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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Purpose 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 secretary. The director is appointed by and reports to the chairperson of the Political Science Department. The field representative and secretary 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 in one MPA required curriculum course. Eligible courses are limited to POLS 542, POLS 543, and POLS 545. Unclassified students will not be allowed to enroll in additional MPA required curriculum courses.
until an admissions decision is made. Unclassified students applying to the program must submit a written evaluation from the instructor teaching the MPA required 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 340 while enrolling in a restricted, common 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 340 (Introduction to Public Administration). Graduate credit cannot be awarded for completing POLS 340. 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 340 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 340 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. The required prerequisites 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 (Computer Lab #1, Faner Hall). 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 secretary.

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 450 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 A and B.

A. SalukiNet Registration

Beginning with Fall 2009, 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 A 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 503b (Data Preparation and Management). 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.

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 dropped from the program.

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. These deadlines are posted in the MPA office. IMPORTANT: These deadlines come well before the last week of the semester. Students need to plan ahead to allow time to schedule the oral defense with the members of the committee supervising their paper and to submit their paper in the format required by the Graduate School. 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.

III. MPA DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Overview. The MPA program requires a minimum of 43 semester hours of academic work. This consists of 19 hours of MPA core curriculum, three semester hours of research paper (POLS 596)\(^1\) and a six-hour internship (POLS 595)\(^2\). In-service students receive an internship waiver reducing the total number of semester hours needed for graduation to 37.\(^3\) All students must complete and successfully defend their research paper orally before a graduate faculty committee. Students in the aviation concentration take 15 semester hours of graduate level elective credit. Students enrolled in the aviation administration concentration take an additional 12 hours of required aviation coursework and three hours of graduate level elective credit.\(^4\) At least 21 semester hours (excluding the six hours of internship and three hours of research paper) of graduate level coursework must be taken from courses offered within the Political Science Department.

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\(^1\) Guidelines concerning the research paper are provided in Appendix A.
\(^2\) Internships are paid full-time for 4.5 months (either fall or spring semester) or paid half-time for 9 months (both fall and spring semester).
\(^3\) 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.
\(^4\) The aviation program is discussed in greater detail in part III-B
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 28 hours of MPA required coursework including three hours of the research paper in public affairs and six hours of internship. 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 40 hours.

POLS 503B (Data Preparation and Management) should be taken during the student’s first semester. This course introduces students to computer software and technology and statistical methods that will be used in subsequent core courses. POLS 503B (Data Preparation and Management) is a prerequisite to POLS 544 (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 (Environment of Public Administration) is considered a “capstone” seminar and should be taken only after at least three other core courses have been completed.

1. MPA Requirements (28 hours)

   POLS 503B: Data Preparation and Management (3)
   POLS 540: Seminar in Public Management (3)
   POLS 542: Public Budgeting and Fiscal Management (3)
   POLS 543: Human Resource Management (3)
   POLS 544: Program Analysis and Evaluation (3)
   POLS 545: Organization Theory and Behavior (3)
   POLS 594: Preprofessional Seminar in Public Administration (1)
   POLS 596: Research Paper in Public Affairs (3)
   POLS 595: Internship (6)

2. MPA Aviation Concentration Requirements (40 hours)

   POLS 503B: Data Preparation and Management (3)
   POLS 540: Seminar in Public Management (3)
   POLS 542: Public Budgeting and Fiscal Management (3)
   POLS 543: Human Resource Management (3)

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

6 The total number of MPA required coursework is reduced to 22 hours for in-service students due to the internship waiver.

7 The total number of MPA Aviation Concentration required coursework is reduced to 34 hours for in-service students due to the internship waiver.
B. Elective Courses
The provision for 15 credit hours of elective coursework (three hours if pursuing aviation administration concentration) affords students flexibility to pursue individual career goals. 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. 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.

Aviation Administration Electives
- POLS 544: Program Analysis and Evaluation (3)
- BA 503: Management of Change (3)
- POLS 590: Readings (3-6)
- POLS 591: Research (3-6)

Museum Administration Electives
- POLS 558: University Museum Colloquium (3)
- POLS 559: Museum Collection Management (3)
- POLS 590: Readings (3-6)
- POLS 591: Research (3-6)

Students may also choose to take electives that enhance skills they believe will be useful to them in their public careers.
Supplemental Elective Examples

- EPSY 506: Inferential Statistics (3)
- EPSY 507: Multiple Regression (3)
- EAHE 543: Professional Negotiations (3)
- HED 598: Grant Writing (3)
- POLS 547a: Topics: (3)
- POLS 547b: Topics: (3)
- POLS 515: Seminar in State Politics (3)
- POLS 590: Readings (3-6)
- POLS 591: Research (3-6)
- WED 581: Workforce Diversity (3)
- WED 566: Administration and Supervision (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.

