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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Mission and Scope

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program prepares students for entry into managerial, administrative, and other professional careers in the government and nonprofit sectors. For students already in public service careers, the MPA program provides them the ability to improve skills, broaden perspectives and assume positions of greater responsibility.

The MPA degree is recognized throughout the United States and in most other countries. The MPA program at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale started in 1974. It was one of the first programs fully accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). The program, a semi-autonomous unit of the Political Science Department, is interdisciplinary and draws on departments and professional programs from throughout the University. In the spring of 1990, the program began offering a concentration in aviation administration, the first of its kind in the nation.

MPA degree requirements are designed to provide instruction in the core knowledge and competencies in public administration, as well as a range of additional subjects appropriate to the student’s career interests. An informal career tracking system allows students to integrate their study of core knowledge and competencies with courses that provide special preparation for entry into such specialty fields as city management, financial management, aviation administration, environmental administration, museum administration, and nonprofit organizations. The program is flexible enough to accommodate full and part-time students.

Additional information may be found on the MPA program website at: http://www.mpa.siuc.edu

B. Program Administration

The MPA program is staffed by a director, a field representative, and a graduate assistant. The director is appointed by and reports to the chairperson of the Political Science Department. The field representative and graduate assistant are appointed by the director and report directly to the director. The MPA program is also staffed by nuclear, contributing, and adjunct faculty. The nuclear faculty consist of members of the Political Science Department whose major academic interests and teaching responsibilities lie in public administration. The nuclear faculty teach public administration courses, serve on student research committees, and assist the director in making decisions affecting various aspects of the program. The contributing faculty consist of faculty members in Political Science, as well as other University departments who make important contributions to program teaching and committee service, but whose major responsibilities reside in other departmental programs or University departments. The adjunct faculty is composed of practicing public administrators from across the Southern Illinois region. The current roster of MPA faculty is available in the MPA office. An Advisory Board composed of alumni and other professionals advises the program on curriculum matters, engages in fundraising, and helps students and faculty make links with government, nonprofit, and business organizations. The board meets twice yearly, once in fall and once in spring.

C. Enrollment of Unclassified Students in MPA Courses

The MPA Director has the discretion to enroll an unclassified student into MPA core curriculum course. Eligible courses are limited to POLS 543, POLS 503, POLS 546 and POLS 545 on a limited basis. Unclassified students will not be allowed to enroll in more than 2 MPA core curriculum courses before an admissions decision is made. Unclassified students applying
to the program must submit a written evaluation from the instructor teaching the MPA core curriculum course as part of their application to the MPA Program. Unclassified students lacking background in government or political science are required to take POLS 537 Foundations of Public Administration while enrolling in a restricted, core curriculum MPA course. MPA students and students in other graduate programs needing MPA courses to complete their graduate programs are given preference over unclassified students when registering for required MPA courses.

D. APA Style and Formatting
The MPA Program has selected the American Psychological Association (APA) style as the required style of documentation for all MPA coursework and the MPA research paper. APA rules and guidelines are set out in a reference book called *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

E. Pre-service and In-service Status
Students are admitted to the MPA program with either a (1) pre-service, or (2) in-service status. A student’s status is determined by experience obtained prior to acceptance into the program. Students are first informed of their status when admitted. Those students who are admitted to the program but possess little or no prior administrative or organizational experience are classified as “pre-service.” Those students who are admitted with significant professional experience in a public or quasi-public agency are classified as “in-service.” Significant professional experience can generally be defined as: at least one year of administrative full-time work experience. The MPA Director, with the advice of the MPA faculty, determines whether the student meets this criterion after consultation with the applicant’s work supervisor. Students within their first semester of study who believe they have not been properly classified can petition the MPA Director who, with the advice of the MPA nuclear faculty, will review the student’s status.

F. Prerequisite Study
Students with a limited background in public administration are required to take a prerequisite course during their first semester of study. Students who lack adequate undergraduate preparation in American government and/or public administration must complete POLS 537 Foundations of Public Administration. Students may demonstrate adequate undergraduate preparation in public administration by (1) a single, survey-type course in the area, or (2) two or more courses in specific topics of the area. The POLS 537 Foundations of Public Administration prerequisite may be waived for in-service students if the student’s work experience clearly demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter. Students who are admitted to the MPA program with the condition that they must complete POLS 537 Foundations of Public Administration must receive a grade of “B” or above or they will be dropped from the MPA program.

Students without an undergraduate degree in aviation, who desire to pursue an MPA with a concentration in Aviation Administration, are required to take prerequisite courses during their first semester of study if deemed necessary by the Chair of Aviation Management. The required prerequisites could include AVM 371: Aviation Industry Regulation and AVM 372: Airport Management. Graduate credit cannot be awarded for completing AVM 371 or AVM 372. The aviation prerequisites may be waived for in-service students if the student’s work experience clearly demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter.
G. Student Mailboxes

MPA students are assigned mailboxes. Located in the Department of Political Science mailroom, the mailbox system facilitates program, campus, and personal communications flowing to and among MPA students. Students are responsible for checking their mailboxes on a regular basis. The students are also responsible for updating MPA office files with current mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

H. E-mail Communications

All MPA students are assigned e-mail addresses through Information Technology. At the beginning of their first semester, all new MPA students are required to obtain an e-mail address from IT and give it to the MPA Field Representative.

