

MPA STUDENT HANDBOOK

Academic Year 2008-2009

Department of Public & International Affairs
University of North Carolina at Wilmington

<http://www.uncw.edu/mpa>

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I. Mission

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) at UNCW is designed to provide students with essential administrative and public policy concepts and skills that can be utilized in a variety of settings in the public and nonprofit sectors. Located in the Department of Public & International Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences, the MPA is an interdisciplinary professional degree with the following goals:

- to provide a broad education for individuals expecting to enter government and nonprofit institutions in administrative positions;
- to further enhance the capabilities and performance of those individuals currently in management positions in southeastern North Carolina;
- to produce relevant public administration research; and
- to provide active public service aimed at the support and improvement of equitable and quality public services and policies through improved administration in southeastern North Carolina.

This handbook provides the requirements and procedures established for candidates for the MPA degree. It is a supplement to the policies, procedures and requirements found in the UNCW Graduate School Catalogue (http://www.uncw.edu/grad_info).

Each student must become familiar with both documents. Upon admission to the program, each student assumes responsibility for monitoring his or her progress toward the degree in conjunction with his or her supervisor.

II. Core Faculty and Staff

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Courses: social and health policy

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III. Academic Standards

University Statement on Academic Expectations

In choosing UNCW you have become part of our community of scholars. We recognize that the UNCW learning experience is challenging and requires hard work. It also requires a commitment to make time available to do that hard work. The University expects you to make academics your highest priority by dedicating your time and energy to training your mind and acquiring knowledge. Academic success in critical thinking and problem solving prepares you for the changes and challenges you will encounter in the future. Our faculty and academic support resources are readily available as partners in this effort, but the primary responsibility for learning is yours.

Academic Honor Code

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington is committed to the proposition that the pursuit of truth requires the presence of honesty among all involved. It is therefore this institution's stated policy that no form of dishonesty among its faculty or students will be tolerated. Although all members of the university community are encouraged to report occurrences of dishonesty, honesty is principally the responsibility of each individual. Academic dishonesty takes many forms, from blatant acts of cheating, stealing, or similar misdeeds to the more subtle forms of plagiarism, all of which are totally out of place in an institution of higher learning. Reporting and adjudication procedures have been developed to enforce the policy of academic integrity, to ensure justice, and to protect individual rights. Complete details may be found in the current Student Handbook and Code of Student Life and in the Faculty Handbook.

MPA Academic Expectations

The MPA program at UNCW is designed according to accreditation standards set by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. The curriculum is therefore rigorous and demanding of a student's energy and time. Excellent performance in the program requires not only attendance at class, but as a guideline three hours of outside study for every hour in the classroom. As a professional degree program, it is also expected that students will conduct themselves accordingly in the classroom and community.

IV. Degree Requirements

Satisfactory completion of 42 credit hours of approved graduate level courses will lead to the MPA degree (39 if internship is waived). The program requirements consist of the following: 18 credits of core classes designed to provide the basic skills needed by managers and policy analysts working in public and nonprofit organizations; 3 credits of an internship or practicum designed to link theory with practice; 3 credits of an applied skill-based elective; and between 9 and 13 credits of an approved concentration. Students can take their remaining 6 to 9 credits from electives offered by the Department of Public & International Affairs or choose approved electives offered by other departments or universities. If students choose to look to other universities for these credits they should keep in mind the Graduate School's 6 credit hour transfer limit.

Core Requirements (18 credit hours)

All students are required to complete the following classes:

PLS 500 Managing Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3)

PLS 501 Quantitative Methods (3)

PLS 502 Public Human Resources Administration (3)

PLS 503 Public Budgeting and Finance Administration (3)

PLS 505 Policy Analysis (3)

PLS 595 Capstone Seminar in Public Administration (3)

Internship or Practicum (3 credit hours)

Students must do an internship or practicum unless the requirement is waived. In general, the practicum will be the option used by working professionals who do not have the flexibility to participate in an internship. The practicum requires an applied research paper(s) examining a management or policy issue at the student's work place. Waiver requests should take the form of a formal letter to the MPA Director describing the relevant experience and include an attached resume. Waivers will only be considered if the student can demonstrate a minimum of five years of significant management or policy-related professional experience. Students must register for the internship or practicum in the semester in which the internship begins.