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 maximum of 6 hours of 400 level credits will be counted towards fulfillment of the MPA degree requirement.
- 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.
- The thesis or research paper may be counted for not more than a combined total of six but not less than three semester hours of credit.

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.

VI. POLS 596 (RESEARCH PAPER IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS)

Students are required to complete POLS 596 (Research Paper in Public Affairs) for which they receive three semester hours of credits. Before students can register for POLS 596, they must have completed POLS 594 (Preprofessional Seminar in Public Administration), all but one of their other required MPA courses, and most of their elective courses. The major objective of the research paper is to provide students with a supervised research experience in which analytical and critical skills important to a public administration career will be sharpened. Those successfully completing POLS 596 receive a grade of “S”. Those who are unsuccessful receive a grade of “U”.

A. Overview

Pre-service students must complete the research paper prior to serving in the internship, excepting those few students assigned to two-semester, part-time internships. In-service students will normally write the paper during their last semester in the program. The MPA research paper begins with successful completion of POLS 594 which guides students through the process of preparing a paper proposal, choosing the MPA paper committee, and securing their approval of the research proposal. Once POLS 594 is successfully completed, students may enroll in POLS 596 the following semester when they write and orally defend the paper. Once successfully defended, a series of paperwork is completed by the committee chair and program director, which is then forwarded with one copy of the completed paper to the Graduate School for its final approval. An electronic copy of the approved MPA research paper must be given to the MPA program so that it may be submitted to Turn-It-In. Submission of the paper to the Graduate School and securing its final approval is the responsibility of the student, and not the MPA program or its staff.

A note about summer: For several reasons, the process for writing the research paper may not go as smoothly during the summer months as it would during the fall and spring semesters. First, there is the matter of time. The three months of summer leaves less time to work on the project. Secondly, faculty members may not be able to work as closely with students during the summer months. Most professors are on contract for the nine months that cover the fall and spring terms. That means they may not be employed by the university during the summer months and thus are not obligated to engage in university related work. Faculty members who are on teaching assignments during the summer are usually on a one-month contract, which also reduces their time commitment. Other faculty may be employed through grants and thus fully assigned to research or training projects. Furthermore, most faculty use their summers for research and writing. This is a major part of professors’ professional life and comprises a significant part of their performance evaluation. Finally, summer is a time for family vacations. All of this is meant not to discourage students from writing research papers during the summer term, but to give fair warning as to obstacles that may be encountered. The attention of faculty will be harder to obtain during the summer months.
B. POLS 594 (Preprofessional Seminar in Public Administration):

This seminar guides students through the process of forming the research paper committee, securing the committee’s approval of the research proposal, preparing for the internship experience and completing the in-service paper. To prepare students for the research paper, the course discusses basic research techniques, declaring a statement of purpose, formulating a research question, preparing a research paper abstract and outline, selecting appropriate research methods, conducting background readings, and developing a reference list of sources for your project. In preparation for the internship experience, the course includes a session that explains the internship search, requirements, your role as the intern, the role of the program, compensation and duration, and the internship paper. In lieu of attendance at the internship session, in-service students are required to complete an in-service paper which provides a critical assessment of the MPA Program.

1. Preparing the Proposal

Prior to enrolling in POLS 594, students should give thought to identifying a research paper topic. Each paper assignment in an MPA class is a potential basis for the research paper, and many students choose to write on a topic they have already addressed in a term paper assignment. The advantage of this is that students have a base of knowledge to work with in preparing a more detailed, in-depth treatment of the subject. However, students may also choose to write on a totally new subject that is of interest to them. The MPA paper research proposal is a POLS 594 requirement. To receive an “S” grade in POLS 594, students have to have signatures from their three committee members. The committee members must read the paper proposal, approve of it, and agree to serve on the MPA paper committee.

To successfully prepare the research paper proposal students are required to:

- Register for POLS 594 in the semester prior to the semester in which the student will register for the three hours of POLS 596 (Research Paper in Public Affairs).

