

CSUF MPA Student Handbook

Academic Year 2026-2027

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Division of Politics, Administration & Justice

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program

California State University, Fullerton

CSUF

Public Administration

**Division of Politics,
Administration, and Justice**

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF). This student handbook contains helpful information to guide students through the MPA Program.

Please note: This handbook is intended as a convenience and guide for students. In all cases, the [CSUF University Catalog](#) and official university web pages are the authoritative source of truth for program requirements, policies, and procedures. Where this handbook and official university publications differ, the university publications govern.

Acknowledgment of Effort

The CSUF MPA Student Handbook was originally developed by Dr. Samuel B. Stone, whose efforts ensured that MPA students had a structured and accessible guide to navigate the program. As the primary author and editor from 2015 to 2023, Dr. Stone created a resource that has supported countless students in their academic and professional journeys.

The handbook is currently maintained by Dr. David P. Adams, who continues to update and refine the content to ensure that it remains relevant and useful for current and future MPA students.

2. Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

We prepare leaders to address complex social issues, uphold democratic values, and foster a commitment to ethical, equitable, and inclusive public service in Orange County and beyond.

Vision

Our vision is to be a program recognized for excellence in value-driven public service and community engagement.

Program Values

Our program values reflect the core commitments of public administration. They guide our teaching, scholarship, and community engagement, and shape the professional identity we foster in future public service leaders.

- **Accountability:** Promoting democratic transparency, responsiveness, and evidence-informed decision-making to uphold public trust and integrity.
- **Ethics:** Advancing integrity, fairness, and service to the public good by fostering ethical reasoning and critical awareness in public administration.
- **Collaboration:** Cultivating collaborative skills for cross-sector partnerships, networked governance, and inclusive stakeholder engagement.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Instilling habits of continuous learning, reflective practice, and professional development to support adaptive leaders and long-term impact.

3. NASPAA Accreditation

The MPA Program is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). As such, the goal of the program is to have students acquire the following competencies:

- Lead and manage in public governance
- Participate in and contribute to the policy process
- Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions
- Articulate and apply a public service perspective
- Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

The program has been accredited since 1989 and was most recently reaccredited by NASPAA in 2017. To learn more about NASPAA, please visit their website at www.naspaa.org.

4. General Facts

The CSUF MPA Program has been offered since 1968 and is the only public MPA Program in Orange County. The program typically enrolls around 100 students and graduates approximately 30 students each year. Alumni work in local governments, county agencies, and nonprofit organizations, particularly in Orange and Los Angeles counties.

Curriculum and Format

The curriculum emphasizes ethical and evidence-based decision-making and prepares students for management and leadership roles in the public sector. Because most students are working

professionals, courses are offered in the evening from 7:00 to 9:45 PM, Monday through Thursday, in face-to-face, synchronous online, and hybrid formats. Students typically take one or two courses per semester.

Student Profile

Most students are working professionals with at least three years of experience in public agencies. Many enroll because their supervisors recommend the MPA as a step toward leadership. Others already hold supervisory or managerial roles and seek to build on their expertise. A smaller number of pre-service students enroll to gain foundational knowledge before entering the field.

Program Structure

The program does not currently offer a dual degree option. It is supported by nine core faculty members, whose credentials are listed at the end of this handbook. The MPA Program is housed in the Division of Politics, Administration & Justice (Gordon Hall 511), which is part of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at CSUF.

5. Admissions

We have both Spring and Fall admissions. Spring admissions typically open on August 1 and close on or around November 1, while fall admissions typically open on October 1 and close on or around April 30.

Admissions Process

The prospective student applies to the university online at Cal State Apply: www.calstate.edu/apply

The Cal State Apply portal will require you to include:

- A set of unofficial transcripts from all universities and community colleges you have attended
- Statement of purpose/interest
- Current resume
- Two letters of recommendation (if possible one from an immediate supervisor and one from a professor).

You are required to have official transcripts sent to CSUF's Office of Admissions and Records. You must send a set of transcripts from all universities and community colleges you have attended.

These should be originals sent from the institution. Further instructions can be found here: admissions.fullerton.edu/prospectivestudent/college_transcripts.php

- **Mail:** California State University, Fullerton, Office of Admissions, P.O. Box 6900, Fullerton, CA 92834-6900
- **In-Person:** California State University, Fullerton, Office of Admissions, 800 N. State College Blvd., Fullerton, CA 92831
- **Electronic:** admissions.fullerton.edu/prospectivestudent/admissions_graduate.php
- **Email:** admissions@fullerton.edu
- **MPA Admissions Website:** paj.fullerton.edu/publicadministration/master/mpaadmissions.html

6. Admissions Criteria

To be considered for admission to the MPA Program, applicants must have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.75. The average GPA of admitted students is 3.3, and because we receive more applications than we can accommodate, admission is competitive.

We encourage applicants with experience in the public or nonprofit sector, as this background strengthens an application. The statement of purpose is an important part of the review process, providing an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to write at the graduate level and articulate your goals. We take a holistic approach to admissions, considering academic performance, professional experience, the quality of the written statement, and letters of recommendation. Strong undergraduate grades can offset the need for extensive supporting materials, but all applicants are encouraged to highlight their strengths.

GRE scores are not required. We welcome applicants from diverse academic and professional backgrounds who are committed to advancing in public service.

7. Cost of Degree

The cost of the MPA degree is based on the number of units taken each semester. The program is designed to be completed in three years, with students taking two courses each fall and spring semester. The cost of tuition is set by the university and is subject to change. The following information is based on the 2026–2027 academic year.

Tuition Cost

Tuition and Campus Fees for Academic Year 2026–2027 (per semester):

- **Part-Time (0-6 units per semester):** \$3,321/semester
- **Full-Time (7 or more units per semester):** \$5,115/semester

Non-resident students pay an additional \$471 per unit of enrollment. For more information, visit Student Business Services: sbs.fullerton.edu/students/all-student-fees.