PLS 594: Practicum in Public Administration (3-6)

or

PLS 598: Internship in Public Administration (3-6)

Applied Skill Based Electives (3 credit hours)

All students are required to take one of the following applied skill-based electives, however, students can take additional classes as their electives. Students should consult with their advisors to select the appropriate course.

- PLS 504 Computer Applications and MIS in Public Administration (3)
- PLS 506 Program Evaluation (3)
- PLS 507 Applied Management Tools, Skills, and Techniques (3)
- PLS 514 Conflict Resolution (3)
- PLS 541 Public Economics and Cost-Benefit Analysis (3)
- PLS 545 Government Planning and Geographic Information Systems (3)
- GGY 524 Geographic Information Systems (3)
- EVS 578 Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HazWOpER) (3)
- ANT 500 Ethnographic Research Methods (3)
- SST 505 Data Analysis (3)
- SST 511 Design of Experiments and Analysis of Variance (3)
- SST 512 Applied Regression and Correlation (3)
- SST 525 Categorical Data Analysis (3)
- SST 530 Introduction to Non-parametric Statistics (3)
- SST535 Applied Multivariate Analysis (3)
- SST 540 Linear Models and Regression Analysis (3)
- SST 565 Applied Probability (3)
- SST 569 Stochastic Processes in Operations Research (3)
- SST 590 Case Studies in Statistical Consulting (3)
- ENG 551 Topics in Professional Writing (3)

Or other approved electives

Concentrations (9-12 credit hours)

All students are required to pursue a concentrated area of study in Coastal Planning and Management (12 credits), Environmental Policy and Management (12 credits), Marine Policy (12 credits), Nonprofit Management (12 credits), Public Management (12 credits) or Urban and Regional Policy and Planning (12 credits). Students can also elect to design their own nine credit concentrations in areas such as historic preservation, health policy, gerontology and public history. Students wishing to design their own concentrations should consult with their advisor or the MPA coordinator.

Coastal Planning and Management (12 credit hours)

All students pursuing a concentration in coastal management must complete the following requirements:

- PLS 521 Foundations of Coastal and Environmental Management (3)
- PLS 527 Planning Theory and Planning Law (3)

Students must take an additional six credit hours of an approved elective.

Choose six credit hours from the following list of approved electives:

- EVS 570 Advanced Environmental Law and Policy (3)

GGY 526 Environmental Geographic Information Systems (3)
 GGY 578 Historic Preservation Planning (3)
 GLY 558 Introduction to Coastal Management (3)
 PLS 513 Politics, Planning and Urban Sprawl (3)
 PLS 517 Strategic Planning and Management for Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3)
 PLS 522 Field Seminar in Coastal Management (3)
 PLS 524 Managing Coastal Hazards (3)
 PLS 525 Managing Coastal Ecosystems (3)
 PLS 528 Local Government Administration (3)
 PLS 543 Environmental Policy Analysis (3)
 PLS 544 Resource Economics (3)
 PLS 545 Government Planning and Geographic Information Systems (3)
 Or other approved elective

Environmental Policy and Management (12 credit hours)

All students pursuing a concentration in environmental management must complete the following requirements:

EVS 501 Introduction to Environmental Problems and Policy (3)
 PLS 543 Environmental Policy Analysis (3)

Choose six credit hours from the following list of approved electives:

BIO 562 Wetland Management (3)
 BIO 568 River Ecology (3)
 EVS 570 Advanced Environmental Law and Policy (3)
 EVS 578 Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HazWOpER) (3)
 GGY 526 Environmental Geographic Information Systems (3)
 GLY 520 Global Climate Change (3)
 PLS 520 Seminar in Coastal Processes and Problems (3)
 PLS 521 Foundations of Coastal and Environmental Management (3)
 PLS 522 Field Seminar in Coastal Management (3)
 PLS 525 Managing Coastal Ecosystems (3)
 PLS 540 Environmental Management (3)
 PLS 544 Resource Economics (3)
 Or other approved elective.

Urban and Regional Policy and Planning (12 credit hours)

All students pursuing a concentration in public policy analysis must complete the following requirements:

PLS 513 Regional Planning, Politics, and Policy (3)
 PLS 527 Planning Theory and Planning Law (3)

Students must take an additional six credit hours of an approved elective.

