COLLEGE OF
LIBERAL ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES
**SCHOOL OF POLITICS,
SOCIETY, JUSTICE &
PUBLIC SERVICE**

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

**MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA)
2024-2025 HANDBOOK**

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Welcome to the 46th Annual Class of MPA Students at Central Michigan University!

On behalf of our faculty and staff, I want to welcome you to the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at Central Michigan University. Since 1978, our program has trained students in the practitioner-based skills and academic-informed theories integral to a successful career in the public sector. Such integration of the practitioner and academic dimensions of public administration form the basis of our program and reflect the public service competencies required to be an effective administrator in today's public sector.

During your time in the program, make sure to engage with your instructors and fellow students. Use them as resources to help elevate your education and career to higher levels. To that end, I urge you to become involved in our student organizations: the CMU Chapter of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the MPA honor society Pi Alpha Alpha (PAA). Our ICMA chapter is for those students with an interest in local government, while PAA is our honor society for students who have completed at least 18 credits in our program with a GPA of 3.70 or higher. These organizations allow you to build your public sector network and meet fellow students and alumni of the program.

In the pages that follow, you'll find some basic information about our program and classes. Our website also offers additional information about the program and students experiences in the program, including graduation rates, labor market placement, and NASPAA accreditation. While these are excellent resources, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions. The best way to get in contact is through email: kukla1sa@cmich.edu.

I look forward to working with you!

Dr. Sharon Kukla-Acevedo
MPA Director

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CMU MPA MISSION STATEMENT & COMPETENCIES

Mission Statement
The mission of the Master of Public Administration program at Central Michigan University is to provide current and future practitioners with enriching learning experiences that advance their intellectual growth and increase the likelihood of respectful governance in a variety of public settings, characterized by accountable and ethical decision-making that engages stakeholders with effective leadership and management practices.

Public Service Values
To achieve our mission and realize our vision, the MPA program at Central Michigan University emphasizes the following NASPAA (Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, & Administration) public service values.

Students and alumni from the MPA program at Central Michigan University will:

- Pursue the public interest with accountability and transparency;
- Serve professionally with competence, efficiency, and objectivity;
- Act ethically so as to uphold the public trust;
- Promote participation and inclusiveness by demonstrating respect, equity, and fairness in dealings with members of society, stakeholders, and fellow public servants; and
- Cultivate global, regional, and local awareness.

Universal Competencies
To implement its mission statement, the MPA program at Central Michigan University uses the following set of NASPAA required competencies in its curriculum. These competencies ensure that our students will develop and enhance their ability:

- To lead and manage in the public interest;
- To participate in, and contribute to, the policy process;

- To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make evidence informed decisions in a complex and dynamic environment;
- To articulate, apply, and advance a public service perspective;
- To communicate and interact productively and in culturally responsive ways with a diverse and changing workforce and society at large.

Mission Specific Competency
In addition to the universal competencies from NASPAA, the program has adopted the following mission-based competency:

- Students in the MPA program at Central Michigan University will develop and enhance their ability to distinguish effective public sector management from ineffective public sector management by interacting with experienced practitioners.

<div style="background-color:maroon; color:gold; text-align:center; font-weight:bold;">NEW MPA STUDENT CHECKLIST</div>

After you've been admitted to the program, make sure to complete the following steps. This will ensure that you are enrolled in the correct MPA courses and understand all program requirements.

✓	New MPA Student Checklist
	1. Contact the MPA Program Director You will need to contact the MPA Director for the design and approval of your 'MPA Program Plan,' initial course schedule, and to determine if you will need to take an internship. Do this step as soon as possible. MPA Director Contact Info: Dr. Sharon Kukla-Acevedo, MPA Director kukla1sa@cmich.edu
	2. Familiarize Yourself with the MPA Program Visit the CMU MPA website at: https://www.cmich.edu/academics/colleges/liberal-arts-social-sciences/departments/politics-society-justice-public-service/political-science-public-administration/public-administration-details/
	3. Login into Degree Progress Login into your 'Degree Progress' via your cmich login and familiarize yourself with its interface. Note the sections for coursework and the 'application for graduation' (which will become important as you complete the program).

	4. *Register for your first courses (only after completing steps 1-3)* Make sure to take PAD 610 in your first semester, or as soon as possible after beginning the curriculum. This is the program's introductory course. Additionally, it is recommended that you only take one course per eight-week term in each semester.

NEW MPA STUDENT FAQ

Below are some questions that are commonly asked by new MPA students. Always feel free to contact the MPA Director with additional questions or clarifications.

What order should I take MPA courses?

      The program has two introductory courses that should be taken as early as possible in your course sequencing. These courses are PAD 610 (Foundations of Public Administration) and PAD 620 (Nonprofit Management). If possible, students should try to take PAD 610 as their first course in the program. Additionally, the MPA capstone course, PAD 799 (Public Service Competencies), should only be taken in your final semester.