2026-2027 Standard 9-Month Student Budget

Full-Time Student Budget (7+ units per semester) by Housing Situation

Expense Category	Commuter (with parents)	On-Campus	Off-Campus
Mandatory Tuition	\$8,548	\$8,548	\$8,548
Campus Fees	\$1,678	\$1,678	\$1,678
Books & Supplies	\$1,078	\$1,078	\$1,078
Housing	\$0	\$14,890	\$13,625
Food	\$11,162	\$6,640	\$7,431
Miscellaneous	\$3,094	\$3,274	\$3,926
Transportation	\$2,846	\$1,678	\$2,906
Loan Fee	\$160	\$160	\$160
Total	\$28,566	\$37,946	\$39,352

Part-Time Student Budget (0-6 units per semester) by Housing Situation

Expense Category	Commuter (with parents)	On-Campus	Off-Campus
Mandatory Tuition	\$4,960	\$4,960	\$4,960
Campus Fees	\$1,678	\$1,678	\$1,678
Books & Supplies	\$1,078	\$1,078	\$1,078
Housing	\$0	\$14,890	\$13,625
Food	\$11,162	\$6,640	\$7,431
Miscellaneous	\$3,094	\$3,274	\$3,926
Transportation	\$2,846	\$1,678	\$2,906
Loan Fee	\$160	\$160	\$160
Total	\$24,978	\$34,358	\$35,764

Key Considerations

- **Mandatory Tuition** refers to the state tuition fee based on enrollment status (part-time or full-time).

- **Campus Fees** are institutional charges assessed to all enrolled students.
- **Books & Supplies** account for necessary educational materials.
- **Housing** and **Food** expenses vary significantly based on living arrangements.
- **Miscellaneous** includes other personal and extracurricular expenses.
- **Transportation** costs depend on commuting needs and distances.
- **Loan Fee** represents charges associated with processing educational loans.

Additional Cost Information

- The Graduate Cost of Attendance page provides the official cost of attendance figures used to determine financial aid eligibility: www.fullerton.edu/financialaid/understanding-aid/cost-of-attendance/graduate-coa.html.
- For a full breakdown of tuition and campus fees, visit Student Business Services: sbs.fullerton.edu/students/all-student-fees.

Financial Aid Availability

- Comprehensive information on financial aid availability can be found at the Office of Financial Aid: www.fullerton.edu/financialaid/
- FAFSA is available for graduate students. Please visit CSUF's Financial Aid website for more information on financial aid: [Graduates - Office of Financial Aid | CSUF](#)
- From time to time, the Division of Politics, Administration & Justice offers assistantships for graduate students. For more information about this, contact the MPA Coordinator.

8. Structure of the Program

General

Conferral of the MPA degree requires 12 courses (36 units) with a 'B' (3.0) average or better (with at least a 'C' in all courses) and successful passage of the comprehensive exam in general public administration.

Core Courses

Students are required to take courses in:

- Introduction to Public Administration
- Organizational theory
- Research methods
- Public finance
- Human resources
- Local government management, state and local government, or public policy
- Capstone course in public administration theory

Concentrations

The program has concentrations in Human Resource Management, Local Government Management, Public Finance Management, and Public Policy. Students are required to choose one (and only one) concentration and take the required courses in that area. The MPA degree is a total of 36 units regardless of which concentration is selected.

9. Degree Requirements

Prerequisites

Students admitted to the program must have completed courses in three areas:

1. **American Government or U.S. History:** must be completed BEFORE beginning MPA coursework.
2. **Statistics or Research Methods:** must be completed by the end of the second semester in the program. Any course in statistics or quantitative research methods is sufficient.
3. **Macro- or Microeconomics:** must be completed by the end of the second semester in the program. Any course in economics is sufficient.

The prerequisite courses may be at any undergraduate college level. All prerequisite courses must be taken at an accredited college (including community college) or university. Students must earn a

'C' or better in these courses. Prerequisites do not count toward your graduate degree or graduate GPA.

Students will know at the time of their admission whether they will need to complete prerequisites. If you have not fulfilled these prerequisites as part of your undergraduate degree, you must submit your transcripts indicating that you have passed these classes to the MPA advisor before you can be placed in a concentration.

Public Administration Core

Students must take all of the following courses:

- **POSC 509** Foundations of Public Administration
- **POSC 521** Capstone Seminar: Public Administration Theory
- **POSC 523** Administrative Research and Analysis
- **POSC 526** Public Organizational Theory & Behavior
- **POSC 571** Public Budgeting and Finance
- **POSC 572** Human Resources Management for Public Organizations

And at least one of the following:

- **POSC 519** State and Local Government
- **POSC 525** Local Government Management
- **POSC 528** Seminar in Public Policy

All core courses must be completed before students take the comprehensive exam.

10. Internship

The internship is required of those few MPA students who have little to no recent experience working in the public or non-profit sector. Students requiring the internship must enroll in the following course:

- **POSC 497** Internship in Public Administration

The required internship includes a 3-unit class with written work requirements and 300 hours of internship experience in a public or nonprofit organization; as fits the mission of the program, most students intern in local government. Several decades of this internship class have resulted in a list of potential internship opportunities that exceeds 80 organizations.

Students can also earn their internship credit by spending a summer in a public or nonprofit agency internship in Washington D.C. These students often intern with a federal or a nonprofit organization.

The internship coordinator has a long list of placement leads for students who need help securing an internship. This list has been cultivated for decades as have program relationships with agencies/alumni who frequently contact the program to invite intern applications.

CSUF MPA students secure paid internships in about one-third of cases.

To offset the opportunity costs of unpaid internships, Bruce Lawson (CSUF MPA 1972), has provided financial support through the Lawson Internship in Public Service Award since 2010. This award provides a \$2,000 scholarship to one student each semester based on a competitive application that is evaluated by program faculty.

11. Program Concentrations

There are currently four concentrations within the program. All students must choose one. They are:

- **Human Resource Management**
- **Local Government Management**
- **Public Financial Management**
- **Public Policy**

Students must choose a concentration during their second semester. Students are encouraged to select a concentration that is complementary to their existing experience or skillset.

