Master of Public Administration Student Handbook

OLD DOMINION
UNIVERSITY

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I.   MPA: Program Overview

Master of Public Administration
The mission of the Master of Public Administration program at Old Dominion University is to prepare students for careers as professionals in public service and to provide students who have considerable experience in the public or non-profit sectors an opportunity to enhance their professional knowledge and abilities, enabling them to advance their careers.

II.   Curriculum & Program Requirements

The MPA curriculum consists of 39 credit hours (13 courses).

Courses are required in two categories:

Core Curriculum (seven (7) required courses)

Electives (six courses for in-service students, five courses for pre-service students plus internship)

Core Curriculum
The following courses are required of all public administration students.

PADM 651 Administrative Theory I: The Context of Public Administration
PADM 652 Administrative Theory II: The Process of Public Administration
PADM 671 Public Budgeting and Financial Management
PADM 701 Public Policy Analysis and Evaluation
PADM 723 Ethical Foundations of Public Administration
PADM 753 Research Methods for Public Administration
PADM 746 Capstone Seminar in Public Administration

Electives (18 Credit Hours)
Students may take elective courses in a number of different areas related to public administration. Students may choose to focus their elective courses in specific focus areas. Students may also choose to take their elective courses in the general area of public management. With prior approval of the MPA Graduate Program Director, students may take graduate level courses outside of the department.

> ***Please visit the MPA Website for course numbers and detailed course descriptions:***
> http://odu.edu/mpa

Required and Recommended Course Sequence
Students are required to enroll in Administrative Theory I: The Context of Public Administration (PADM 651) and Administrative Theory II: The Process of Public Administration as early as possible in their program of study. Research Methods (PADM 753) should be completed early in the program. The remaining core courses are not required to be taken in a specific order;

however, the Capstone Seminar (PADM 746) must be taken after the other core courses have been completed (or in the same semester as the last of the core courses).

Internship/Field Experience
Practical professional experience in a public or nonprofit setting is an important component of the MPA curriculum. A formal internship is required for all pre service students in a public or nonprofit agency. Internships give students the opportunity to gain professional experience and provide government and nonprofit agencies with the services of graduate students with high potential for future achievement. MPA students have the opportunity to earn three semester credits for internships and apply these credits to their elective requirements. PADM 668 Internship/Field Experience is a 300-hour public service experience in an approved agency. All internships must be approved in advance by the Internship Coordinator. Internship guidelines are updated periodically and are posted on the MPA website.

Transfer of Credit
Upon the recommendation of the MPA Graduate Program Director, students may transfer up to 12 credit hours of approved coursework from a regionally accredited institution. Coursework must be beyond the undergraduate degree. Transfer of credit, however, is not automatic and must meet specific criteria established by the department, including meeting university guidelines for course validation.

Students interested in transferring credits from a previous institution should submit a letter of intent, official transcript, course syllabus and the ODU transfer of credit form to Dr. Chapman, MPA Program Director.

Training in Responsible Conduct of Research
Old Dominion University has a policy of training all graduate students in the fundamentals of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). This policy was adopted with the understanding that the knowledge and philosophy presented in the RCR training can enhance the professional development of all students, regardless of discipline. The following requirement is presented on page 57 of the Graduate Catalog:

> "All graduate students must complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) seven core RCR training modules. These modules address the following: Misconduct (falsification, fabrication, and plagiarism); Data acquisition, management, sharing and ownership; Mentor/trainee relationship; Publication practices and responsible authorship; Peer review; Conflicts of interest; and, Collaborative research. Completion of the RCR modules will be tracked through the CITI website and must be completed within twelve months after first enrolling. As appropriate to their general field of study, students can complete the Biomedical, Social & Behavioral Research, Physical Sciences, or Humanities RCR track offered by CITI to fulfill this requirement."

As noted in this policy, graduate students must complete the CITI training within their first twelve credit hours of enrollment at ODU. The MPA Program requires the training to be completed before completion of PADM 753, Research Methods for Public Administration. Students should obtain a copy of the RCR Certificate of Completion to provide to the instructor of PADM 753.

III.   SPS Policies

Attendance Policy
Class contact and instruction hours are important since discussions cannot be reproduced. Excessive absences can have a negative effect on student learning and performance. Students are responsible for notifying professors when it is necessary to be absent from a class. In addition, students are responsible for the material missed. Students must meet all course deadlines and be present for required examinations. Professors may establish additional attendance requirements for their individual courses. Please refer to the course syllabus for further guidance.