      Other than that, students should consult with MPA Director to determine the best schedule of core courses, electives, and concentration-specific courses.

How many courses should I take each semester?

      Online MPA courses are structured in an eight-week format with two eight-week sessions comprising a traditional academic semester (e.g., Fall I is the first eight weeks and Fall II is the second eight weeks of a traditional Fall semester lasting from August to December). In your first eight-week session in the program, it is recommended you only take one MPA course. In your second eight-week semester session and subsequent sessions, you may take two courses concurrently. However, for the most effective academic experience, the program recommends you only take one MPA course per eight-week semester session.

      Please note that if you just take one MPA course per eight-week semester session, you will be considered a part-time graduate student. CMU considers full-time graduate students as taking a total of nine credit hours for each of the fall and spring semesters, and four to six credit hours for the entire summer semester. Make sure to coordinate your financial aid concerns, applicable scholarship rules, or employer tuition reimbursement plans with this fact (e.g., some financial aid packages require graduate students to be full time, whereas others do not).

Do I need to take the internship course?

      The internship course is only required for those students without significant public sector experience. For students with public sector experience, the internship course is waived and a student either takes an elective course in its place or receives prior learning credit for their experience. The program considers at least 26 months of experience in the public sector to be significant experience that can waive the internship requirement.

Public sector experience includes any work in a public or nonprofit organization. This can include: the federal government, state governments, local governments, court systems, nonprofit organizations, school districts, public hospitals, economic development corporations, international organizations, special districts, and the military.

What is the MPA Capstone Course?

PAD 799 (Public Service Competencies) is a one-credit hour course that you take in your last semester. In the course, you complete an innovation analysis for a public sector organization using the public service competencies learned throughout the MPA program. The innovation analysis will include the completion of a paper with some level of data analysis as well as a professional presentation of the results of your innovation analysis.

Should I purchase or rent the textbooks required for each MPA course?

When financially possible, the program recommends you purchase and keep the textbooks required for each MPA course as these books can help you complete your innovation analysis in the MPA capstone and can also help your career going forward.

How do I know if I'm ready for online courses?

Explore CMU's website on online education at the website listed below. It includes a variety of practical information (e.g., where to order your books) as well as more technical information (e.g. information about the Blackboard learning system used in online courses). Additionally, the website has a good overview of the technical computer requirements needed to excel in online education.

Please reference this link: https://www.cmich.edu/admissions-aid/global-campus/cmu-online/online-learning-resource-center

What should I take for my electives?

Students can take any graduate-level class (above the 500-level) to meet their elective requirements. Students should choose the classes that best suit their career goals and interests. Outside of the PAD courses, students have chosen Political Science (PSC), Master of Science in Administration (MSA) and Geography (GEO.) Talk to the MPA Director to learn more about elective courses.

Can I really contact the MPA Director?

Yes! Part of having an effective graduate education is contact with your course professors and the MPA Director. At a minimum, you should contact the MPA Director at least once a semester to assess your course schedule and whether you are on track for graduation.

PLANNED ROTATION OF ONLINE MPA COURSES

Below is the planned sequence of course offerings within the MPA program. Use this sequence to help sketch out your program plan and anticipated graduation date with the MPA Director. Please note that factors outside of the MPA program's control may lead to changes in the planned rotation.

Academic Year 2024-25

Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Summer 2025
PAD 555 (I)	PAD 620 (I)	PAD 714/614 (I)
PAD 610 (I)	PAD 711/611 (I)	PAD 785/685 (I)
PAD 711/611 (I)	PAD 775/675 (I)	PAD 799 (II)
PAD 620 (II)	PAD 521 (II)	
PAD 780/680 (II)	PAD 561 (II)	
	PAD 713/613 (II)	
	PAD 799 (II)	

Academic Year 2025-26

Fall 2025	Spring 2026	Summer 2026
PAD 523 (I)	PAD 623/501 (I)	PAD 521 (I)
PAD 610 (I)	PAD 622/522 (II)	PAD 785/685 (I)
PAD 711/611 (I)	PAD 561 (II)	PAD 620 (II)
PAD 555 (II)	PAD 775/675 (I)	PAD 799 (II)
PAD 773/673 (II)	PAD 780/680 (II)	
PAD 799 (II)	PAD 799 (II)	

Notes:
** Internship and independent study courses are not listed. Please contact the MPA Director to learn how to register for those courses.
*** Other PAD courses not listed are offered on a non-routine basis.

