

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (M.P.A.)

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree prepares professionals to capably manage public sector processes and effectively implement public policy decisions. Graduates will be ready to advance their careers in management and leadership positions in a wide range of public focused organizations, including government agencies, non-profit and other nongovernmental organizations, private firms, and advocacy groups. As the first MPA program offered by an ABA accredited law school in the nation, special attention is given to statutes, regulations and strategic use of legal processes.

Thirty course units distributed across four areas of competency must be completed to receive the MPA. Optional areas of concentration require an additional six (6) units.

The MPA may be pursued part-time or full-time. Admissions are made in the fall and in the spring. A cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher is required for award of the MPA.

MPA Requirements

Thirty (30) course units distributed across four areas of competency must be completed to receive the MPA. Optional areas of concentration require an additional six (6) units. A cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher is required for award of the MPA.

Core Courses - 30 units in four areas, including: 6

LAW 201	Law for Public Administration	3
LAW 517	Statutes and Regulations	3

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION/LEADERSHIP 9

PUB 241	Leaders, Organization Behavior	3
PUB 251	Foundations of Public Administration	3
PUB 252	Capstone: Strategy, Implementation	3

PUBLIC POLICY 6

PUB 211	Governance and Public Policy	3
PUB 214	Budgets, Financial Management	3

ANALYTIC TOOLS 6

PUB 233	Public Manager Analytics	3
PUB 221	Economic Concepts and Tools	3

ELECTIVE: One elective from PUB or LAW courses 3

Optional MPA Areas of Concentration

Environmental and Water Policy 6

Complete 6 or more units from among these courses

LAW 230	Water Resources Law	2-3
LAW 507	Environmental Law	3
LAW 583	Water & Environmental Justice	3
PUB 291	Externship (Pre-service only)	3

Public Policy Advocacy 6

Complete 6 or more units from among these courses

PUB 242	Leading Systemic Change	3
LAW 505	Legislatures and Lawmaking	3
LAW 513	California Lobbying & Politics	2
LAW 699X	Negotiations	3

PUB 253	Legislative and Public Policy Practicum	3
PUB 291	Externship (Pre-service only)	3

Non-Profit and Social Capacity Management 6

Complete 6 or more units from among these courses

PUB 243	Non-Profit Management	3
PUB 242	Leading Systemic Change	3
PUB 213	Enhancing Societal Capacity	3
LAW 699X	Negotiations	3
PUB 291	Externship (Pre-service only)	3

Policy Analysis 6

Complete 6 or more units from among these courses

PUB 213	Enhancing Societal Capacity	3
PUB 234	Advanced Quantitative Methods	3
PUB 235	Advanced Policy Analysis	3
PUB 291	Externship (Pre-service only)	3

Questions?

Contact the Director of Public Policy Programs at publicpolicy@pacific.edu or 916.520.7471

Learning Outcomes

1. Lead and manage in the public interest.

Habitually use feedback and own self-assessments to identify and further advance the skills needed to master various aspects of governance including the use of formal authority and competencies of governments, roles of non-profits and businesses, and citizen engagement—in a way that addresses the particular demographic, economic, and cultural factors that shape possible actions.

2. Participate in and contribute to the public policy process.

Identify, describe, and proactively engage in activities congruent with establishing a suitable career that contributes to public policy processes, which may include working in government agencies, non-profit and other nongovernmental organizations, private sector firms, and advocacy groups that connect with public service organizations.

3. Analyze and synthesize information in support of complex decision-making.

Independently select and use appropriate qualitative and quantitative analytic tools to support effective decisions in socially and managerially complex situations that require integrating competing perspectives of diverse stakeholders.

4. Articulate and apply a public service perspective.

Across a wide range of issues and public administration settings, articulate how institutions, policies and programs support achieving central values of democracy and the role of public service professionals in advancing those values.

5. Communicate and interact productively with diverse public stakeholders.

Communicate and interact productively across public, private and nonprofit sectors, and with a wide variety of stakeholders, to solve problems.

6. Apply the law as a foundation for public action.

Identify and understand the legal foundations of policies and programs, including the interpretation of statutes and regulations.

7. Understand California government in the context of federalism.

Understand California-specific laws, rules and routines, impact of voter initiatives, and State and local tax and budget systems in the context of California's diversity.