Continuance Policy
To qualify for graduation, students must achieve a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in MPA courses. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the student being placed on probation, as per the university graduate policy. Students who fail to raise their GPA to 3.0 or better within the probationary semester are indefinitely suspended from the program. Please see the Old Dominion University Graduate Catalog for further information on grade appeals and reinstatement from indefinite suspension.

Earning an MPA degree is more than an exercise in receiving acceptable course grades. Graduates of ODU's Masters of Public Administration program are expected to embody values such as honesty, integrity, and fairness, and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the expectations of the academy and the profession of public administration. Likewise, students are expected to exhibit growth in their intellectual capabilities and are expected to be exemplars of public service values in their program and in their future careers. These expectations are critical to a successful public service career, as well as to the ability to maintain the quality and reputation of the MPA program, the Department, and the University. Students who fail to meet these expectations may be dismissed from the MPA program by a majority vote of the tenure-track faculty in the department, regardless of the student's current grade point average.

Advising and Registration
Once initial registration has taken place the advisor will release each student's registration block, permitting students to register online.

Students should meet at least once each academic year with their assigned advisor. Students should consult the On-line Schedule of Classes to view current course offerings and registration policies.

Students in Good Standing
Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0. Instructors may issue a grade of "I" for work not completed on time. Incomplete grades must be completed within one semester after the course has ended or the course will be automatically changed to "F". Students with more than 6 hours of incompletes will not be allowed to register for courses until the incompletes are

resolved. Students must complete all requirements for the MPA degree within eight years of beginning the program. Students who take longer than eight years must seek validation for out of date credit. Students must be enrolled in the semester during which they officially graduate.

Validation of Out-of-Date Course Credit

Academic credit granted outside the time limit established for graduate degrees (eight years for master's degrees) must be validated by an examination before the work can be applied toward the requirements of a degree program. To be re-validated, the work must have been completed at Old Dominion University or be acceptable as transfer credit in lieu of an Old Dominion University course.

The following procedure shall be used to re-validate out-of-date work:

1. The student must receive the permission of his or her graduate program director and the chair of the department/school or dean of the college in which the course is offered to validate the course credit. The form for re-validation of out-of-date credit shall be used to record all transactions and must be submitted to the Registrar's Office upon completion of validation of work.

2. The graduate program director, department/school chair or dean shall make appropriate referrals to faculty member(s) (an individual or a committee) teaching the course to request that an examination be prepared and evaluated. Before the examination, the faculty member(s) shall inform the student of the area of knowledge or course content on which he or she is to be examined.

3. After the examination has been completed, the validation form shall be filled out, signed by the examining faculty member(s), and forwarded to the dean of the academic college offering the graduate degree program for approval.

4. Copies of the completed form shall be sent to the student, the graduate program director, and the university registrar.

5. Validation for any given course can be sought only once.

Provisional Status

Students admitted provisionally to the MPA program must complete their first four courses (12 credit hours) in the program with a 3.0 average. After this requirement is completed, the provisional status will be removed.

General Appeals Procedures

Graduate students may initiate formal appeals proceedings on decisions that alter their program status. Procedures for appeal are as follows:

1. Students will consult with the MPA Graduate Program Director and then submit a letter of appeal within two weeks of the event in question. This letter must clearly state the grounds for the appeal (e.g., answer correctness, irregularities of procedure, extenuating circumstances, personal prejudice) and make a specific change request (e.g., nullify, reverse, or modify the decision).

2. The MPA Graduate Program Director will transmit copies of the letter to the Chair and the students' files.

3. The Chair will appoint a three-member ad hoc review committee consisting of faculty members not previously involved in the situation in question.

4. The ad hoc review committee will gather relevant information, interview the necessary

people, and make a recommendation regarding students' appeals and report to the department head as expeditiously as possible. The Chair will render the final decision.

5. The decision of the Chair will be conveyed to the students and MPA Graduate Program Director in writing.

Original Work and Multiple Uses of Student Papers
The purpose of this policy is to promote clarity and general understanding about multiple use of work in student papers, term projects, examinations and other work. A paper prepared and submitted to meet a requirement for one course cannot be used, in whole or substantial part, to meet a requirement in another course. One possible exception is when students make full disclosure of an intended second or multiple use to the instructor in the latter course and receive approval (mere reference in the subsequent paper is not sufficient). Another exception might be the use of an insignificant part of the paper in a second course, such as a conceptual scheme drawn from an external source or a set of bibliographic references. Students should check with their professors to avoid misunderstandings.

