

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA) PROGRAM GUIDE

Online Program Edition

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Effective August 2018

ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

A-STATE MPA PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The Master of Public Administration at Arkansas State University exists to enhance individual, organizational, social and governmental capacity in the public and non-profit sectors by equipping pre-service and mid-career students with sound management skills and a public/non-profit philosophy to lead public institutions of the future with integrity, innovation, excellence, and professionalism.

A-STATE MPA PROGRAM GOALS

The MPA Program at ASU will equip the next generation of public leaders by:

1. Enhancing student skills in leading and managing diverse people with dignity and respect.
2. Developing students' analytical, problem solving and decision-making skills.
3. Equipping students with the interpersonal and communication skills needed to establish and maintain relationships in public/non-profit institutions.
4. Assisting students in establishing a professional code of ethics that sustains quality leadership.
5. Providing students with fundamental financial management skills as a basis for financial fluency in public institutions.
6. Involving students in experiential learning to find solutions to public problems.

**Code of Conduct & Civility
Arkansas State University
Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program**

As a student of the program I will....

1. **Respect** other students and professors. Demonstrate respect by allowing others time to respond to comments, responding in a timely manner to others' comments, and refraining from the use of insulting, derogatory or disrespectful language in discussions—in or out of class.
2. **Reflect** before I reply; communication requires effort. Think about my audience and the context of my communication. Statements in class or online are not the same as private communication between friends.
3. Take **Responsibility** for my own conduct—I will not blame others for my own actions.
4. **Reject** bigotry, or discrimination against others based on a single attribute of theirs.
5. **Represent** the truth—be honest in my dealings with others in the program and uphold the highest standards of **academic integrity**: never, ever submit anyone else's work as my own.
6. **Respond** to all assignments with my own work and words, unless working in an authorized group. Understand that the A-State MPA Program has a **zero-tolerance** policy for plagiarism and cheating.
7. **Read** and **Refer** to this MPA Guide throughout my program.
8. Understand that **Repercussions** for not following the code may include receiving a zero grade, failing a course, dismissal from the program, and/or referral for a student conduct hearing at the university.

Signed Name

Date

Printed Name

ID Number

Please print this sheet, sign and date it, and return to Dr. Reese (if traditional) or AOS Admissions (if online: academicpartnerships@astate.edu) in your first semester of coursework. Failure to do so may result in any of the repercussions described above.

CcR 2.2018

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The A-State Graduate Bulletin under which you entered the program governs your curriculum. That is your "contract" with the University. Your curriculum is also governed by these guidelines which detail the operation of the MPA program and are periodically revised. You may choose to be governed by the MPA curriculum in any later Bulletin and its associated guidelines while you are still completing your degree.

It is your responsibility to comply with the various requirements of the Graduate School and the Department of Political Science. You should, therefore, be familiar with the Graduate Bulletin and these guidelines about the MPA degree. Please be aware that this information packet is intended to supplement but not replace the *Arkansas State University Graduate School Bulletin*.

Checklist for success in your MPA Program:

- ♦ Read the Arkansas State University Graduate Bulletin
- ♦ Consult with your advisors about the program as needed
- ♦ Familiarize yourself with the MPA course rotation
- ♦ Complete any required co-requisite courses during your first two semesters
- ♦ Submit the Intent to Graduate form on the Registrar's website in the start of your last semester
- ♦ Prepare to take the MPA Capstone Experience course in your last semester

Q. Once I have been admitted, who is my academic **advisor**?

A. Dr. Reese is the MPA Program Director for both MPA programs, and has full academic advising responsibility for the traditional program and ***partial*** academic advising responsibility for the online program. Dr. Reese handles matters of degree appropriateness, program planning, and internships for online students. The best way to contact her is via email ccreese@astate.edu. Technical matters such as how to register, problems/error messages signing up for a course, clearing advising holds, financial aid (and related paperwork), admissions, and deadlines for registration are handled by other people; contact the Online Advisor, Justin Carothers, for help at jucarothers@astate.edu.

