BGSU MPA Handbook

Mission Statement

The mission of BGSU's MPA program is to create an inclusive, collaborative learning environment that empowers students with the skills, applied theories, and community-based project experiences necessary to adapt to and succeed in an ever-changing public sphere.

BGSU MPA PROGRAM

Education for Public **IMPACT**

Integrity

Multicultural

Purpose

Applied learning

Community

Transformative

Contact Information

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>Bowling Green State University
>43403

Graduate Coordinator
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Graduate College
>http://www.bgsu.edu/graduate.html
>(419) 372-2791

Program Website
>http://www.bgsu.edu/mpa

MPA Facebook
>https://www.facebook.com/BGSUMPA/

RESOURCES

Computer Lab/Office Space

Graduate students have access to the MPA computer lab in 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. 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 the computer lab in Williams Hall. You can receive a key to the lab by filling our a key request form.

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.

Graduate College

The graduate college website (http://www.bgsu.edu/graduate.html) 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. Our program has a GSS representative every year who can assist you if necessary.

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 reimbursement 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.

COURSEWORK

All courses numbered 5000 and above are graduate courses. If a 5000-level courses is cross-listed with a 4000-level undergraduate course, graduate students must register for the 500-level section of the course. To graduate students must complete **36 semester hours of course work**, and 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

All students are required to complete 15 hours of core courses and 18 hours of public administration courses.

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 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 that may be of interest include:

Administration of Higher Education
College Writing: Theory and Practice
Construction Management
Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education
Ethnic Studies
Food and Nutrition
Geospatial Technology

International /Intercultural Communication
Public History
Quality Systems
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
Technical Writing
Women's Studies

The complete list of graduate certificates is available here:
http://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/graduate-programs.html

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 (Fall)
- POLS 6260 Public Management I: Personnel Management and Leadership (Fall)
- POLS 6280 Public Management II: Budgeting, Fiscal Policy, and Decision-making (Spring)
- POLS 6200 Public Administration and Public Policy (Spring)
- POLS 6750 Research Methods (Fall)

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

Additional Public Administration Coursework (18 credit hours)
A minimum of 9 credit hours of 6000 level courses must be chosen from the Political Science Department. Sample courses include: Ethics, Program Evaluation, Economic Development and Seminar in American Government. Students with specific interests should meet with the Graduate Coordinator to discuss an individualized plan of coursework. The other 9 credit hours may be chosen from the Political Science Department (either 6000 or 5000 level courses) or from other departments on campus such as Business Administration, Communications, and Public Health etc… These courses should be chosen considering your particular interests and career goals.

Planned Program
Students interested in creating a 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…

Thesis or Internship/Capstone (3 hours)
Students can choose to do either 1) a thesis or 2) complete an internship and take 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 additional class. Students should consider taking Research Methods (POLS 6750) and Administrative Theory (POLS 6210) early in their studies as future courses may build on this material.

SAMPLE DEGREE PLAN – FULL TIME STUDENT

FALL YEAR 1
- POLS 6210 Public Administration Theory and Behavior
- POLS 6750 Research Methods
- Elective (e.g. POLS 5330 – Nonprofit Administration)

SPRING YEAR 1
- POLS 6280 Public Management II: Budgeting, Fiscal Policy, and Decision-making
- POLS 6200 Public Administration and Public Policy
- Elective (e.g. POLS 6230 Policy Analysis/Program Evaluation)

SUMMER
- Internship – register for COOP50

FALL YEAR 2
- POLS 6260 Public Management I: Personnel Management and Leadership
- Elective (e.g. MBA 6080 – Leading for Organizational Success)
- Elective (e.g. EDLS 7310 – Diversity and Cultural Leadership)

SPRING YEAR 2
- POLS 6900 Capstone
- Elective (e.g. POLS 6600 Seminar in Local Economic Development)
- Elective (e.g. MC 6550 - Organizational Communication)

INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES

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. **Registration**: Students must register for COOP 50 which is a 0 credit course with no tuition/fees through the BGSU Career Center: https://www.bgsu.edu/career-center/employers/co-op-50.html.

