



# **KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY**

NORMAN J. RADOW COLLEGE OF  
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
*Master of Public Administration Program*

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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## **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

### **NASPAA ACCREDITATION**

The Master of Public Administration Program is formally accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). NASPAA is the recognized global accreditor of master's degree programs in these fields. NASPAA's twofold mission is to ensure excellence in education and training for public service and to promote the ideal of public service<sup>1</sup>.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Master of Public Administration Program (MPA) is a professional degree program that prepares students for public governance leadership positions in local, regional, and national organizations.

### **PROGRAM PURPOSES**

1. Prepare graduates to think critically and creatively about public issues.
2. Prepare graduates to possess the administrative and leadership skills to enter a professional position in a public organization.
3. Provide a rigorous core curriculum that examines the theoretical underpinnings of public service.
4. Inspire a commitment to public service values and ethical behavior.
5. Cultivate and sustain a welcoming environment that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion

### **PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES**

*Public Service Value 1: Ethical Values* Public service professionals emphasize integrity, accountability, honesty, fairness, and ethical behavior in personal and professional relationships and activities.

*Public Service Value 2: Professional Values* Public service professionals should reflect the highest ideals of citizenship and service to the community and develop professionalism by emphasizing competence, excellence, efficiency, objectivity, and impartiality to their community, the nation, and the world.

*Public Service Value 3: Democratic Values* Public service professionals exhibit democratic values, respect for the Constitution, and the rule of law.

*Public Service Value 4: Inclusiveness* Public service professionals commit themselves to equity and diversity by recognizing that their exercise of authority and responsibility must always be tempered by respect for human dignity, fairness, and social equity.

### **COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

The MPA faculty are committed to recognizing and respecting the inherent dignity of all people. We promote an inclusive and engaged working and learning environment, free from discrimination based on age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender orientation, racial/ethnic background, and/or religion. We are committed to the following goals to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the MPA program:

1. Recruit and graduate diverse students from the Atlanta metropolitan area and across the United States and the world.
2. Recruit, employ, and retain diverse faculty with a particular interest in underrepresented minority groups.
3. Create and maintain a collaborative learning environment that celebrates diversity and fosters inclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on NASPAA visit [www.naspaa.org](http://www.naspaa.org).

4. Provide current and future public service professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively serve diverse communities in a manner that upholds public interest values.

While the entire School of Government & International Affairs works to ensure an environment of mutual respect that is free from intolerance and offers equal opportunity, we recognize that occasional challenges may arise. As concerns or issues arise, the MPA director is available to talk and be of any assistance possible. All conversations are confidential. Students may also wish to contact the Office of Ombuds and/or the Office of Institutional Equity.

## **ADMISSION & REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION**

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 2.75-grade point average;
- Official transcripts from each college and/or university you have attended;
- Submission of an application to the Office of Graduate Admissions and a non-refundable application fee; International students must also provide satisfactory TOEFL or IELTS scores;
- A statement of purpose essay of approximately 1,000 words addressing the following question: "In what way do you expect the Master of Public Administration degree to affect or enhance your career goals and aspirations?"
- A current résumé;
- Two letters of recommendation from faculty or work supervisors with direct knowledge of the applicant that address the applicant's potential for graduate study and use of an MPA degree.

Students are admitted to the program based upon an overall review of all credentials, including any work and community service experience that indicates potential success in graduate work and professional public service.

## **APPLICATION DEADLINES**

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Prospective students may apply for admission at the start of any semester.

Please note that completed applications and all required credentials must be received by 11:59 pm (EST) of the posted deadline.

<b>Admission Term</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>
Fall	July 1
Spring	November 1

## **REGISTRATION**

Students are expected to monitor the Academic Calendar published by the Office of the Registrar for important dates regarding registration, payment deadlines, add/drop, and withdraw dates. It is the responsibility of the student to register for classes each semester in a timely manner to avoid penalties.

## **WAITLISTS**

Course waitlisting is available for course sections at the time of registration. Students must meet all course registration requirements (including prerequisites and co-requisites) before waitlisting. Once waitlisted, students may view their waitlist status in Owl Express, Registration Tab, Display, Class Schedule, and Grades.