I. Public Administration Student Organization (PASO)

PASO is the organization of students in the MPA program. Its objectives are two-fold: (1) to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience among students interested in pursuing a career in public administration, and (2) to provide a cooperative atmosphere for joint action and representation of needs and interests of public administration students to the officials and agencies of the University community. Membership is open to any SIUC student, graduate or undergraduate, who is interested in public administration. Additionally, associate memberships are open to MPA alumni or any non-student who is interested in participating in the organization. More information about PASO may be obtained in the MPA office.

J. Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society

Pi Alpha Alpha is the National Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration. The Southern Illinois University Carbondale chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha was chartered in 2008. The purposes of this society are: (1) to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in public affairs and administration; (2) to promote the advancement of education and practice in the art and science of public affairs and administration; and (3) to foster integrity, professionalism and creative performance in the conduct of governmental and related public service activities. Membership is limited to students, faculty and alumni who have achieved academic excellence and achievement. More information about Pi Alpha Alpha may be obtained in the MPA office.

K. American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)

The MPA program maintains an affiliation with professionals in the field. ASPA provides the link as the professional association in which most public administrators and PA academics belong in the United States and even abroad.

L. Job Placement

The MPA program tries to assist students in finding professional employment upon graduation. In cooperation with the University Career Services and the Placement Center, the program’s field representative maintains job information files, including catalogs and announcements from local, state, and federal agencies, nonprofit and other organizations that are currently hiring MPA graduates. Resources and guidelines for accessing internet job information
databases are also available. Through student advisement and other program activities, MPA students learn how to prepare resumes, receive tips about interviewing for jobs and receive information about how and where to conduct job searches. Job information resources of the MPA office, web-based resources and other information outlets will be made available to the students.

M. Alumni Services

The MPA program has an alumni association of over 500 graduates. The alumni are scattered over forty states and twenty foreign countries. MPA alumni are a key to making the MPA program viable. Frequently, the alumni are called upon to assist with and even host student visits, social events, and other program activities in their geographical areas.

A program newsletter, “MPA Affairs,” is posted twice yearly in an effort to enhance alumni relations and keep alumni abreast of developments in the MPA program. Students, faculty, and alumni contribute articles to the newsletter.

II. MPA STUDENT ADVISEMENT

The MPA program director is the faculty advisor for all MPA students and is assisted by the MPA Field Representative. An advisement session must be scheduled prior to the initial semester of enrollment in the program and in each subsequent semester with either the MPA Director or the MPA Field Representative. In the initial session, the student’s career goals, program curricula, and options for completing the program in two years are discussed. Courses for the first semester are also selected. Each subsequent semester students must schedule an appointment to register for the next semester’s classes. The MPA Director or MPA Field Representative will discuss the current schedule of courses and student progress during subsequent student advisement sessions. Advanced registration (within the dates established by the University and MPA office) is recommended. Students are encouraged to check their progress in following the program of study given them in their initial advisement session and to use the same form the MPA program uses to record student progress toward the MPA degree. The forms are provided in Appendix B and C.

A. SalukiNet Registration

All SIUC students are required to utilize SalukiNet for course registration including adding or dropping courses. The SalukiNet login page is available at https://salukinet.siu.edu. Once logged on to SalukiNet, the registration application can be accessed by clicking on the “My Records” tab. MPA students are required to enter a Registration User Number (RUN) before SalukiNet will allow access to registration. Students will receive their RUN number for registration during their advisement appointment each semester. Step-by-step instructions and online tutorials are available if needed.

In addition to course registration, students can utilize SalukiNet for a number of applications including e-mail, internet services, student records, financial aid and bursar information.

B. Course Substitution

There are two circumstances in which courses other than those listed in Appendix B may be used to satisfy core course requirements. They are as follows: First, a transfer student who has
completed graduate-level study in the subject matter of one of the core courses may request substitution of a core course. The request must be submitted in writing to the program director. The request must be accompanied by supporting documentation including a catalog description and a course syllabus. If the program director approves the student’s written request, the director will petition the Graduate School dean for approval of the transfer credit. The student will be notified of the dean’s decision. Students must note that no more than 15 hours of transfer credit may be applied to the MPA degree and that no more than one core course may be substituted.

Second, one graduate level course offered by another university department may be substituted if it covers the same subject matter and is considered equivalent to the particular core course. For example, a student may request to take ESPY 506 Inferential Statistics instead of POLS 503 (Research Methods for Public Administrators). All requests for substitutions must be addressed in writing to the director.

C. Course Waiver
In the case of in-service students, a core course may be waived if the student’s record of professional accomplishments clearly indicates knowledge of the subject matter of the course. The waiver of a core course does not waive the 37 semester hours required for in-service students to receive the MPA degree. The hours must be made up by taking an approved elective. Requests for waivers must be addressed in writing to the director.

D. Incomplete Grades
Students who receive an incomplete grade (INC) in any course must satisfy requirements to complete the course with a satisfactory grade by the end of the semester following the incomplete grade. Students who do not clear incomplete grades within one semester are not eligible for graduate assistantships from the MPA program. Students with an incomplete grade in any course are ineligible to begin an internship. If you have additional questions about University policies and procedures on incomplete grading please contact the Graduate School at (618) 536-7791 or visit: http://www.gradschool.siu.edu/.

