

Graduate Programs in Public Administration

Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs

The Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs is committed to enhancing the quality of public life through high-quality graduate instruction, excellence in applied research, and responsive community service. This focus results not only in an excellent graduate education for students, but also allows a special connection with the community's needs through research and service. By integrating teaching, research, and service, the school makes a distinctive contribution to Wichita State University's long standing commitment of service to Wichita, Sedgwick County, surrounding communities, and the region.

The school serves as the academic home for the Master of Public Administration degree, the Center for Urban Studies, and the Kansas Public Finance Center. Through these units, faculty, staff, and students blend teaching, research, and service in the interdisciplinary field of urban and public affairs. The Hugo Wall School offers special opportunities for students interested in urban and public affairs. Students completing the Master of Public Administration degree gain experience through hands-on research and network with practitioners in the field of public administration.

Financial Assistance

The school has two forms of financial aid available to provide students with financial assistance, as well as an opportunity to be directly involved with research and service projects. Financial aid in the form of graduate assistantships and fellowships is awarded competitively on the recommendation of the faculty in the Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs.

Graduate assistants aid faculty in the Hugo Wall School in instruction, as well as work directly with faculty and professional staff on research and community service projects through the Center for Urban Studies and the Kansas Public Finance Center. Graduate assistants work 20 hours per week with faculty and staff in the school's teaching, research, and public service activities.

The Hugo Wall School has four endowed fellowships available for financial assistance to qualified graduate students enrolled in the Master of Public Administration degree. These fellowships – the Hugo Wall, George Pyle, Mike Hill, and George Van Riper –

are awarded on a competitive basis to students with exemplary records and specific career interest in the field of public administration.

Master of Public Administration

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree program, with instruction in public management, public finance, and public policy, prepares students for positions of leadership in public and nonprofit organizations. The degree is structured to respond to the unique student body of an urban university. The Master of Public Administration program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA).

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree draws upon the methods and perspectives of the social and behavioral sciences, economics, and the humanities. The links between these disciplines and the challenges of public management are emphasized through the use of practitioners in the classroom, policy-relevant research assignments, public affairs seminars, and internships. Teaching faculty, with significant professional experience in state and local government, are engaged in cutting-edge research relevant to public and nonprofit organizations in Kansas. This experience allows faculty to bring relevant perspectives on public management into the classroom.

Graduates of the MPA degree program now hold positions of responsibility in state and local government and in nonprofit agencies throughout the U.S and in other countries. Graduates serve as city managers, department heads, program managers, finance directors, budget analysts, management analysts, and agency planners. Although the majority are employed in public service, some graduates of the program have taken positions in the private sector, while still others have pursued additional study in law, doctoral education, and other specializations.

Admission Requirements

The Master of Public Administration degree is designed for students to begin study in the fall semester. The deadline for applications for the fall semester is April 1. Admission to begin study in the spring semester is considered on an exceptional basis and class availability. The deadline for spring admission is November 1. Admission to the MPA program is a three part process.

First, applicants for the degree program must complete a graduate school application, meeting the following criteria: (1) completion of an undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and (2) a grade point average of at least a 3.0 (4.0 scale) in the last 60 hours, including any post-graduate work. International students must attain a minimum score of 600 (paper based) or 100 (internet based) on the TOEFL, OR a minimum overall band score of 7.5 on the IELTS examination. Second, applicants must submit the following items to the graduate coordinator: (1) a letter of application outlining the student's career plans and how the MPA degree would further those plans; (2) a resume including the student's work and volunteer experience; and (3) two letters of reference from individuals with direct knowledge of the student's work experience or academic performance. Third, students are required to have an intermediate level of skill or better using word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software programs. Programs such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, which are provided on the Wichita State University campus, or their equivalents are acceptable. Students can obtain these skills by taking short courses and through other means.

Faculty will consider exceptions to the minimum grade point average (3.0 in the last 60 hours) based on a student's academic record, career plans, work and volunteer experience, and letters of reference. In reviewing requests for exceptions faculty give consideration to achieving a diverse student body, racially and culturally, and a balance of pre-service and in-service students.

Degree Requirements

The Master of Public Administration degree consists of 39 graduate hours, taken over at least three semesters of study.

Core Curriculum. All degree candidates are required to complete the eight core courses:
PADM 702, Research Methods in Public Administration
PADM 710, Public Sector Organizational Theory and Behavior
PADM 725, Public Management of Human Resources
PADM 745, Public and Nonprofit Governance
PADM 765, Public Sector Economics
PADM 802, Quantitative Methods for Public Sector Professionals
PADM 865, State and Local Government Finance
PADM 895, Public Decision Making

Internships

Internships are an important part of the MPA program. Pre-service students are encouraged to take an internship which must last at least nine months. Internship (PADM 890) carries 3 hours of credit and includes attendance at periodic seminars. Intern positions are remunerative and are awarded on a competitive basis. Although placement cannot be guaranteed, the public administration program has an excellent placement record.

Graduate Certificates

The Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs offers four graduate certificates in the following areas:

- City and County Management
- Economic Development
- Nonprofit Management
- Public Finance

Graduate certificates are designed to offer advanced study in a specialized area. They enhance a student's career opportunities and provide practitioners an avenue to improve their skills. Each graduate certificate requires 12 hours of specific coursework.

For more information, admission, and completion requirements for the graduate certificates, please refer to the Graduate Certificates in Public Administration fact sheet or contact the Hugo Wall School at 316-978-7240.

For More Information

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