

# The Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program

The Master of Public Administration Program at the University of Wisconsin -Milwaukee is designed to prepare students for leadership and management roles in local, state, and national government. A professional degree program, the MPA includes applied work in several related disciplines: Political Science, Urban Planning, Economics, Urban Studies, and others.

Graduates of UWM's MPA Program work for suburban municipalities in southeastern Wisconsin, for Milwaukee County, the City of Milwaukee, Waukesha County, and for state or local governments throughout the United States. Many also hold management positions with private sector and nonprofit employers.

The conceptual and analytical skills developed through the MPA curriculum are critical to the effective management of public agencies and programs. Contemporary public officials are required to make complex choices and implement programs and policies within difficult financial, legal, political, and organizational constraints. More than ever, it is important that administrators be able to work with a variety of people, both within and outside the public sector. Professional education in public administration thus encompasses fiscal control, quantitative analysis, organization management, decision analysis, and a working understanding of government institutions and legal procedures.

The MPA Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is designed to respond to these critical educational needs. In addition to the academic coursework, students may gain important experience in supervised field work and applied research, while a choice of concentrations within the curriculum makes it possible to pursue intensive training in a specific subfield of public administration. Our MPA graduates will be uniquely prepared to understand the responsibility and accept the challenge of managing in the public sector.

## **Curriculum**

The College of Letters and Science and the Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business offer and present jointly the Master of Public Administration (MPA). The program is designed to provide theoretical and practical preparation for careers in public and non-profit administration with three areas of concentration – municipal management, general public administration, and non-profit management.

Students entering the MPA program will be placed (in concert with the MPA Director) in one of two tracks (A or B) within the core. The minimum degree requirement is 39 credits for Track A and 42 credits for Track B.

The MPA curriculum consists of three parts: a 21-24 credit **Core** required of all students, a three credit **Capstone** seminar required of all students, and an 18-21 credit **Concentration**. The Core develops basic skills needed by all public officials: policy analysis, budgeting, statistics, organizational management, and administrative behavior. Students take the Capstone seminar

upon nearing completion of all work towards the MPA degree. Non-in-service students are also required to take Political Science 921 Government/Non-profit Administrative Internship (3cr)\*

Students entering the MPA program will be placed, at the discretion of the MPA Director in one of two tracks (A or B) within the core. The minimum degree requirement is 39 credits for Track A and 42 for Track B.

### **Track A**

Students with significant public or nonprofit sector work experience may, at the discretion of the MPA Director, have the Government/Nonprofit Administrative Internship course (Pub Adm 921) waived. Students seeking placement in this track will need to meet with the MPA Director to discuss this possibility and will be required to provide documentation of current public or nonprofit sector work experience.

### **Track B**

Students with no significant public or nonprofit sector work experience are required to enroll in and successfully complete the Government/Nonprofit Administrative Internship course (Pub Adm 921). As part of the requirements for this course, Track B students are required to obtain, with the assistance of the MPA Director, one or more internships in either the public or nonprofit sector while enrolled in the MPA program.

### **Required/Core Courses (18-21 credits)**

- Bus Adm 738: Human Resource Management (3 cr)
- Pub Adm/Urb Plan 630: Budgeting and Finance in the Public Sector (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 763: Scope and Dynamics of Public Administration (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 769: Analyzing and Evaluating Public Policies and Programs (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 921: Government/Non-profit Administrative Internship (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 959: Capstone Seminar in Public Administration (3 cr)

One course in statistics selected from the following list:

- Bus Mgmt 709: Analytic Models for Managers (3 cr)  
(only those students with quantitative GRE scores of 600 (old version) or 160 (new version) or greater should take this course).
- Pub Adm 792: Decision Making for Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3cr)  
(students with quantitative GRE score below 600 (old version) or 160 (new version) should take this course).
- Students in the combined MUP/MPA program (and only these students) may use Urb Plan 740 (Data Analysis Methods) to satisfy the MPA statistics requirement.

One seminar in organizational management and leadership (3 cr) selected from the following list:

- Bus Adm 441: Diversity in Organizations
- Bus Adm 443: Special Topics in Human Resources Management
- Bus Adm 706: Managing in a Dynamic Environment
- Bus Adm 737: Managerial Decisions and Negotiations

In addition to the above Core Courses, each student completes 21 credits of coursework in a specialized area of **Concentration**. The three Concentrations are explicitly geared toward different careers in public administration.

MPA students choosing the **Municipal Management Concentration** will receive in-depth training in the political, legal, and administrative aspects of managing municipal services in city manager systems. The coursework includes municipal law and local regulation of land use, public personnel administration, intergovernmental relations, and applied program evaluation methods. The **Municipal Management Concentration** includes the following courses:

**Concentration 1: Municipal Management** (18 credits)

Select two of the following three course options (total of 6 cr):

- Bus Adm 842: Government & Non-profit Accounting (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 965: Municipal Management (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 750: Public Administration Risk and Analysis (3 cr)

Select two of the following four course options (total of 6 cr):

- Pub Adm 914: Intergovernmental Relations (3 cr)
- Urb Plan 651: Land Use Planning Practice (3 cr)
- Urb Plan 684: Planning Local Economic Development (3 cr)
- Both ...  
Urb Plan 701: Introduction to Land Use Planning (1 cr), and  
Urb Plan 702: Introduction to Planning Law (2 cr)

Moreover, the student must select an additional six elective credits, with the approval of the MPA Director, that relate to the student's substantive interests within the discipline of public administration.