- Students are required to form their research paper committee in the POLS 594 seminar. In forming a committee, students will first need to have a good idea as to the topic they want to investigate and write on. The topic students choose may determine who they want to approach to chair their committee. For example, if a student has written a paper in the POLS 542 budgeting class that he/she would like to expand on, he/she may want to ask the professor who taught that class to chair his/her committee. In thinking about prospective topics, students do not need to hesitate to talk over their ideas with faculty and receive their feedback. The research paper committee is composed of three faculty members, one of whom is chair. The chair of the committee must also be from the Department of Political Science, except in the case where aviation administration students may select one of the faculty members from the Aviation Management Department who teach in the MPA aviation core and who hold graduate faculty status. One member of the committee can come from another department as long as that individual has graduate faculty status and has relevant expertise in the topic area (students will want to consult with the chair before asking an outside person to serve on their
committee). Thus two members must be from within the Department of Political Science, at least one of whom must be a nuclear faculty member.

- Complete the research proposal which must contain the following: (1) paper title; (2) research question; (3) statement of purpose; (4) methodology statement; (5) proposed paper outline; (6) bibliography; (7) proposed time-line for completion of the project [i.e., target dates for completing drafts, defending, and depositing the paper by Graduate School deadlines]; (8) human subjects approval form [if needed].

- Obtain committee approval of the research proposal, as well as each member’s signatures on the Research Paper Committee Form attesting that they have approved the research proposal. See Appendix C for a copy of the form. (Copies of the form are also available in the MPA office.)

- Submit the committee form to the program director who can then register the student for research paper hours. Remember, the committee approval form must be completed and submitted to the program director by the due date or a student cannot register for POLS 596 (Research Paper in Public Affairs).

2. 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.

C. POLS 596 (Research Paper in Public Affairs)

The research paper’s purpose is to refine your analytical and writing skills. The paper should be a thoughtful, informative written product of about 25 pages in length. The paper should draw a sharp focus on a particular issue or problem, summarize relevant literature on the topic, analyze and interpret data and information, offer critical comments, make suggestions, and draw the discussion to an informative conclusion.

1. Writing the Paper

During the course of the semester in which the paper is written, students will work most closely with the chair of their committee. It is that person that will be consulted most often about the structure and content of the paper. Drafts of the paper will first be submitted to the committee chair for that person’s reading and evaluation. Students should expect to submit multiple drafts of the paper. The chair will carefully review and comment on the paper and provide instruction on redrafting the paper. When the chair determines that the paper is ready, the student will be instructed to submit the paper for the other committee members to read and evaluate. The other committee members may request changes in the paper as well.

Since students will almost certainly write more than one draft of the paper, they need to set specific deadlines for themselves for submitting first, second, and possible third drafts. Students need to remember to build in time for your chair and the committee members to read and comment on the paper, and to complete rewrites.

2. Style and Format

In writing the paper, follow the style and formatting provided by the style manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). Consult the APA manual for proper text citation, format for listing references, presentation of tables and charts, and presentation of subheadings. Students should begin following the APA style when writing papers for class so that they will be familiar with it when writing the research paper. Students should consult the APA manual carefully. Students should not make up their own referencing system. It will not be accepted by the Graduate School as the MPA program has designated the APA style as the one appropriate for its students. In addition to the formatting specified by the APA manual, the Graduate School requires its own specific requirements for the final draft. The Graduate School is very particular on such matters as proper margins and type of paper. Students should contact the Graduate School web site for a copy of research paper and theses guidelines: www.siu.edu/gradschl/dtrguide.htm.
3. The Oral Defense

Once the whole committee agrees that the paper is of sufficient quality, an oral defense will be scheduled. Students should secure an acceptable time and date from the committee members. They should then notify the MPA program secretary of the oral defense so that a room can be scheduled and paperwork prepared. Following the presentation, the committee will ask questions about the topic the student has examined and discuss it with him/her. There will also be questions related to the coursework he/she has taken. The oral defense lasts approximately one hour.

At the end of the oral defense, the committee determines whether or not the examination is satisfactory, based on the content of the paper and performance in the oral defense. If deemed satisfactory, the student will receive instructions for producing a final draft. These may include editorial corrections as well as changes in substance. If the examination is deemed unsatisfactory, the student is given the option of a second examination after completion of remedial work as recommended by the student’s committee. Students who fail the examination a second time are dropped from the program.

4. Plagiarism

Students found guilty of plagiarism may be permanently dismissed from the MPA program and/or the university. Copying another person’s work without proper attribution (providing citations, placing quotation marks around quotes) and closely paraphrasing work without proper attribution is dishonest and unprofessional. Please note that this extends to internet pages as well. Treat internet sites like a book or an article. Give proper citations and references for quotes, data and information obtained from internet sites. Follow APA guidelines for proper citation and referencing.