E. Dismissal from the MPA Program
MPA students are required to make satisfactory progress in the program. A minimum level of performance is required of all MPA students. Any student earning a “C” grade or below in more than one of the MPA required courses will be automatically dropped from the program. At that time they can choose file a formal grievance for readmission. The MPA program follows the policies set forth by the graduate school in this regard. That policy can be found at http://gradschool.siu.edu/_common/documents/catalog_12-13/46-Academic_Grievances_Policy.pdf

F. Time Limits
Students have six years to complete all requirements for the MPA degree. Students must remain actively enrolled until completion of their degree. See the section on the requirement for Continuing Enrollment (POLS 601) below.

G. Requirement for Continuing Enrollment (POLS 601)
Students must register for POLS 601 if they do not enroll for graduate credit in any other course during that semester. The only exceptions are when a leave of absence is granted by the
MPA program on formal withdrawals (see below). Students in a graduate program who do have a leave of absence and have not registered by the second week of the Fall or Spring semester will be required to register for one hour of POLS 601. This hour will be dropped if the student subsequently enrolls in a class that semester. The Graduate School notifies graduate programs of students who are enrolled in POLS 601. This 601 policy terminates when the student passes the six years to complete a master’s candidacy, or officially withdraws from a program. All students are considered in-state for purposes of 601 enrollment. This policy began with the Fall 1998 semester, and subsequently applies only to Fall and Spring semesters (not Summer).

H. Leave of Absence and Withdrawal from the MPA Program

Leave of Absence: Leaves of absence do not affect time-to-degree requirements. Programs which choose to grant a leave of absence must notify the Graduate School by the 8th week of the semester. Students seeking a leave of absence from the MPA program must submit a request in writing to the MPA director, who approves or denies the leave. Final approval of a request for leave of absence is made by the Graduate School. The written request must clearly state the reasons for requesting the leave. A leave of absence will normally be granted only in special circumstances, such as student health problems or family or personal exigencies. Leaves of absence will not be granted to anyone who will be using any MPA program or university resources (e.g., faculty or staff, library or computer facilities, etc.) during their absence.

Withdrawal from Program: Students who wish to withdraw from the MPA program should send written notification to the program director. The notification will be forwarded to the Graduate School.

I. Graduation

The Graduate School announces deadlines for applying for graduation and filing the final research paper for each semester. IMPORTANT: These deadlines come well before the last week of the semester. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they are aware of these deadlines and to submit required graduation documents on time. Also students need to realize that faculty typically are on nine-month contracts and are away much of the summer since they are not under contract. This makes finishing program requirements difficult during the summer. If you have additional questions about graduation and deadlines contact the Graduate School at (618) 536-7791, or visit http://www.gradschool.siu.edu/.

III. MPA DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Overview. The MPA program requires a minimum of 40 semester hours of academic work. This consists of 25 hours of MPA core curriculum, and a three-hour internship (POLS 595).1 In-service students receive an internship waiver reducing the total number of semester hours needed for graduation to 37.2 Students take 12 semester hours of graduate level elective credit.

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1 Internships are typically completed after the first year of coursework.
2 In-service students may receive an internship waiver due to a determination that they possess significant professional experience as defined in Section I. C. of this Handbook.
Student Progress and Maintaining Good Standing in the Program. A grade of “D” or “F” in any core course is not considered successful completion. The course has to be retaken. Any student earning a “C” grade or below in more than one of the MPA required courses will be dropped from the program.

A. Required Courses

Each required course is offered at least once per academic year. A course may be offered twice per year if student needs so dictate. Every effort is made to offer each required course at night at least once every two years in order to accommodate students who are employed full-time. All students are required to take 25 hours of MPA required coursework. Requirements ensure exposure to the body of knowledge central to the study of public administration and the work of public administrators. Students in the MPA Aviation Concentration take an additional 12 hours of aviation management related coursework for a total of 37 hours.

POLS 503 (Research Methods for Public Administrators) should be taken during the student’s first semester if possible. This course introduces students to computer software and technology and statistical methods that will be used in subsequent core courses. POLS 503 (Research Methods for Public Administrators) is a prerequisite to POLS 539 (Program Evaluation) and is recommended prior to enrollment in either POLS 542 (Public Budgeting and Fiscal Management) or POLS 557 (Public Financial Administration). POLS 540 (Seminar in Public Management) is considered a “capstone” seminar and should be taken only after at least four other core courses have been completed.

1. MPA Requirements (28 hours)

   POLS 503-3 Research Methods for Public Administrators
   POLS 535-3 Ethical Foundations of Public Service
   POLS 539-3 Program Analysis and Evaluation
   POLS 540-3 Seminar in Public Management
   POLS 542-3 Public Budgeting and Fiscal Management
   POLS 543-3 Human Resource Management
   POLS 545-3 Organization Theory and Behavior
   POLS 546-3 Leadership in Public Administration
   POLS 594-1 Preprofessional Seminar in Public Administration
   POLS 595-3 Internship

2. MPA Aviation Concentration Requirements (40 hours)

   POLS 503-3 Research Methods for Public Administrators
   POLS 535-3 Ethical Foundations of Public Service
   POLS 540-3 Seminar in Public Management
   POLS 542-3 Public Budgeting and Fiscal Management

Full descriptions of these courses can be found in the current Graduate Catalog.