MPA COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

I. MPA Core Courses (Required for all MPA students)

PAD 610 Foundations of Public Administration
This course is an overview of the major themes of modern public administration, including administrative theories and processes, democratic environments, administrative functions and activities, and analytical tools and concepts.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 620 Nonprofit Management
This course is an introduction to the fundamentals of managing organizations in the non-profit sector.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 711/611 Public Personnel Management
This course is designed to provide an overview of personnel management in the public sector.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 713 /613 Public Budgeting and Finance
This course is an advanced study of public budgets and processes. It emphasizes the political nature of budget preparation, adoption, administration, and evaluation at various levels of government.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 714/614 Program Analysis and Evaluation
This course examines the methodology of analyzing and evaluating public programs. It includes the design and use of quantitative and qualitative techniques for predicting and measuring performance.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 773/673 Administration and Ethics in Public Service
This course examines ethical problems faced by participants in a modern administrative system with a focus on their sources and on methods for resolving them.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 775/675 Organization Theory and Behavior
This course is a study of the appropriate design structures for administering complex organizations in the public sector with an emphasis on management, decision-making, and planning.

3 Credit Hours.

PAD 780/680 Public Sector Research Methods
This course is an exploration of research methods used in governmental and public sector organizations.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 799 Public Service Competencies
This is the program's capstone course taken in the last semester. It is an overview and assessment of the competencies needed to be an effective administrator in the public sector.
1 Credit Hour.

PAD 795 Internship in Public Administration
This is the internship course for students without public sector experience. Contact the MPA Director to determine if you need to take this course. The course is a pracademic experience where students apply public administration concepts to a work experience in the public sector.
3 Credit Hours.

II. MPA Electives

PAD 521 Board Governance and Executive Leadership
This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of governance, trusteeship, and executive leadership in nonprofit sector organizations.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 523WI Fundamentals of Grant Writing and Management
This course examines grant seeking, writing, proposal development, management, and evaluation in public and nonprofit organizations. Writing Intensive.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 555 Managing Modern Local Government
This course is an overview of the major themes and issues confronting the management of local government.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 561 Administration and Policy in American State Government
This course analyzes the political, legislative, executive, judicial and administrative processes of American state government with an emphasis on the way they influence public policies.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 623/501 Public Policy Processes and Evaluation

This course provides an introduction to the professional practice of policy analysis.
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 712/612 Public Sector Project Management
This course covers many aspects of public sector project management, including a guiding framework, technical concepts, and political issues
3 Credit Hours.

PAD 785 Strategic Leadership
This course focuses on the study of leadership within public or nonprofit organizations with specific explorations of how to lead and manage.
3 Credit Hours.

Additional graduate level electives are also available in other programs (e.g. Political Science, Master of Science in Administration, and GIS based classes offered by the Department of Geography & Environmental Studies). Contact the MPA Director for more information.

MPA DEGREE

Students in the MPA program at Central Michigan University who focus their studies in the MPA degree will develop and enhance their ability:

- To recognize how power and authority are effectively and responsibly exercised in all organizations;
- To integrate issues of workforce diversity and diversity management in one's leadership style;
- To differentiate the relationship between leading and managing, and how those two functions overlap and differ; and
- To understand how to successfully introduce and manage a learning organization.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPETENCIES CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

The capstone experience for the MPA program is a one-credit hour course, PAD 799 'Public Service Competencies' taken in your last semester in the program. In the course, each student works directly with the course instructor to complete an innovation analysis for a public sector organization using the public service competencies learned throughout the MPA program. For the innovation analysis, each student will complete a paper with some level of data analysis and application of public service theoretical concepts, and a professional presentation of the results of the innovation analysis.

What is innovation? In many ways, innovation is the defining characteristic of being an MPA trained leader, administrator, or researcher. Public sector innovation is about

implementing evidence-based ideas in organizations that can bring forth new endeavors that add value, efficiency, and effectiveness to the organization. Throughout the MPA program, each course presents to students several cases, theoretical concepts, and methodological approaches that can be used to generate new innovation in an organization. In the capstone course, each student will directly apply such concepts and approaches for a real-world public sector organization.

For this type of innovation analysis, pay careful attention to the courses listed below. These courses form the methodological foundation of successfully completing the capstone course. Additionally, these courses are designed in ways in which each student can complete some dimension of their final innovation analysis in each respective course.

Courses Providing the Methodological Foundation for the Capstone Experience

(other MPA courses also provide integral skills and concepts necessary for a successful innovation analysis)

Course	Course Description	Methodological Foundation
PAD 610 Foundations of Public Administration	This course is an overview of the major themes of modern public administration, including administrative theories and processes, democratic environments, administrative functions and activities, and analytical tools and concepts.	o Introduction to the theories of Public Administration o Applying those theories of public administration to management cases occurring in the public sector
PAD 714/614 Program Analysis and Evaluation	This course examines the methodology of analyzing and evaluating public programs. It includes the design and use of quantitative and qualitative techniques for predicting and measuring performance.	o Introduction to the techniques of analyzing organizational performance o Applying those techniques to evaluative cases occurring in the public sector
PAD 780/680 Public Sector Research Methods	This course is an exploration of research methods used in governmental and public sector organizations.	o Introduction to common research methods used in the public sector o Introduction to common statistical tools used in the public sector

		o Applying those tools and methods to public sector cases
PAD 799 Public Service Competencies	This is the program's capstone course taken in the last semester. It is an overview and assessment of the competencies needed to be an effective administrator in the public sector.	o Applying skills and concepts learned in the foundational courses to an innovation analysis for a public sector organization