Choose six credit hours from the following list of approved electives:

GGY 524 Geographic Information Systems (3)
 PLS 506 Program Evaluation (3)

PLS 514 Conflict Resolution (3)
 PLS 521 Foundations of Coastal and Environmental Management (3)
 PLS 528 Local Government Administration (3)
 PLS 541 Public Economics and Cost-Benefit Analysis (3)
 Or other approved electives

Nonprofit Management (12 credit hours)

All students pursuing a concentration in nonprofit management must complete the following requirements:

PLS 530 Management Practices in Nonprofit Organizations (3)
 PLS 531 Resource Development in Nonprofit Organizations (3)

Choose six credit hours from the following list of approved electives:

PLS 507 Applied Management Tools, Skills, and Techniques (3)
 PLS 508 Ethics and Leadership in Public Life (3)
 PLS 532 Issues in Nonprofit Management (3)
 PLS 542 Management Interorganizational Relations (3)
 Or other approved electives

Marine Policy (12 credit hours)

All students pursuing a concentration in marine policy must complete the following requirements:

PLS 543 Environmental Policy Analysis (3)
 PLS 544 Resource Economics (3)

Choose three credit hours from the following list of approved electives:

BIO 558 Biology of Recreational and Commercial Fish (3)
 BIO 560 Estuarine Biology (4)
 BIO 562 Wetland Management (3)
 BIO 564 Biological Oceanography (3)
 BIO 568 River Ecology (3)
 BIO 585 Special Topics in Advanced Biology (3)
 BIO 591 Directed Independent Study (1-4)
 CHM 575 Chemical Oceanography (3)
 CHM 576 Chemical and Physical Analysis of Seawater (3)
 CHM 591 Directed Independent Study (1-3)
 GLY 520 Global Climate Change (3)
 GLY 550 Marine Geology (3)
 GLY 558 Introduction to Coastal Management (4)
 GLY 591 Directed Independent Study (3)
 MSC 591 Directed Independent Study (1-4)
 PHY 575 Physical Oceanography (1-3)
 Or other approved electives

Choose three credit hours from the following list of approved electives:

- EVS 570 Advanced Environmental Law and Policy (3)
- GGY 526 Environmental Applications in GIS (3)
- PLS 520 Seminar in Coastal Processes and Problems (3)
- PLS 521 Legal Foundation of Coastal and Environmental Management (3)
- PLS 522 Field Seminar in Coastal Management (3)
- PLS 524 Managing Coastal Hazards (3)
- PLS 525 Managing Coastal Ecosystems (3)

Students must take an additional three credit hours of an approved elective.

Public Management (12 credit hours)

All students pursuing a concentration in public management must complete the following requirements:

- PLS 517 Strategic Planning and Management for Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3)
- PLS 542 Managing Interorganizational Relations (3)

Students must take an additional six credit hours of an approved elective.

Choose six credit hours from the following list of approved electives:

- PLS 506 Program Evaluation (3)
 - PLS 507 Applied Management Tools, Skills and Techniques (3)
 - PLS 508 Ethics in Public Life (3)
 - PLS 509 Leading Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3)
 - PLS 514 Conflict Resolution (3)
 - PLS 515 Organizational Communication (3)
 - PLS 516 Leadership and Organizational Culture (3)
 - PLS 528 Local Government Administration (3)
 - PLS 530 Management Practices in Nonprofit Organizations (3)
 - PLS 541 Public Economics and Cost-Benefit Analysis (3)
- Or other approved electives

Customized Concentration (9 credit hours)

Students can also elect to design their own nine credit concentration in areas such as historic preservation, health policy, or gerontology. Classes offered by the Department of Public and International Affairs, by other departments on campus, and by other universities can be part of the concentration. Students wishing to design their own concentrations should consult with their advisor or the MPA coordinator.

Approved Electives (6 to 9 credit hours)

Students generally have to complete an additional 6 to 9 credits in order to fulfill their degree requirements. Students have the following options: take additional classes offered as applied skill-based electives; take classes offered as concentration classes; take classes listed as electives below; take approved electives offered by other departments or universities.

Students should consult with their advisor and the MPA coordinator when planning their program of study and selecting their electives.