Concentration in Human Resources Management

Core Course:

- **POSC 572** Human Resource Management for Public Organizations

Concentration Electives (take any two):

- **MGMT 441** Labor–Management Relations
- **POSC 423** Diversity in Public Management
- **POSC 475** Administrative Law
- **POSC 522** Seminar in Public Personnel Administration
- **POSC 582** Organizational Development and Change

Advisor-Approved Electives (must take 1–3):

- **CRJU 491** Applied Policy Research
- **MGMT 441** Labor-Management Relations
- **POSC 421** Government and the Economy
- **POSC 423** Diversity in Public Management
- **POSC 424** Health Policy
- **POSC 425** Policy Analysis
- **POSC 426** Education Politics and Policy
- **POSC 427** Metropolitan Politics and Policymaking
- **POSC 430** Nonprofit Organizations and Advocacy
- **POSC 446** Corruption, Ethics and Public Policy
- **POSC 459** Social Welfare Politics and Policy
- **POSC 475** Administrative Law
- **POSC 478** Urban Planning Principles
- **POSC 484** Urban Planning Methods
- **POSC 491** Applied Policy Research
- **POSC 519** State and Local Government
- **POSC 522** Seminar in Public Personnel Administration
- **POSC 525** Local Government Management

- **POSC 528** Seminar in Public Policy
- **POSC 580** Emergency Management in Public Administration
- **POSC 582** Organizational Development and Change
- **POSC 583** Public Budgeting and Finance II
- **POSC 588** Collaborative Governance
- **PUBH 424** Health Policy

Concentration in Local Government Management

Core Course:

- **POSC 525** Local Government Management

Concentration Core Courses (take either one):

- **POSC 427** Metropolitan Politics and Policymaking
- **POSC 519** State and Local Government

Concentration Electives (take one):

- **POSC 428** Environmental Policy and Politics
- **POSC/GEOG 478** Urban Planning Principles
- **POSC/GEOG 484** Planning Methods
- **POSC 427** Metropolitan Politics and Policymaking
- **POSC 519** State and Local Government
- **POSC 580** Emergency Management in Public Administration
- **POSC 583** Public Budgeting and Finance II
- **POSC 588** Collaborative Governance
- **ENST 595T** Selected Topics in Environmental Problems (note: only certain sections of this course will count. Be sure to check with the MPA advisor in advance)

Advisor-Approved Electives (must take 1-3):

- **CRJU 491** Applied Policy Research
- **MGMT 441** Labor-Management Relations
- **POSC 421** Government and the Economy
- **POSC 423** Diversity in Public Management
- **POSC 424** Health Policy
- **POSC 425** Policy Analysis
- **POSC 426** Education Politics and Policy
- **POSC 427** Metropolitan Politics and Policymaking
- **POSC 430** Nonprofit Organizations and Advocacy
- **POSC 446** Corruption, Ethics and Public Policy
- **POSC 459** Social Welfare Politics and Policy
- **POSC 475** Administrative Law
- **POSC 478** Urban Planning Principles
- **POSC 484** Urban Planning Methods
- **POSC 491** Applied Policy Research
- **POSC 519** State and Local Government
- **POSC 522** Seminar in Public Personnel Administration
- **POSC 528** Seminar in Public Policy
- **POSC 580** Emergency Management in Public Administration
- **POSC 582** Organizational Development and Change
- **POSC 583** Public Budgeting and Finance II
- **POSC 588** Collaborative Governance
- **PUBH 424** Health Policy

Concentration in Public Finance Management

Concentration Core Courses (take both):

- **POSC 571** Public Budgeting and Finance
- **POSC 583** Public Budgeting and Finance II

Concentration Electives (take one):

- **POSC 421** Government & the Economy
- **POSC 425** Policy Analysis
- **ECON 416** Benefit Cost and Microeconomic Policy Analysis
- **ECON 417** Public Finance

Advisor-Approved Electives (must take 1-3):

- **CRJU 491** Applied Policy Research
- **ECON 416** Benefit Cost and Microeconomic Policy Analysis
- **ECON 417** Public Finance
- **POSC 421** Government and the Economy
- **POSC 423** Diversity in Public Management
- **POSC 424** Health Policy
- **POSC 425** Policy Analysis
- **POSC 426** Education Politics and Policy
- **POSC 427** Metropolitan Politics and Policymaking
- **POSC 430** Nonprofit Organizations and Advocacy
- **POSC 446** Corruption, Ethics and Public Policy
- **POSC 459** Social Welfare Politics and Policy
- **POSC 475** Administrative Law
- **POSC 478** Urban Planning Principles

- **POSC 484** Urban Planning Methods
- **POSC 491** Applied Policy Research
- **POSC 519** State and Local Government
- **POSC 525** Local Government Management
- **POSC 528** Seminar in Public Policy
- **POSC 580** Emergency Management in Public Administration
- **POSC 582** Organizational Development and Change
- **POSC 588** Collaborative Governance
- **PUBH 424** Health Policy

Concentration in Public Policy

Concentration Core Courses (take both):

- **POSC 425** Policy Analysis
- **POSC 528** Seminar in Public Policy

Concentration Electives (take one):

- **POSC 421** Government and the Economy
- **POSC 426** Education Politics and Policy
- **POSC 427** Metropolitan Politics and Policymaking
- **POSC 430** Nonprofit Organizations and Advocacy
- **CRJU 405** Criminal Justice Policy
- **CRJU/POSC 491** Applied Policy Research
- **ECON 416** Benefit Cost and Microeconomic Policy Analysis
- **PUBH 524** Public Health Administration

Advisor-Approved Electives (take 0–3):