The total number of MPA required coursework is reduced to 25 hours for in-service students due to the internship waiver.

A student may petition the MPA Director to substitute POLS 539 with POLS 557 if it is a better fit for their chosen career path.
POLS 543-3 Human Resource Management
POLS 545-3 Organization Theory and Behavior
POLS 546-3 Leadership in Public Administration
POLS 557-3 Public Financial Administration
POLS 594-1 Preprofessional Seminar in Public Administration
POLS 595-3 Internship in Public Affairs

**Aviation Requirements – 12 credit hours**
(Students are required to select four of the five aviation courses)
POLS 551-3 Aviation Policy, Law and Regulation
POLS 552-3 Advanced Airport Administration
POLS 553-3 Advanced Aviation Safety Administration
POLS 554-3 Aviation Planning
POLS 555-3 International Aviation

**B. Elective Courses**

The provision for 12 credit hours of elective coursework affords students flexibility to pursue individual career goals. It is important to consider early in your program of study that these only represent the minimum elective requirements for completion of the MPA degree. Students may choose to take additional electives that enhance skills they believe will be useful to them in their public careers or to obtain a certification (ex: Women’s Studies or Conflict Resolution) or even consider a double major (see below).

When looking for potential elective courses, MPA students should look for courses at the 500 level. 400 level courses, of an introductory technical nature and other specialized courses especially relevant to the public administration profession may be taken only with the consent of the MPA Director. Students may count no more than 6 hours of 400 level coursework toward fulfillment of the MPA degree requirement without consent of the MPA Committee. The student may work with the MPA director to lay out a course of study that helps prepare them for a specific career field. Students in the past have focused on city management, financial administration, personnel administration, policy analysis and evaluation, museum administration, administration of courts and criminal justice, environmental and natural resources administration, human services administration and nonprofit administration. Students wishing to pursue a particular administrative career may supplement required courses by choosing electives that further their understanding of the fundamentals in desired fields from the offerings of various University departments. For instance, many MPA students pursuing studies in aviation administration or museum administration take some of the following courses:

**Supplemental Elective Examples**
- POLS 558: University Museum Colloquium (3)
- POLS 559: Museum Collection Management (3)
- EPSY 506: Inferential Statistics (3)
- EPSY 507: Multiple Regression (3)
- EAHE 543: Professional Negotiations (3)
- HED 598: Grant Writing (3)
- POLS 547a: Topics: (3)
IV. DOUBLE MAJOR

A student may earn a double major if such a program of study more adequately fulfills the student’s professional career goals. Students interested in pursuing a double major must submit a written justification for the proposed program and a program of study to the dean of the Graduate School. The program of study must be signed by the chairperson/director of both study programs. Students in the MPA Program may be interested in a double major in Anthropology, Community Health Education, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Economics, Education Administration, Geography and Environmental Resources, Health Education, Higher Education, History, or Workforce Education and Development.

Requirements for a double major are summarized as follows:

- The student must be admitted to one master’s degree program.
- Each unit in which the student wishes to earn a major must have an approved master’s degree program.
- The chairperson/director of each unit must endorse the proposed program.
- The proposed program must specify the title of the degree which is to be awarded.
- The proposed program must be approved by the graduate dean.
- At least 18 semester hours must be earned for each major.
- A minimum of one-half of the required coursework for the second major must be in courses numbered 500 or above.
- The minimum number of hours required for the double major must total 60 percent of the sum of the total required for the two majors individually.

V. CONCURRENT LAW AND MPA DEGREE

The Master of Public Administration program offers a concurrent master’s degree in public administration to law students. Law students should make their interest in the concurrent degree program known to the SIUC School of Law Registrar during or after completion of the first year of law school. Concurrent study students must complete a minimum of 81 semester hours of School of Law credits which meet all School of Law graduation requirements, as well as all MPA requirements to receive both the MPA and JD degrees. Each program maintains records and evaluates final degree requirements as if the student were enrolled in only one program. To earn a concurrent MPA/JD degree, a student cannot graduate from one program before completing the other. Students interested in pursuing the concurrent law and MPA degrees should consult with the MPA program director for advice on an appropriate program of study. The required courses for joint degree students are as follows:
Core Requirements – 25 credit hours
POLS 503-3 Research Methods for Public Administrators
POLS 539-3 Program Analysis and Evaluation
POLS 540-3 Seminar in Public Management
POLS 542-3 Public Budgeting and Fiscal Management
POLS 543-3 Human Resource Management
POLS 545-3 Organization Theory and Behavior
POLS 546-3 Leadership in Public Administration
POLS 594-1 Preprofessional Seminar in Public Administration
POLS 595-3 Internship in Public Affairs

Law Requirements – 15 credit hours
(Select five law courses from the list below)
LAW 533, 539, 548, 552, 553, 558, 568, 579, 585, 589, 593, 596, 600, 619, 620, 622, 642, 650, 651, 662, and 668

VI. POLS 594 (Pre-professional Seminar in Public Administration):
This seminar guides students through the process of developing the professional portfolio and preparing them to search for jobs, prepare resumes and other workforce readiness task as deemed necessary by the Field Representative and Core MPA Faculty. All MPA students are required to attend two (2) extracurricular events per semester to support information presented in the portfolio. This can include specialized training, professional meetings, public presentations, and any other events sanctioned by the MPA. In addition, in-service students are required to complete their in-service paper by the end of the course which provides a critical assessment of the MPA Program.