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

As part of its commitment to the public sector, NASPAA public service values, the mission of Central Michigan University, and its own mission, the MPA program at Central Michigan University actively promotes the integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles in its courses as well as its actions. Specifically, the program promotes a climate of diversity, equity, and inclusion for students, alumni, and external partners through its recruitment, admission practices, student engagement opportunities, and support services. To that end, the program provides faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external partners the tools and skills necessary for communicating and engage a diverse and changing workforce, and a diverse and changing society, in productive and culturally responsive ways. Additionally, many MPA courses actively integrate fundamental concepts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. These courses include courses listed on the following page.

Students should explore the following University offices for more information about diversity, equity, and inclusion practices at Central Michigan University as well as current events related to diversity, equity, and inclusion occurring at the University:

Office for Institutional Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/institutional-diversity-equity-inclusion

Office of Diversity Education
https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/institutional-diversity-equity-inclusion/diversity-education

Office of Civil Rights and Institutional Equity (OCRIE)
https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/OCRIE

Multicultural Academic Student Services (MASS)
https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/multicultural-academic-student-services

Courses Providing Fundamental Concepts Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (other MPA courses also discuss these concepts)

Course	Course Description	Concepts
PAD 610 Foundations of Public Administration	This course is an overview of the major themes of modern public administration, including administrative theories and processes, democratic environments, administrative functions and activities, and analytical tools and concepts.	o Introduction to the theories of Public Administration linked to diversity, equity, and inclusion o Applying those theories of public administration to management cases occurring in the public sector to ensure that the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion are achieved
PAD 711/611 Public Personnel Management	This course is designed to provide an overview of personnel management in the public sector.	o Introduction to how diversity, equity, and inclusion become integrated into public organizations and public law o Applying diversity, equity, and inclusion concepts to better understand management cases in the public sector
PAD 775/675 Organization Theory and Behavior	This course is a study of the appropriate design structures for administering complex organizations in the public sector with an emphasis on management, decision-making, and planning.	o Overview on how organizations can use concepts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion to improve decision-making and enhance organizational performance

INTERNSHIPS

For MPA students without public sector experience, this requirement can be satisfied by taking the internship course PAD 795. To register for that course please contact the program's Internship Director, Dr. Emma Powell at: powel3ea@cmich.edu

For MPA students with public sector experience, the internship requirement can be replaced by taking an additional MPA elective.

Experience in the following types of organizations can count as valid public sector experience to satisfy the internship requirement:

International Organizations	Nonprofit Organizations
National Governments	Educational Administration
U.S. Federal Government	Public Corporations
State (or Sub-National Governments)	Public-Private Partnerships
Local Governments (and other types of local organizations)	Advocacy Organizations
Regional Governments	Contractors Serving Public Sector Organizations
Courts and Court Systems	Public Research Organizations
Military Service	

PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT

MPA students with public sector experience can substitute up to six hours of academic credit with prior learning credit. These experiences must be from the previous 7 years or the completion date of the students most recent undergraduate degree. Prior learning credits are assessed and awarded based on months of relevant experience (10-15 months: 1 credit; 16-20 months: 2 credits; 21-25 months: 3 credits; 26-30 months: 4 credits; 31-35 months: 5 credits; 36-40+ months: 6 credits.) Students seeking prior learning credit should contact the MPA Director before they begin the program.

To apply for prior learning credit, a student constructs a portfolio describing their learning experiences. The portfolio is first evaluated for approval by the MPA program. From there, the portfolio is formally submitted for approval by the University's Prior Learning Assessment Committee.

MPA students can transfer up to nine hours of graduate credit from another institution. Students seeking transfer credit should contact the MPA Director before they begin the program.

The process for transferring graduate credit begins with the student submitting the course syllabus and course description for each graduate course being transferred into the MPA program as well as the student's academic transcript from the institution where the graduate credit was taken. From there, the MPA program's Transfer Review Committee evaluates the course objectives of each course and the grade achieved in each course to determine if the course can be transferred into the MPA program.

CMU has the following policies regarding graduate transfer credit (see the CMU Graduate Bulletin for more information).