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 up to the student.

Wavier. 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 satisfactory. A formal performance evaluation may be submitted for the supervisor's statement.

CAPSTONE COURSE

Purpose
The MPA Capstone is the culmination of the Bowling Green State University Master of Public Administration program. This capstone course is designed to provide graduating students with a summative experience that allows them to synthesize and apply their cumulative learning throughout the MPA program while completing a service-learning project of value for a community partner. During the projects, students gain professional experience interacting with government and non-profit organizations. Students will expand their capacities for writing, analysis, critical thinking, project management, and oral communication while forging professional development skills and connections.

In addition, students will complete a portfolio based on the program competencies, and participate in career development activities throughout the semester such as resume writing, job searching and setting up a LinkedIn profile.

The capstone class is for Plan II (non-thesis) students.

Schedule
The capstone class is offered every Spring. Students who are graduating in the Summer must complete the capstone in Spring. Students graduating in the Fall will ideally take it in the previous Spring, or if necessary, as an independent study in the Fall.

Assessment
The course will be graded S/U.

Credit Hours
The capstone class is a 3-credit hour course.

Portfolio
Students will be asked to provide evidence of their learning relating to the program's core learning competencies (Appendix A). They will reflect on the body of their academic and professional work to construct a document that provides evidence of their mastery of the core competencies. The portfolio will include prior class assignments and a summative paper (1-2 double spaced pages for each component – 15 components total) that demonstrates the student's learning in the competency. Students will include a resume in their portfolio as well as a biographical sketch.
The final product should contain the following sections:
- Biographical Sketch
- Resume
- Demonstration of 3 components of the Lead and Manage in the Public Interest Competency
- Demonstration of 3 components of Policy Process Competency
- Demonstration of 3 components of Analysis/Critical Thinking Competency
- Demonstration of 3 components of Public Service Perspective Competency
- Demonstration of 3 components of Diverse Citizenry Competency
- Final Reflection (3-4 pages) on Overall Program Learning
- Appendix with Evidence/Class artifacts

THE THESIS OPTION

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

CAREER PLANNING

Two years may seem like a long time, but graduate school will fly by before you know it. Success in graduate school is dependent on what you make of your short time here. We want our students to not only be academically and professionally trained as public administrators, but we also want you to be prepared to be successful on the job market.

In addition to the academic coursework, MPA students not currently employed in full-time work are now required to complete **a minimum of 5 hours of Professional Workshops/Webinars** such as resume writing and interviewing skills. One of those hours should include a one-on-one meeting with a Career Counselor at the BGSU Career Center during your first year.

Career Center: http://www.bgsu.edu/career-center/students.html

During their first-year students are also encouraged to do the following:

- o Develop a resume

- o Set up a Linked-In page

- o Google yourself to identify any unsecured social media posts (make sure your social media profiles is set to private if needed)

- o Create a list of job posting sites in your area of interest

- o Identify specific skills you want to develop during the program and figure out how to achieve them (e.g. through coursework, independent study, online training etc..)

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

I encourage all of you to think about joining some professional organizations in your related areas of interest. Most of them have inexpensive student memberships and they are an excellent way to begin networking, identify job opportunities or participate in conferences.

EPIC Toledo - BGSU MPA students get FREE membership, they do a lot of fantastic events throughout the year - everyone should join
http://www.epictoledo.com

Young Nonprofit Professionals Network, http://www.ynpn.org

ICMA - International City/County Management Association
http://icma.org/en/icma/members/join/overview

OCMA - Ohio City Managers Association (includes a great job page) If you are interested in working in local government in Ohio, you should join and go to some of their events, especially their annual conference.
http://www.ocmaohio.org

Emerging Local Government Leaders (free for students) http://elgl.org

Alliance for Nonprofit Management, http://www.allianceonline.org/

American Evaluation Association (AEA), http://www.eval.org

American Public Works Association (APWA), http://www.apwa.net

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), http://www.asaenet.org

American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), http://www.aspanet.org

Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), http://www.afpnet.org

Association for Volunteer Administration (NY), http://www.nyava.org

Student Support Services

Learning Commons: The Learning Commons provides "one-stop-shop" academic support in the Jerome Library including tutoring and writing help. For more information, or to make an appointment: tlc@bgsu.edu ; 419-372-2823; www.bgsu.edu/learning-commons.html .