- **CRJU 405** Criminal Justice Policy
- **CRJU 491** Applied Policy Research
- **ECON 416** Benefit Cost and Microeconomic Policy Analysis
- **POSC 421** Government and the Economy
- **POSC 423** Diversity in Public Management
- **POSC 424** Health Policy
- **POSC 426** Education Politics and Policy
- **POSC 427** Metropolitan Politics and Policymaking
- **POSC 446** Corruption, Ethics and Public Policy
- **POSC 475** Administrative Law
- **POSC 478** Urban Planning Principles
- **POSC 484** Urban Planning Methods
- **POSC 491** Applied Policy Research
- **POSC 519** State and Local Government
- **POSC 525** Local Government Management
- **POSC 580** Emergency Management in Public Administration
- **POSC 582** Organizational Development and Change
- **POSC 583** Public Budgeting and Finance II
- **POSC 588** Collaborative Governance
- **PUBH 424** Health Policy
- **PUBH 524** Public Health Administration

12. Comprehensive Exam

Key Information

- The comprehensive exam is a critical graduation requirement designed to assess your mastery of core public administration concepts.
- Students must answer a general public administration question, demonstrating their ability to synthesize and apply knowledge from the MPA curriculum.
- To prepare effectively, begin studying early and maintain thorough notes from all core courses.

Overview

- The comprehensive exam is integrated into **POSC 521: Capstone Seminar in Public Administration Theory**, which serves as the culminating experience of the MPA Program.
- This exam evaluates your ability to:
 - Understand and apply core public administration theories and frameworks
 - Analyze and synthesize public administration literature
 - Apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios
 - Integrate knowledge from across the MPA curriculum

Eligibility Requirements

- To take **POSC 521** and the comprehensive exam, students must have successfully completed all **core MPA courses**.
- The capstone course should be taken in the final semester after fulfilling all other core requirements.

Exam Format

- **Take-home exam** with one week to complete
- **One general public administration question**
- **Blind grading process** to ensure fairness

Grading Criteria

- Comprehensive exam responses are graded independently.
- Students receive one of the following outcomes:
 - **High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, or Fail**
 - A **failing grade** is assigned when at least two exam readers determine that an answer does not meet the required standards.

Retake Policy

- Students who fail any portion of the exam have **one opportunity** to retake the failed section.
- The retake occurs within the same semester, shortly after grades are released.
 - If a student **fails the retake**, they may be disqualified from the program.
 - At the discretion of the MPA faculty, students **may be offered an oral exam** as a final opportunity.
 - **Failure of the oral exam results in disqualification from the MPA Program.**

Additional Details

- Comprehensive exam guidelines, including format and evaluation criteria, will be provided during **POSC 521**.
- Students are encouraged to engage with faculty and peers throughout the course to refine their understanding of core concepts.

Students with Disabilities

- Students with documented disabilities must register with Disability Support Services (DSS) if they will require accommodations so that DSS can make faculty aware of them.

13. Advising

The **graduate advisor** provides academic advising for all MPA students, assisting with:

- Academic program planning
- Selecting a concentration

- Evaluating transfer credits
- Choosing electives
- Understanding administrative procedures

The **MPA Director** can also provide guidance on program requirements, policies, and academic progress. Other faculty members are available for individual mentorship. Each semester, the graduate advisor or MPA Director will share the advising schedule. For additional questions, students may contact the **Division Office at 657-278-3521**, open **Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM**.

Students are responsible for scheduling their advising appointments and staying informed about program requirements. Advising is required at least twice:

1. **By the second semester** - to declare a concentration.
2. **Before the final semester** - when applying for a graduation check.

It is recommended that students maintain personal records of **transcripts, grades, and other academic documents** to support their advising sessions.

Titan Degree Audit (TDA)

The **Titan Degree Audit (TDA)** is an official tool used to track academic progress. It helps students:

- Monitor how completed coursework applies to their **degree, concentration, and general education** requirements.
- Ensure they are meeting graduation requirements.
- Plan their remaining coursework effectively.

The TDA is available through the Student Portal: www.fullerton.edu/portal/

Additional guidance on accessing and using the TDA can be found in the Titan Degree Audit Tutorial: www.fullerton.edu/registrar/tda/

Initial Study Plan

Upon admission, all MPA students are placed in an initial study plan that includes the following core courses:

- **POSC 509** - Foundations of Public Administration
- **POSC 523** - Administrative Research and Analysis
- **POSC 526** - Public Organizational Theory & Behavior
- **POSC 571** - Public Budgeting and Finance
- **POSC 572** - Human Resources Management for Public Organizations

These are the only courses that will count toward the degree until the student meets with an advisor and officially selects a **concentration**. Once a concentration is declared, the remaining degree requirements will appear on the student's TDA.

14. Milestones toward Completion of the Degree

First Semester

Enroll in **POSC 509: Foundations of Public Administration** and up to **one** of the following core courses:

- **POSC 523** - Administrative Research and Analysis
- **POSC 526** - Public Organizational Theory & Behavior
- **POSC 571** - Public Budgeting and Finance
- **POSC 572** - Human Resources Management for Public Organizations

Second Semester

- Meet with the MPA Advisor to select a **concentration**.
- Enroll in up to **two** of the following core courses:
 - **POSC 523** - Administrative Research and Analysis
 - **POSC 526** - Public Organizational Theory & Behavior
 - **POSC 571** - Public Budgeting and Finance
 - **POSC 572** - Human Resources Management for Public Organizations

Completion of 18 Units

Students with a **GPA of 3.70 or higher** are eligible to join **Pi Alpha Alpha**, the national honor society for public administration.

Final Semester

- Enroll in **POSC 521: Capstone Seminar in Public Administration Theory**.
- Take the **comprehensive exam** during the course.