Q. What is the **order** in which I should take **courses**?

A. The MPA program is designed so that you may take your courses in any order with the following exceptions (once your pre-requisites have been completed; see above). First, please take Seminar in Public Administration in either your first or second semester. Second, the internship (if you need it) may not be taken before you have completed at least 18 hours of coursework (with a minimum 3.0 GPA). Third, the MPA Capstone Experience must be taken in your final semester.

Online Degree Evaluation

Note that you can check your degree progress at any time by going to Banner, Student Info, Degree Evaluation, check MPA, then Generate Evaluation.

Co-Requisite Courses

The student entering the MPA program is expected to have previously taken an undergraduate course in U.S. Government and a course in the Principles of Economics. If not, the student must complete the course(s) prior to or during the first year of study, and earn at least a “C” grade.

NASPAA Accreditation

The Master of Public Administration Program at Arkansas State University is globally accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). A-State is also fully accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Admissions & Re-Admissions

Students with prior “F” or “D” grades at the graduate level in any graduate program will not be admitted to the A-State MPA program. In addition, students who earn failing (“F”) grades in the A-State MPA program are ineligible for readmission to the program. Exception is with Capstone; see #5 in that section.

Alumni Relations

Students who wish to remain connected to other A-State MPA students in the MPA program should join the A-State MPA Alumni group on Linked In. This site can help with finding both positions and employees. Dr. Reese started this group in 2015.

**ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA)
DEGREE PLAN (36 HOURS)**

Student: _____ **ID:** _____

CO-REQUISITE COURSES

COURSE	SEMESTER	GRADE
POSC 2103 Intro to U.S. Government		
ECON 2333 Economic Issues & Concepts		

CORE COURSES (POSC) (21 HOURS)

COURSE	SEMESTER	GRADE
6563 Seminar in Public Admin		
6003 Techniques of Research		
6593 Human Resource Admin		
6553 Public Budgeting & Finance		
6613 Admin Leadership		
6623 Admin Ethics		
6573 Grant Writing Admin		

TRACKS (9 HOURS)

PUBLIC MGT			OR	NON-PROFIT MGT		
COURSE	SEM	GR		COURSE	SEM	GR
6543 Admin Behavior				6843 NP Mgmt		
6423 Pub Financial Mgmt				6433 NP Fundraising/FM		
6533 Policy Analysis				6443 NP Plan/Mkt		

INTERNSHIP (3 HOURS)

COURSE	SEMESTER	GRADE
6603 Internship OR 6803 Strategic Planng		

CAPSTONE (3 HOURS)

COURSE		
6653 MPA Capstone Experience (All)		

MPA PROGRAM COURSEWORK: ONLINE ROTATION

Courses in the Online Mode Are Usually 7 Weeks Long

FALL 1 6563 Seminar in PA 6553 Public Budgeting & Finance 6603 Internship 6653 Capstone	FALL 2 6613 Leadership 6543 Admin Behavior OR 6643 NPM 6003 Techniques 6603 Internship 6653 Capstone
SPRING 1 6563 Seminar in PA 6593 Human Resources Mgmt 6573 Grant Writing 6603 Internship OR 6803 Strategic Planng 6653 Capstone	SPRING 2 6623 Ethics 6423 Fin Mgmt OR 6433 NP Fund 6553 Public Budgeting & Finance 6603 Internship 6653 Capstone
SUMMER 1 6563 Seminar in PA 6003 Techniques 6613 Leadership 6593 Human Resources Mgmt 6603 Internship 6653 Capstone	SUMMER 2 6573 Grant Writing 6533 Political Analysis OR 6443 NP Plan 6623 Ethics 6603 Internship 6653 Capstone

Course Transfers

You are allowed to transfer a maximum of nine semester credit hours (three courses) of equivalent graduate coursework previously taken in a NASPAA-accredited MPA program at another university, assuming you had a minimum 3.0 GPA at that university. Graduate credit from non-NASPAA-accredited MPA programs will not be accepted for transfer.