Internship

A three-credit minimum internship in a government or nonprofit agency will be an integral part of the MPA program. Internships give students the opportunity to integrate theory and practice by learning in situations outside of the traditional classroom setting. On-the-job training also gives students firsthand experience and allows them to make contacts useful for future employment. Furthermore, interns can be an invaluable resource for agencies and serve as bridges between the university and the southeastern North Carolina region. In accordance with accreditation guidelines, interns will be supervised by a faculty member, mentored by an on-site preceptor, and required to keep a journal and write a structured paper that will integrate experiences in the field with theory learned in the classroom.

Internships normally require 20 hours of agency work per week, although time schedules can be designed to fit different student circumstances. Students must register for the internship during the semester in which the internship begins. Working students with significant administrative experience (minimum of three years) may apply to the MPA Director for a waiver of the internship.

Capstone Seminar/Oral Defense

The final course for every MPA student will be an integrative seminar that synthesizes material across the curriculum. A comprehensive applied research paper project addressing a contemporary public management or policy issue will be required and defended before a committee of at least three members of the graduate faculty (at least two of whom must be in the major program). Students may request faculty to serve on their committee at any time during the program, but the composition of the committee must be approved by the MPA Director at the beginning of the semester in which the seminar is taken.

An MPA candidate who fails the oral defense may not take the examination a second time until at least three months have elapsed. No student may take an examination a third time without approval of the dean of the Graduate School. A student passes an examination only on approval by at least two-thirds of the members of the examining committee. The vote of the examining committee is considered to be final.

Thesis Option

Students wishing to complete a thesis may do so by pursuing a thesis option which requires:

- 1) Creating a thesis committee consisting of a chairperson and two additional members of the Graduate Faculty. At least two members of the committee including the chairperson must be from the Department of Public & International

Affairs. This committee will oversee the student's thesis. Students are advised to create this faculty committee no later than the third semester of enrollment.

- 2) Prepare and defend a thesis proposal following departmental guidelines.
- 3) Prepare and defend a thesis that is acceptable to the individual's thesis committee.
- 4) Complete at least 6 hours of PLS 599 Thesis.
- 5) Complete at least 45 hours of graduate credit, three hours more than students who do not pursue this option.

Students who pursue the thesis option are not required to take PLS 595: The Capstone Seminar in Public Administration.

V. Programs of Study

Students have two basic decisions regarding their program of study: 1) how quickly they will progress through the program and 2) which concentration they will pursue.

Full-Time versus Part-Time Tracks

A full-time track assumes three courses per semester, with two courses taken during the summer session. This pace will earn the MPA in two years (assuming prerequisites are completed in advance). Students currently working full-time will be strongly discouraged from taking a full-time course load. Graduate assistants, fellows, and others working no more than 20 hours per week are candidates for full-time status.

A part-time track assumes two courses per semester, with one course taken in each summer session. This pace will earn the MPA degree in three years (assuming prerequisites are taken in advance). This track is recommended for students working full-time.

Students with work or family commitments may proceed through the curriculum at a slower pace, but they must realize that one has five calendar years to complete his or her degree program. The five-year period begins with the student's first term of work after formal admission to a degree-granting program. Work completed as a non-degree student does not initiate the five-year period for completing a degree program.

VI. Admissions Policies

Application Deadlines

Applications to the MPA program will be considered primarily during the fall semester. Those interested in starting the program in the fall should apply by April 15th of the spring semester. To take advantage of the ideal sequencing of courses, students are encouraged to begin the program in the fall semester. Applications for admission to the program for the spring semester will be considered on a limited basis. Applications for admission in January should be received by November 15th of the fall semester.

Admission Criteria

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, or its equivalent from a foreign institution of higher education based on a four-year program;
- A strong academic record (an average GPA of 3.0 or better is desirable in the undergraduate program).
- Academic potential as indicated by satisfactory performance on the GRE General Test or GMAT. A combined score of 1,000 on the verbal and quantitative sections of the GRE or a 550 on the GMAT are considered acceptable.
- Three recommendations from individuals who are in a position to evaluate the student's professional competence as well as potential for graduate study (ideally at least one reference should be an academic instructor).
- A personal statement describing educational and professional experiences, their reasons for pursuing graduate study in public administration, and career goals.

Admission Documents

Application for admission is made by submitting application materials to the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

The following materials must be submitted to the Graduate School Admission Office:

- 1. Graduate School Application**
- 2. Official transcripts from all universities attended**
- 3. Three recommendations**
- 4. GRE or GMAT scores**

5. **International students: TOEFL score of 550 or higher**
6. **A completed “Personal Statement of Professional Goals” form**
7. **A current resume or curriculum vitae**
8. **An academic or professional writing sample**

Admission Decisions

Applications are reviewed by the MPA Director in consultation with the MPA faculty. No single criterion determines the decision; all criteria are weighed on a case by case basis so that each candidate’s total set of qualifications can be considered. In situations where a candidate may be significantly below a certain criterion such as GPA or GRE score but is otherwise highly qualified, a provisional admission may be utilized where the student is admitted but must earn at least a “B” on the first three courses.

There may be other cases where a student is not presently qualified for admission, but may be invited to apply for nondegree-seeking status and take up to three classes to provide additional information for the faculty. The overall goal of the admissions process is to identify motivated applicants who have the potential to complete the program and be productive public administrators.

For an application package or other information visit the UNCW Graduate School web page at http://www.uncw.edu/grad_info or contact the Graduate School at 910.962.7303.

VII. Advising

Two types of advising are available to students: academic and career advising. Both types of advising are available on an informal basis from all MPA faculty, but formal advising occurs in the following manner.

Academic Advising

All incoming students will receive formal academic advising at the MPA Orientation session before the fall and spring semesters. Courses will be recommended to students for the coming semester, and after consultation students will be registered that evening. Students unable to attend the orientation are responsible for contacting the MPA Director to make other arrangements.

Students will be assigned a faculty advisor according to their academic interests. Students should make course selection and registration decisions in consultation with this faculty member. Students cannot register without obtaining their official registration number from their advisor.

The MPA Director reviews and approves all requests involving transfer credits or course waivers. In accordance with university regulations, up to six credits of coursework may be transferred from another university. Credit for coursework from another program within UNCW will be determined on an individual basis.

Career Advising

The MPA Director will assign a mentor to each student from among the faculty or members of the Community Advisory Board. Students are encouraged to consult with their mentors frequently around professional and career development issues, as well as the university's Career Services office (962-3174). Furthermore, the MPA website will post job and internship opportunities on a regular basis, and provide links to a variety of sources of career information. A focus of the Capstone Seminar at the end of the program will also be on career development activities.

VIII. Grading Policy

In accordance with Graduate School policy, a student must maintain a cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) or "B" average to remain eligible in the program. Students falling below a 3.0 GPA will be placed on academic probation, and will have three subsequent courses to bring the GPA up to at least 3.0. Three grades of C or one grade of F results in dismissal from the graduate program.

An incomplete grade may be given if the course instructor determines that exceptional circumstances warrant extending the time for the student to complete the course work. The instructor may set the maximum allowable period for completion of the course work, but in no case will the extension exceed one year. If the time allowed is to be less than one year, this information should be transmitted in writing to the student, with a copy to the Graduate School. If, within 12 months, a change of grade has not been submitted by the instructor, the incomplete automatically becomes an F. Ensuring that I grades are converted in a timely manner is the responsibility of the student.

The basis for course grading is determined by the instructor. Most MPA courses will have a participation requirement, so it is essential for students to understand that class attendance is vital for a successful experience. Although each faculty member has the discretion to determine his or her specific attendance policies, it is expected that graduate students will attend all classes unless they have professional obligations and have discussed their absence in advance with the faculty member. Frequent unexcused absences may result in a failing grade and loss of eligibility until the student can demonstrate to the faculty that he or she is in a position both professionally and personally to attend class on a regular basis.

IX. Graduate Assistantships/Fellowships

Subject to funding, the MPA program may be in a position to award a number of graduate assistantships or fellowships at the beginning of each academic year. The exact terms of these opportunities will vary depending on the source of the funds, but typically offer a stipend and/or tuition waiver in return for twenty hours per week of research or professional support for the sponsor. Awards may be for one or more academic years, depending on available funding and/or student performance. A graduate assistant is paid by state funds and normally works for faculty in the MPA program. A fellow may be paid by a research grant or a local agency sponsor and would work for the sponsor.

Graduate assistantships or fellowships are awarded on a competitive basis, with final selections made by MPA faculty and/or the sponsoring agency. Criteria include academic performance, recommendations, and special skills that may be required for a particular opportunity.

X. Professional Development

An important aspect of graduate education is developing professional networks and becoming involved in professional associations that foster lifelong learning through conferences, publications, and workshops. To promote professional development, all MPA students are expected at a minimum to join the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and consider joining more specialized groups such as the International City Managers Association (ICMA). Students are specifically expected to attend formal MPA program events such as Capstone presentations and the MPA Community Advisory Board meetings. See MPA website for links.

XI. Important Contacts (Prefix Code 962)

Bookstore – 3188
Career Services – 3174
Cashier – 3164, 3165
Computer-based Testing (GRE) – 7444
Computer Services Help Desk – 4357
Counseling Center – 3746
Financial Aid/Veterans Services – 3177
Graduate School – 7303
Housing Information - 3119
Information Center – 3841
Library Schedule – 7306
Parking/Student Ids – 3537
Police – 3184
Registrar/Records – 3125
SEA LINE – 4246
Student Accounts – 3147
Student Health Center – 3280
Tutorial Assistance – 3549

Note: University information also available at www.uncw.edu

XII. Appendix

A. Course Descriptions

PLS 500. Managing Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3). Provides an overview of theories of organization, decision making, leadership, motivation, communication, and conflict resolution in the environment of public and nonprofit organizations.

PLS 501. Statistics for Public Managers and Policy Analysts (3). Issues and techniques in data collection and statistical analysis for managers and policy analysts in public and nonprofit organizations.

PLS 502. Public Human Resources Development and Administration (3). The study of policies, methods and techniques utilized in the public human resource function. Special attention is given to challenges reflecting contemporary demands in the areas of recruitment, training, compensation, performance evaluation, motivation, labor relations, sexual harassment policies, and diversity in the public workforce.

PLS 503. Public Budgeting and Finance Administration (3). Focuses on governmental budgeting and finance at the federal, state, and local level. Topics include budget types, budget preparation, politics of the budgetary process, tax policy, revenue sources, and other public finance issues. Attention is also paid to specific issues related to budgeting and finance issues in the nonprofit sector.

PLS 504. Computer Applications and MIS in Public Administration (3). Theory and application of the use of information technology to support decision making in public organizations. Topics include the use of the Internet to share and collect information, Geographic Information Systems, and appropriate software packages.

PLS 505. Applied Policy Analysis and Cost-Benefit Analysis (3). Examines the different approaches to public policy analysis and the various techniques that an analyst uses such as cost-benefit analysis. Students complete an applied policy analysis and present results to a simulated audience.

PLS 506. Research Methods and Program Evaluation (3). Covers research methods and basic statistics including hypothesis testing and examines the theory and practice of program evaluation including the ethical issues related to the practice of program evaluation.

PLS 507. Applied Management Tools, Skills, and Techniques (3). Examines concepts, techniques, and tools used by organizations with a focus on improving management skills. Topics covered include managing meetings, giving presentations, interacting with the media, strategic planning, performance measurement and contracting.

PLS 508. Ethics in Public Life (3). Examination of ethical principals as they apply to the practice of public administration; basic legal constraints such as conflict of interest laws; role of codes of ethics; and models for the responsible exercise of administrative discretion by public officials.

PLS 509. Leading Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3). Examines the theoretical and practical approaches to leading and managing public and nonprofit organizations.

PLS 510. Political, Social and Economic Context of Public Administration (3). Covers the rationales for public policy and critical concepts in public economics (e.g., market failures, public goods, externalities, monopolies, information asymmetries, and public choice theory). Class also examines the public policy process (e.g., context, agenda setting, implementation, evaluation, etc.), and the legal foundations of public administration (i.e., federalism, checks and balances, roles of the courts, etc.) and the basics of state and local politics in the U.S.

PLS 513. Regional Planning, Politics and Policy (3). Explores the connection between formal planning processes and political decision making at the regional and local levels for various policy issues (e.g., rapid development, sprawl, transportation, aging population, affordable housing, rural poverty, economic development, quality of life, etc.). Special attention is given to how planners and analysts provide advice to elected and non-elected decision makers.

PLS 514. Conflict Resolution (3). Examines the theoretical and practical perspectives and techniques for resolving conflict. Emphasis is placed on bargaining, negotiation, and conflict management techniques used in public and nonprofit organizations and interpersonal relationships.

PLS 517. Strategic Planning and Management (3). Examines the theoretical and practical approaches to conducting strategic planning and management in public and nonprofit organizations.

PLS 520. Seminar in Coastal Processes and Problems (3). Examines various coastal management policies and problems from a variety of perspectives (e.g., legal, economic, political, scientific, etc.).

PLS 521. Foundations of Coastal and Environmental Management (3). Analyzes key policy issues and the laws, regulations, and legal decisions that influence the management of coastal land use in North Carolina and the United States.

PLS 522. Field Seminar in Coastal Management (3). Field seminar that uses an applied project to examine the political, economic, and socio-cultural challenges facing coastal managers. It also examines the role of science in the policy and management process. Students are expected to collect and analyze data, prepare a report, and present their findings.

PLS 524. Managing Coastal Hazards (3). Explores the natural and technological hazards that threaten coastal areas, the principles of coastal hazard mitigation and the development of policy dealing with the preparedness, response to, and recovery from the events.

PLS 525. Managing Coastal Ecosystems (3). Examines programs, policies, and approaches to managing coastal ecosystems such as watershed management, ecosystem management, command and control approaches, and market-based approaches.

PLS 527. Planning Theory and Planning Law (3). Course reviews and provides an overview of this history of the major urban/regional planning theories in the U.S. and Europe. Emphasizes the legal framework and case law connected to local land use policies and regulations.

PLS 528. Local Government Administration (3). Examines the institutions, laws and policies that surround local government administration. It also examines contemporary issues and problems faced by town administrators from a variety of perspectives (e.g., legal, economic, social, political, societal, etc.)

PLS 530. Management Practices in Nonprofit Organizations (3). Introduction to theoretical foundations, structures, and processes of nonprofit organizations; historical development and impact, social, political, legal and economic environment in which nonprofit organizations exist, and complexities of organizational governance shared by volunteer and professional staff decision makers.

PLS 531. Resource Development in Nonprofit Organizations (3). Introduction to various resources important to nonprofit organizations including financial support, volunteers, and community awareness, and to the wide ranges of organization activities utilized for acquisition and maintenance of these structures such as grant writing and fundraising strategies.

PLS 532. Issues in Nonprofit Management (3). Examination of the current managerial, legal, and political challenges facing nonprofit organizations.

PLS 540. Environmental Management (3). Examines selected policies and programs including both regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to environmental management in the United States.

PLS 541. Public Economics and Cost-Benefit Analysis (3). An applied policy analysis course covering basic economic concepts. The class will also provide an introduction to the techniques of cost-benefit analysis. Students complete an applied cost-benefit project and present results to a simulated audience.

PLS 542. Managing Inter-organizational Relations (3). Course provides an overview of the theory and practice of inter-organizational relations. Topics generally include inter-

governmental management, collaboration, networks, policy implementation and governance. Emphasis is placed on emerging trends from the new governance movement and the increased relationships between public, private, and nonprofit organizations in government service delivery.

PLS 543. Environmental Policy Analysis (3). Examines the fundamental factors that influence environmental policy in the United States. It also examines the different approaches to policy analysis and the techniques available to environmental policy analysis.

PLS 544. Resource Economics (3). Introduction to environmental and natural resource economics and policy. Emphasizes applied methods and results of use to practicing coastal managers. Topics include pollution regulation and pollution damage assessment, recreation and tourism impact analysis, public good valuation methods, the economics of land development and urban sprawl, and economic issues in forestry, wetlands and fisheries management.

PLS 545. Government Planning and Geographic Information Systems (3). Examines the use of government geographic information systems (GIS) in the context of land use planning and other applications in state and local government. Course provides an introduction to the theory and application of GIS, spatial data collection, relational databases, spatial analysis, and mapping.

PLS 561. Comparative Public Administration (3). Examines public administration in many different countries with a particular emphasis on development administration, the government-administration interface, and the administrative issues of cooperation between two or more countries.

PLS 562. International Environmental Policy (3). Examines major political issues related to national level and international environmental politics and policy-making. Emphasis is placed on democracy, political transition, levels of development, national cultural values, political institutions, and citizens as potential shapers of the nature and dynamics of environmental politics and vice versa as well as trans-boundary interactions and relations affecting the environment.

PLS 591. Directed Individual Study in Public Administration (1-6). Independent investigation of research problems or directed readings in a selected area of public administration.

PLS 592. Special Topics in Public Administration (3). Intensive study of selected topics in public administration. (*Repeatable course as topics change*)

PLS 594. Practicum in Public Administration (3-6). The application of knowledge, concepts and analytical tools to contemporary issues that challenge public administrators. Individuals select special projects to pursue in local public and nonprofit organizations and conduct research under the guidance of a faculty member. With permission only.

PLS 595. Capstone Seminar in Public Administration (3). Synthesizing experience at end of program where key concepts from total curriculum are integrated and applied to contemporary issues in public administration. Public administration as a profession and career opportunities for graduate students are discussed. Student completes an applied research project that integrates materials from the curriculum and the internship or practicum.

PLS 598. Internship in Public Administration (3-6). Participation in a field experience, including a journal and written report critically describing the student's responsibilities and experiences, focusing on linkages between the theory learned in coursework and the practice of public administration. Field experience will result from a supervised internship in cooperating public or nonprofit organization.

PLS 599. Thesis in Public Administration (1-6). Prerequisites: at least 30 hours toward completion of the master's degree and permission of the MPA coordinator. Intensive study of a topic selected by the student and approved by a thesis committee. Includes definition of problem, review of related literature, application of appropriate methodology, and interpretation of results and conclusions. Oral presentation and defense of thesis are required.

B. MPA Curriculum Planner

Core Requirements (18 hours)	Semester/Year
PLS 500 Managing Public & Nonprofit Organizations	
PLS 501 Quantitative Methods	
PLS 502 Public Human resources Administration	
PLS 503 Public Budgeting & Finance Administration	
PLS 505 Policy Analysis	
PLS 595 Capstone Seminar in Public Administration	
Internship/Practicum (3 hours)	
PLS 598 Internship in Public Administration	
PLS 594 Practicum in Public Administration	
Waiver of 3 hours due to 5 years of significant experience	
Applied Skill-Based Elective (3 hours)	
PLS 504 Computer Applications & MIS in Public Administration	
PLS 505 Policy Analysis	
PLS 506 Program Evaluation	
PLS 507 Applied Management Tools, Skills, Techniques	
PLS 541 Public Economics & Cost-Benefit Analysis	
<i>Other Approved Elective:</i>	
Coastal Planning & Management (12 hours)	
PLS 521 Legal Foundations of Coastal & Environmental Management	
PLS 527 Planning Theory & Law	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
Environmental Policy & Management (12 hours)	
PLS 543 Environmental Policy Analysis	
EVS 501 Introduction to Environmental Problems & Policy	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
Marine Policy (12 hours)	
PLS 543 Environmental Policy Analysis	
PLS 544 Resource Economics	
<i>Approved Science-Oriented Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Policy- Oriented Elective:</i>	

Public Policy Analysis (12 hours)	
PLS 505 Policy Analysis	
PLS 506 Program Evaluation	
PLS 541 Public Economics & Cost-Benefit Analysis	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
Urban & Regional Policy & Planning (12 hours)	
PLS 527 Planning Theory & Law	
PLS 513 Politics, Planning, and Urban Sprawl	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
Public Management (12 hours)	
PLS 507 Applied Management Tools, Skills, Techniques	
PLS 508 Ethics and Leadership in Public Life	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
Nonprofit Management (12 hours)	
PLS 530 Management Practices in Nonprofit Organizations	
PLS 531 Resource Development in Nonprofit Organizations	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
Customized Concentration (12 hours)	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
<i>Approved Elective:</i>	
Electives (6 hours)	
<i>Elective:</i>	
<i>Elective:</i>	
Transfer Credits (up to 6 hours)	
<i>Substitution/Elective:</i>	
<i>Substitution/Elective:</i>	
Total Required Hours – 42 hours (39 hours if the Internship is waived)	

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