1. *Credits must have been earned at a regionally accredited higher education institution or one of recognized standing (at the time the credits were earned) as defined by the College of Graduate Studies.*
2. *The credits are not in violation of any pertinent university regulation, procedure, or policy.*
3. *The credits do not correspond to a course previously taken at CMU.*
4. *The credits were earned within the time limit for program completion.*
5. *The credits are appropriate to the student's program and are not in conflict with credit limitation specified elsewhere in the Graduate Bulletin.*
6. *As certified on the official graduate transcript, courses must be at the graduate level.*
7. *The grade for the credits must be B or higher. Ungraded course work will not be accepted in transfer unless accompanied by evidence that the work was of B or higher quality. Military coursework with a grade of outstanding or excellent is transferable. At the discretion of the department, coursework that is not transferable may be considered for prior learning credit.*
8. *The student is in good standing (cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher) at the institution at which the credit was earned.*
9. *Doctoral degree students must have regular admission to their degree program.*
10. *The credits must be approved by the student's academic advisor and Program Director or Department Chair.*
11. *Courses earned by correspondence will be eligible for graduate transfer credit unless otherwise stipulated in department admission requirements.*
12. *Transfer credits must be earned within the time limit for program completion and are not eligible for extension of time consideration.*

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

You can build your resume by completing a postgraduate micro credential like a graduate certificate. A graduate certificate is a narrowly focused, specialized, credit-based academic credential. When successfully completed, it will show up on your graduate transcript. Students can earn a graduate certificate as a stand-alone credential, or they can earn the certificate as a part of their master's degree. Typically, the credits earned for the certificate will count toward your MPA elective courses. CMU offers graduate certificates in a wide range of fields.

The MPA program's Nonprofit Leadership certificate is for students who seek advanced training in the field of nonprofit executive decision making. All 12 credits successfully earned with the certificate program can be transferred toward the MPA degree. In addition, the coursework in this graduate certificate is aligned with the industry-recognized Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP) credential (see next section.) Completion of this graduate certificate will satisfy the academic component of the CNP and prepare students to take the CNP exam.

Nonprofit Leadership Graduate Certificate Required Courses
◦PAD 521 Board Governance and Executive Leadership (3 credits)
◦PAD 523 Grant Writing and Management (3 credits)
◦PAD 522 Strategic Planning for Public/Nonprofit Organizations (3 credits)
◦PAD 620 Nonprofit Leadership (3 credits)

*Note that the first of the Nonprofit Leadership Certificate is set to begin in the online format in Spring 2025.

CERTIFIED NONPROFIT PROFESSIONAL (CNP) CREDENTIAL

The Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP) credential is the only nationally recognized credential in nonprofit management. The CNP is a competency-based credential that signals to employers your preparation to lead and perform in your nonprofit organization.

CMU is a partner campus with the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance (NLA.) This affiliation means that the MPA will cover your CNP program costs (which can be costly to earn on your own) upon successful completion of the CNP requirements (below.) Additionally, CNP learners have access to CNP Central, an online community for networking, learning, and resource sharing. CNP Central also provides career resources, a comprehensive study guide, and the CNP exam.

To earn a CNP, students must:

1. Complete the Nonprofit Leadership Graduate Certificate. These classes can be used to fulfill MPA electives, or the certificate can be a stand-alone micro-credential.
2. Complete 20 hours of nonprofit volunteer service
3. Complete a 120-hour professional experience at a nonprofit (paid or unpaid)
4. Attend a nonprofit sector conference
5. Pass the CNP exam

To learn more, please contact Sharon Kukla-Acevedo kukla1sa@cmich.edu.

COURSE REPEAT POLICY

The course repeat policy can be found here: CMU Bulletins - Graduate Repeat Course Policy (smartcatalogiq.com). Students can repeat a course 2 times; grade from final attempt is used in GPA.

INCOMPLETE AND DEFERRED GRADES

Review the CMU policy on Incomplete and Deferred Grades here, CMU Bulletins - Grade, Incomplete and Deferred (smartcatalogiq.com).

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT/EXTENDED ACCESS

Continuous enrollment is no longer required for all graduate students at Central Michigan University. Students may lose access to email when not enrolled.

Apply for Extended Access using this link, https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/office-research-graduate-studies/graduate-studies/student-services/forms.

INACTIVITY

Students become inactive after 3 years of no enrollment (they need to re-apply to the program to enroll in courses). CMU Bulletins - Period of Inactivity (smartcatalogiq.com).

ACADEMIC PROBATION AND DEMATRICULATION

Students should review the Academic Probation and Dematriculation policy CMU Bulletins - Graduate Academic and Retention Standards (smartcatalogiq.com).

TIME FOR COMPLETION

Courses expire after 7 years when used toward a Graduate Certificate, Masters or Specialist Degrees. Transfer credit courses cannot be extended.

Time for completion of degree' policies, 2024-2025 Graduate Bulletin » Admission » Duration of Admission Status: Time for Completion of Degree; and link to 'Extension of

time' forms, https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/office-research-graduate-studies/graduate-studies/student-services/forms.

MPA GRADUATION PROCEDURES

CMU has a specific procedure for graduating. Please follow these procedures specified in the 2024-25 Graduate Bulletin to ensure a timely graduation.