Public Policy Courses

PUB 211. Governance and Public Policy. 3 Units.

This course introduces students to policy formulation, implementation and analyses in the context of America's democratic system of governance. Students first learn about governance principles in the US constitution (principles of separation of powers, federal system, and limited government) and how they influence the structure and complexity of public policy making and implementation at the federal, state and local levels. Next, students learn how policies are initiated through value propositions from formal and informal policy actors with emphasis on how values of leaders within public institutions, nonprofit agencies and the private sector affect decisions and implementation.

PUB 213. Enhancing Societal Capacity. 3 Units.

Enhanced societal capacity is an overarching goal of public policy. Today's quality of life, economic competitiveness and opportunity, or use of natural resources, reflect past choices. Societal capacity to choose and to act will determine our futures and should be viewed globally. Progress here is not synonymous with "larger" or more "active" government as very important public purposes are achieved by actions which protect the liberty of or empower individuals, households, firms and communities. However, important societal purposes are achieved by public action that requires capacity derived from legal authority, technical competencies, fiscal resources, political support and networked relationships. Examination of a broad, global range of policy making and implementation tools, ranging from individual or family choice (e.g., in schools), through expertise (e.g., scientists) and a variety of techniques to learn from assessment of policy and program implementation, all analyzed from different perspectives established in PUB 211.

PUB 214. Budgets, Financial Management. 3 Units.

Develops understanding of the role budgets play in state, local, and federal governance. Examines the politics of budgeting and the process of developing capital and operating budgets. Gives students hands on experience working with core budget and other financial documents, including budget change proposals, performance measures, comprehensive annual financial reports, and public agency actuarial valuation reports. Also explores the effect economic cycles and past government and voter decisions have on modern budget options.

PUB 215. Capstone: Public Policy Analysis Case. 3 Units.

Integration of learning from courses taken through (1) self-assessment and (2) class analyses of relevant cases of both successful and unsuccessful public professionals, or (3) a project for an actual client. The goal is strengthening knowledge and competencies for sustained, long-term effectiveness. Much class work is undertaken by teams.

PUB 218. Professional Skills. 1 Unit.

Develops professional skills in writing and presentation. Exercises establish the high standards required in professional work in the public sector. Contrasts colloquial, advocacy and discipline-based academic communications vs. professional work products used in the making and implementation of public policies to clarify norms and the writing and presentation competencies required in these roles.

PUB 219. Directed Research. 1-3 Units.

Students complete comprehensive individual research projects under the supervision of a faculty member resulting in a public policy relevant analysis. Topic, unit credit and graded or pass/fail must be approved in advance. (P/F or graded) (may be repeated).

PUB 221. Economic Concepts and Tools. 3 Units.

Develops competence in economic concepts and tools. Draws from microeconomics. Key concepts include efficiency, equity, tax incidence, opportunity cost, cost-benefit analysis and the role of incentives, marginal analysis, competition, public goods and market failure. Provides opportunity for students to discuss the effectiveness of various government programs and regulation or de-regulation strategies from an economic point of view.

PUB 222. Finance for Public Policies. 3 Units.

Develops competence to use concepts and tools of public finance common to professionals in public policy arena. Examines substantive and procedural requirements related to various forms of public agency revenue sources in California, including taxes, assessments, fees and charges. Other topics include revenue estimation, capital facility financing, internal controls, fund accounting and public investments. Attention also paid to institutions critical to public finance.

PUB 233. Public Manager Analytics. 3 Units.

Introduces students to use of analytics in managing organizations and implementation of programs or policies. Provides students with a solid foundation in descriptive and inferential statistics. Topics covered include: measures of central tendency and dispersion, probability and probability distributions, hypothesis testing and confidence intervals, correlation, simple regression, and an introduction to multivariate regression. Develops competencies in identifying relevant analytics, collection of data including survey design, and making information usable for decision makers seeking to improve performance in achieving policy goals.

PUB 234. Advanced Quantitative Methods. 3 Units.

Policy analysts seek to understand why public policy problems exist and what, if anything, could be done to address them. Program evaluators want to know whether and how well extant public policies/programs-designed in response to policy problems-are working. This course extends the statistical toolbox, introduced in PUB 233: Public Manager Analytics, used in policy analysis and program evaluation. By the end of the course, students should be able to estimate and interpret a variety of econometric models. Topics include: Hypothesis testing with multivariate regression, dummy variables, interaction effects, fixed effects, instrumental variables, time series, discontinuity models, and logistic regression.

