MASTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION IN PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Bush School of Government and Public Service offers an interdisciplinary, non-thesis program leading to the Master of Public Service and Administration (MPSA) degree. The MPSA curriculum provides a professional education for those seeking careers at any level of government or in the nonprofit sector. It includes a solid academic and practical grounding in management and policy analysis, as well as an opportunity to refine critical leadership skills such as team building, motivation, conflict resolution, and effective written and oral communication. The MPSA program is fully accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (http://www.nasppa.org) (NASPAA).

The PSAA Department offers a two-year, full-time course of study in one of three tracks: Nonprofit Management, Public Management, or Public Policy Analysis. In addition, students have the option to choose a concentration in a substantive area such as analytical methods; education policy and management; energy, environment, and technology policy and management; health policy and management; international nongovernmental organizations; security policy and management; state and local government policy and management; or they may design their own concentration in consultation with their advisor. The program includes a non-credit-bearing internship and two semesters of capstone policy seminars which give students the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills to a real-world problem or issue.

The Public Service and Administration Department, in conjunction with the College of Education and Human Development, also offers dual degree programs which enable students to receive a Political Science, Economics, or Sociology undergraduate degree and a Master of Public Service and Administration (MPSA) degree in five years. Students admitted into one of the dual degree programs will be enrolled in Bush School graduate courses with an undergraduate classification for their fourth year. They will be reclassified as a graduate student upon completing 120 credit hours required for the undergraduate degree, typically after the end of the fourth year. To be eligible for admission into a dual degree program, students must have a GPA of at least 3.25 and must have completed 103 credit hours, including the specific course prerequisites for the Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics, as well as the courses required by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and by Texas A&M University for an undergraduate degree by the end of their third year. Students who are admitted into the dual degree program will complete the same two-year, 48-hour curriculum as other students admitted to the Bush School’s MPSA program.

The Public Service and Administration Department, in conjunction with the College of Education and Human Development, also offers a collaborative degree program (CDP). The CDP is designed for those individuals who intend to build an academic career focused on conducting research in the multidisciplinary field of education policy. This unique academic program will prepare individuals for careers in research universities and teaching colleges as well as for careers in consultancies or educational agencies of all types (private, non-profit, local, state, federal or international). As part of this specialized program of study, students will attain knowledge, skills, and abilities to conduct high quality research, present papers at scholarly conferences, and submit research articles for publication. Ultimately, students who successfully complete all program requirements will receive both a Master of Public Service and Administration (MPSA) degree from the Bush School of Government and Public Service and a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration (Ph.D.) from the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development, in the College of Education and Human Development.

For further information about the Bush School, including requests for admission materials, please contact: Bush School, Texas A&M University, 4220 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843-4220, email bushschooladmissions@tamu.edu, or visit the website http://bush.tamu.edu.

Program Requirements

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Student’s Advisory Committee

The MPSA student’s advisory committee consists of the student’s designated faculty advisor and the Head of the Bush School’s PSAA Department, who has the responsibility of approving the proposed degree plan for an MPSA student. When necessary, recommendations in cases of academic deficiency will be made to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Degree Plan

The student in consultation with his or her advisory committee, will develop the proposed degree plan. The degree plan must be completed and filed with the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies prior to the deadlines imposed by the student’s college, and no later than the dates announced in the OGAPS calendar of deadlines for graduation.
This proposed degree plan should be submitted through the online Document Processing Submission System located on the website http://ogsdpps.tamu.edu.

Credit Requirement

A minimum of 48 semester credit hours of approved courses are required for the Master of Public Service and Administration Program: six common courses, two track core courses, two track elective courses, four additional elective courses, and a two-semester capstone sequence. Students without substantial professional experience are also required to complete a non-credit-bearing internship.

Transfer of Credit

A student who has earned 12 hours of graduate credit in residence at Texas A&M University may be authorized to transfer courses in excess of the limits prescribed above upon the advice of the advisory committee and with the approval of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. Graduate and/or upper-level undergraduate courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or approved international institution with a final grade of B or greater, might be considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were completed, the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution. Otherwise, the limitations stated in the preceding section apply.

Coursework in which no formal grades are given or in which grades other than letter grades (A or B) are earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.) is not accepted for transfer credit. Courses appearing on the degree plan with grades of D, F or U may not be absolved by transfer work. Credit for thesis research or the equivalent is not transferable. Credit for coursework submitted for transfer from any college or university must be shown in semester credit hours or equated to semester credit hours. An official transcript from the university at which the transfer coursework was taken must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions.

Courses used toward a degree at another institution may not be applied for graduate credit. If the course to be transferred was taken prior to the conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the Registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for credit toward the degree must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in computing the GPR.

Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extension and Certain Other Courses

Some departments may have more restrictive requirements for transfer work. If otherwise acceptable, certain courses may be used toward meeting credit-hour requirements for the master’s degree under the following limitations.

1. The maximum number of credit hours which may be considered for transfer credit is the greater of 12 hours or one-third (1/3) of the total hours of a degree plan. The following restrictions apply:
   - Graduate and/or upper-level undergraduate courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution, or approved international institution with a final grade of B or greater will be considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were completed, the student was in degree-seeking status at Texas A&M University, or the student was in degree-seeking status at the institution at which the courses were taken; and if the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution.
   - Courses previously used for another degree are not acceptable for plan credit.

2. The maximum number of credit hours taken in post-baccalaureate non-degree (G6) classification at Texas A&M University which may be considered for application to the degree plan is 12.

3. A zero credit 684 and 685 course is only allowed for non-thesis master’s students. Other courses, including 691 research hours, are not eligible for zero credit.

4. Any combination of 684, 685, 690 and 695 may not exceed 25 percent of the total credit hour requirement shown on the individual degree plan:
   - A maximum of 8 hours of 684 (Professional Internship) and/or
   - A maximum of 8 hours of 685 (Directed Studies), and
   - Up to 3 hours of 690 (Theory of Research), and
   - Up to 3 hours of 695 (Frontiers in Research).

5. A maximum of 2 hours of Seminar (681).

6. A maximum of 9 hours of advanced undergraduate courses (300- or 400-level).

7. For graduate courses of three weeks’ duration or less, taken at other institutions, up to 1 hour of credit may be obtained for each five-day week of coursework. Each week of coursework must include at least 15 contact hours.

8. No credit hours of 691 (Research) may be used.

9. Continuing education courses may not be used for graduate credit.

10. Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.

Exceptions will be permitted only in unusual cases and when petitioned by the student’s advisory committee and approved by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Final Examination

A final comprehensive examination is not required for the Master of Public Service and Administration.

Additional Requirements

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Residence

A student must complete 12 credit hours in resident study at Texas A&M University to satisfy the residence requirement for the Master of Public Service and Administration degree.

Students who are employed full-time while completing their degree may fulfill total residence requirements by completion of less-than-full time course loads each semester. In order to be considered for this, the student is required to submit a Petition for Waivers and Exceptions along with verification of his/her employment to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

See Residence Requirements (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/degree-requirements).
Time Limit
All degree requirements must be completed within a period of seven consecutive years for the degree to be granted. A course will be considered valid until seven years after the end of the semester in which it is taken. Graduate credit for coursework which is more than seven calendar years old may not be used to satisfy degree requirements.

Foreign Languages
A foreign language is not required for the Master of Public Service and Administration degree.

Internship or Practicum
During the summer between their first and second year, a student participates in a non-credit-bearing internship related to his/her career plans. The internship requirement can be waived if the student has at least two years of recent professional-level public service experience related to his/her career goals and to the degree.

Application for Degree
For information on applying for your degree, please visit the Graduation section.