

MPA Program Internship Guidelines

The internship experience is an important component of the MPA program. All students without public sector work experience are required to perform an internship, write an internship report, and conduct an oral defense of the report.

The Internship

With consultation from the MPA Director, MPA candidates should select an internship in an area of professional interest. The internship can be paid or unpaid and should involve approximately 300 hours of work. For example, MPA candidates could work part time during a 15-week academic semester (about 20 hours per week) or full time during a 10-week summer session (about 30 hours per week). Students should enroll in PA 685-80 and PA 685-81 when conducting the internship and writing the internship report.

Internship Report

The written report provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the internship experience. Students should select an MPA faculty member to supervise the writing of the report. The selected faculty member will provide advice and comments on drafts of the internship report.

The report should be approximately 30-40 pages and include the following sections:

- 1) Title page
- 2) Table of contents
- 3) Overview of the agency in which the MPA candidate worked
- 4) Overview of the specific duties of the MPA candidate
- 5) Discussion of how internship experience relates to core MPA classes
- 6) Policy recommendations for the agency
- 7) Conclusion
- 8) Appendix

The final draft of the internship report is due to MPA faculty members by November 20 in the fall semester, April 15 in the spring semester, and July 20 in the summer session. It is the MPA candidate's responsibility to submit copies of the report to MPA faculty by these deadlines.

Defense of Internship Report

The MPA candidate must defend the internship in front of the MPA faculty. During the defense, the candidate will give a five-minute overview of the experience and then answer questions about the report. Based on the quality of the report and defense, MPA candidates will be assigned one of the following grades: pass with distinction, pass plus, pass, pass with conditions, or fail.

For more information please contact:

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