I. Guidelines for Pursuing the MPA Degree

A. Program Goals

The Master of Public Administration prepares students to work in government, nonprofit organizations, and private entities that deal with governmental agencies, public entities, and public policy. It is a 36-hour program, including 27 hours of core courses and nine hours of electives. The program offers classes in both public policy and public management.

Core courses include economics, budgeting, finance, organizational behavior, data analytics, and human resource management. Additionally, students link coursework to real-world experience through a practicum.

B. Admission

- **LSU Graduate School Admissions Requirements** – LSU Graduate School regular admission requires a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution, a 3.0 GPA on all undergraduate work, and a resume with complete chronological outline. Students who do not qualify for regular admission may qualify for probationary or provisional admission.

- **Department of Public Administration Admissions Requirements** –
  The MPA Program evaluates applicants based on the following criteria:
  - Undergraduate academic performance
  - GRE scores (waived for fall 2020 and fall 2021 as a part of the global effort to contain the coronavirus)
  - Three letters of recommendation
  - Work experience
  - Activities indicating an interest in public management and public policy
  - Other experiences that may indicate the ability to complete a professional program

C. Transfer of Credit

- Three hours of elective credit can be transferred into the MPA Program
- Core curriculum cannot be transferred into the MPA Program
- Non-matriculating students can transfer in up to 12 hours into the MPA Program (with approval from graduate advisor and program director)

- **LSU Catalog – Transfer of Credit**

D. Registration

- Specific registration dates for fall, spring, and summer semesters are listed on the LSU academic calendar. Registration procedures are published in the semester or term’s schedule of classes on the University Registrar’s website.

- **How to schedule & drop classes**

- **How to pay fee bill**

- **How to complete registration**
  - Go to MyLSU
  - Fee bill
  - Registration services
  - View fee bill
  - Pay fees, if needed or if paid fees with a ZERO balance
  - Click **complete registration** button
E. **Time Limitation to Complete the Degree** — The MPA degree must be completed within five years from entrance into the program. Details of this requirement are available in the current LSU Graduate School catalog.

F. **Minimum GPA Requirements** — A minimum of a 3.0 GPA is required for students to maintain good academic standing in the MPA Program. A student whose GPA falls below a 3.0 will be placed on probation. A student whose GPA falls below a 2.75 may be dismissed from the LSU Graduate School and from the MPA Program.

G. **Scholastic Reinstatement** — Scholastic reinstatement is a process that allows graduate students who were academically dismissed from LSU to become eligible for readmission and reenrollment. To be considered for reinstatement, you must meet various eligibility criteria.

II. **MPA Program Requirements**

A. The MPA Program is a 36-hour program that includes 27 hours of core courses and nine hours of electives. A required practicum is included in the core coursework.

B. **Core courses**

1. **PADM 7910 Public Administration Theory and Practice (3)** — Students learn contents and boundaries of public administration as discipline. Topics include historical development of public administration as a field of study, organizational theory, professional ethics, policy development, management techniques to enhance productivity and performance, leadership, and diversity. Course includes plenty of case study work.

2. **PADM 7912 Public Human Resource Management (3)** — Course explores human resource policy including procedures and principles of personnel administration. Students will learn traditional aspects of personnel administration including recruiting, job classification, evaluation, and compensation. Additional topics include workforce diversity, drug abuse, whistle blowing, sexual discrimination, and labor relations.

3. **PADM 5009 Data Analytics for Public Administration I (3)** — Course introduces students to the development of a research question and the procedures of using empirical observations and data that describe the practical and technical issues of sampling, surveying, measurement, research design, analysis, and preparation of research reports.

4. **PADM 7914 Public Budgeting (3)** — This is an introduction to public budgeting. Topics include budget techniques, the importance of budgeting in policymaking, and understanding the budget process.

5. **PADM 7902 Seminar in Public Policy (3)** — Seminar on policymaking and administration in the American political system, with an emphasis on the institutions of governance including their constitutional foundations. Students learn about the political process of formulating, implementing, and evaluating public policy, and the public-private, intergovernmental, and international dynamics of policy.

6. **PADM 5600 Microeconomic Theory for Policy Analysis (3)** — *Open only to students in the MPA Program or by consent of instructor.* This course teaches the concepts and analytical tools of microeconomics, and their relevance for decision and policy making in public and nonprofit sectors. It also teaches theories of demand, production, cost, market structures, and distribution. In addition, students study the analysis of economic problems and policies, efficiency criteria, social impacts, and limitations of the market system.