Graduation Procedures
All students must submit a graduation application; the link can be found on the Degree Progress or the Registrar's website. Degrees are conferred six times each year: March, May, June, August, October, and December. Submissions should be based on the following timeline: October 1 for spring graduation, February 1 for summer graduation, and April 1 for fall graduation. There is a $50 application fee.

Application for Graduation
Degrees are not awarded automatically upon completion of scholastic requirements. Students should submit a graduation application by the semester prior to their anticipated graduation date. Applications can be found on CentralLink or the Registrar's website. It is the responsibility of the student to contact their advisor to obtain thesis and/or other graduation-related approvals.

Graduation Audit
After a student completes a Graduation Application, the student's record is audited to verify completion of program requirements. After the audit is complete, the student will be e-mailed an audit form indicating either that all requirements are satisfied or that the student has requirements left to complete, indicating what requirements the student must complete. Students who fail to complete requirements by the deadline will receive a letter indicating that they will not graduate. Students must reapply to graduate in a subsequent semester; the fee for each subsequent graduate application is $50. Students can monitor their own progress toward graduation via Degree Progress.

Diplomas
Following the graduation date and submission of all grades, diplomas are mailed over a six to eight week period. Diplomas are mailed to the permanent address on record. Diplomas are not distributed during graduation ceremonies. Students who fail to meet requirements will be notified and advised to apply for the next graduation period.

Graduation Ceremonies
All students receiving degrees and graduate certificates are invited to participate in the official graduation ceremonies conducted in May and December of each year on Central Michigan University's main campus in Mount Pleasant.

To participate in the official graduation ceremony, students are required to have submitted a graduation application and be enrolled in all remaining requirements to graduate. Information about the ceremony is emailed to prospective graduates about four to six weeks prior to the event.

Graduation Application Periods	Deadline
August*	February 1
October*	April 1
December	April 1
March*	October 1
May	October 1
June*	February 1
August*	February 1

*There are two commencement ceremonies held each year: May and December. Spring graduates can participate in May commencement, and summer and fall graduates can participate in December commencement. See https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/office-research-graduate-studies/graduate-studies/student-services/deadlines for updates.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The MPA program has two affiliated student organizations that you can join. These include the following:

The Central Michigan University Student Chapter of the International City/County Management Association encourages student scholarship relevant to the quality of local government as achieved through the professional management of local public services. The chapter promotes the advancement of student knowledge about public service management by supporting student explorations of the ways public services are delivered on behalf of local communities. The chapter fosters student appreciation for integrity, professionalism and creative performance in the management of local governmental and related public service activities. Membership in the chapter is open to all Central Michigan University students in good standing academically who are interested in local government and the management of local public services.

For additional information about the chapter, contact Dr. Thomas Greitens at: Anspach Hall 247B, 989-774-3862, thomas.greitens@cmich.edu.

The Central Michigan University Chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha, the National Honor Society of Public Affairs and Administration, encourages and recognizes outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in public affairs and public administration, promotes the advancement of education and practice in the arts and sciences of public affairs and public administration, and fosters integrity, professionalism and creative performance in the conduct of governmental and related public service activities. Membership in the chapter is limited to those of academic excellence and achievement and/or distinguished public service who are or have been enrolled or teach in public affairs or public administration programs, or who serve or have served with distinction in the public service.

The NASPAA accredited MPA program would like to invite our students and alumni to consider membership in our chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha. Recognition by Pi Alpha Alpha is the premier academic distinction available to students of public administration or public policy; serving to identify the best students in the discipline both nationally and internationally (http://pialphaalpha.org). This is evidenced by the following eligibility requirements:

1. A GPA of at least 3.7.
2. Students must have completed at least fifty percent (50%) of the required course work (a minimum of 18 semester hours).

Membership in the chapter is open to qualifying current students and alumni and requires national membership dues of $50 (one-time fee).

Those who are looking to join please feel free to contact: Kay Purtill, Anspach Hall 247A, 989-774-3302, purti1k@cmich.edu.

MPA ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD

Established in 2009, the MPA Alumni Advisory Board meets at least once a year to help ensure continued programmatic success for the MPA program. Board membership includes alumni of the program active in public service.

Vision Statement
To assure program excellence in the development of professionals who reflect quality, competence, and ethical behavior in the practice of public administration.

Mission Statement

The Master of Public Administration Advisory Board strives to serve five fundamental objectives:

1. To provide MPA students with a comprehensive and current professional education that will prepare them for entry and mid-career positions in public and nonprofit service. It will regularly review the demand for particular competencies as professional needs emerge and change, and in light of these suggest program improvements.

2. To provide students and alumni with a voice in service to their academic and professional needs relative to the MPA program and its administration, and to provide a liaison for dialogue with alumni and students, and between faculty and alumni and students.

3. To provide faculty and staff with assistance in growing the MPA program by contributing to recruiting students and faculty, locating internships, and placing students in professional positions in public and nonprofit service.

4. To provide guidance and direction to faculty when designing value-driven new courses or modules within existing courses in areas such as professional ethics, diversity, and information technology and management.