VII. THE PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO
Purpose
The professional portfolio serves to demonstrate your public administration competencies through collecting and reflecting on work products from previous courses and creating one original paper on your public service experience i.e. the In-service paper or the Internship paper. A faculty member/committee assesses the portfolio. When the portfolio has been deemed to have met the demonstration of competency requirements, the student will do a presentation for faculty and fellow students.

Prerequisites
A. All core courses either currently enrolled in or satisfactorily completed
B. A minimum of 28 hours completed in the program

Course Expectations
A. Instructor offers guidance in preparing the portfolio
B. Constructive feedback on draft portfolios from fellow students
The portfolio content has four primary goals:
• Establishes a vision of one’s self as a public service leader
• Articulates the values that one associates with as a public service leader
• Describes the knowledge and skills developed that are critical for one’s career
• Documents achievement of selected competencies

Competencies
A. Required competencies in all portfolios:
  • to lead and manage in the public sector
  • to articulate and apply public service ethics and values
  • to communicate effectively
  • to communicate and interact productively with diverse groups
  • to analyze information for decision making

B. Students must select at least two other competencies to include in portfolio. At least one of the selected competencies is expected to address the chosen concentration/track which are:
  • Aviation Management
  • Museum Administration
  • Nonprofit Management
  • Public Management (general track)

Additional competencies to consider are:
  • Public policy analysis
  • Budgeting and financial management
  • Human resources

Preparation
Preparation for this course occurs throughout a student’s work in the MPA program. Due to the short timeframe of the 1-credit course, identification of material to demonstrate competencies needs to start before the course begins. Students are encouraged to carefully consider how individual and group projects yield memos, reports, research papers and other products which can be used to demonstrate the competencies required for the portfolio. Students must engage the curriculum to develop an understanding of how their career goals, and associated knowledge and skills, are embedded in the specific areas of public administration as a discipline and as a practice. Through instructor and peer feedback, one or more drafts of the portfolio are created and critiqued. Each student decides when to submit the final portfolio. The instructor’s opinion on the quality of the portfolio can be solicited, but it does not bind the separate review committee’s judgment of the quality of the portfolio. In short, a student can benefit from the constructive feedback of peers and the instructor, and the judgment that counts the most is that of review committee.

Evaluation
When a student submits the portfolio, the review committee assesses the material. The committee chair is responsible for aggregating the committee’s evaluation and determining if a
majority has passed the student on the portfolio. With two or more passes, the portfolio has met the standards of demonstrating competencies; for less than two passes, the review committee provides guidance on how to improve the portfolio for re-submission. A student has the opportunity to revise and resubmit the portfolio one time after it has been formally submitted. The assessment of the revised portfolio is done by the same committee. If the majority of the committee does not award passes, the student becomes academically ineligible to continue in the MPA Program. A student may petition the MPA program for reinstatement when special circumstances warrant.

Privacy, Honest Reflection, and Distribution of the Portfolio
The portfolio is addressed to the MPA faculty. Thoughtful and candid reflection is a central element for cover memos on previous work and for the Personal Leadership Vision.

Students’ work in this course will be shared with:
- The course instructor
- A subset of the students in the class for peer review (approximately 3-5 students)
- The faculty review committee: the two persons selected by the course instructor

*Some or all parts of the portfolio may be appropriate for students/graduates to use for career development/job seeking purposes. However, sharing drafts or the final portfolio is solely up to the student. The portfolio will be handled as a confidential document by the MPA program, and will not be distributed beyond (a-c) above unless the student gives explicit, written permission.

1. The In-service Paper: (In-service Students)
In-service students must additionally complete and submit an in-service paper as a requirement of POLS 594. The papers are reviewed by the MPA Director. Students may be asked to revise and resubmit drafts before final approval is given.

The in-service paper provides a critical assessment of the MPA Program. Through the in-service paper, students are required to evaluate the degree to which the program curriculum assisted them in the enhancement of their skills, broadening of their perspectives, and achievement of their career goals. The in-service paper must be a minimum of 3 pages (double-spaced) in length and must follow APA format. It must be printed in a standard font and font size with the pages numbered in the same font as the text. It must have a cover page which has a title, date, and author identification. The paper must entirely address the following issues with approximately 1-2 pages dedicated specifically to the assessment. If you would like to provide additional information regarding your experience in the MPA Program please use additional pages.

- Introduction: Write a paragraph describing your professional work experience prior to entering the MPA program, professional positions currently held, and future goals and ambitions.
- Assessment (1-2 pages): Provide five examples of concepts or skills acquired through the program curriculum that you feel will aid you in your professional
work experiences (Include the course in which each was obtained). Discuss contributions of MPA program coursework that you feel will aid you in the advancement of your career. From your professional perspective provide a critical analysis of the MPA Program including any suggested changes (curriculum, student advisement, professional experiences, etc.) that you feel would strengthen the program.

