

Fall | 2012

# BGSU MPA PROGRAM GUIDE

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program at Bowling Green State University is to educate students, preparing them to assume leadership roles in public service. The program aims to provide the public and nonprofit sectors with talented and rigorously-trained graduates equipped to address problems and challenges now and in the years ahead. It strives to promote intellectual development, scholarship, leadership, ethics and training in basic and applied research relevant to the public and nonprofit sectors at various levels. The program trains students in the theory, methods, and practice of public administration through a combination of coursework, research, and experiential learning via public service and client-based projects. The program serves its students, BGSU, the state of Ohio, the US, and the international community by promoting innovative and effective solutions in the public and nonprofit sectors.

# **BGSU MPA PROGRAM**

Education for Public **SERVICE**

**S**uccess

**E**thics

**R**esponsibility

**V**ision

**I**ntegrity

**C**ompetence

**E**fficiency

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## Contact Information

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### **Political Science Department**

Williams Hall  
Bowling Green State University  
43403

### **Department Chair**

Dr. Marc Simon [msimon@bgsu.edu](mailto:msimon@bgsu.edu)

### **Department Secretary**

Kelly Avery 419-372-2921 [kellya@bgsu.edu](mailto:kellya@bgsu.edu)

### **Graduate Coordinator**

Dr. Albert Dzur [awdzur@bgsu.edu](mailto:awdzur@bgsu.edu)

### **Graduate College**

<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/gradcol/index.html>  
(419) 372-2791

### **Department Website**

<http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/pols/>

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## RESOURCES

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### **Computer Lab/Office Space**

Graduate students have access to the MPA computer lab in 105 Williams Hall which has 10 computers and a laser printer. This lab is reserved only for MPA students. Please take the appropriate security measures with the computer lab, and refrain from eating in the lab. Paper for the printer can be obtained from the Department Secretary. MPA students also have access to a study/office area shared with graduate students in History and Sociology in the basement of Williams Hall. Graduate student mailboxes are located in 105 Williams Hall.

### **Library Assistance**

During the first month of classes the library hosts a variety of tours and information sessions that may be of great use for MPA students. In addition, through the library webpage (<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library>) the 'ask a librarian' feature can be of great help for identifying research sources.

BGSU is a member of OhioLink which is a consortium of Ohio's college and university libraries and the State Library of Ohio. The OhioLink catalogue includes the library resources at 17 public universities, 23 community/technical colleges, 44 private colleges and the State Library of Ohio. Books and other resources on OhioLink can be delivered to the BGSU Jerome Library for free and with a very short delivery time. In addition, almost 7000 full text journals are available through the electronic journal center of Ohiolink.

### **Graduate College**

The graduate college website (<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/gradcol>) is an important resource for all graduate students. Additional assistantship opportunities are available at this site, as well as link to important documents and forms. Students should check the list of important dates on the website regularly to ensure that they are meeting deadlines as appropriate.

### **Graduate Student Senate**

The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) advocates for the needs and interests of graduate students. Links to the GradLife Handbook and other resources are available at (<http://www.bgsu.edu/studentlife/organizations/gss>).

### **Bookstore**

Graduate students are eligible for a 10% discount on all goods at the campus bookstore. Student cards must be shown at the time of purchase.

### **Conference Travel**

Graduate students presenting research at conferences are eligible to apply for an award of up to \$250 for travel expenses from the Political Science Department Graduate Committee. Students who wish to attend, but not present at professional conferences, are also eligible to apply for a \$100 travel grant. Students must be in good academic standing in order to be eligible. Receipts and proof of conference attendance must be submitted prior to disbursement of funds. Awards are subject to availability of departmental funds. In order to

apply for an award, students must submit a letter of intent, information about the conference and a current resume to the graduate coordinator as early as possible.

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## **COURSEWORK**

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All courses numbered 500 and above are graduate courses. If a 5000-level course is cross-listed with a 4000-level undergraduate course, graduate students must register for the 5000-level section of the course. Of the 36 semester hours of course work, at least 30 hours must be graduate level courses at the 6000 level or above.

No more than 9 credits may be taken as independent study and/or workshops.