5. To provide outreach to the profession by orienting the MPA toward new linkages and educating practitioners to the MPA as a professional degree.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The School of Politics, Society, Justice and Public Service awards the following two scholarships each year. Students can apply for these scholarships by emailing application materials to Kay Purtill, purti1k@cmich.edu, by February 15th. Applications include a formal letter detailing their fit with the scholarship focus, a resume, and contact information for three references who can speak to the students' career interests in state and/or local government.

Barbara P. Greene Endowed Scholarship in Political Science

Established in 2004 by Sarah and Edward Cohen (daughter and son-in-law) and friends of Barbara Greene. Barbara was a Professor of Public Administration and Chair of the Political Science Department prior to her death in 2001. Income from this endowment supports a scholarship for students enrolled in the School of Politics, Society, Justice, and Public Service who have an interest in state and local government. One scholarship is typically awarded each year.

Scholarship Requirements

- *Minimum GPA 3.00 on a 4.0 scale.*
- *Preference is given first to MPA graduate students, followed by undergraduate seniors and juniors.*
- *The award will be made only if highly qualified applicants apply.*

Edward H. Potthoff Scholarship in Local Government Administration
Applicants must be graduate students in a public administration curriculum. They need a demonstrated career interest in local government, a record of participation at that level, and directly relevant coursework. One scholarship is typically awarded each year.

Scholarship Requirements

- *The award will be made only if highly qualified applicants apply.*

MENTORS

New students seeking additional networking within the public service community are invited to participate in the MPA program's mentor program. In this program, interested students are matched with an alumnus of the program or other public service professional based on career goals. During a semester, the mentor and the student meet to discuss career goals, existing networking opportunities, and the best path forward to enhance a student's career in the public sector.

For more information on this program, please contact either the MPA Director, Dr. Sharon Kukla-Acevedo, kukla1sa@cmich.edu or Dr. Larry Adamitis, adami1l@cmich.edu.

STRESS MANAGEMENT & WELL-BEING

Many student resources exist at Central Michigan University to help students confidentially manage stress and stressful situations. These resources include:

Faculty
To maintain confidentiality, students do not have to discuss their situation with their course instructors or MPA faculty. However, faculty are there for students if needed. Students should feel free to discuss these issues with faculty.

CMU Counseling Center
CMU's Counseling Center is located at 102 Foust Hall and is staffed by health professionals. The center provides free and confidential counseling services for currently

enrolled CMU students. The Center is open 8 am to noon, and 1 pm to 5 pm (all times eastern standard time) Monday through Friday. Call 989-774-3381 to make an appointment.

Additional information on the Counseling Center can be found here: https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/counseling-center.

CMU Sexual Aggression Peer Advocates (SAPA)
SAPA is a survivor-centered and trauma-informed paraprofessional student organization serving those affected by sexual aggression. Services include a confidential support line and direct in-person services. SAPA only operates during the Fall and Spring semesters. Services are not operational during CMU recognized breaks or during the Summer. Call 989-774-CALL (2255) for services. There is also a text option: 989-621-3359.

Additional information on SAPA can be found here: https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/sexual-aggression-peer-advocates

24/7 Resources
Listening Ear Crisis Center
989-772-2918 for students living in Mt. Pleasant.
989-775-1520 for students living outside of the Mt. Pleasant area.
https://www.listeningear.com/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
988
Online chats are available.
https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/

Crisis Text Line
Text HOME to 741741
https://www.crisistextline.org/

RISE (Recovery, Independence, Safety & Empowerment)
Formerly Women's Aid
989-773-0078 (general business line)
844-349-6177 (24-hour crisis line)
https://www.riseadvocacy.org/

Trevor Lifeline
866-488-7386
Text START to 678678
Online chats are available.
https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now/

Trans Lifeline
877-565-8860
https://translifeline.org/

Veterans Crisis Line
800-273-8255 and press 1
Text 838255
Online chats are available.
https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/hotline

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS & STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

MPA students are expected to act professionally in all settings. Professional behaviors include the following within the MPA program:

- *Completing all readings and assignments by the expected due date.*
- *Treating fellow classmates, instructors, and guests with respect and support.*
- *Producing work that is free of plagiarism, uses the APA style format, includes the student's own interpretations and analyses of topics, and could be used in any public sector organization.*
- *Serving as a role model during class and outside of class (i.e., social events, conferences, and study abroad experiences).*

Additionally, student behaviors should conform to the public service values of the MPA program at Central Michigan University both during their time in the MPA program and throughout their subsequent career after graduation. These include the following:

- *Pursue the public interest with accountability and transparency;*
- *Serve professionally with competence, efficiency, and objectivity;*
- *Act ethically so as to uphold the public trust; and*
- *Demonstrate respect, equity, and fairness to dealings with citizens and fellow public servants.*

As part of their professional behaviors, students should also read and adhere to CMU's Policy on Academic Integrity. The policy is located at:
https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/office-of-student-conduct/university-policies

Students should also become familiar and adhere to the ethical principles established by the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). These principles include the following:

ASPA Code of Ethics[1]

The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) advances the science, art, and practice of public administration. The Society affirms its responsibility to develop the spirit of responsible professionalism within its membership and to increase awareness and commitment to ethical principles and standards among all those who work in public service in all sectors. To this end, we, the members of the Society, commit ourselves to uphold the following principles:

1. Advance the Public Interest
Promote the interests of the public and put service to the public above service to oneself.