15. CSUF Graduate Academic Standards

General requirements for the graduate degree

Credit Requirements

A master's degree requires a minimum of 30 approved semester units

Study Plan Requirements

Graduate degree Study Plans for each program are defined in the University's official catalog and are modified through changes in the curriculum governed by university policy. The following restrictions apply to Study Plans:

1. For the master's degree, at least twenty-one (21) semester units or half the units required by the program, whichever is larger, must be taken in residence as part of the student's degree program.
 - Courses transferred and courses taken through California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) extension are not in-residence units.
2. A maximum of nine units of extension credit may, with the approval of the departmental graduate advisor, be used to obtain a master's degree, regardless of the number of units required for the program.
3. All courses on the Study Plan for the master's degree must be at the 400-or 500-or equivalent level. 400-level General Education courses may not be counted toward the Study Plan.
 - 400-level courses used on the Study Plan must be approved for graduate credit.

4. The typical academic standard is that at least 70 percent of all Study Plan courses for the master's degree must be at the 500-level. However, with prior approval, upon the recommendation of the Graduate Education Committee, master's programs may permit students to include up to 50 percent of coursework at the 400-level. Such programs should justify a standard of 50 percent in the course of program performance reviews.
5. The master's degree Study Plan may include no more than nine units of post-baccalaureate work taken at this institution before admission to an approved program.
6. Prerequisite requirements for admission may not be used on a Study Plan.
7. A limited number of CR/NC graded courses, identified by the respective Department, that are clinical practicum, internship, applied skills, fieldwork, performance, or similar courses may be used on a graduate Study Plan; however, at least twenty four (24) semester units or half the units in the program, whichever is greater, must be coursework with letter grades.
8. The master's Study Plan may include no more than six (6) semester units of thesis or project work.
9. The Study Plan may include no more than six (6) semester units of Independent Study. The basis for Independent Study courses cannot be another undergraduate or graduate course. Independent Study courses must follow UPS 410.010.
10. The Study Plan may not include courses that were applied to another degree.
11. Changes to the Study Plan that are not in the program curriculum are approved by the graduate advisor and the appropriate Provost designee for graduate studies.

Time Limits

The candidate must complete all Study Plan courses within five years (10 consecutive semesters), starting with the earliest course on the Study Plan. Students may petition to extend the time limit to complete the degree to seven (7) years (14 consecutive semesters). Students must retake or validate courses completed more than seven (7) years prior to completing the requirements for the degree. Courses completed more than ten (10) years prior to completing requirements for the degree are not eligible for validation.

1. Degree program coursework is outdated when completed more than five (5) (or seven (7) with extension) years before completing all degree requirements. Validating outdated coursework is allowed by approval of the graduate program advisor, the academic unit offering the subject course, and the appropriate Provost designee.

2. Validation is accomplished by passing a written comprehensive exam of the materials in the course, oral examination, written report, or paper, or by an equivalent method with prior approval of both the graduate program advisor and the appropriate Provost designee.
3. Up to nine (9) units of coursework may be validated. Courses completed more than ten (10) years prior to completing the graduation requirements are not eligible for validation. Outdated transfer coursework cannot be validated.

Continuous Enrollment

Students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment. Continuous enrollment requires enrollment in the fall and spring semesters from admission to the program of study until awarding of the degree. Students enrolled in a program with a mandatory summer semester must maintain continuous enrollment in fall, spring, and summer.

1. The approved Study Plan is valid as long as the student maintains continuous enrollment requirements for their program.
2. Students not enrolled in courses can maintain continuous enrollment with approved leaves of absence or enrollment in Graduate Studies 700 (GRAD 700).
 - Registration for GRAD 700 is restricted to graduate students who have enrolled in all Study Plan coursework, have advisor approval, and the culminating experience is in progress.
 - International students need International Student Services approval to take GRAD 700.
3. Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment must re-apply to the University to continue in the program and meet current admissions standards for the re-admitted semester.

Advancement to Candidacy

Students must be Advanced to Candidacy before the degree conferral. Students may advance to candidacy when they are: (1) in classified status; and (2) have completed at least nine (9) units of coursework in the Study Plan. Advancement to candidacy signals that the student is ready to begin the culminating experience. The graduate advisor approves of the courses in the Study Plan, which will be used for degree conferral.

Culminating Experience

The candidate must satisfactorily undergo one culminating experience, which may be a thesis, a project, a comprehensive examination, or a dissertation. This experience should be educationally

appropriate to the student and the discipline. An oral presentation is strongly encouraged. The Department or program is expected to maintain records indicating the culminating experience, the faculty members involved, and completion results.

Admissions Standing for Post-baccalaureate and Graduate Students

Post-baccalaureate Students

Post-baccalaureate students have earned a bachelor's degree and are either not in a degree objective or are in a post-baccalaureate, credential, or certificate program.

1. Post-baccalaureate Standing: Unclassified

- To qualify for admission with no degree objective, a student must:
 - Hold an acceptable bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution
 - Have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 or 2.5 GPA in the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units
 - Have been in good standing at the last institution of higher education attended

2. Post-baccalaureate Standing: Classified

- To qualify for admission to a post-baccalaureate, credential, or certificate program, a student must:
 - Meet the requirements for post-baccalaureate unclassified standing
 - Satisfy any additional program requirements

Graduate Students

Graduate students are in a master's or doctoral degree program.

1. Graduate Standing: Conditionally Classified

- To qualify for admission with a graduate degree objective, a student must:
 - Meet the admission requirements for post-baccalaureate unclassified standing
 - Meet any additional program admissions requirements
- An applicant who shows promise for success but needs additional coursework to prepare for graduate study may be considered for admission in conditionally classified standing with the approval and recommendation of the graduate program advisor. A student admitted in conditionally classified standing may be granted classified standing once the prerequisite conditions are met. The Department must notify the student of

prerequisites or preparation required, including specific course names, grades, and time frame for completion. The time frame for meeting prerequisites should not exceed two semesters (counting fall and spring semesters only).

- Prerequisite courses are needed for sufficient academic preparation for the graduate degree or success in specific graduate courses. Conditional classification should not be used because of lower cumulative GPAs in undergraduate study.
- After the two-semester conditional period, graduate advisors should assess progress and either move the student to classified standing or discontinue the student from the program if the conditions are not satisfied.

