

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, MASTER OF (M.P.A.)

Program accreditation

National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration

Program goals

The Master of Public Administration program's mission supports a "generalist" conception of public administration. This seems quite appropriate as the students come from diverse academic and employment backgrounds and find jobs in a wide variety of government and nonprofit organizations.

The program's mission includes the following goals:

1. Prepare professional public managers, public officials and citizens to meet the challenges of public service in both government and nonprofit sectors
2. Advance the state of knowledge in the field of public administration through scholarly research and publications
3. Serve the profession and local, state, federal and international communities by extending faculty expertise and intellectual resources

Student learning outcomes

1. Students will participate in and contribute to the policy process.
2. Students will lead and manage in public governance.
3. Students will analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.
4. Students will articulate and apply a public service perspective.
5. Students will communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/>)

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/candidacy/>)

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>)

Apply online today. (<https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/>)

Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.P.A.	Fall	Apr 1 (Mar 1 for financial aid)	
	Spring	Oct 1	
	Summer	Feb 1	

Special requirements

- These deadlines are designed to allow sufficient time for application review and admission processing. Applications may be submitted after the deadline; however, there is no guarantee of sufficient time for processing. Any application submitted too late for current semester processing will be considered for the following semester. Please contact the program chair with specific application questions.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>), selection is made on the basis of prior academic performance, professional accomplishments and other indicators of the ability to pursue graduate studies and a professional career in public management successfully. Specifically, the application for admission requires a transcript documenting the completion of a bachelor's degree, three letters of reference (including both academic and professional references if possible), and a current resume. In addition, applicants must have taken an undergraduate math course

(algebra, statistics or finite mathematics) and passed with a minimum grade of C.

No applicant will be considered for admission to the M.P.A. program within two years of having been terminated from the program or of having been rejected for admission to the program.

Degree requirements

The Master of Public Administration program is designed to meet the graduate educational needs of pre-service and in-service professionals for careers in public management and analysis in the public and nonprofit sectors. The degree requires a minimum of 36 graduate credit hours (39 credit hours for students with less than one year of experience in the public or nonprofit sector). In addition to the general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>), M.P.A. students must meet the following requirements:

1. Students must complete a minimum of 36 graduate credit hours, as approved, with an overall minimum GPA of 3.0. Students who do not have at least one year of professional-level experience in the public sector or in a nonprofit agency are required to earn three additional hours of credit in a public service practicum/internship (for a total of 39 graduate credit hours for the degree).
2. Students who are required to take the practicum/internship will usually do so during the summer between the first and second years or during the last semester of course work. The practicum must include a minimum of 300 hours as required by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. The scheduling of the practicum will be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of those students who pursue the degree on a part-time basis. Each practicum will be negotiated between VCU and the host agency, including the scope of work to be performed by the student, the type and extent of supervision, both within the agency and from the university, and the stipend. A learning contract will be executed among the department, the agency and the student. A written student project is required to complete the internship.
3. All students are required to complete the courses in the core curriculum unless competence in the subject matter can be demonstrated on the basis of previous experience or course work. Course work that is waived must be replaced by approved substitutions in order to meet the minimum 36 (or 39) graduate credit hours required for the degree.

Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
Core courses (required)		
PADM/GVPA 601	Principles of Public Administration	3
PADM 602	Public Administration Theory	3
PADM 607	Public Human Resource Management	3
PADM 609	Financial Management in Government	3
PADM/GVPA/CRJS/ URSP 623	Research Methods for Government and Public Affairs	3
PADM 624	Quantitative Methods for Public Administration	3
PADM/GVPA 625	Public Policy Analysis	3
PADM 689	Seminar in Public Administration: Integration of Theory and Practice (capstone)	3

Electives		
In consultation with an adviser, students may select up to 12 credit hours from any additional graduate-level CRJS, GVPA, HSEP or URSP courses.		12
Internship		
GVPA 693	Internship (required for students with less than one year of professional experience in the public or nonprofit sector)	0-3
Total Hours		36-39

The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 36 (or 39 with internship).

Accelerated opportunities

The program offers opportunities for qualified undergraduate students to earn both an undergraduate and graduate degree in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. See the individual program page for concentrations in the Undergraduate Bulletin (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/college-humanities-sciences/political-science-program/>) for details.

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Program website: wilder.vcu.edu/academic/pubadmin.html (<http://wilder.vcu.edu/academic/pubadmin.html>)