Most leadership positions in public administration require skills and knowledge in several issue areas. The **General Public Administration Concentration** provides such a background while at the same time enabling the student to take nine credits of electives in order to gain greater depth in one or more specific areas. The required coursework includes program evaluation, intergovernmental relations, personnel administration, and administrative law. MPA-General Public Administration graduates are trained to understand and appreciate the legal, political, economic and administrative problems central to modern public management.

The **General Public Administration Concentration** includes the following courses:

**Concentration 2 General Public Administration** (18 credits)

Select any four of the following courses:

- Bus Adm 441: Diversity in Organizations (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 400 Ethics and Responsibility in Public Administration (3 cr)
- Pub Adm/Pol Sci 452: Administrative Law (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 705: Government Public Relations (3 cr)

- Pub Adm 750: Public Administration Risk and Analysis (3cr)
- Pub Adm/Pol Sci 914: Seminar in Intergovernmental Relations (3 cr)
- Pub Adm 958: Seminar in Public Administration\* (3 cr)

\* variable content course; course can be repeated up to three times under different subject titles

Moreover, the student must select an additional six elective credits, with the approval of the MPA Director, that relate to the student's substantive interests within the discipline of public administration.

**The Non-profit Organization and Management Concentration** offers students the knowledge and skills needed to pursue or advance careers in nonprofit sector organizations. This concentration is particularly appropriate for “mid-career” professionals wishing to advance their careers in nonprofit sector organizations. However, it is also appropriate for those who are seeking to change their career focus from government or business to the nonprofit sector and for those who are beginning their careers in the nonprofit sector.

The **Nonprofit Organization and Management Concentration** includes the following courses:

**Concentration 3: Non-profit Organization and Management** (18 credits)

Select any four of the following courses:

- Bus Adm 766: Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations (3 cr) OR Bus Adm 767: Services and Relationship Marketing (3 cr)
- Bus Adm 842: Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting (3 cr) OR Bus Mgmt 724: Accounting for Nonprofit Organizations (3 cr)
- Nonprof 789: Theory and Role of Nonprofit Organizations (3 cr)
- Nonprof 791: Nonprofit Advocacy and Public Policy
- Pub Adm 958: Seminar in Public Administration\* (3 cr)

\* variable content course; can be repeated up to three times under different subject titles

Moreover, the student must select an additional six elective credits with the approval of the MPA Director, that relate to the student's substantive interests within the discipline of public administration.

**Combined MPA/MUP.** A joint degree program has been designed to obtain both the Master of Public Administration and the Master of Urban Planning degrees concurrently. This program is intended to combine professional training in planning with applied administrative and managerial skills. Further information on the joint program and its requirements can be obtained through the MPA Program or the School of Architecture and Urban Planning.

## **Career Skills, Training and Professional Applications**

**The Internship Program.** Practical field experience is an essential part of the professional public administration graduate program. Students in all concentrations are required to take the three-credit internship course (POL SCI 921) in an office or agency appropriate to their individual career orientation. (Students already engaged in administrative careers are not required to take the internship course.)

In accordance with the guidelines established by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, the MPA Internship Program provides an opportunity for students to polish their skills, and to test and apply the methods they have learned.

The UWM MPA Program has a full-time Internship Coordinator who works closely with students in order to obtain the most appropriate match of student and agency. Students are assisted in developing a professional resume and interview and job search skills. All internship students attend a course which is designed to augment the internship experience with relevant presentations, discussions, and assignments. While there are exceptions, interns can generally expect to receive compensation for their work. In a few cases, MPA interns have remained with their employers after the completion of their internships, either in limited term or permanent employment situations; others have obtained positions elsewhere directly related to their internship experiences.

The Milwaukee area provides a wide variety of internship opportunities at all levels of government, and in the private and non-profit sector as well. Internship placements in other parts of the country are also possible.

**Professional Involvement.** The MPA Program has developed strong ties with many local administrative professionals and agencies. Students choosing municipal management as a career are encouraged to join the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Wisconsin City/County Management Association (WCMA) as a majority of county/city/village administrators in the state are members of these organizations.

**Career Placement.** As a consequence of the Program's Internship activities and its academic standards and professional relationships, most MPA graduates are successfully placed in promising administrative career positions. Many of our former students are currently serving in positions with Wisconsin State government, Milwaukee and Waukesha government, Milwaukee city government, and other local governments within Milwaukee and outside of Wisconsin. The Program's combination of professional and academic work and interaction with administrative leaders provides the foundation for success in career placement.

## **Admissions and Financial Aid**

**Admission.** Public Administration is an inter-disciplinary field. Admission is therefore not limited to those with a particular undergraduate major; good students from a variety of backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Prior coursework in economics and statistics is particularly useful. Admission requires a Bachelor's degree with a 3.0 grade point average (4-point scale) and completion of the Graduate Record Examination. Three (3) letters of recommendation are required from persons familiar with the student's academic work and potential.

