Program Faculty

Vickie Edwards (PhD) blends her practical experiences in teaching nonprofit management, democratic governance, and human resources.

Gene McKay (PhD) draws from his extensive private and public sector experiences in his command of public management, supervisory skills, political economy, and data analysis.

Matthew Mingus (PhD) utilizes his international exposures in examining governance, leadership, and comparative public administration.

Vincent Reitano (PhD) background in economic theories, econometrics, and consulting inform his command of political economy, finance, and public management.

Daniela Schroeter (PhD) builds on her experiences in grant writing, research, and evaluation to engender critical thinking and data-based decision-making.

Udaya Wagle (PhD) integrates his expertise in political economy, public finance, and public policy in studying social policy, international development, and other comparative issues.

Additionally, a number of practicing professionals with decades of administrative, management, and leadership experience teach many concentration-specific courses and guide students in their networking and career search.

Modality, Location, and Course Schedule

The program is designed to accommodate the busy life of professional students through in-person classes in Kalamazoo and partially synchronous classes online (with six evening or weekend three-hour meetings each) on a year-round basis. Students can start in any term (fall, spring, or summer). Most students taking two courses each term can graduate in just over two years, while students taking one course per term expect to graduate in about four years.

For Further Information and Contact

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MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA)
An Interdisciplinary Professional Degree for Careers in Public, Nonprofit, and Health Care Services

School of Public Affairs and Administration
Western Michigan University
About

The MPA program at the WMU School of Public Affairs and Administration is a nationally ranked, NASPAA-accredited program that provides students with broad understanding of theories, best practices, and methodological skills needed to be effective leaders in public and nonprofit organizations. The program accommodates the needs of pre- and in-career, domestic and international students in career, professional development, and course sequencing. Students have a choice of five concentrations: Health Care, Human Resources, Nonprofit, Public Management, and Public Policy. The School has a history of offering innovative and academically rigorous programs as a way to lead and manage change in the public and nonprofit sectors.

Typical careers include mid-to-upper level executive, leadership, or management positions at public and nonprofit organizations, including government agencies, hospitals, and foundations. The program’s over 2,600 graduates have had impactful professional careers helping to improve the quality of public and nonprofit service at local, regional, national, and global levels.

Quotes from Alumni Anonymous Survey

“I was exposed to professionals in other industries and [the program] enabled me to consider the transferability of my skills and experiences for application in other areas.”

“[The program] provided me with the skills and knowledge necessary to move up into leadership positions with my organization.”

“Classroom experiences and exposure to different career and educational paths are the key strengths of this program.”

“Through this course work, I felt prepared to address the issues and concerns facing nonprofit healthcare organizations in Washington, DC.”

Advising

Upon admission into the program, each student receives individualized attention from faculty-advisors in developing a customized program plan. The goal is to accommodate each student’s professional interests and map out the complete course schedule through graduation.

Curriculum

The program has 39-credit hours of requirement divided into 15 credits of core courses, 12 credits of concentration courses, six credits of electives, three credits of capstone portfolio, and three credits of internship (needed for pre-career students only).

Core Courses

- Fundamentals & Ethics of Public Service
- Economic Principles of Public Service
- Public Policy & Politics
- Applied Research Methods
- Quantitative Data Analysis I

Concentration Required Courses

- Management, law, or policy in the area of concentration
- Budgeting or Financial Management
- Human Resources Administration
- A Specialized Course in Concentration

Concentration Elective Courses

An array of concentration-specific or cross-concentration courses are available including from other departments throughout the University. This extensive choice of courses helps deepen the exposure to and competence in best practices relevant to the student’s intended professional career. (See the table for a complete list of concentration courses)