2. Graduate Standing: Classified

- To qualify for admissions with a classified standing, a student must:
 - Meet the admission requirements for post-baccalaureate unclassified standing
 - Meet any additional program admissions requirements
- Classified status signals that the student is ready for graduate study, and no additional courses or prerequisites need to be taken or satisfied.
- Most students should be admitted in classified standing.
- A student can make admissions appeals within fifteen (15) days of the admission decision, up to one appeal per semester. Appeals will be reviewed by the Graduate Admissions Appeals Committee.

Grade Point Requirements

To earn a graduate degree, a student must earn a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.0 in:

GPA Requirements

All graduate-level units attempted subsequent to admission to a degree program and all Study Plan coursework.

Study Plan Modifications

A student may request a change in the Study Plan to raise the Study Plan grade-point average to 3.0 by:

1. Adding no more than six units of approved coursework, or

2. Repeating no more than six units of coursework in which a B- (2.7) or lower was earned, or
3. A combination of (1) or (2) not to exceed six (6) units.

Requests to add courses to the Study Plan or repeat courses must be approved by the graduate program advisor and the appropriate Provost designee before registration.

Repeated Courses

Minimum Grades

Each course on the Study Plan must be completed with a C (2.0) grade or better. Some programs may have higher standards.

Course Repetition

If a student receives a grade less than the minimum grade required by the program for a Study Plan course, the course must be repeated and passed with the minimum grade required by the program for that course, or better. A course may be repeated no more than once.

GPA Calculation

When computing the Study Plan and cumulative graduate CSUF grade-point average, both grades are included if a course is repeated.

Unit Credit

Repetition of a course carries no additional unit credit toward a degree.

Course Substitution

In extenuating circumstances, the graduate program advisor may request to add another course to the approved Study Plan, with appropriate Provost designee approval. The added course must have the same unit value as the course with the unsatisfactory grade.

Academic Notice and Disqualification

Academic Notice Definition

Academic notice is an action which suspends a student's good academic standing and precedes disqualification.

Disqualification Definition

Disqualification removes a student from their program and graduate standing. Further enrollment in courses is not permitted (except through Open University enrollment).

Academic Notice Criteria

A graduate student enrolled in a graduate degree program is placed on academic notice if the cumulative graduate or the Study Plan grade-point average falls below 3.0.

Additional Reasons for Academic Notice/Disqualification

A graduate student may also be placed on academic notice or disqualified for any of the following reasons: repeated withdrawal; failure to progress toward an educational objective; non-compliance with an academic requirement; failure to demonstrate a level of professional competence or fitness commensurate with the standards of the discipline being studied; or inappropriate behavior as defined in UPS 300.000, Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, and in UPS 300.021, Academic Dishonesty.

Disqualification Process

With the recommendation of the student's graduate program advisor, the appropriate Provost designee will disqualify a student who is on academic notice.

1. Master's or DNP student is placed on academic notice if the student does not, or cannot, raise the Study Plan grade-point average and cumulative graduate grade-point average to 3.0 by the completion of the second regular semester following the session in which the cumulative or Study Plan grade-point average fell below the minimum 3.0 standard.

Low GPA Disqualification

The student will be disqualified from a graduate degree program if that student's grade-point average becomes so low that it cannot be raised to 3.0 within the defined probationary period.

Disqualification Appeals

If no policy for disqualification appeal is explicitly established at the program level, disqualification appeals will be reviewed by the Graduate Disqualification Appeals Committee.

Readmission to Same Program

A student who has been disqualified from a master's degree program or a doctoral degree program may apply for readmission to the same program after one calendar year. A re-admitted student must file a new Study Plan that meets current requirements and policies. A disqualified student who wishes to use previous coursework must have it approved by the appropriate Provost designee.

Readmission to Different Program

A student who has been disqualified may apply for readmission to a different program. A re-admitted student must file a new Study Plan that meets current requirements and policies. A disqualified student who wishes to use previous coursework from a different program must have it approved by the appropriate Provost designee, up to nine units.

Guidelines for Post-baccalaureate and Transfer Coursework

Post-baccalaureate Coursework

Post-baccalaureate coursework on a student's graduate Study Plan is governed by the general regulations for all graduate degrees. Approval is required by the program advisor and the appropriate Provost designee.

Undergraduate Coursework Petition

A master's student may petition for a maximum of nine units of credit for coursework (either 400-or 500-level) taken while the student was an undergraduate at CSUF, if:

1. The coursework was not used to meet any of the University's requirements for the baccalaureate degree (including major, minor, or concentration).
2. The coursework was taken during the senior year of the student's undergraduate career.
3. The coursework was completed with a grade of B or better.

Transfer Coursework

Graduate students may apply to use a limited amount of transfer coursework in meeting the requirements for a graduate degree. Use of transfer work on a student's Study Plan is subject to all other policies concerning Study Plan coursework. Further, the coursework being transferred must:

1. Have been taken at a regionally accredited college or University or equivalent;
2. Have been completed with a grade of B or better;
3. Be acceptable for credit toward the same graduate degree at the institution where the coursework was taken;
4. Not have been used in meeting the requirements for another earned graduate or undergraduate degree;
5. Have been completed within the student's five-year time period required to complete the requirements for the graduate degree at CSUF.

16. Leaves of Absence

Overview

Continuous enrollment is a normal expectation of graduate degree and credential students, for sound academic reasons including assurance of currency in the field and integration of knowledge at a sophisticated level. Continuous enrollment means that a student registers in every Fall and Spring semester, following admission to the University, until award of the degree or credential. Continuous enrollment further permits degree students to elect the catalog graduation requirements for their degree programs which were in force at the time of admission to the program.

Continuous enrollment for credential students assures continuity in their program and availability of course work in sequence with the credential requirements.

Procedures for Granting Leaves of Absence

Eligibility

Leaves of absence may be granted to (1) conditionally classified or classified graduate students and (2) students with a credential-only objective who have completed at least one semester of course work.