- Conclusion: Provide an overall assessment of the MPA experience and how it has contributed to the enhancement of your skills and the continued development of your professional career.

VII. MPA COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

All Masters in Public Administration (MPA) students must successfully complete a comprehensive examination as a part of their degree requirements. The examination may be taken in the semester in which the MPA student will complete all coursework (with the possible exception of one substantive course) or in any subsequent semester. The student's examining committee must approve any exceptions. The examination will consist of three required questions coming from either the core courses in the program or from a case study (at the discretion of the MPA faculty member evaluating exams). The written examination may or may not be followed by an oral examination. The choice to follow up with an oral examination is at the discretion of the student's examining committee. In order to successfully pass the examination, students must score a minimum of 80 out of a total of 100 possible points. If a student fails the examination, they have one additional opportunity to take and pass the examination during the next regularly scheduled examination period. For further details on the comprehensive exams students should refer to Appendix C in the back of this handbook.

VIII. POLS 594 INTERNSHIP IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A. Internship Duties
MPA interns are expected to be doing work that is appropriate and supportive of the students’ educational goals. Thus, students should be in an applied learning experience to gain management and analytical skills. Appropriate work includes:

- Conducting research
- Developing or revising regulations, policies, or plans
- Evaluating the effectiveness of programs, policies or regulations
- Facilitating meetings or group discussions
- Writing technical or nontechnical documents
• Training others in specific skills
• Setting up information systems
• Developing standards and measures for agency performance
• Drafting agency budgets, preparing grant applications, or assisting in other fund raising initiatives

All interns are supervised by the site supervisor and will provide updates about their work to the MPA Director. The Internship Director will contact supervisors at least twice during the semester to assess the student’s performance and progress. The site supervisor will evaluate the intern at least twice during the internship—once at mid-term and again at the end of the internship. These reports will be used as part of the grading process for the internship. The site supervisor is required to share the contents of the mid-term assessment with the intern, as part of the process of helping the intern improve his or her performance. In addition to work performance, the Internship Director will require the intern to write an internship report on their internship experience.

B. Internship Placement
The MPA faculty will assist MPA students with career counseling and will help in determining what internship might be suitable given your career goal. While the MPA program will assist you in finding an internship, you are responsible for initiating contacts with public sector agencies at the local, state or federal levels, or other private or not-for-profit agencies and securing an internship that is acceptable to you.

C. Internship Requirements
All internships must meet the minimum requirement of 300 working hours. Student interns are expected to work at least 20 hours per week for the duration of the internship. When you have little or no administrative experience, it is to your advantage to arrange an internship that exceeds the minimum hourly requirement. Interns may be compensated for their work by the agency, if the agency has funding available. Students who already hold full-time jobs, but lack adequate exposure to the public and nonprofit sector may be required to take do an internship. In such a case, the student will work with the Director to identify an agency and develop a project to work on that will give them the needed exposure to the public/nonprofit sectors.

Students earn three semester hours of credit for completing the internship. Students doing an internship must be enrolled for POLS 595 under the direction of the MPA director. A deferred grade (DEF) is assigned to any enrollments in POLS 595 in semesters prior to completion of the internship. The final grade for the internship is either satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) depending on the student’s performance and written internship report. IMPORTANT: Students with an incomplete grade in any course prior to the beginning of internships will be ineligible to begin an internship.

The internship is usually works best if taken during the summer after your first year in the MPA Program or after the completion of a majority of your administrative core courses. With some
internships there are expectations that the student will remain in a full-time entry-level position following graduation with the MPA degree.

The MPA program and Southern Illinois University Carbondale expects its interns to be treated as professional staff and given responsible assignments. Interns should not be relegated to clerical tasks, or designated as “gofers.” However, if other professionals in the agency share menial or clerical chores, then you too will be expected to do the same. If the internship becomes an experience that is more “clerical” than professional, you should contact the Internship Coordinator at once. The Coordinator will then contact the agency and ask that your situation be improved. If there is no improvement, the internship may be terminated and the intern placed in another agency.

D. Summary of Responsibilities by all Parties

The **student intern** agrees to conduct him/herself as an ethical professional and perform the assigned duties to the best of his/her abilities. The intern will not engage in any activity, including accessing confidential information or the collection of data, without the permission of the site supervisor. S/he will respect the confidentiality of all organizational and client information provided by the agency and will not share it with persons outside the agency without permission. The student will meet the time requirements and notify the supervisor in advance if unable to come during the agreed upon hours. The intern agrees to immediately notify the supervisor if problems arise during the performance of his/her duties at the agency. If problems cannot be resolved with the site supervisor within a reasonable period of time, the student will notify the internship coordinator.

