

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, MPA

Program Director: Shuyang Peng, PhD

Introduction

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree provides graduate professional education for students interested in public service leadership positions and careers with public and nonprofit agencies and organizations. The program serves students new to public service as well as those already in the field who are interested in furthering their careers.

To learn more about our renowned faculty, please view their bios (<https://publicaffairs.ucdenver.edu/people/faculty/>) on the School of Public Affairs website.

The School of Public Affairs offers three distinct ways to complete the MPA:

- Accelerated MPA
- Executive MPA
- MPA

Program Delivery

- Courses are offered on campus, online, and hybrid formats. The Accelerated MPA is offered in a cohort model, typically on campus.

Program Requirements

1. Students must successfully complete at least 36 credit hours of approved coursework for the MPA and Accelerated MPA formats. Students must successfully complete at least 30 credit hours of approved coursework for the Executive MPA format.
2. Students in the MPA and Accelerated MPA formats who have not had at least one year of professional work experience in the public or nonprofit sectors must complete an internship through an additional three-semester-hour course, bringing their total semester-hour requirements to 39.
3. Students must maintain at least a 3.00 cumulative GPA in this program.
4. Students must earn at least a B- in all core coursework and at least a C in all elective coursework to be accepted for graduate credit towards the degree.
5. No more than six credit hours of Independent Study may be applied toward the degree.
6. This program must be completed within 7 years.

Code	Title	Hours
Required Core Courses		
All MPA students (with the exception of those in the Executive MPA option) must complete the following seven core courses or approved equivalents:		
PUAD 5001	Introduction to Public Administration and Public Service	3
PUAD 5002	Organizational Management and Behavior	3
PUAD 5003	Research and Analytic Methods	3
PUAD 5004	Economics and Public Finance	3
or PUAD 5503	Public Budgeting and Finance	

PUAD 5005	The Policy Process and Democracy	3
PUAD 5006	Public Service Leadership and Ethics	3
PUAD 5008	Evidence-Based Decision-Making	3
Required Elective Courses		12

Select four elective courses from a pre-approved list and/or with approval from the program director.

Internship		3
PUAD 6910	Internship ¹	
Capstone		3
Select one of the following:		
PUAD 5361	MPA Capstone Seminar (during the final semester)	
PUAD 6950	Master's Thesis ²	

Total Hours	39
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¹ Internship: Students who have limited experience (generally defined as less than one year of experience) in public, nonprofit or relevant private-sector service must enroll in PUAD 6910 Internship. The decision to require PUAD 6910 Internship for a particular student is made by the faculty admissions committee or the student's faculty advisor upon the student's acceptance to the MPA program. A minimum of 300 hours of supervised work and study is required to earn the 3.00 credit hours for this course. The internship requirement raises the total credit hours needed to earn the MPA degree from 36 to 39.

² Taken for three or six credits with approval by and in consultation with the program director prior to enrolling in the course.

MPA Options

In addition to the MPA program, students may consider the accelerated and executive options.

Accelerated MPA

The Accelerated MPA is a fast-paced, full-time program for students ready to jumpstart their public service careers. The AMPA option enables students to focus their energies on a concentrated program of study and earn a nationally accredited, 36-hour MPA in 12 months. Students in the AMPA program may not be able to choose a certificate due to the cohort nature of the program and sequencing of classes.

Students are admitted to the program in a cohort that starts each August. The cohort format helps to increase the opportunity to become acquainted with other graduate students and increases the opportunities for interaction between program participants and faculty.

The AMPA option is priced at a flat rate, regardless of in-state or out-of-state student status, providing out-of-state students with substantial savings. Students interested in pursuing the AMPA option should designate this as their desired program on their admissions application.

Executive MPA

The Executive MPA is designed for mid- to senior-level professionals seeking to advance their careers and drive meaningful change in the public and nonprofit sectors. Students have at least 5 to 10 years of cumulative experience with public or non-profit organizations and at least three years of middle-to-upper-level managerial experience. The Executive MPA requires a minimum of 30 credit hours to complete the degree. Professional experience counts for two courses, leaving 10 courses to complete, as opposed to the 12 courses of the MPA and Accelerated MPA options.

Initial Leadership Experience (3 credit hours)

All students will enroll in the Rocky Mountain Leadership Program (3 credit hours), which is a six-day seminar typically held in Breckenridge. The RMLP brings together public and non-profit professionals from across the country to collaborate on current management issues while honing leadership skills.

Coursework**Required courses (15 credit hours)**

Students will take two core MPA courses in sections open only to those in the Executive MPA program. These courses are held in a hybrid format, which combines a one-week intensive session (typically on the Denver campus) with additional online instruction.

- PUAD 5001 Introduction to Public Administration and Public Service (3 credit hours)
- PUAD 5002 Organizational Management and Behavior (3 credit hours)

Executive students take three additional MPA core courses (9 credits) with students in the MPA Program. The additional core courses to be taken shall be determined by the student, in consultation with their student advisor and/or the MPA Program Director. These courses may be offered in formats including online, weekend intensive, or through the traditional campus-based setting. Additional core course sections open only to those in the Executive MPA program may also be offered.

Electives (9 credit hours)

In consultation with an advisor, students select three elective courses that best meet their professional goals. These courses may be offered in formats including online, weekend intensive, or through the traditional campus-based setting. Students in the Executive MPA program are able to pursue a graduate certificate, though additional coursework may be required beyond the degree requirements.

Capstone or Thesis (3 - 6 credit hours)

Students elect to take either PUAD 5361 MPA Capstone Seminar (3 credit hours) or PUAD 6950 Master's Thesis (3 - 6 credit hours) during their final semester with Program Director approval.