7. **PADM 5010 Data Analytics for Public Administration II (3)** — *Prereq.: PADM 5009.* Open only to students in the MPA Program. Students learn descriptive measures for populations and samples, basic probability theory, and distributions of discrete and continuous random variables. The course also includes hypothesis testing and estimation for means, variances, and proportions, measures of association, regression analysis, index numbers, applications in public administration, and policy evaluation.

8. **PADM 7911 Organizational Analysis for Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3)** — Course includes analyzing elements of effective organizational functioning in the public and nonprofit sectors, and the development of diagnostic skills to improve performance. It also teaches students how to incorporate organizational behavior and theory in the study of achieving effectiveness, efficiency, and growth.

9. **PADM 7852 MPA Practicum** — *Prereq.: PADM 5009, PADM 5600, PADM 7902, PADM 7910, PADM 7912, PADM 7914.* MPA Practicum is required of all MPA students. To enroll in this course, students must have an approved internship or other relevant position. Assignments are designed around the work of the position and include letters of appointment from an employer.

10. **PADM 7901 MPA Capstone** — The MPA capstone course covers major components of public administration through guest lectures. Topics include budgeting, policy, management, organizational behavior, and economics. Students take this course at the conclusion of their path to the MPA. The final exam is comprehensive.

C. **Electives**

1. Nine hours of electives are required for MPA students. Electives are selected with the guidance of program faculty. The Department of Public Administration offers a variety of electives (PADM courses). Students who wish to pursue electives in other departments must have the elective course approved by the Department of Public Administration. The **elective approval form** must be submitted and approved prior to registration.

2. Students who wish to pursue independent research under supervision of an MPA faculty member may apply for an Independent Study (PADM 7800). The **independent study form** must be approved by the chair of the department.
3. At least half of the student’s minimum required credit in the MPA Program, whether thesis or non-thesis, must be in courses at or above the 7000 level.

D. **MPA / JD requirements** – The Department of Public Administration offers a joint program with the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center for students to complete an MPA and a JD in a four-year program. Students interested in this joint program should meet with a Department of Public Administration advisor to establish an academic plan.

E. Recommended Schedules – The MPA degree is offered to both full-time and part-time students. The recommended schedules for students are outlined below. The Department of Public Administration considers it the responsibility of the student to ensure that the student fulfills all course requirements.

1. **Full-Time MPA Recommended Schedule**
2. **Part-Time MPA Recommended Schedule**

### III. Practicum

1. **PADM 7852 MPA Practicum** – The MPA practicum is required of all MPA students. For this course, all students should have an approved internship or other relevant position. Assignments are designed around the work of the position and include letters of appointment from an employer.

2. Students will link coursework to real world experience through a practicum. If you are currently working in the public sector, you’ll complete the practicum coursework using your current job. Students who are not currently employed in the public sector will acquire and complete an internship.

3. **Pre-requisites**: MPA students must complete PADM 5009, PADM 5600, PADM 7902, PADM 7910, PADM 7912, and PADM 7914 before enrolling in PADM 7852.

4. **Application and approval**
   - Complete the [practicum approval form](#)
   - Provide letter from employer or internship offer letter
   - Provide position description, including description of duties

### IV. Exit Exam

1. Each student will take a comprehensive examination in accordance with the Public Administration Colloquium (a capstone course that each MPA student takes during the student's last year in the MPA Program). This comprehensive examination is evaluated by the Public Administration Colloquium professor and two other faculty members.

### V. Financial Assistance

1. **Graduate Assistantships**
   a. Graduate assistantships within the Department of Public Administration are available to MPA students. Complete the [public administration application form](#) to apply.
   b. The LSU Graduate School announces graduate assistantships outside of the Department of Public Administration that are available to students (see the LSU Graduate School weekly announcements).
   c. Graduate assistants are contractually required to devote full-time to their graduate programs and to the responsibilities of their graduate assistantships. A graduate assistant may accept additional employment only with chair or graduate advisor approval and approval from the dean of the LSU Graduate School. Please see Policy Statement 21 for details about the responsibilities of a graduate assistant.

2. **Conference Travel Support**
   a. The department offers a limited number of travel awards to students who attend widely recognized academic conferences to present research works. Each student can receive a maximum of $500 per academic year to cover conference and travel costs such as conference registration fee, airfare, lodging, and food.
   b. **Award eligibility**:
      - Student must present a formal letter or email to prove their proposal was accepted by the conference.
      - Students must complete the conference paperwork and present the work to department faculty before the conference.
      - Students must submit all the receipts and documents for reimbursement after the conference.
   c. **Graduate Student Association Travel Award**
   d. Students are encouraged to apply for conference sponsored financial aid such as a registration fee waiver or discount, scholarships, fellowships, and travel stipends. LSU also provides travel awards to qualified graduate students.

3. **Campus-wide financial aid opportunities can be found on the LSU Financial Aid & Scholarships website.**
VI. Activities, Awards and Honors

1. Conferences and Professional Organizations – There are many opportunities for students to become involved in professional organizations affiliated with public affairs and administration programs. Interested students should discuss these opportunities with an advisor or faculty member. Some of the professional organizations include:

   a. American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) – The American Society for Public Administration serves as the bridge between public administration scholarship and practitioners in the field. ASPA hosts an annual meeting in the spring and offers many opportunities for students to present their research, including the ASPA Founders’ Fellows, which is open to graduate students and professionals in the first three years of their public service career.

   b. Southeastern Conference for Public Administration (SECoPA) – The Southeastern Conference for Public Administration (SECoPA) is the gathering place of ideas for public service practitioners, researchers, and students in a ten-state region. The conference offers attendees the opportunity to engage in scholarly discourse, discover the latest innovations in the field, share ideas from practitioners in the field, and network with other public service administrators across the region.

   c. International City/County Management Association (ICMA) – ICMA formed in 1914 and is one of the oldest governmental management associations in the country. It hosts an annual meeting usually in the fall. It is one of the largest annual gatherings of local government officials.

4. Department Activities and Organizations

   a. Public Administration Student Association (PASA) is a professional organization for students in the MPA Program. PASA supports the department’s work by providing professional development, career counseling, and social activities for MPA students. The organization regularly hosts networking events where students and alumni can interact with senior-level public administrators and political leaders. PASA elects its officers annually. Any MPA student who has at least a 3.0 GPA and is in good standing with the university is eligible to run for office. For more information on PASA: e-mail lsu.pasa@gmail.com or follow the group on Facebook (@PASALSU).

   b. Pi Alpha Alpha is the global honor society for public affairs and administration. There are more than 160 chapters located around the world at NASPAA member schools. Pi Alpha Alpha is run by NASPAA. The purpose of Pi Alpha Alpha is to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in public affairs and administration. Its objectives include fostering integrity, professionalism, and effective performance, promoting the advancement of quality in education, and the practice of the art and science of public affairs and administration. PAA membership identifies those with the highest performance levels in educational programs and helps prepare them for public service careers. MPA graduates who excel in scholarship and demonstrate a commitment to public service can be nominated to join Pi Alpha Alpha by members of the department faculty.

   c. Department Student Awards

      ▶ MPA Alumni of the Year — This award is presented annually to an alumnus of the LSU MPA Program who has demonstrated outstanding service and leadership in the public sector and in his or her community.

      ▶ Astrid Merget Award — This award is presented annually to an MPA student who demonstrates a dedication to public service, citizenship, and community engagement.

      ▶ David B. Johnson Award — This award is presented annually to an MPA student in recognition of academic achievement. Honorees plan to enter the public sector, have an inquiring mind about public policy issues, and demonstrate a commitment to improving public management/policy.

VII. Student Advisements

Students are responsible for scheduling their own classes and for ensuring that they complete courses necessary to graduate. The Department of Public Administration offers courses in accordance with the schedules for full-time and part-time degree paths.

Students are encouraged to seek advice on their schedules from the department’s program manager or graduate advisor. Students can email pa@lsu.edu to schedule a meeting or contact their graduate advisor.

VIII. Campus resources

1. LSU Parking & Transportation Services

   ▶ How to purchase a parking permit

   ▶ Student Parking Permits

2. Reserve a room

   ▶ Reserve a room in the Business Education Complex

   ▶ Reserve a room on LSU’s campus

3. Maps

   ▶ Business Education Complex Map

   ▶ LSU Map

4. Get a Student ID (Tiger Card)

   ▶ Setup your MyLSU Account