Public Administration (Public Finance), MPA

This program, ranked No. 14 by U.S. News & World Report, is designed to work with your schedule through evening, online or traditional course offerings. Enhance your resume while preparing to lead through the lens of financial management.

Program Description

Degree Awarded: MPA Public Administration (Public Finance)

The MPA is a transdisciplinary, professional degree program designed to prepare students for public service, public management and policy analysis at the local, state and national levels of government.

The concentration in public finance provides knowledge and skills for students seeking careers or career advancement in areas in which financial management plays an integral role in governance. This concentration emphasizes theories and research concerning urban economics and public finance, managing money in the public sector, public budgeting, and finance and capital budgeting and financing.

At a Glance

• College/School: Watts College of Public Service & Community Solutions
• Location: Downtown Phoenix campus

Accelerated Program Options

This program allows students to obtain both a bachelor's and master's degree in as little as five years. It is offered as an accelerated bachelor's and master's degree with:

- Public Service and Public Policy, BS
- Public Service and Public Policy (American Indian Studies), BS
- Public Service and Public Policy (Business), BS
Acceptance to the graduate program requires a separate application. During their junior year, eligible students will be advised by their academic departments to apply.

Degree Requirements

42 credit hours including the required capstone course (PAF 509)

Required Core (24 credit hours)
- PAF 501 Public Service Research I (3)
- PAF 502 Public Service Research II (3)
- PAF 503 Public Affairs (3)
- PAF 504 Microeconomics of Public Policy I (3)
- PAF 505 Public Policy Analysis (3)
- PAF 506 Public Budgeting and Finance (3)
- PAF 507 Public Human Resource Management (3)
- PAF 508 Organization Behavior (3)

Concentration (9 credit hours)
- PAF 521 Managing Public Money (3)
- PAF 522 Advanced Governmental Financial Management: Capital Budgeting and Infrastructure Financing (3)
- PAF 570 Microeconomics of Public Policy II (3)

Electives or Research (6 credit hours)

Culminating Experience (3 credit hours)
- PAF 509 Public Affairs Capstone (3)


Additional Curriculum Information
To meet the electives or research requirement, students choose one course from NLM 520, PAF 590 and PAF 584 for three credit hours. Students also choose any PAF 500-level course for three credit hours.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited institution in a related field. Related fields include social science degrees, although the department may accept applicants with degrees from all educational backgrounds provided the minimum requirements for the degree program are met.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00(scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. three letters of recommendation
4. GRE scores
5. written statement
6. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information
An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of English proficiency regardless of current residency.

At least two of the three letters of recommendation should be from faculty or other academic staff who can evaluate the applicant's academic performance.

The written statement should be one to two pages in length and describe the applicant's educational and career goals. This statement is also used as a sample of the applicant's writing abilities.
Students enrolling in Master of Public Administration core courses must demonstrate minimum competency in statistics and American government. Courses taken to fulfill the competency do not count toward the total credit hours required for the degree program. Completion of prerequisite courses is not a requirement for admission but must be completed within one semester after starting the program.

Competency in statistics is met with a grade of "B" (scale is 4.00 = "A") or higher in one of the approved courses (PAF 301 or PAF 401, POS 401, PSY 230, ECN 221, QBA 221, SWU 321, STP 226 or SOC 390) within the past two years or passing a diagnostic test approved by the MPA committee. Other courses taken within the last two years may be substituted upon approval of the Master of Public Administration director.

Competency in American government is a demonstrated understanding of American government institutions and processes. Students may be required to take an undergraduate class in American government (PAF 300, PAF 340, POS 110 or POS 310) with a grade of "B" or higher. The College-Level Examination Program can also be used to demonstrate competency in American government.

Contact Information

School of Public Affairs | UCENT 400
spat@asu.edu | 602-496-0450