Final Course Grade and Other Grievance Appeals

If you feel that a final course grade has been unfairly given to you, or if you otherwise feel aggrieved by an action of a faculty member, the Department, the Graduate School or the University, you should first attempt to resolve the matter with the party concerned. If such is not possible, direct your grievance to the Chair of the Department of Political Science. The Chair will seek a disposition of your grievance, and if such is not resolved, will inform you of the appeals process. Please read the A-State Student Handbook for more detail.

INTERNSHIP

Please refer to the A-State MPA Internship Guide.

MPA CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE (COMPREHENSIVE EXAM)

University policies with respect to the comprehensive examination are given in the Graduate Bulletin. The MPA Capstone Experience conforms to those general guidelines. The MPA Capstone is designed to test and project your overall grasp of the public administration subject matter that you have studied by challenging you with a set of real-world problems in the field.

The MPA Capstone Experience must be taken in the last semester of the program. Students applying to take the capstone must have a 3.0 GPA and must have satisfied any undergraduate-level co-requisites.

The MPA Committee has established the following procedure for the comprehensive examination of MPA candidates:

1. In the semester prior to the end of the student's program, he/she must contact the MPA Director, providing his/her student ID number, in order to obtain clearance to register for the MPA Capstone Experience course in the final semester of the program.
2. Around this same time, the candidate must submit an Intent to Graduate via the A-State Registrar's website.
3. The comprehensive examination will be in writing and consist of weekly reflective assignments from different areas within the degree, chosen by the MPA Committee, and resulting in documents that may be used for an e-portfolio.
4. Answers to a given question will be graded by a quorum of committee members who will read and grade each question. Each reader will assign a grade of using these reference points: High Pass = 90-100; Pass = 80-89; Low Pass = 70-79; Fail = Below 70.
5. The student must achieve an overall grade of Pass. However, if the candidate fails any assignments due to plagiarism, the student will fail the Capstone and be dropped from candidacy for the degree. Students who fail the MPA comprehensive examination for reasons other than plagiarism must repeat the course after sitting out one full (14 week) semester in penalty. All students who fail Capstone for the second time are permanently dropped from candidacy for the degree.

THESIS

The MPA thesis is expected to consist of a systematic study, which contributes to the knowledge base of some aspect of public administration. Generally, the best MPA theses are those that analyze empirical data gathered to investigate a concrete issue, problem, or hypothesis. Such theses are usually the most easily managed by the student, and have the greatest potential for subsequent publication. The thesis is ***not recommended*** for MPA students unless they are planning on pursuing a Ph.D.

The MPA thesis will normally contain the following elements:

- a) a survey of previous research literature on the subject;
- b) a statement of research methods being employed;
- c) data analysis and reporting of results; and
- d) the drawing of implications and conclusions.

Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin and the Graduate School webpage on the A-State website for additional information about theses. Students contemplating the thesis option should consult with the MPA Director. Thesis students are exempt from taking the MPA Capstone Experience.

ETHICS FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATORS

Students in our program are expected to note and adhere to both departmental ethics/plagiarism policies and national ASPA ethics policies. The MPA student's ethical behavior should always be above reproach. Below are both the departmental and ASPA policies. Students must always be careful to uphold their reputations, including avoiding any unethical behavior as well as the appearance of any unethical behavior.

MPA Program's Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the use, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another's work or ideas, and the unacknowledged or insufficiently documented submission and/or incorporation of that work as one's own. It involves quoting or paraphrasing someone else's work without providing the source or properly assigning credit. This is not merely an offense of academic dishonesty, which may result in failure of a course or dismissal from the university; it is also an illegal act subject to criminal prosecution.