Canvas: Students looking for CANVAS support or more in-depth assistance with computer technology should contact the Student Technology Assistance Center (STAC) in person at 122 Jerome Library (1st floor), by phone (419-372-9277) or online https://www.bgsu.edu/library/stac.html.

Library: The University Libraries supports the teaching, learning and research mission of BGSU. For more information, to reserve a study space or to make an appointment with a librarian for help: http://www.bgsu.edu/library.html ;] 419-372-6943; libhelp@bgsu.edu .

Disability: In accordance with the University policy, any student with a documented disability and requires accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester and make this need known. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Disability Services, 38 College Park, 419-372-8495. (**http://www.bgsu.edu/disability-services.html**)

Title IX: Bowling Green State University (BGSU) is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students that is free of all forms of discrimination and harassment. Faculty members are considered "Mandatory Reporters" and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and relationship violence to the Title IX Coordinator. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, please visit www.bgsu.edu/TitleIX to access information about university support and resources.

Religious Holidays: It is the policy of the University to make every reasonable effort to allow students to observe their religious holidays without academic penalty. In such cases, it is the obligation of the student to provide the instructor with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which he or she will be absent. Students must still complete the missed work.

Veterans/Active Duty Military/ROTC: Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor. See (**http://www.bgsu.edu/veteran/**) for more information about support services.

Parenting/Child Care: If you require special accommodations due to parenting or care giving, please do not hesitate to contact your instructor to discuss the situation privately.

LGBTQ+ Resource Center: The LGBTQ+ Resource Center is located at 427 BTSU and provides programming, education and support to the entire BGSU community.

BGSU Counseling Center: The Counseling Center (104 College Park Building) has free walk-in hours M-F from 1:30-4:00 for students who would like to see a counselor. Additional information about services including group sessions, stress management and more is available at: https://www.bgsu.edu/counseling-center.html .

Additional Support Services: There are many services available in the community for students struggling financially. A list of food related resources such as food pantries is available here: https://www.bgsu.edu/center-for-community-and-civic-engagement/push/need-help.html Information about other services in the area (e.g. homelessness, food services, assistance with home heating payments etc…) is available by calling the United Way helpline from any phone including cell phones. The phone number is 2-1-1 and is available 24/7

Falcon Food Pantry: The Falcon Food Pantry is here to help any student, staff or faculty going through tough times. The Pantry is open during the semester when classes are in session: Monday/Thursday 12pm-3pm and Wednesdays 2:30-5:30 at Central Hall 109. No proof of need is required, just a BGSU ID. Falcons can stop in once a week to "shop" for a bag of groceries: we stock a wide range of items including food, diapers and hygiene items such as toothpaste and shampoo.

For more information: bgsu.edu/foodpantry or follow us on social media for news and updates:
Instagram @Falcon_Food_Pantry
FB @FalconFoodPantry

The Firelands pantry is located outside of GM105. It is a self-serve pantry and is available whenever the building is open.

BGSU MPA Alumni Offer their Advice

Branch out and take a course in another program (ex. GIS). As you progress through the course work, you should be reflecting on how the information being taught will ultimately help you and how it can be applied. Don't be afraid to ask questions (from professors, peers, and alumni), learn from others, or find new ways to learn in order to get the most out of the experience. Have fun and good luck! Joe (Assistant Municipal Administrator)

Find ways to unwind and recharge in between exams and studying. Find a study buddy to hangout with you in the library and share snacks with during study marathons. Eat at Polleyeyes. Explore your options and see all that is out there. Brianna (Development Officer at Ohio State)

Develop strong relationships with your professors and cohort. Even those in other programs. You're all in this together for the next two years and beyond. Don't forget to get to Southside 6. Best gyros in town. Mark (Compliance Officer – State Auditor)

1.Make sure to embrace the social side of the program. It's easy to focus on just the course work, but you will need your cohort partners to help you study and stay sane during exams. 2. Explore partnership projects with grad students from other departments, it will open your eyes to more ways to use for future degree and help you gain a new perspective at the university. 3. Get a blizzard at DQ, it's a special treat in BG. 4. The best Mexican food in town can be found at El Zarape and Guajillo's. Low cost but amazing! Jessica (Director – University of Wisconsin)

Take advantage of internship opportunities, networking is an invaluable tool toward future employment. Nealy (Judicial Attorney)

Do whatever Dr. Orr tells you to do. Dance to relieve stress. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Megan (Research Associate – Policy Institute)

NEVER, EVER plagiarize! Ben (Marketing/Outreach local nonprofit)

Don't be afraid to intern or volunteer somewhere that may not fit your specific interest or specialization. It is valuable to learn what you don't want to do as much as it is to learn what you do want to do. Additionally, employers appreciate diverse work experience! Mel (County Sustainability Director)

Make friends with your cohort and ask questions of the 2nd years. Your cohort is going through the same things and make excellent study buddies and proofreaders. 2nd years can help you with any questions you may have about how something works, understanding a concept, or getting a new take on an idea. Essentially... Use your resources. Also step out of your comfort zone in a project, job, volunteer opportunity, or internship. You will learn a lot about yourself in the process and what you really may want to do after grad school. Princess (HR Compliance Analyst)

Take risks and step away from the familiar. Things won't go as you plan them and the smallest of opportunities will be what makes the biggest difference. Also, retail sucks but it pays the bills and

gives you really good motivation to try something new. Oh, and it really does end up being who you know that gets you the furthest so make sure you are seen! Meredith (Volunteer Coordinator parks district)

Cannot stress enough how important it is to foster and maintain relationships with the professors. Will go a long way. Also, take the next two years to really focus on what you want to do post-graduate school. Nick (Director, Legislative Affairs)

Get to know Vera Lux in the library and appreciate the serendipity of the browse! Dan (Assistant City Manager)

Network. Volunteer. Everyone leaves with a degree. What else do you have? Chris (Environmental project manager)

Advice from your professors:
- Come to class prepared and ready to participate (do the readings before class).
- If you need help, come see us! We can help you, but we need to know you need help.
- Get to know other students in the program. You are all in this together, be there for each other.
- Save everything you do in the cloud so that you are ready for the final portfolio.
- The end of the semester is often jam-packed with deadlines and work – try to spread out your work so that you are not so overwhelmed.
- The BGSU Counseling Center is free for students and has walk-in hours Monday-Friday 1:30-4pm at 104 College Park. If you need help with personal life issues, stress, time management etc … they are wonderful. Please use them.
- We will give you lots of new and exciting opportunities – it's up to you to make the most of them.
- Every semester check in with yourself – what do I want to do after graduation? What do I need to do to get there? It may be taking a specific class, doing some self-paced learning on your own (e.g. Udemy or YouTube tutorials), volunteering, going to a conference, going to professional development workshops at BGSU etc…
- Edit your work! Assume you will do at least one rough draft for everything – print out your work (including presentations) and read them over and make changes.
- Remember, you were admitted into the program because we know you will do great things and succeed in this program.

MPA DEGREE PLAN

NOTES
- The MPA requires 15 hours of core courses and 18 hours of public administration coursework, of which a minimum must be 9 credit hours of 6000 level courses from the Political Science Department, unless a student is pursuing a unique specialization with approval from the Graduate Coordinator
- 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

Name	
ID	
Email	
Specialization (OPTIONAL)	

Plan I (Thesis) Thesis Adviser_____

Plan II Internship Site _____

DEPT.	NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	SEMESTER HOURS	SEMESTER TO BE COMPLETED
CORE COURSES				
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION COURSES				
THESIS/CAPSTONE/INTERNSHIP (COOP 50)				

Minimum of 5 hours of non-credit Professional Workshops (e.g. Resume writing, Networking)

_____   _____
Thesis Adviser (if applicable)   Graduate Coordinator