First-time Leave Requests

Students requesting a first-time leave of absence for a duration of one semester shall fill out an appropriate form at the Office of Graduate Studies. All leaves are subject to review by the Associate Vice President for Academic Programs or their designee; leaves for credential-only students are also subject to review by the appropriate credential program coordinator. Approval of leaves for students who qualify (Section III) will normally be granted on request.

Extended or Successive Leaves

A leave of absence normally is not granted for more than one semester. Students who have had a leave of absence of one semester who request a successive leave, and students requesting any leave of a duration longer than one semester, must have their applications endorsed by the appropriate degree program authority (normally the department chair or graduate adviser) and approved by the Associate Vice President for Academic Programs or their designee. Appropriate substantial documentation shall be provided. In the instance of an approved leave, the student's normal discretion in election of catalog requirements shall be maintained.

Grounds for Granting Leaves of Absence**Medical Reasons**

Illness or disability (permanent or temporary) or similar personal exigencies including pregnancy that makes it impossible or inadvisable for a student to register for classes.

Professional Development

Activities that enhance a student's professional career objectives.

Military Service

Active duty in the armed forces of the United States.

Financial Hardship

Severe financial hardship.

Other Reasons

Other reasons at the discretion of the Associate Vice President for Academic Programs or their designee.

Consequences of Leaves of Absence or Break in Enrollment

Graduate degree or credential students may be granted a leave of absence which maintains their place in the University and in degree or credential programs (i.e., they do not have to reapply following the leave). A leave granted to a degree objective student also preserves the election of curriculum rights regarding catalog requirements.

The time limit for completion of course work for which a grade of “Incomplete” has been received may be extended by the instructor when the leave of absence is approved. However, leaves of absence do not affect the time limit for completion of course work for the degree. As students on approved leaves of absence are not required to pay fees, services provided in whole or in part by fees (such as student health center services) are not available to students on approved leaves of absence.

Non-approved breaks in enrollment require that the student reapply for admission to the University. No preference in admissions can be given to students returning from a non-approved break in enrollment. Students who are readmitted to the University and to a degree or credential program following a non-approved break in continuous enrollment are subject to catalog requirements in effect at the time of readmission.

17. A Note on 400-Level Courses

Not all 400-level courses are approved for graduate credit. Only 400-level courses approved for graduate credit may count toward the MPA degree. The Catalog description states whether a 400-level counts for graduate credit. No more than three 400-level courses may be used to count toward the MPA degree.

In a 400-level course that counts for graduate credit, the instructor *must* assign additional readings and assignments to graduate students enrolled in the course. These *must* be described in the syllabus and they may not just be longer versions of assignments assigned to undergraduate students in the same course. A student's graduate course credit for 400-level courses that do not follow this policy may be retroactively revoked. Be sure to make sure the instructor of a 400-level course know that you are a graduate student.

18. Completion Of Degree and Graduation

An overall minimum graduate grade-point average of 3.0 (B) for all 400-, and 500-level coursework attempted subsequent to admission to a degree program, including all transfer work and previous coursework approved for use in the graduate career, and an overall minimum grade-point average of 3.0 for all coursework is required. Other scholastic, professional and personal standards, the passing of examinations, and other qualifications, may be required.

Deadlines

All coursework for the degree, except final course examinations, must be submitted by the last day of classes, in order to assure granting of the degree by the end of the semester or session. The degree is awarded upon the satisfactory completion of all state and University requirements, as well as the specific requirements approved on the student's graduate degree plan. Award of the degree also requires the recommendation of the appropriate graduate program advisor and committee, the approval of the faculty, and the approval of the associate vice president, Graduate Programs and Research (or designee).

19. Applying for Graduation

Students must apply for a graduation check and pay the graduation and diploma fee prior to the deadline.

The last date to file the application is listed in the Registration Guide for each regular semester and is posted on the Graduate Studies website. The effective date of graduation will be the last day of the specific term in which requirements are completed.

Students who fail to complete requirements as planned must update the application for a graduation check and do so by the appropriate deadline. A fee is required to change the graduation date.

Commencement

Commencement ceremonies are held only at the end of the spring semester. Once you have completed the graduation check process, i.e., filed for graduation check and paid the graduation fee, you are eligible to participate in the commencement ceremonies appropriate to your graduate date.

Information concerning commencement activities is sent to students by college dean's offices usually in April of each year. Check the University's website fullerton.edu/commencement for

further details about commencement events and procedures. Arrangements for cap, gown and hood purchase are made in the campus bookstore, Titan Shops.

20. Academic Integrity

Adapted from the University Policy on Academic Integrity.

Academic dishonesty includes such things cheating, inventing false information or citations, plagiarism, and helping someone else commit an act of academic dishonesty. It usually involves an attempt by students to show a possession of a level of knowledge or skill, which they in fact do not possess. Cheating is defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for work by the use of any dishonest, deceptive, fraudulent, or unauthorized means. Plagiarism is defined as the act of taking the work of another and offering it as one's own without giving credit to that source. Instructors who believe that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred (1) are obligated to discuss the matter with the student(s) involved; (2) should possess reasonable evidence such as documents or personal observation; and may take whatever action (subject to student appeal) they deem appropriate, ranging from an oral reprimand to an F in the course. Additional information on this policy is available from the following document: www.fullerton.edu/senate/publications_policies_resolutions/ups/UPS%20300/UPS%20300.021.pdf

The use of AI and other technology to cheat is a violation of the University's Academic Integrity policy. The University has a subscription to Turnitin, a plagiarism detection service, which can be used by faculty to check for academic integrity violations. Individual faculty may have an AI use policy that is more restrictive than the University's policy. Consult your instructor's syllabus for more information.

21. Student Conduct

The Student Conduct guide can be found here: www.fullerton.edu/student-conduct/. This guide outlines the University's expectations for student behavior and the procedures for addressing violations of these expectations.

22. Awards, Honors, and Scholarships

Irving Stone Prize

The Irving Stone Prize is given to the most outstanding essay written during the previous year by an MPA student for a Public Administration course. Winners receive \$100.