The **site supervisor** agrees to willingly provide guided supervision during the internship period. In the case that the supervisor leaves the agency, s/he is responsible for identifying a replacement supervisor to fulfill the commitment. The site supervisor agrees to provide an ethical work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination and will address issues immediately, should they arise. The supervisor will engage the student in projects and tasks that are administrative in nature. The intern will not be expected to provide secretarial support, direct services to clients or the public, transport others, or supervise minor children or vulnerable populations. The supervisor will meet regularly with the student to provide feedback on his/her progress on projects, areas of growth, and to review responsibilities. S/he will provide the student with access to adequate information, assistance, and staff cooperation to enable the student to fulfill his/her assigned responsibilities. The supervisor will verify that the student’s time and task completion are documented. The supervisor agrees to complete a verbal mid-semester assessment with the internship coordinator and a final written evaluation (found on MPA website) or provided by the internship coordinator. S/he will also meet with the intern to provide a final performance appraisal. If, during the course of the internship an issue arises that cannot be resolved by the site supervisor or in the case that the student intern’s performance does not meet expectations, the supervisor will contact the internship coordinator.

The **internship coordinator** agrees to provide consultation to both the student intern and site supervisor, as needed, throughout the semester. S/he will help resolve issues, answer questions, and provide support, as needed. The coordinator will conduct a mid-semester assessment of
student performance with the site supervisor. S/he will periodically contact the student for updates or to address problems as they arise. After the successful completion of the internship, the coordinator will assign a pass/fail grade based on the evaluation supplied by the supervisor and the successful completion of the internship report.

The Internship Report

All interns are required to write an internship report at the conclusion of the internship period, in which the student conducts a self-evaluation of his/her own performance and evaluates the overall internship experience. The purpose of the internship report is to induce the student to do some self-reflection on his/her own performance and to carefully examine the whole experience in terms of its contributions to his/her professional development. The MPA program uses these reports as a way to evaluate the internship component of the MPA program and to help improve it. The internship report is a minimum of five pages in length, computer printed, and double spaced. A cover sheet will accompany the text of the report (obtain a copy from the field representative or program secretary). Internship reports are to be submitted to the director of the MPA program for the director’s reading and approval. Credit will not be given for the internship experience until the internship report is submitted and approved.

The internship report should contain the following:

- A brief description of the internship itself, including: (a) location of internship; (b) time period employed; (c) job title [if one exists]; (d) name of supervisor; (d) description of job duties.
- A written assessment of performance: Was the student satisfied with what he/she was able to accomplish? Explain particular tasks that were assigned and discuss achievements. Were there tasks or duties he/she would have liked to perform but were unable to?
- Assess the support received in conducting the job: What support was received in carrying out duties (supervision, guidance, technical, financial, etc.)? Was support lacking in any way? What other factors aided or impeded the ability to carry out the job?
- Discuss the relevance of MPA coursework: Were any courses particularly useful in the internship experience? Is there any subject matter that the student did not have that would have helped better prepare for the internship?

Students may address these issues in the order that seems most appropriate to them, and are encouraged to add any other commentary and observations felt important.

IX. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Graduate assistantships (GA’s) are the most frequent form of financial assistance. GA’s primarily are awarded according to academic merit and the work-related competence of the applicant. Need-based fellowships are also available. Students who receive a graduate assistantship usually work as research or teaching assistants for faculty members in the MPA program and Political Science Department. Students who have a 50% appointment work 20 hours per week. Those with a 25% appointment work 10 hours per week. The number of assistantships available varies from year to year. The maximum appointment time set by the
Graduate School for master’s students is 24 months. However, students enrolled in the MPA Program typically receive no more than three (3) full length semesters of support.

For additional information regarding Graduate Assistantships, please refer to the Graduate Catalog [http://www.gradschool.siuc.edu/catalog.htm](http://www.gradschool.siuc.edu/catalog.htm) or the GA United Contract [http://www.gradschool.siuc.edu/GA_UNITED.pdf](http://www.gradschool.siuc.edu/GA_UNITED.pdf)

A. How to Apply for a Graduate Assistantship from the MPA Program

Graduate students requesting a graduate assistantship must take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and report that score to the program director prior to application deadlines. Academic achievement, individual skills, and financial need are the major factors for determining graduate assistantship awards. Most graduate assistantship awards are made in April for the upcoming calendar year (August to May). Occasionally, awards are made in November for assistantships beginning in January. In the latter case, the award is only for one semester. All graduate assistants holding a fall and spring appointment for the full length of the semesters will be eligible for an eight-hour tuition scholarship for the summer session immediately following the two consecutive semesters. Additional information may be found at [http://www.gradschool.siuc.edu/financialaid.htm](http://www.gradschool.siuc.edu/financialaid.htm)

B. Fellowships through the Graduate School

Fellowships available through the Graduate School carry a stipend and tuition waiver, but unlike graduate assistantships do not always include a requirement to work. These awards are made to students of outstanding academic ability and achievement and to students who have overcome disadvantages of minority group membership, socio-economic status, or gender. These competitive awards require nomination by the program director.

C. Tuition Waivers

The Graduate School determines eligibility for tuition waivers (i.e., tuition scholarships):
- Students with a 25% or 50% GA contract and Fellows will be given a 15-hour tuition scholarship for fall and spring semesters, and an 8-hour tuition scholarship for the summer semester. Graduate assistants holding a fall and spring appointment for the full length of the semesters will be eligible for an eight-hour tuition scholarship for the summer session immediately following the two consecutive semesters.

D. Contract Renewal and Termination

A graduate assistant’s contract may be terminated early under certain conditions. These include but are not limited to: (1) incompetence, inefficiency, or neglect of duty; (2) misconduct that is job-related including unprofessional conduct in GA offices; (3) delinquency in academic work; (4) moral turpitude; (5) financial exigency; (6) voluntary mutual agreement; and (7) failure to register for the required number of credit hours each semester. A graduate assistant who resigns before the end of the semester but who remains enrolled in classes will be liable for the full tuition for the semester. Students who hold a graduate assistantship in the fall and spring

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6 For current information regarding wages, hours, terms and conditions regarding graduate assistantship appointments, please refer to the most recent Graduate Assistants United IEA-NEA contract.
semesters will automatically receive a tuition waiver during the summer semester whether or not the student holds an appointment during the summer.

E. Other Sources of Financial Assistance
Various other departmental and administrative units of the University may provide some form of financial assistance for graduate students. Information on current opportunities may be obtained from the Graduate School in Woody Hall and through the Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC) in the Student Center.

X. APPENDICES

Appendix A: General Track MPA Student Form
Appendix B: Aviation Concentration MPA Student Form
Appendix C: Joint Law/MPA Student Form
Appendix D: Comprehensive Examination Policy

APPENDIX A
ADVISEMENT RECORD
General Track MPA Student Form

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### Prerequisite

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APPENDIX B
ADVISEMENT RECORD
Aviation Concentration MPA Student Form

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Prerequisites

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Required Courses (19 hrs.)

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Required Aviation Courses (12 hrs.)

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MPA Exam

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## APPENDIX C
### ADVISEMENT RECORD
Law and Public Administration MPA/JD Track Student Form

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**Prerequisite**

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**Internship (3 hrs)**

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**Comprehensive Exam**

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<th>Course</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPA Exam</td>
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APPENDIX D

MPA Comprehensive Exam Policy

All Masters in Public Administration (MPA) students must successfully complete a comprehensive examination as a part of their degree requirements.

The examination may be taken in the semester in which the MPA student completes all coursework (with the possible exception of one substantive course) or in any subsequent semester. The student's examining committee must approve any exceptions. The examination will consist of three required questions coming from either the core courses in the program or from a case study (at the discretion of the MPA faculty member evaluating exams). The written examination may or may not be followed by an oral examination. The choice to follow up with an oral examination is at the discretion of the student's examining committee. Students should note the following steps and details about the process.

1. Students must file a comprehensive exam registration form with the Department Office Manager to be eligible to take the comprehensive examination before the end of the third full week of the semester. This form includes the student's address, telephone number, and email. Students must also have a completed plan of study form on file with the department to be eligible to take the comprehensive exam.

2. The comprehensive examination will be administered during once during the fall and twice during the spring semester of each academic year. For each semester the examination is given, students are to receive the examination questions via email (or D2L if arranged that way in advance) at 9:00 a.m. on a date to be determined by the MPA director with answers to examination questions returned by email (or via D2L if arranged that way in advance) to the MPA comprehensive exam administrator by 9:00 p.m. that same day. If the examining committee requires an oral defense, the student will be notified of the time/date of the oral defense.

3. Prior to the comprehensive examination, students will be mailed or emailed confirmation of their acceptance into the examination process and a confirmation of the time/date of the examination and any other necessary details.

4. The student's written examination may not exceed 20 pages. The finished product must follow a standard and acceptable style manual format (e.g., APA, APSA, Chicago), be double-spaced, with standard margins and fonts (no exotic fonts), proper annotation, and in-text citations that clearly identify the source (e.g., author, title), however no formal bibliography is required.

5. Each student must submit their own individual exam. Students may utilize and access outside materials during the examination. The final product must be comprehensive and address the given questions. A successful written examination will be clear, concise, and will illustrate the student's familiarity with the relevant literature and theories.
6. Each student examination will be administered by two MPA program faculty members (MPA faculty administer comprehensive exams on a rotating basis). The MPA program faculty members will score the required, MPA-related questions on the exam. Faculty comments on individual examinations are available on request.

7. Scoring of exam questions will be conducted using a points system. There will be a total of 100 points possible for the comprehensive exam as a whole. Total scores below 80 points results in an automatic failure on the comprehensive exam. Oral examinations are at the discretion of the faculty scoring the written exam, however, students scoring between 80-85 points on the comprehensive exam usually require an oral examination. Students scoring more than 85 points may be subject to an oral examination at the discretion of the examining faculty members.

8. Students will be notified of the results of the written part of the examination by mail or email, usually within about three weeks of the final exam date. If the examining committee requires an oral examination, the student will be notified by mail or email with the date/time of the oral exam. Oral exam format is determined by the faculty who scored the comprehensive exam. A mark of "fail" ends the MPA student's comprehensive examination process for that period.

9. Students who fail the examination may retake the entire comprehensive examination once. After the first fail, the student may be advised to take additional course work and other advice might be given. Failure to successfully pass the examination the second time will result in dismissal from the MPA program.

10. Collaboration on the MPA Comprehensive Exam is strictly prohibited unless specifically granted by the MPA program faculty member who is evaluating the examination. Violation of any of these policies by the student, including plagiarism of any kind or form, will not be tolerated. Penalties may include automatically failing the comprehensive examination, removal from the program, and/or university disciplinary action.

11. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the MPA Director in consultation with the MPA faculty.