VII. POLS 595 (INTERNSHIP IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS)\(^8\)

Pre-service students must register for POLS 595 and serve an internship in a governmental agency, nonprofit organization or quasi-governmental agency. Students successfully completing POLS 595 receive a grade of “S.” Those not completing it successfully receive a grade of “U.”

An internship is considered both an educational and a professional work experience. It provides the intern with an opportunity to compare practical experiences with knowledge and theory obtained in the classroom. While actual work assignments and conditions are involved, the basic purpose of the internship is to provide a learning experience. The internship serves as a means for the intern to become involved in the administrative or analytical aspects of agency operation. The internship cannot begin until students complete all coursework and begin the MPA research paper.

A. Advanced Planning and Placement

Students will plan for the internship experience through regular advisement sessions and completion of the Preprofessional Seminar in Public Administration (POLS 594). In the Preprofessional Seminar (POLS 594), students will be aided in planning and preparing for the

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\(^8\) In-service students receive an internship waiver due to a determination that they possess significant professional experience as defined in Section I. C. of this Handbook.
professional internship experience. The MPA field representative acquaints pre-service students with the requirements of the internship, provides guidance and assistance in searching for potential internship sponsors, and explains the expectations for their performance during the internship. The MPA field representative serves as the liaison between the agency, the intern, and the MPA program. Students are required to meet with the field representative well in advance of the beginning of an internship. The student expresses preference for type of work, governmental level and geographic region of the internship. A joint search for an internship which meets the student’s and program’s specification is begun. Students should appreciate that it may not be possible to meet all desired conditions. In this instance, the student is expected to accept any available internship. Normally, the field representative will arrange the student’s internship interview visit. Upon agreement among the agency, student, and MPA program, the field representative ensures that all documents, including a job description, are completed and processed in accordance with the terms of the arrangement (spelled out in a Memorandum of Understanding). These documents are not the student’s responsibility.

B. Enrollment

Students earn six 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. Additionally, under normal circumstances students will not be allowed to start internships until the research paper (POLS 596) is completed.

C. Compensation and Duration

Internships are for either full-time for four and a half months (in either the spring or fall semester) or half-time for nine months (during the fall and spring semester). The internship is a paid experience. Internship finances and other arrangements are worked out by the agency and the MPA program.

D. Internship Oversight

During the internship, the field representative may contact the intern and the intern’s supervisor. The purpose is to monitor the progress of the intern, ensuring that the internship is progressing satisfactorily according to the terms of employment spelled out in the Memorandum of Understanding. The agency supervisor is required to complete an evaluation of the intern’s performance upon completion of the internship. The student is required to write an internship report of four to five pages in length. The report is submitted to the MPA Director for approval.

E. 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.

VII. 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.

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

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 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.

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9 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.
IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A: General Track MPA Student Form

Appendix B: Aviation Concentration MPA Student Form

Appendix C: MPA Program Research Paper Committee Approval Form
## ADVISEMENT RECORD
General Track MPA Student Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Admission Status:</th>
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<tr>
<td>I.D. Number:</td>
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### Prerequisite
- POLS 340:

### Required Courses (19 hrs)

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### Elective Courses (15 hrs)

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### Research Paper (3 hrs)
- POLS 596

### Internship (6 hrs)
- POLS 595

### Continuing Research
- POLS 601
### ADVISEMENT RECORD
Aviation Concentration MPA Student Form

#### Prerequisites

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#### Required Courses (19 hrs.)

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#### Research Paper (3 hrs.)

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#### Continuing Research

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Appendix C

MPA Program Research Paper Committee Approval Form

Student Name: ____________________________________________________________

Registration for Research Paper Hours: _____ Spring Semester   Year ____________

               _____ Summer Semester

               _____ Fall Semester

Paper Title:  ____________________________________________________________

Committee Approval: We have reviewed and have approved the research proposal submitted
by this student and agree to serve on the student’s research paper committee.

Committee Chair’s Signature   Print Name   Date

Committee Member’s Signature   Print Name   Date

Committee Member’s Signature   Print Name   Date

Checklist: Please check that you have attached the following documents to this form.

_____ Research Question
_____ Statement of Purpose
_____ Methodology Statement
_____ Outline
_____ Bibliography
_____ Proposed timeline for completion of project
_____ Human subjects approval forms (if needed)

MPA Director’s Signature: ____________________________________________ Date