Email
Enrolled MPA students are required to activate and use their ODU e-mail accounts for correspondence with department and faculty members. All email correspondences to the department and faculty must include the student's name and UIN number in the subject title.

Laptop/E-device Policy
Many instructors are beginning to ban laptops, netbooks, or other electronic devices (iPhone, Droid, iPad, tablet, etc.) from the classroom. They are not banned in our classes or by the university… yet. However, students are becoming more distracted by non-class related activities on their devices and, anecdotally, there appears to be a growing correlation between laptop/device usage, student engagement, and student performance (i.e., grades). Therefore, the right is reserved to halt laptop/device usage at any point of time in the class session or term by the instructor.

Graduation
To graduate, students must satisfy all the University, college, and major requirements. Students must file an application for graduation with the Office of the Registrar by the published deadline. Students must be enrolled in the semester in which they plan to graduate.

IV. Student Conduct

University Honor Code
The College upholds the University's standards of integrity and honor. The honor code is supported and enforced by the university.

Honor Pledge
"I pledge to support the Honor System of Old Dominion University. I will refrain from any form of academic dishonesty or deception, such as cheating or plagiarism. I am aware that as a member of the academic community it is my responsibility to turn in all

suspected violations of the Honor Code. I will report to a hearing if summoned."

Student Code of Ethics

Students will strive to uphold and promote the highest moral and ethical standards in decision-making. As students and future leaders, we are committed to live by the values below:

Honesty: We shall strive to be true to ourselves and others while upholding the ideals of the ODU honor code. We will avoid all communication and actions that may mislead others.

Integrity: Honor commitments by practicing highest ethical standards, and taking personal responsibility for our actions even when facing social and economic pressures.

Respect: To treat everyone with respect, dignity, and fairness with no tolerance for discrimination.

Global Awareness: To understand and appreciate diversity of the global environment, and be sensitive to the ramifications of our actions in the international community.

Excellence: We will strive for a high level of academic excellence and professional achievement. We will demonstrate our ability to perform while developing our intellectual capabilities and skills.

We hold these values in high regard. Understanding that our actions today and in the future reflect upon ourselves and Old Dominion University, we are committed to abide by this code of ethics in our actions.

Plagiarism Definition

The Old Dominion University (ODU) Code of Student Conduct defines plagiarism as follows:
> *Using someone else's language, ideas, or other original material without acknowledging its source in any academic exercise. 4 Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following: submitting a research paper obtained from a commercial research service, the Internet, or from another student as if it were original work; or making simple changes to borrowed materials while leaving the organization, content, or phraseology intact. Plagiarism also occurs in a group project if one or more of the members of the group does none of the group's work and participates in none of the group's activities, but attempts to take credit for the work of the group.*

In your professional career, you will find that reputation is everything. Plagiarism can ruin your reputation and cost you your professional career, along with the respect of your peers and family. Plagiarism at Old Dominion University is an act of academic dishonesty that has serious consequences. Note that plagiarism is specifically covered in the ODU Honor Pledge. Refer to the Student Handbook and Student Affairs for details about sanctions and penalties for this behavior.

Hints for Avoiding Plagiarism

- *More than three words is plagiarism.* This is a good yardstick to use when wondering whether or not quotes are appropriate. They are if you are copying more than three words in sequence.
- *One source is not "common knowledge."* Common knowledge does not require citation. But something is not common knowledge if you have found just one source for the information.
- *When in doubt, cite!* If you have any doubt about whether or not to cite a source, err on the side of making the attribution.
- *If your co-author sounds surprisingly eloquent, make sure the contribution is his or her own.* We often work in groups and co-author papers and projects. You should ask the question of your co-author if you doubt the work is their own. In group work, you are responsible for the project/paper in its entirety.
- *Look away.* When you are writing, do not have open books or papers in front of you. Read your sources, and then put what you have read into your own words.
- *Writing is hard work.* Paraphrasing is relatively easy, writing is hard. Learning to be a good writer is part of what your college education is about.
- *Just because it's on the Internet, doesn't mean it's yours.* The Internet is a fantastic resource and search engines are terrific research tools. You must cite Internet web sites, and if you use a quote, use appropriate quotation procedures.
- *Paraphrasing is more than changing a verb tense or reordering a list.* There is a difference between citing a source for a fact and creating a bad quote.
- *Use a Style Guide.* Purchase a style guide and refer to it. Popular and timeless guides are by the American Psychological Association, Strunk and White, and Kate Turabian.

V.   Contact Information

Mailing Address:
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