It is easy to avoid plagiarism. Writers simply need to acknowledge the sources they use in writing their own work. Some instances of plagiarism are inadvertent, often arising from inexperience and a misunderstanding of what a writer does and does not need to cite, but ignorance is not an excuse that carries a lot of weight. Here is a *rough* guide to what writers do and do not need to cite in their own work:

*Materials that **do not** need to be acknowledged:*

- Information that is common knowledge. For example, a writer would not need to credit a source for the statement that Little Rock is the capital of Arkansas. The writer would, though, need to cite a source if he/she discussed information outside of common knowledge (e.g., Little Rock's population, circumstances regarding the city's founding, etc.).
- Information that is widely available in a variety of sources. A writer who mentions the fact that President Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963 would not need to cite a source for that information, even if the writer had to check to ensure that the date was correct. If a borderline case arises, consult your teacher.

Information based on the writer's own field research. If you use information gathered from your own surveys, observations, and interviews, you only need to say so in your work.

*Materials that **do** need to be acknowledged:*

- Direct quotations.
- Summaries and paraphrases of someone else's words. Note that whereas a summary is a recapitulation or a succinct covering of a text's main points, a paraphrase is a rewording, perhaps a simplification, of a text. Borrowing from either requires that the user credit the source.
- Facts not widely known and statements that are arguable. For example, the assertion that the U.S. is becoming increasingly socialistic is arguable, while the statement that Augustus attempted to reduce the size of the Senate, but gave it up in bafflement is (presumably) a fact beyond common knowledge. Writers should be careful in judging whether the borrowed information is fact or opinion and use the information fittingly in their own work.
- Data such as statistics, tables, and other graphs not derived from your own work.

The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)'s Code of Ethics, to which we subscribe and expect graduates of the A-State MPA program to do as well, follows.

American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)

Code of Ethics

The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) advances the science, art, and practice of public administration. The Society affirms its responsibility to develop the spirit of responsible professionalism within its membership and to increase awareness and commitment to ethical principles and standards among all those who work in public service in all sectors. To this end, we, the members of the Society, commit ourselves to uphold the following principles:

- 1. Advance the Public Interest.** Promote the interests of the public and put service to the public above service to oneself.
- 2. Uphold the Constitution and the Law.** Respect and support government constitutions and laws, while seeking to improve laws and policies to promote the public good.
- 3. Promote democratic participation.** Inform the public and encourage active engagement in governance. Be open, transparent and responsive, and respect and assist all persons in their dealings with public organizations.
- 4. Strengthen social equity.** Treat all persons with fairness, justice, and equality and respect individual differences, rights, and freedoms. Promote affirmative action and other initiatives to reduce unfairness, injustice, and inequality in society.
- 5. Fully Inform and Advise.** Provide accurate, honest, comprehensive, and timely information and advice to elected and appointed officials, governing board members, and staff members in your organization.
- 6. Demonstrate personal integrity.** Adhere to the highest standards of conduct to inspire public confidence and trust in public service.
- 7. Promote Ethical Organizations:** Strive to attain the highest standards of ethics, stewardship, and public service in organizations that serve the public.
- 8. Advance Professional Excellence:** Strengthen personal capabilities to act competently and ethically and encourage the professional development of others.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

These are organizations of which you can become a member. They are also organizations with good and interesting information on public administration as a career.

American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)

Membership includes students, academics, and practitioners from local, state, and federal agencies. ASPA has one national meeting per year, and there are also regular regional meetings and local chapter meetings in many areas. Probably the most significant regional ASPA meeting is the Southeastern Conference on Public Administration, or SECoPA, held in various cities in the southeastern U.S. in the fall. ASPA publishes *Public Administration Review* (PAR), perhaps the most important journal in public administration, which includes articles of research, analysis, and commentary. Members also receive *Public Administration Times*, a monthly newspaper that provides information on current events in public administration as well as job openings. In addition, members can join different sections of ASPA, such as the Public Budgeting & Finance Section (PBF) or the Section on Public Personnel Administration & Labor Relations (SPALR). Also, members can join local chapters of ASPA. ASPA has an inexpensive membership for students. For more information see <http://www.aspanet.org/>

Pi Alpha Alpha – The Public Administration Honor Association

Arkansas State University has a chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha, the National Honorary Society for Public Affairs and Administration. Pi Alpha Alpha is prestigious for our students, as well as for our public administration program and the university. Eligibility requirements for MPA students are: minimum 18 hours completed and minimum 3.85 GPA.

