PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION M.P.A.

All students must meet the Requirements for the Master’s Degree

OVERVIEW

The Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) Program at the University of Vermont joins vigorous study of the foundations of public administration with the practice of public administration in the real world. Vermont’s small size, open local and state government, and wealth of nonprofit organizations make for an ideal environment in which to directly engage with the public administration field. More information on the M.P.A. program can be found on the Master of Public Administration website. Inquiries can be made through email: mpa@uvm.edu or by phone (802) 656-0009.

Mission

The Master of Public Administration Program is housed within the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics at the University of Vermont. The UVM M.P.A. Program inspires, equips, and elevates action-oriented leaders with the attitude, knowledge, and skills needed to foster a resilient sustainable society by drawing on the traditions and innovative spirit of Vermont communities.

Traditions

The M.P.A. program at UVM capitalizes on these unique traditions that have direct implications to Vermont and beyond to the public administration needs of a changing nation and world.

- The recognition and importance of community building
- The tradition of grassroots democracy
- A history of strong local governance with citizen input
- A record of fiscal conservatism combined with “progressive” positive change
- A citizen legislature with limited staff support
- An emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and sustainability
- Administrators serving their publics as “reflective practitioners”
- A history of cooperation between private and public sectors for the public good
- A vigorous non-profit sector, supported by citizens and organizations
- A deep commitment to inclusion and cultural diversity

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for Admission to Graduate Studies for the Degree of Master of Public Administration

- A sound academic record, including a baccalaureate degree from an accredited undergraduate institution
- Satisfactory scores on the general aptitude section of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). GMAT and LSAT scores are also accepted. This requirement may be waived for applicants with a minimum of 5 years of professional experience in the field of public administration. Experience can be at any level but must be within a professional context. Students who may be eligible for this waiver should send a resume to mpa@uvm.edu for review and confirmation.

  - Three letters of recommendation attesting to the candidate’s academic potential for graduate work and motivation for pursuing the M.P.A.
  - Past experience in public service will be considered.
  - Persons currently employed in administrative positions are encouraged to apply.

An additional requirement:

- Completion of these prerequisite courses: economics, American government, and statistics. Admission is not contingent upon prerequisites. Prerequisites must be completed by the end of the first semester of enrollment in the program.

For international students whose native language is not English or who have not completed undergraduate degrees in English, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores must be submitted.

Minimum acceptable scores for admission to the Graduate College at UVM:

| Internet-based | 90 |

Minimum acceptable scores for a student receiving funding from UVM:

| Internet-based | 100 |

Institution code for test scores for UVM is 3920.

Minimum Degree Requirements

Successful completion of thirty-six credits, including:

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An approved sequence of elective courses which may include up to twelve credits of course work from approved disciplines related to public administration

The Capstone is designed to provide M.P.A. students with a summative experience that ties learning competencies to
evidence drawn from their course of study. This course is required for all M.P.A. students as it also incorporates the spirit of the Comprehensive Exam within the curriculum. Students in their final spring semester of the program are eligible to take this. This course counts as the “comprehensive exam” for the Master of Public Administration at UVM.

INTERNSHIP
The Internship experience is a key opportunity to put into practice the concepts and theories of public administration. It is critical in gaining experience, building credentials and networking for future professional opportunities. A three-credit internship is required of all students, and students may apply up to 6 credits of internship experience toward the degree.

THESIS OPTION
A six-credit thesis option is also available to all students and strongly recommended for students interested in continuing on to a Ph.D. A student doing a thesis selects a three member thesis review committee to evaluate her/his work. If this is an option you would like to pursue, talk to your assigned advisor upon entering the program to allow plenty of time for the planning and writing of a thesis. Students enrolled in the thesis option must take six credits of PA 391, which are counted towards the thirty-six credit requirement.

Comprehensive Examination
The Comprehensive Examination requirement is met when a student completes the Capstone during their final spring semester. The Capstone is designed to provide M.P.A. students with a summative experience that ties learning competencies to evidence drawn from their course of study.

Requirements for Advancement to Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Public Administration
Thirty six (36) academic credits are needed (12 courses) to earn an M.P.A. degree. These eight courses are required core courses:

- PA 301 Foundations of Public Administration (Fall)
- PA 302 Organizational Theory and Behavior (Spring)
- PA 303 Research and Evaluation Methods (Fall)
- PA 305 Public and Non-Profit Budgeting (Fall)
- PA 306 Policy Systems (Spring)
- PA 326 Community and Economic Development (Fall)
- PA 375 M.P.A. Capstone (Spring)
- PA 380 Internship

Students, with guidance from their advisor, select additional courses within the M.P.A. program or other academic institutions at the University of Vermont to round out their academic experience. A full-time student will finish the M.P.A. Program course work in 2 years, and a part-time student, 5 years. While the M.P.A. Program at UVM does not offer explicit specializations, a student may pursue courses with a common thread or focus and can tailor their course selections to work toward that focus.