

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Dr. Stephen Eliason, Chairperson
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Admission Requirements

To be admitted to the MPA program, prospective degree candidates must have completed a bachelor's degree at an accredited college or university with a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) recommended and submitted their GRE scores.

The following application materials need to be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies by March 15th for fall priority admission, and October 15th for spring priority admission. Please contact the MPA program coordinator regarding late admission.

1. Submit a letter of application, stating the applicant's career goals and how the degree will be applied within those career goals.
2. Complete, official transcripts from all institutions attended.
3. GRE or GMAT scores. Preference will be given to applicants with a score in the 35th percentile or above on at least one of the three sections of the GRE or GMAT exam. GRE/GMAT requirements can be waived depending on the strength of the applicant's GPA.
4. Three letters of recommendation from individuals who can attest to the applicant's academic performance and potential for graduate study.
5. A vita or resume.
6. A graduate admission form. The Department Graduate Committee will determine admissions.

To be admitted to the Certificate in Nonprofit Administration and Leadership, all applicants must possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution at the time of admission. Applicants must submit a resume or curriculum vitae, letter of application, official transcriptions from all previous institutions of higher education, and one letter of recommendation from someone who can attest to the applicant's ability to succeed in the certificate program.

Students who complete the Certificate in Nonprofit Administration and Leadership with a minimum of 3.0 GPA and apply for admission to the Master of Public Administration program will have their GRE/GMAT requirement waived.

Students admitted to the MPA program with this Certificate will enter the program with all 12 credits. Students will have to complete the remaining 24 credits, including all required courses, to complete the MPA plan of study. Certificate holders applying to the MPA program must submit 2 additional letters of recommendation to fulfill MPA admission requirements.

Transfer Credit

The MPA coordinator must approve transfer credits. Two copies of official transcripts recording the transfer courses must be sent directly from the registrar of that institution to the Office of Graduate Studies. No course credit may be transferred unless the grade received was at least a "3.0."

If approved by the coordinator, a student may transfer a maximum of nine semester hours from an accredited institution.

Internship Option

Students without any public service career work are encouraged to complete an internship with a public agency. The purpose of the internship is to provide the

degree candidate with a meaningful learning experience within the context of public administration. Each graduate credit for an internship must entail a minimum of 50 hours of work; a total of 150 hours for the three credit requirement. Normally, the internship is completed during the summer months between the student's first and second year in the degree program.

Comprehensive Examination

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to test the student's capacity to identify and integrate general concepts derived from the course of study. During the student's final semester of coursework, the MPA faculty reviews the student's progress and writes five questions covering completed coursework. The student receives these questions one week prior to the examination, and comes to the exam site prepared to write on three questions of choice.

Student Learning Outcomes

Successful graduates of this program will be able to:

1. Locate, read, and evaluate professional and academic literature.
2. Develop, design, and execute independent research projects.
3. Disseminate research findings to different types of audiences.

Course Requirements

Courses for which a student has received a grade of "C-" or less may not be used to satisfy degree requirements. The MPA degree will not be awarded to a student who earns a grade of "C" or lower in more than six hours of graduate-level work.

Students may take up to nine hours of electives outside the MPA Program. At least six of those elective hours must be numbered 500 or higher. All electives must be approved by the student's MPA faculty advisor.

The MPA program is a three-year, part-time program. Students will be expected to make satisfactory progress towards degree completion each semester. Students are permitted to "fast-track" through the program by taking more than the normal 6-hour course load. No MPA student may be enrolled for more than 12 credits.

Applied Research Project

The Applied Research Project (POLS 574) is usually taken during the student's last semester of the program, after completing the Comprehensive Examination. The purpose of the Applied Research Project is to allow MPA students an opportunity to effectively integrate underlying theories, concepts, themes, and patterns found throughout the program's course work into a final, professional paper. This professional paper should constitute significant scholarly and/or practical research project. A final presentation of the course and/or project will be given to Public Administration and Political Science faculty, student peers, and other interested parties. The student will provide the department with two (2) high quality bound copies of the final, approved project. Specific printing and binding requirements are established annually and should be obtained from the Department office.

- Public Administration Master of Public Administration *Program placed on moratorium* (<https://catalog.msubillings.edu/graduate/college-arts-sciences/department-social-sciences-cultural-studies/mpa-public-administration>)
- Nonprofit Administration and Leadership Certificate (<https://catalog.msubillings.edu/graduate/college-arts-sciences/department-social-sciences-cultural-studies/certificate-nonprofit-administration-leadership>)