To Enter: Please submit two clean/blinded copies of your essay to the Politics, Administration &

Justice Division office by the date to be announced in the spring. Your name should not appear on the essay.

Please attach a cover page with the following information:

1. Name
2. Student ID
3. Class, professor and semester when the paper was written
4. The title of paper

Sidney Baldwin Award

This certificate of recognition is given annually to the outstanding MPA student in the graduating class. The awardee is selected by the Public Administration coordinator and/or faculty after considering students' academic record, including grades, performance on the comprehensive exams, and contributions to the MPA Program.

Spirit of Public Service Award

This certificate of recognition is given annually to the MPA student in the graduating class who has demonstrated a consistent commitment to public service in addition to academic excellence. The awardee is selected by the Public Administration coordinator and/or faculty after considering students' academic record and other activities.

Alan Saltzstein Excellence Scholarship

Dr. Saltzstein was the head of the MPA Program for many years and his legacy is honored with this \$1,000 scholarship award. The purpose is to reward excellent academic performance for students after completion of 6-12 units in the MPA Program and is designed to recognize, reward and encourage top students as they progress through the program.

Students will receive information regarding application deadlines from the MPA Coordinator during the fall and spring semesters.

Lawson Internship in Public Service

The Lawson Internship in Public Service offers \$2,000 to at least one MPA student interning in the public or nonprofit sector each semester. This gift is designed to assist students who must forgo other earned income while they get the invaluable experience of a public sector internship.

The MPA Program shall present scholarship(s) to an individual(s) meeting the following criteria:

1. Enrolled in the MPA Program
2. Enrolled in POSC 497
3. Interning in the public or nonprofit sector
4. A statement by the student in the form of a letter that shall include:
 - (a) The student's status in terms of the MPA Program
 - (b) The student's expectations of the internship and plans for the future
 - (c) Any information which addresses the student's situation in regard to special circumstances that would make this scholarship particularly valuable to his/her future career in the public sector

DC Internship

Since 2006, the Cal State DC program has offered students opportunities to spend a summer studying about and working in the nation's capital. Through the program students enroll in full-time academic units while interning in Washington. For MPA credit, internships can be with executive agencies, advocacy groups, non-profits, and a variety of other offices in and around Washington, D.C. Juniors, seniors, and graduate students from all majors and CSU campuses are encouraged to apply. Internships in the past have included The United States Department of Agriculture, The National Coalition for the Homeless, The Police Foundation, and other offices across a diverse array of interests.

Program costs can vary based upon personal preferences. The primary costs include tuition, room and board, and transportation to and from DC. Tuition is the exact same as if you were taking the classes on the home CSU Fullerton campus.

Please visit the Cal State DC Scholars website for more information:

calstatedcscholars.fullerton.edu

23. Campus Resources and Support

Career Center

(Langsdorf Hall 208)

www.fullerton.edu/career/

Children's Center

asi.fullerton.edu/childrens-center

Diversity Initiatives and Resource Centers (DIRC)

Supports students by building communities that foster a sense of belonging, creating opportunities to engage in self-discovery and critical inquiry, and serving as a hub for resources in inclusive and affirming spaces. We create engagement opportunities that empower, educate, and activate students in the areas of social justice, equity, and anti-racism.

www.fullerton.edu/dirc

Student Wellness

Counseling and Psychological Services, Disability Support Services, Health Services, TitanWell.

www.fullerton.edu/studentwellness/

Disability Support Services

If you have a documented disability, you should visit and register with the office as soon as possible in order to receive accommodations.

www.fullerton.edu/DSS/

Graduate Studies

This office maintains graduate forms and documents, can advise you on academic and graduate policies and offers resources such as tutoring, and writing workshops.

www.fullerton.edu/graduate/

Graduate Studies Center

(Pollok Library North (PLN) 121)

The Center provides graduate students a place to study and network, and hosts workshops, graduate learning communities, and writing tutors.

www.fullerton.edu/graduate/gsc/index.html

Parking and Transportation Services

parking.fullerton.edu

Pollak Library

www.library.fullerton.edu

Titan Dreamers Resource Center

www.fullerton.edu/tdrc/

Titan Shops

This is the campus bookstore from which you can purchase your textbook. It can be accessed through the University's portal or through the Titan Shops website:

www.titanbookstore.com/home.aspx

TitanCard

(Pollak Library 1st Floor – South Wing)

The TitanCard is the university's ID card and is required to use the library and for other campus services.

www.fullerton.edu/IT/services/TitanCard/

Tuffy's Basic Needs Services

www.fullerton.edu/deanofstudents/tuffys_basic_needs/index.php

Veterans Resource Center

www.fullerton.edu/veterans/

Computer Labs

www.fullerton.edu/STS/computer_labs/

Office of Financial Aid

(Gordon Hall 146)

www.fullerton.edu/financialaid/

24. Full-time Faculty

- **David P. Adams**, Associate Professor - Ph.D., Public Policy and Public Administration, Auburn University
- **Sean Angst**, Assistant Professor - Ph.D., Public Policy and Management, University of Southern California (Sol Price School of Public Policy)
- **Shelly Arsneault**, Professor - Ph.D., Political Science, Michigan State University
- **Meriem Doucette**, Associate Professor - Ph.D., Public Administration and Policy, University of Georgia (School of Public and International Affairs)
- **Clement Demoah**, Assistant Professor - Ph.D., Public Administration, University of Arizona (School of Government and Public Policy)
- **Elaine Frey**, Professor - Ph.D., Economics, George Washington University
- **Sarah A. Hill**, Professor - Ph.D., Social Science, California Institute of Technology
- **Myungjung “MJ” Kwon**, Professor - Ph.D., Public Administration and Policy, Florida State University (Askew School of Public Administration and Policy)
- **Scott J. Spitzer**, Professor - Ph.D., Political Science, Columbia University
- **Samuel B. Stone**, Professor - Ph.D., Public Affairs, Indiana University (Paul H. O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs)