rules and regulations by which Indiana University students must abide. This book includes information on student rights and responsibilities, complaint procedures, misconduct, disciplinary procedures, and due process. The Code is available at: https://studentcode.iu.edu

According to the Code, the following conduct is prohibited as violating those standards:

1. Cheating

   Cheating is considered to be an attempt to use or provide unauthorized assistance, materials, information, or study aids in any form and in any academic exercise or environment.

   a. A student must not use external assistance on any "in-class" or "take-home" examination, unless the instructor specifically has authorized external assistance. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the use of tutors, books, notes, calculators, computers, and wireless communication devices.
   b. A student must not use another person as a substitute in the taking of an examination or quiz, nor allow other persons to conduct research or to prepare work, without advanced authorization from the instructor to whom the work is being submitted.
   c. A student must not use materials from a commercial term paper company, files of papers prepared by other persons, or submit documents found on the Internet.
   d. A student must not collaborate with other persons on a particular project and submit a copy of a written report that is represented explicitly or implicitly as the student's individual work.
   e. A student must not use any unauthorized assistance in a laboratory, at a computer terminal, or on fieldwork.
   f. A student must not steal examinations or other course materials, including but not limited to, physical copies and photographic or electronic images.
   g. A student must not submit substantial portions of the same academic work for credit or honors more than once without permission of the instructor or program to whom he work is being submitted.
   h. A student must not, without authorization, alter a grade or score in any way, nor alter answers on a returned exam or assignment for credit.

2. Fabrication

   A student must not falsify or invent any information or data in an academic exercise including, but not limited to, records or reports, laboratory results, and citation to the sources of information.

3. Plagiarism

   Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work, including the work of other students, as one's own. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged, unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered "common knowledge" may differ from course to course.

   a. A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgment.
   b. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge indebtedness whenever:

      1. directly quoting another person's actual words, whether oral or written;
      2. using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories;
      3. paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written;
      4. borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or
      5. offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment

4. Interference

   A student must not steal, change, destroy, or impede another student's work, nor should the student unjustly attempt, through a bribe, a promise of favors or threats, to affect any student's grade or the evaluation of academic performance. Impeding another student's work includes, but is not limited to, the theft, defacement, or mutilation of resources so as to deprive others of the information they contain.

5. Violation of Course Rules

   A student must not violate course rules established by a department, the course syllabus, verbal or written instructions, or the course materials that are rationally related to the content of the course or to the enhancement of the learning process in the course.

6. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty

   A student must not intentionally or knowingly help or attempt to help another student to commit an act of academic misconduct, nor allow another student to use his or her work or resources to commit an act of misconduct.

Program Administration

Admissions

Applicants who satisfy published admissions criteria may be considered to be fully admitted to the MPA program. After a review of applications, the Department of Political Science issues a letter with the formal decision of all admission decisions.

A provision or conditional admission into the program may be offered to applicants at the discretion of the MPA Director in consultation with the MPA admissions committee. This provisional status is removed upon fulfillment of stipulated conditions, such as taking more preparatory undergraduate courses. Generally, applicants admitted on a provisional basis must enroll in certain courses and must obtain a 3.0 GPA in all preliminary course work before they are granted full admittance to the degree program.

Advisor

Upon entering the MPA program, students must choose a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor's primary responsibility is to assist students in developing a plan of study for their path through the program. Students work with their advisors to select courses in key areas of interest to fulfill their concentration requirements. A student may choose any full time MPA faculty member as an advisor. Students are also free to contact any MPA faculty member, regardless of whether that faculty member is the student's advisor, or the MPA Director with substantive questions about their studies. All students should consult with a faculty advisor or the Director at least one a year.

Course Loads

In the MPA program a full course load is considered to be nine (9) credits hours per semester. The program is designed to be completed in a two-year period of full-time enrollment. The two year plan requires full time enrollment during Fall and Spring semesters and enrollment in a three (3) credit hour course during the Summer between the first and second year. However, students that maintain employment during the program should consult with their faculty advisor before attempting a full course load. It is common for students to enroll as a part time student, attempting only one or two courses during a semester.

Students should use the following as a guide in planning their course schedule and when registering: if working full time, one or two courses is appropriate; if working 20 to 30 hours per week, two or three courses; and if working less than one-half time, three courses. Students should consult with their advisor concerning the number of courses to take each semester.

It should also be noted that a student must take at least four (4) credit hours to be eligible for financial aid.

Dropping Courses and Withdrawal

Throughout the pursuit of a degree, situations may arise where students may need to drop or withdrawal from a course. During the first week of classes, individual courses may be added or dropped. Courses dropped during the first week will not appear on a student's academic transcript.

Students may continue to drop from courses through the tenth week of a semester using eDrop through OnCourse. Any course that is dropped after the first week but before the tenth will receive an automatic "W" (Withdrawal) on their transcript.

After the tenth week eDrop is not available and drop forms should be obtained from the student's advisor or office of the Registrar. The signatures of the student's faculty advisor, the Dean, and the course instructor are required. Completed forms must be submitted for processing at the Office of the Registrar by the deadline indicated on each semester's calendar. After the tenth week the student may receive a "W" (Withdrawal) or "F" (Fail) at the discretion of the instructor. No withdrawals will be processed after the last day of classes. Students who choose to complete paper drop forms must submit them at the Office of the Registrar by 5 p.m. on or before each deadline date. Depending on how far into the semester the schedule adjustment is requested, a late schedule adjustment fee may be charged.

If a course is dropped, tuition and fees will be refunded on a percentage basis according to the university's refund schedule. Students receiving financial aid should contact the Office of Financial Aid before making a schedule adjustment to determine how the change will affect eligibility and payment. For additional information on dropping courses, contact the Office of Registrar (https://www.iusb.edu/registrar/index.php).

Transfer Credit

Up to six (6) credit hours of appropriate graduate course work may be transferred from other regionally accredited universities and applied toward the MPA degree. Approval of credit transfer is at the discretion of the MPA Director and the MPA Graduate Admissions Committee. Applicants seeking to apply transfer credits to the MPA program should contact the MPA Director.

Students may transfer from another regionally accredited university a maximum of six (6)credit hours under the following conditions:

> a) The credit is fully acceptable to the transferring institution in satisfaction of its own advanced degree requirements;
> b) The credit is applicable to the student's program of study for an advanced degree at Indiana University South Bend;
> c) The student received a grade of "B" or better for the credit;
> d) The student received the credit within six (6) years prior to the transfer;
> e) The transfer of credit occurs at the time of admission to the program of study and becomes part of the student's MPA study plan *or* the student receives permission from their faculty advisor and the MPA Director to take a transfer course at another regionally accredited university and it becomes part of the study plan.

Repeated Courses

A student may repeat a course once in an attempt to receive a higher grade. A total of two courses in the MPA program may be repeated. The grade received from the second attempt of a course is be used in computing a student's GPA, regardless of whether the grade is higher or lower than the original grade.

Time Limit for Degree Completion

All course work taken for credit towards the MPA degree, including accepted transfer credit, must be completed within a seven (7) year period. The seven (7) year period begins with enrollment in the first course to be applied towards the degree. A student who does not anticipate finishing within the allotted time must meet with the MPA Director to determine whether out-of-date courses must be retaken or revalidated.

Graduation

The process of applying for graduation begins at least one semester before the student intends to graduate. The application deadline for graduation in May or August is October 1st of the previous year. The deadline for a December graduation is March 1st of the same year. For example, students wanting to graduate in May or August 2025 must apply by October 1, 2024. Alternatively, students wanting to graduate in December 2025 do not need to apply for graduation until March 1, 2025.

Applications for graduation are available from the forms section of the MPA student handbook, MPA Director and from the Department of Political Science office, Wiekamp 2188.

Financial Aid

Indiana University South Bend offers an array of resources for students seeking financial aid. Students are heavily encouraged to speak with a financial air representative as soon as possible to discuss the options available to them. The Office of Financial Aid may be contact at:

Office of Financial Aid
Administration Building 157
1700 Mishawaka Avenue
Post Office Box 7111
South Bend, IN 46634-7111

Phone: (574) 520-4357
Toll free: 1-877-462-4872, Extension 4357
Fax: (574) 520-5561
E-Mail:sbfinaid@iusb.edu
Website: https://southbend.iu.edu/students/financial-aid/index.html

Organizations

The public administration/affairs field is focused on the development of an individual's managerial skills during the pursuit of the MPA degree and throughout their career. To assist in this manner, there are several organizations with which students may choose to get involved.