Political Science

<p>POLS 523 Const Law: Civil Liberties. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Examines major Supreme Court decisions in the field of individual rights; provides an overview of civil liberties decisions with an emphasis on the Bill of Rights, e.g., speech, religion, privacy, and administrative law. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>	<p>POLS 551 Research Methods. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Acquires knowledge by means of a research process that is reliable and relevant to the making of public management decisions. Students will prepare and submit a research design that meets social scientific standards. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>
<p>POLS 527 Const Law: Powers&Structures. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Introduces the evolution and structure of the United State constitutional system, focusing on the federal relationship, the separation of powers, and judicial review, relying upon the case method. Includes aspects of administrative law. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>	<p>POLS 554 Fndtns of Public Administration. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Explores the theoretical, historical, and intellectual foundations of public administration. Examines the relationship between public administration theory and practice, the political contest, and the intellectual heritage of the field. Examines basic functions and processes of public administration. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>
<p>POLS 530 Fin Mgmt & Analysis Nonprofits. 3 Credits Prepares students for financial management and analysis in the nonprofit sector. Topics include legal and audit requirements for financial planning and reporting, donor integrity, disclosure laws, state and federal registration requirements, endowment management, and grant management. Students will also learn interpreting financial statements and assessing and managing for financial health. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>	<p>POLS 555 Human Resource Management. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Focuses on the essential elements of human resource management, including analysis and evaluation of work, and the selection, management, and evaluation of public employees. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>
<p>POLS 531 Nonprofit Resrce Devlpmnt/Mktg. 3 Credits Prepares students to be future nonprofit leaders and board members. Students will learn to utilize resource development and marketing fundamentals that help nonprofits prosper. The course also focuses on the development of strategic relationships with funders, potential funders, and the media. Students will learn human resource management, how to develop a board, manage volunteers, and utilize information technology and social media. Students will learn data driven decision making and all aspects of fund development, marketing, and communications throughout the course. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>	<p>POLS 557 Public Budgeting & Finance. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Focuses on budgeting in the public sector as a tool for financial management and the implementation of fiscal and programmatic policy, with emphasis on the political context. Graduate students will be expected to read substantially more in the public administration literature, to produce more in-depth research in their term papers, and to make at least one, possibly two, classroom presentations. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>
<p>POLS 532 Nonprofit Governance/Leadrs hip. 3 Credits Examines the legal foundations and responsibilities of nonprofit boards, including ethics, public attitudes, and contemporary legislative and regulatory issues. Students will explore theories of effective governance and executive leadership that have had wide influence, and how ethical considerations relate to perceptions of excellence and efficacy. Students will also learn mentorship and how to create and manage an effective organizational culture. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>	<p>POLS 558 Public Organization Dynamics. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Examines alternative organization structures for public management and the influence of those structures upon organization behavior and performance. Influence of management styles and individual differences are examined, as well as issues relating to personal development and organization mission. Public and non-profit organizations are contrasted. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>
<p>POLS 533 Influences/Impact of Nonprfts. 3 Credits Covers the history, size, and impact of the nonprofit and philanthropic sector in the United States as well as a comparative global perspective. The growth and culture of the nonprofit sector is intertwined with America's legal and tax systems, interest groups, social service delivery, foreign aid, rising wealth, and perceived threats to internal security. Students will examine the scope and status of nongovernmental organizations, as well as their influences. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>	<p>POLS 559 Prog Eval & Policy Analysis. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Provides methods of program evaluation and policy analysis for public programs. Quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis are contrasted. Implementation, utilization, and political context of the analysis and evaluation process are examined. Philosophical and ethical issues underlying alternative methods are examined. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>
	<p>POLS 560 Ethics & Public Policy. 3 Credits Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Explores ethics and selected issues in public service and policy making through theoretical and case study approaches. Emphasis on the relation of continuing issues and problem areas to individual careers in policy making and administrative decision making. Graduate students will be expected to read substantially more in the public administration literature, to produce more in-depth research in their term papers, and to make at least one, possibly two, classroom presentations. Lecture Hours 3 Department: NAS/PS/SOCL</p>

POLS 562 Local Government Administratn. 3 Credits

Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing.

Focuses on contemporary issues affecting small towns and counties. Discussed topics include public works departments, economic growth, human resource development, and parks and recreation.

Lecture Hours 3

Department: NAS/PS/SOCL

POLS 574 Applied Research Project. 3-9 Credits

Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing.

Entails preparation of a project design, implementation of the research design, and completion of a professional paper.

Lecture Hours 3-9

Department: NAS/PS/SOCL

POLS 576 Internship. 1-9 Credits

Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing.

Provides an opportunity for students to gain practical experience beyond the material covered by regular Public Administration courses.

Lecture Hours 1-9

Department: NAS/PS/SOCL

POLS 580 Special Topics. 3 Credits

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

Provides Masters of Public Administration students an opportunity for them to investigate contemporary topics related to the field. Staffing needs will largely involve local practitioners in government and not-for-profit organizations. The course will be offered on an irregular basis.

Lecture Hours 3

Department: NAS/PS/SOCL

POLS 591 Independent Study. 1-6 Credits

Lecture Hours 1-6

Department: NAS/PS/SOCL

Sociology

SOCL 590 Internship. 1-12 Credits

Department: NAS/PS/SOCL

SOCL 591 Independent Study. 1-5 Credits

Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing and consent of the instructor, approval of the department chairperson and Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Independent Study contract filed with the Office of Graduate Studies prior to registration.

Provides an opportunity for students of superior academic standing to explore material beyond that covered by undergraduate courses in Sociology.

Department: NAS/PS/SOCL

SOCL 593 Workshop. 1-8 Credits

Provides an opportunity for experimental study at the advanced level in Sociology.

Department: HIST/NAS/PS/SOC