PUB 235. Advanced Policy Analysis. 3 Units.

This course provides the theoretical foundations and practical skills necessary to critically assess the impact of politics, political institutions, and the political process on policymaking. Through a blend of theoretical exploration and real-world case studies, the focus is on the rationale and limitations of collective action, the tools of public policy, and the responsibilities of policy analysts in democratic societies. The course will cover essential topics such as agenda setting, policy formulation, implementation, and the evolution of public policies over time.

PUB 241. Leaders, Organization Behavior. 3 Units.

Analysis and development of knowledge and skills relevant to complex organizational behavior in public and nonprofit organizations, including motivation, diversity, communications, decision-making, power, conflict, culture, and change. Explicit attention to strategic leadership, including responsibilities for organization structures and their internal and external relationships, managing human capital, group development and performance, and political and symbolic roles.

PUB 242. Leading Systemic Change. 3 Units.

Analysis and developing skills relevant to purposeful, enduring change of public policies and public institutions. Roles and strategies of policy entrepreneurs are analyzed. Actions which strengthen policies are contrasted with those which weaken them. Explicit attention not only to public executives, but also to strategies of elected officials, stakeholders, and advocacy groups. Identifying and understanding the articulation of a variety of tools, such as strategic communications or facilitated processes, as well as more specific policy tools, such as changed laws, new decision arenas, or changed financial incentives.

PUB 243. Non-Profit Management. 3 Units.

This course is designed to give students a condensed overview of the governance, financial, human resource and strategic concerns facing the nonprofit sector. Through directed readings, cases and guest speakers, students will be exposed to the unique economic and policy environments in which nonprofits reside, identify effective strategic, governance, and management approaches, and explore how appropriate measurement techniques can inform the policy treatment and demand for nonprofits.

PUB 251. Foundations of Public Administration. 3 Units.

This foundation course introduces students to the theoretical and practical principles required for public service in the United States at federal, state and local levels. It emphasizes: 1) the values that are fundamental to public action (i.e. equity, ethics, accountability and diversity); 2) the roles of public servants/managers (e.g., department head, staff analyst, city manager, non-profit manager) and 3) the professional knowledge and skills required for achieving desired public purposes. Topics include: the legal and constitutional foundations of public administration in the US, bureaucratic structure and administrative power in public institutions, managerial accountability and ethics, human resource management, race and diversity in public service, budgeting, performance management and public management networks.

PUB 252. Capstone: Strategy, Implementation. 3 Units.

Integration of learning from courses taken through (1) self-assessment and (2) class analyses of relevant cases of both successful and unsuccessful public professionals, or (3) a project for an actual client. The goal is strengthening knowledge and competencies for sustained, long-term effectiveness. Much class work is undertaken by teams.

PUB 253. Legislative and Public Policy Practicum. 3 Units.

Students gain practical experience in researching, drafting, and pursuing adoption of State legislative and regulatory proposals. Students develop competencies to identify a client in need of a State law change, analyze the deficiencies in current law and practice, draft proposed statutes or regulations, refine the proposals to reflect public affairs and political realities, craft a strategy for effectuating the change, and participate in a mock legislative hearing. This whole course simulation provides students with real-world experience to devise and execute a realistic strategy for passing legislation or petitioning a State government department to adopt a rule change.

PUB 271. Public Policy Special Topics. 3 Units.

Topic selected by faculty member to fit curricular needs, current issues and student interest. Illustrative topics include "U.S. Social Movements and Public Policy," "Spatial and Data Analysis," or "The Economics of Race in the United States."

PUB 291. Externship. 3 Units.

Students will perform on-site public policy work as externs under the supervision of field placement supervisors in government agencies, non-profit entities or for-profit firms engaged in public policy processes. Placements in for-profit firms can include consulting firms focused on public policy processes and firms directly providing services with largely public funding, such as in health care. The Field Placement Director and/or the Associate Director of the Public Policy Program will help students find an appropriate placement, and must approve each student's registration. Placements in for-profit firms must also receive approval of the Director of the Public Policy Program. (P/F).