Students must take a minimum of 33 semester hours of course work and either

- three credit hours of credit for either a thesis and oral defense OR
- three credit hours for the Capstone Course, and complete an internship (not for course credit)

All students are required to complete 15 hours of core courses and 12 hours of specialization courses. The remaining six hours are electives.

### **Degree Plan**

The purpose of the degree plan is to ensure that degree requirements are being met. You must complete the department degree plan **BEFORE** your last semester in order to make sure you are meeting all degree requirements. Please keep in mind that a student cannot graduate without the approval of their degree; and that the final degree plan form must appropriately reflect the courses taken toward the degree. There is a copy of the form included in this package, or it can be printed from the department website. Do not use the degree plan (TDP) form on the graduate college website.

### **Graduate Certificates**

Students may also pursue a graduate certificate concurrently with the MPA degree. Students interested in graduate certificates should consult with the MPA coordinator as some certificate courses may also be counted as requirements or electives. Graduate certificates available at BGSU include:

- Ethnic Studies
- Gerontology
- Quality Systems
- Organizational Development
- Women's Studies
- Geospatial – GIS
- Organizational Change
- International Scientific and Technical Information

## **Core Courses (15 hours)**

*Required of all students*

The five required courses in the MPA “core,” each worth 3 credit hours, are:

- POLS 6210 Public Administration Theory and Behavior
- POLS 6260 Public Management I: Personnel Management and Leadership
- POLS 6280 Public Management II: Budgeting, Fiscal Policy, and Decision-making
- POLS 6200 Public Administration and Public Policy
- POLS 6750 Research Methods

Students must receive at least a 'B' grade in all core classes.

## **Specializations**

Our MPA program will offer students three specializations: Politics and Public Policy, International Development Administration, and Environmental Management and Sustainability. In addition, a “planned program” option is available for students wishing to craft their own specialization. Students choosing this option work closely with our Director of Graduate Studies to ensure that the crafted specialization has sufficient focus and direction.

Regardless of which track is chosen, students will complete 12 credit hours of coursework in their chosen specialization as discussed below.

I. The **Politics and Public Policy** specialization prepares students to work in the local, state, or federal government or non-profit sector in the United States. This specialization will be of interest to both newly-minted college graduates and mid-career professionals. It is geared toward individuals wishing to pursue careers in legislative politics, executive politics, campaign politics, polling, and/or political consulting, among others. In addition this will be a track of particular interest for students wishing to do a Ph.D. in public administration

**Required Course for Politics and Public Policy:** POLS 6310 Seminar in American Government  
**Choose 3 additional courses such as:**

- POLS 6110 Administrative Law
- POLS 6120 Ethics
- POLS 6230 Program Evaluation
- POLS 6450 Environmental Management
- POLS 6540 Nonprofit Management
- POLS 5400 Parties and Voting Behavior
- POLS 5530 Media and Politics
- POLS5800 Women and Politics
- HIST 6120 Introduction to Policy History
- HIST 6200 Colloquium: U.S. Politics
- EDAS 7330 - Seminar: Collective Bargaining

II. The **International Development** specialization will prepare students to work for international non-governmental organizations or inter-governmental organizations such as the United Nations and the United States Agency for International Development.

**Required Course for International Development:** POLS 6710 Seminar in International Development

**Choose 3 additional courses such as:**

POLS 6120 Ethics  
POLS 6230 Program Evaluation  
POLS 6450 Environmental Management  
POLS 6510 Seminar in Comparative Government  
POLS 6540, 6550 Nonprofit Management  
POLS 5730 International Law  
POLS 5750 International Organization  
POLS 5760 International Political Economy  
POLS 5790 Conflict Resolution  
HIST 6190 Colloquium in Comparative Industrial Policy  
COMS 7630 Seminar in International Development

III. The **Environmental Management and Sustainability** specialization prepares students for work in the emerging “green sector” and builds on the BGSU Center of Excellence “Sustainability and the Environment.” As an interdisciplinary specialization, students will be uniquely qualified to take on a variety of jobs and will be broadly trained in environmental management and sustainability.