**Access for Mid-Career and Part-Time Students.** The MPA Program is designed to accommodate students who are currently employed and must take courses during the evening hours. Virtually all MPA courses (including all required courses) begin after 4:00 p.m., and all courses meet one or two times per week. Students can complete the coursework by taking one to two courses per semester. Alternatively, students may elect to take up to three or four courses per semester and complete the Program in two years. While the complete program is not offered online, several MPA courses are offered online.

**Financial Aid.** MPA students are eligible to apply for Graduate School Fellowships, and student loans. The Advanced Opportunity Program provides special fellowship funds for minority students. Most of these programs require that the student be enrolled full-time (defined by the UWM Graduate School as 8 or more credits per semester). Interested students should contact the MPA Director or the Graduate School for more information.

## **The University**

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has been designated a Research II University by the Carnegie Foundation, one of only 125 universities in the United States to be designated at the Research I or II level. They are the nation's leading research universities. The University offers 51 master's programs, 30 Ph.D. programs, and 32 Certificate Programs. The Golda Meir Library is one of the 100 largest academic libraries in the country.

The University is located in a residential neighborhood about three miles north of the city's business district and near to the Lake Michigan parks for which Milwaukee County is famous. The metropolitan area offers a number of appealing restaurants, major league sports, outstanding cultural and recreational opportunities (several of them at the University), and authentic ethnic festivals. The cost of living is nevertheless quite reasonable compared to other metropolitan areas.

## The Faculty

**Layth C. Alwan, Ph.D., University of Chicago (Business Administration).** Dr. Alwan specializes in operations management, statistical quality control, and forecasting. His research includes developing model-based approaches for purposes of more effective statistical process monitoring. He teaches courses in data analysis, operations management, and quality management. His work has appeared in numerous journals including *Journal of Business and Economic Statistics*, *Journal of Royal Statistical Society*, *Communications in Statistics*, *IIE Transactions*, *Production and Operations Management*, *European Journal of Operational Research*, and others. Dr. Alwan has also authored a textbook titled **Statistical Process Analysis**.

**Douglas Ihrke, Ph.D., Northern Illinois University.** Dr. Ihrke is Professor, Department of Public and Nonprofit Administration. He specializes in personnel management, organization theory, and municipal management. He is co-author of articles in *Public Personnel Management*, *Public Administration Quarterly*, and the *Journal of Management History*. His current research interests include examining the impact of management innovation and policy board conflict on service delivery at the municipal level, and the role leadership plays in motivating employees at all levels of government.

**Romila Singh, Ph.D., Drexel University (Organizational Sciences)**

Dr. Singh specializes in organizational behavior and human resource management. She teaches and conducts research on a variety of topics in these areas. In particular, her research focuses on understanding career management issues related to career choices, work-life relationships, and retention and turnover decisions of women and people of color.

**Laura Peracchio, Ph.D., Northwestern University (Business Administration).**

Dr. Peracchio specializes in the application of consumer behavior research to marketing issues. Dr. Peracchio serves on the board of directors and marketing advisory committees for the American Cancer Society, Jewish Family services, and the Milwaukee Jewish Federation. She has published her research in the *Journal of Consumer Research* and *Journal of Marketing Research* and has also received research awards from the American Marketing Association, the Marketing Science Institute, and the *Journal of Consumer Research*.

**Belle Ragins, Ph.D., University of Tennessee (Business Administration).** Dr. Ragins teaches, consults, and conducts research on diversity, mentoring, and gender issues in organizations. Her current research examines the development of mentoring relationships and explores how gender and diversity affect mentoring. Dr. Ragins has written more than 70 papers for presentations at national and international conferences and for publication in leading academic journals, including the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Academy of Management Executive*, *Journal of Applied Psychology* and *Psychological Bulletin*. She is co-author of the book *Mentoring and Diversity: An International Perspective*. Her research was highlighted in *U.S. News and World Report*, *Barron's Magazine*, *Harvard Business Review*, *Newsday*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Working Woman Magazine*, and over 30 newspapers throughout the country.

**Joel Rast, Ph.D., University of Oregon.** Dr. Rast is Associate Professor, Department of Political Science. He is also Director of the Center for Economic Development at UWM. His teaching interests include Urban Development and Redevelopment since World War II, Urban Politics, Environmental Politics, and Intergovernmental Relations. He has selected publications: "Business Leadership on Smart Growth: *Lessons from Chicago*." *International Journal of Public Administration* (forthcoming). "Manufacturing Industrial Decline: The Politics of Economic Change in Chicago, 1955-1998." *Journal of Urban Affairs*, U.S. Department of Transportation, *Transportation and Environmental Justice: Case Studies*. Washington, DC: US Department of Transportation, 2000 (co-authored with the Louis Berger Group). *Remaking*

*Chicago: The Political Origins of Urban Industrial Change, DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1999.*

**For Further Information and Application Materials, Contact:**

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