Q. How can I become a member of Pi Alpha Alpha (PAA), the Global Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration?

A. Dr. Reese requests a list of eligible students (from the A-State Registrar) who fit these criteria at the beginning of Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. She then emails eligible students. You may also order honor cords to wear at graduation at the same time if you wish. These are the only times in the year when you may be inducted or order graduation regalia; it is just too time consuming to have random orders. So, if you get an email invite, respond by the due date! More info on the international honor society is here: <http://pialphaalpha.org/>

International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

ICMA is a professional and educational organization representing appointed managers and administrators in local government throughout the world.

Members receive bi-weekly newsletters and the monthly publication of *Public Management* magazine. For more information see <http://www.icma.org/main/>

International Personnel Management Association (IPMA)

IPMA is the recognized association for public personnel professionals.

Members receive a monthly newsletter which includes position openings, a quarterly journal, and a membership directory. For more information see <http://www.ipma-hr.org/>

Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA)

Membership includes professionals in such areas as governmental accounting, debt, and cash management, revenue sharing, and data processing. The GFAO holds an annual conference and several regional and local seminars in topical areas. The journal, *Governmental Finance*, is published by GFAO and members receive a bimonthly newsletter with articles on financial topics and job advertisements. For more information see <http://www.gfoa.org/>

SOME SUGGESTED PODCASTS/ BLOGS (PLEASE WRITE ME WITH MORE!)

<https://aspanational.wordpress.com/>

<https://www.brookings.edu/podcasts/>

<http://leagueofwomeningovernment.org/>

<http://fiscalhealthandwellness.blogspot.com/>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/govbeat/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.ccbe2bbe7a93

<http://www.govtech.com/govgirl/>

<https://www.n-r-c.com/news-and-knowledge/the-civil-review/>

MPA GRADUATION

Q. I would like to participate in the A-State Commencement Ceremony. May I do that?

A. Yes, most definitely! When we started our online program, we did not know if students would come to Jonesboro for the graduation ceremony, but we have been pleasantly surprised! (One even came from California!)

Q. What if my final online course ends a week after commencement?

A. If you wish to participate in commencement, you may still walk even if your very last class is not completed. You will just not receive your diploma at commencement. It will be mailed to you after your last class is completed.

Q. If I walk at graduation, will I meet some of my professors?

A. Yes, usually you will meet most of us. Most of us who are local attend most graduations. Those of us who attend graduation ***always*** congregate up in the reception area following the ceremony for at least 20 minutes. We hope that you will come up to meet us. We would love to meet you and take pictures with you!

A-STATE MPA ADVISORY BOARD

NAME	AFFILIATION	E-MAIL
Darrell Phillips	Paragould Light, Water & Cable	dphillips@paragould.com
Jason French	Arkansas Attorney General's Office	jason.french@arkansasag.gov
Drew Merryman	HR Manager - Ascent Children's Health Services	drewm15@hotmail.com
Jack Turner	Burch and Co. Real Estate	Jackaturner0@gmail.com
Shungetta Cunningham	Independent Contractor - Kharis Grants and Services	shungettacunningham@gmail.com
Anna Tikhonova		annatikhonov@ymail.com
Peggy Wright	A-State Dept of Political Science	pwright@astate.edu
Christy Hewitt-Mann	A-State - Newport	Christy_mann@asun.edu
Valeria L Hawkins	Alliance for a Healthier Generation	Vlhawkins74@gmail.com
Albert Banuelos	County of San Diego	afbanuelos@aol.com
Emily Devereux	A-State Office of Research & Technology Transfer	edevereux@astate.edu
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10.15.2018 CcR