**Required Course for Environmental Management and Sustainability:** POLS 6450

Environmental Management

**Choose 3 additional courses such as:**

POLS 6120 Ethics  
POLS 6310 Seminar in American Government  
POLS 6230 Program Evaluation  
POLS 644 Environmental Policy  
POLS 6710 Seminar in International Development  
BIOL 5040 Environmental Microbiology  
BIOL 5240 Landscape Ecology  
BIOL 5400 Conservation Biology  
BIOL 5420 Conservation Biology in Practice  
BIOL 5450 Evolution  
GEOG 5040 Climatology  
GEOG 5240 Geographic Information Systems  
GEOG 5400 Introduction to Remote Sensing  
PUBH 6050 Concepts and Issues in Environmental Health  
HMSL 6550 Foundations of Travel and Tourism

IV. The **Leadership and Management** specialization prepares students for work in management positions within the public and nonprofit sector.

**Required Course Leadership and Management:** One of: POLS 6540 Nonprofit Management OR  
POLS 6410 - Management in Small Local Government

**Choose 3 additional courses such as:**

POLS 6110 Administrative Law  
POLS 6120 Ethics  
POLS 6230 Program Evaluation  
POLS 6450 Environmental Management



EDAS 6210 - Introduction to Organizational Leadership and Change  
EDAS 7330 - Seminar: Collective Bargaining  
MBA 6080P - Leading for Organizational Success  
ECON 5310 - Public Finance  
MBA 6050 - Marketing Management and Strategy

#### **V. Planned Program**

Students interested in creating their own specialization should meet with the Graduate Coordinator as soon as possible to identify a plan of work. Possible specializations would include for example Public Health Administration, Gender and Administration etc...

#### **III. Electives (6 hours)**

##### **Program Electives (6 hours)**

Many courses are available throughout the university. Students are encouraged to take electives that complement their specializations. Electives must be graduate level courses.

##### **IV. Thesis or Internship/Capstone (3 hours)**

Students can choose to complete either 1) a thesis or 2) complete an internship and complete the capstone course offered every Fall and Spring.

#### **THE FIRST SEMESTER**

Full-time students are encouraged to take at least 2 core classes in their first semester, plus one specialization or elective course. Students should consider taking Research Methods (POLS 675) and Administrative Theory (POLS 621) early in their studies as future courses may build on this material.

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## INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES

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Internships are required of all students in the Master's of Public Administration program at Bowling Green State University who lack substantial prior administrative experience. We believe that the internship is one of the most valuable educational experiences the student will have in the MPA program if it is appropriately structured and supervised. The following is intended to give some guidelines concerning internships served by students in the MPA program.

**Purpose.** The primary purpose of the internship is educational rather than service to the agency. Students may well, and usually do, make valuable contributions to the employing agency, but the objective of the internship is to expose the student to an experiential learning process in an actual administrative or policy setting. The organization should view itself as a partner with the MPA program in an educational endeavor. Indeed, the agency is expected to provide the primary supervision of the intern and, accordingly, is actually a senior partner in this particular enterprise.

**Location.** Internships may be served in governmental organizations (including executive, legislative, and judicial), in not-for profit organizations, and in private organizations dealing with the public sector. The choice of the specific location of the internship is dependent on the career interests of the student.

**Role and Functions.** The specific role and function of a given intern in an agency should be a matter of mutual agreement between the student and the agency. Students have served in a variety of capacities in previous internships. Some internships have been project-oriented with the student doing such things as analyzing a policy, writing a policy and procedures manual, or doing a program evaluation. In other internships, students have been assigned as staff assistants to particular offices. Others have involved rotation through several offices in an agency. There is no set model. Instead, the role and function of the intern should be consistent with the interests of the student and the needs of the agency. **Compensation.** Interns may receive compensation for their services, although unpaid internships are common. The normal rate of compensation is minimum wage or whatever more the agency can afford. Payment is made by the agency.

**Timing.** The internship may be served at any time prior to completion of the other requirements for the MPA degree. Internships are most often served during the summer, but timing is a function of the needs and interests of the student and the opportunities available.

**Waiver.** The internship requirement may be waived for students with substantial prior administrative experience. Students seeking a waiver of the internship requirement should submit a written request to the Graduate Coordinator describing the work experience. The student should also arrange to have a supervisor or other appropriate party submit a separate statement verifying the length of employment (it must have been at least one year of employment) and stating that the student's performance in that position was at least satisfactory. A formal performance evaluation may be submitted for the supervisor's statement.

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## CAPSTONE

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**Purpose:** The capstone project is a growing trend in MPA programs. The capstone combines assessment with an educative experience. The capstone will draw upon knowledge, analytical abilities, writing and presentation skills and insight acquired through involvement in the practice of public administration. As such, the capstone will be both an assessment tool for mastery of public administration, as well as a learning opportunity. Capstone projects must reflect an integration of knowledge across the areas of the MPA curriculum.

In addition to the written component, students will be required to do a professional presentation of their projects in a public forum (e.g. fellow MPA students, graduate committee) including the members of the graduate committee who will be responsible for assessment.

The student's work on the capstone is separate from and concurrent with the normal course load during the last semester of study. The capstone project is for Plan II (non-thesis) students only.

**Topics:** Possible capstone topics:

- Analysis of a policy question with recommendations
- Client project
- Major expansion of a seminar paper
- Experiential paper

**Administration:** A faculty member will teach the course in the Fall and Spring semesters as part of their normal course load. Students who are graduating in the Summer must complete the capstone in Spring. The faculty member will hold a number of classroom sessions to discuss the projects and will meet individually with students throughout the semester to provide guidance on the project.

**Assessment:** The Graduate Committee will serve as the assessment committee for the final capstone projects. Projects will be graded S/U. Students with unsatisfactory results will be required to rewrite until it is deemed satisfactory by the committee.

**Credit Hours:** The capstone will be a 3 credit hour course.

**Schedule:** The capstone should be taken at the end of your program. It will be offered only in the Fall and Spring.

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## THE THESIS OPTION

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Students may pursue the thesis option instead of the internship and capstone course. The thesis is a significant undertaking that typically requires 2-3 semesters of work to complete. An MPA Thesis will demonstrate a student's mastery of a substantive body of scholarly or practice literature as well as using appropriate and academically defensible methodologies to analyze research questions, test hypotheses or contribute new theoretical knowledge. An oral defense of the thesis is required.

Students who are interested in the thesis should consult with a professor in the department early in the program with whom they are interested in working, and who has an expertise in the area of research. Together the professor and student will identify other faculty members who may be appropriate to serve on the thesis committee. The choice of both the thesis adviser and committee members is very important, as the student and faculty members will work closely on developing and refining a topic, revising and editing chapters and preparing for the final oral defense.

A thesis proposal must be submitted and approved by the thesis adviser prior to submission to the Graduate College. This should be done in the semester prior to registering for the thesis hours. Students pursuing the thesis option register for 3 hours of thesis credits (POLS 699). Upon approval of the student thesis topic, he or she should consult the Graduate College for a Thesis and Dissertation Handbook. The thesis is graded Pass/Fail.

### Developing a Thesis Topic

- Determine whether there is current interest in this topic in the field.
- Identify the gaps in knowledge that work on this topic could help to fill.
- Determine if there is sufficient literature available for your research.
- Talk to a faculty member about being the thesis adviser.
- Narrow the topic down to a manageable segment of this topic.
- Develop a preliminary method of data collection
- Determine if financial assistance is required to carry out your research.
- Identify the project purpose, scope, objectives, and procedures.
- Establish any potential limitations of the study.
- Determine if there are any skills called on by the study that you have yet to acquire (e.g. advanced statistics, language skills) and figure out how to obtain them.
- With your adviser identify additional faculty members who could serve on the thesis committee

## MPA DEGREE PLAN

**NOTES**

- The MPA requires 15 hours of core courses, 12 hours of specialization courses and six hours of electives. At least 30 credit hours must be at the 600 level or higher
- No more than 9 credits may be taken as independent study/workshop
- Students must take a minimum of 33 semester hours of course work and either
  - three credit hours for either a thesis and oral defense OR
  - three credit hours of Capstone and complete an internship

<b>Name</b>	
<b>P00</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Specialization</b>	

Plan I (Thesis) Thesis Adviser \_\_\_\_\_

Plan II Internship Site \_\_\_\_\_

DEPT.	NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	SEMESTER HOURS	SEMESTER TO BE COMPLETED
<i><b>CORE COURSES</b></i>				
<i><b>SPECIALIZATION COURSES</b></i>				
<i><b>ELECTIVES/THESIS/CAPSTONE</b></i>				

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Adviser (if applicable)

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Graduate Coordinator