American Society of Public Administration

The American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) is the largest, most prominent association for public administrators. As a national association, ASPA provides opportunities for networking, conferences, and a public administration focused career website. Additionally, it promotes professionalism and training through its chapters and sections. ASPA also sponsors regular webinars on topics of interest to public managers. For more information about ASPA, students are encouraged to visit the ASPA website (www.aspanet.org). Students receive many of the benefits from membership at greatly reduced price while in student status.

MPA Student Association

The MPA Student Association (MPASA) is a recognized student group on campus and is engaged with the program as an avenue for students to improve their graduate experience through social, community, and career development activities. All students enrolled in the MPA program and all program alumni are automatically members in MPASA. Students wishing to become more engaged in the organization should contact the organization's president (MPASASS@iusb.edu), or visit the MPASA website (https://www.iusb.edu/mpa/Current_Students/mpasa.php) for more information.

Pi Alpha Alpha

Pi Alpha Alpha is the national honor society for the field of public affairs and administration. All memberships are national memberships with local chapter affiliation. Information detailing the organization is available on the NASPAA website (http://www.naspaa.org). MPA students are nominated for membership based on the following criteria:

1. GPA of at least 3.7;
2. Completion of 20 hours of MPA credits

Students who meet the eligibility qualifications are notified by e-mail. Students who decide to accept membership pay a one-time membership fee. New members are honored at a special induction ceremony dinner each spring.

Other Professional Organizations

Other organizations whose membership is beneficial to students during their academic and professional careers include:

- Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (www.arnova.org)
- Government Finance Officers Association (www.gfoa.org)
- International City/County Management Association (www.icma.org)
- Society for Human Resource Management (www.shrm.org)

Forms

Checklist for MPA Graduate Students

Name_____

Concentration_____ S.I.D._____

Course #		Term	Grade	Professor
	MPA Core (18 Credit Hours) (POLS-Y)			
Y501	Fundamentals of Public Management			
Y524	Research Design for Public Affairs			
Y503	Statistics for Public Management			
Y505	Personnel Management in Public Organizations			
Y509	International Public Affairs			
Y615	Capstone in Public Affairs			
	Electives (9 Credit Hours)			
	Government Concentration (12 Credit Hours)			
Y513	Public Policy*			
Y507	Public Law			
Y511	Public Economics			
Y517	Civic Groups & Public Policy			
Y522	Public Budgeting & Finance			
Y582	Financial Management for Public Affairs			
Y625	Topics in Public Affairs			
	Nonprofit Concentration (12 Credit Hours)			
Y515	Nonprofit Management*			
Y507	Public Law			
Y511	Public Economics			
Y517	Civic Groups & Public Policy			
Y519	Resource Development for Nonprofits			
Y582	Financial Management for Public Affairs			
Y635	Topics in Nonprofit Management			
	Health Concentration (12 Credit Hours)			
Y502	Healthcare Delivery*			
Y504	Managing Healthcare Organizations			
Y514	Political Economy of Health Care			
Y516	Legal Aspects of Health Care Delivery			
Y582	Financial Management for Public Affairs			
	Criminal Justice (12 Credit Hours) (CJUS-P)			
P510	Criminal Justice Policy and Practice			
P521	Policing Policy and Management			
P524	Race, Class, and the CJ System			
P525	Victim Advocacy and Victimology			
P526	Corrections, Practice, Policy, and the World of Incarceration			
Y507	Public Law			

MPA Graduation Application

Date of application _____

Enter year in which you expect to graduate:

December 20____   May 20_____   August 20_____

Please **print** your name **exactly** as you would like it to appear on your diploma:

_____
First   Middle   (second middle)   Last

10-digit IUSB Student I.D. number _____
Home Address _____
Telephone (Home) _____
(Work/Cell)_____
Email _____

Please check degree

Master of Public Affairs _____

Please check Concentration:

Government Administration and Policy _____

Nonprofit Administration and Policy _____

Health Systems Administration and Policy _____

Criminal Justice _____

Please return completed form to:

Dr. Jamie Smith, Director, MPA Program
(jms21@iu.edu)
Department of Political Science
Indiana University South Bend
1700 Mishawaka Avenue
South Bend, IN 46634