2. Uphold the Constitution and the Law
Respect and support government constitutions and laws, while seeking to improve laws and policies to promote the public good.

3. Promote Democratic Participation
Inform the public and encourage active engagement in governance. Be open, transparent, and responsive, and respect and assist all persons in their dealings with public organizations.

4. Strengthen Social Equity
Treat all persons with fairness, justice, and equality and respect individual differences, rights, and freedoms. Promote affirmative action and other initiatives to reduce unfairness, injustice, and inequality in society.

5. Fully Inform and Advise
Provide accurate, honest, comprehensive, and timely information and advice to elected and appointed officials and governing board members, and to staff members in your organization.

6. Demonstrate Personal Integrity
Adhere to the highest standards of conduct to inspire public confidence and trust in public service.

7. Promote Ethical Organizations
Strive to attain the highest standards of ethics, stewardship, and public service in organizations that serve the public.

8. Advance Professional Excellence

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[1] Information on the ASPA Code of Ethics is quoted from: https://www.aspanet.org/ASPA/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics.aspx

Strengthen personal capabilities to act competently and ethically and encourage the professional development of others.

ICMA Code of Ethics[2]

The mission of ICMA is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide. To further this mission, certain principles, as enforced by the Rules of Procedure, shall govern the conduct of every member of ICMA. These include the following:

Tenet 1
We believe professional management is essential to efficient and democratic local government by elected officials.

Tenet 2
Affirm the dignity and worth of local government services and maintain a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.

Tenet 3
Demonstrate by word and action the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in all public, professional, and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the trust and respect of the elected and appointed officials, employees, and the public.

Tenet 4
Serve the best interests of the people.

Tenet 5
Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts, and technical and professional advice about policy options; and collaborate with them in setting goals for the community and organization.

Tenet 6
Recognize that elected representatives are accountable to their community for the decisions they make; members are responsible for implementing those decisions.

Tenet 7
Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.

Tenet 8

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[2] Information on the ICMA Code of Ethics is quoted from: https://icma.org/icma-code-ethics

Make it a duty continually to improve the member's professional ability and to develop the competence of associates in the use of management techniques.

Tenet 9
Keep the community informed on local government affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and all local government officers; emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public; and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.

Tenet 10
Resist any encroachment on professional responsibilities, believing the member should be free to carry out official policies without interference, and handle each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.

Tenet 11
Handle all matters of personnel on the basis of merit so that fairness and impartiality govern a member's decisions, pertaining to appointments, pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline.

Tenet 12
Public office is a public trust. A member shall not leverage his or her position for personal gain or benefit.

FIVE STEPS FOR SUCCESS

1.   Plan Your Time Carefully
Most MPA students work full-time in the public sector. Faculty within the program recognize this but also must offer courses that achieve meaningful learning results for students. To do well in the program, you must plan for a significant amount of work in each MPA class each week. A good way to approximate time is to plan on working on class assignments three hours per each credit hour taken. Thus, for a three-credit hour course, you should work on your assignments and reading through your course materials at least nine hours per week.

2.   Use Data and Concepts to Justify Your Conclusions
Part of being a professional manager is moving from intuition-based decisions to decisions based on data and theoretical concepts. Thus, as you complete assignments in your MPA courses move away from answering questions with subjective assessments (e.g. 'In my opinion,' based answers). Instead, use data from cases as well as theoretical concepts discussed in class to justify an objective based diagnosis of a problem or event. Be objective, not subjective, in your work.

3.   Use Citations Strategically and Correctly
Most MPA courses require many written-based assignments. In those assignments, make sure to use citations strategically and correctly. For instance, if you are diagnosing a management error in a case presented in a class assignment, cite your course texts or other academic sources to justify your answer. In that citation, explain the concept in your own words and then cite where the concept originated from. Avoid using direct quotes from the texts when you discuss these concepts.

4.   Avoid Plagiarism
Plagiarism is a serious allegation and can eventually result in a student's dismissal from the University. Make sure you understand plagiarism and the University's policy on it. Please see the website below for more information:

https://libguides.cmich.edu/writinghelp/plagiarism

5.   Get Involved
The MPA program has two student groups where you can become involved in public service activities. Take advantage of such experiences to further expand your network in the public service community. Additionally, think about participating in the MPA program's Alumni Advisory Board after graduation.