- Students will receive an email notification when a seat becomes available.
- Students have 18 hours from the date and time of seat notification to register for the course, or the student will be deleted from the waitlist. Notices of seat availability are emailed to student KSU email accounts.
- ALL waitlists will expire at the end of Registration. Therefore, students will be removed from the waitlist. However, students may register for open seats during the remaining days of Drop/Add.

# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The MPA program requires the completion of thirty-six (36) credit hours of graduate coursework. Students complete coursework in three areas – core coursework, electives, and capstone.

Of the thirty-six (36) credit hours required for the degree, up to nine (9) semester hours of graduate work from other NASPAA-accredited master's programs may be transferred. To be transferred, coursework from other institutions must correspond to Kennesaw State University's MPA curriculum, in addition to coming from a NASPAA-accredited master's program. Students will need to provide course descriptions and syllabi, and the amount of credit granted will be at the program director's discretion. Such coursework may be no more than five years old.

### ***Core Coursework (21 Credit Hours)***

The core curriculum of twenty-one (21) credit hours of courses are required of all students. Students should take the core courses towards the beginning of their matriculation to prepare for their elective coursework and capstone projects. ALL MPA core courses are offered during the academic year.

- PAD 6200: Fundamentals of Public Administration and Public Service
  - PAD 6250: Research Methods and Computer Applications
  - PAD 6300: Public Organization Theory
  - PAD 6350: Public Service Budgeting
  - PAD 6450: Governmental Relations
  - PAD 6700: Human Resource Management in Public Service
  - PAD 6500: Policy Analysis
- Or
- PAD 6600: Program Evaluation

### ***Concentrations (12 Credit Hours)***

#### *State, Local, and Regional Administration*

Select four of the following:

- PAD 7130: Regional Politics and Policy
- PAD 7230: Local Governance and City Management
- PAD 7390: Public Financial Management
- PAD 7430: Regional and Local Planning
- PAD 7461: Law for Public Managers

#### *Information Systems Administration*

In addition to the two required courses below, students will select two other graduate IS or MPA courses or other graduate courses approved by the program director.

- IS 7100: Advanced IT Project Management
- IS 7700: Information Systems Policy and Strategy

#### *Nonprofit Administration*

Required:

- PAD 7100: Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector
- PAD 7180: Nonprofit Governance and Administration

Select two of the following:

- MSCM 7100: Introduction to Conflict Management
- PAD 7120: Health Policy
- PAD 7130: Regional Politics and Policy
- PAD 7140: International Environmental Policy
- PAD 7150: Contemporary Public Issues

- PAD 7250: Leadership and Ethics in Public Service
- PAD 7465: Law for Nonprofit Managers

### *Electives (12 Credit Hours if no Concentration)*

Students who do not pursue a designated concentration can choose a combination of twelve (12) credit hours of electives. Options are available on the MPA website.

### *Capstone (3 Credit Hours)*

All students are required to complete the capstone course toward the end of their matriculation:

- PAD 7998: MPA Capstone Seminar

## **DUAL DEGREES**

The MPA currently offers two dual degree programs allowing students to pursue two concurrent graduate degrees. New applicants may apply directly to the dual degree program of their choice. Current students interested in applying to a dual degree program must consult with the respective program directors and make their application within their first two semesters of graduate study. Current students may be required to submit a new application through the Office of Graduate Admissions. Admission to the dual degree program is not guaranteed.

- Master of Business Administration/Master of Public Administration
- Master of Public Administration/Master of Arts in Integrated Global Communication

## **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

### **ADVISING**

The MPA Program Director is the advisor for all MPA students. Students may set advising appointments by contacting the Program Director via email. Students should come to advising appointments prepared with specific questions and a preliminary program of study to review. MPA students are also encouraged to connect with other MPA faculty with expertise in their field of interest for professional advice.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT – EXPECTATIONS & CONSEQUENCES**

All students are expected to uphold the KSU Student Code of Conduct, which includes the general student code of conduct, the residential code of conduct, and the code of academic integrity. In addition to the expectations and associated consequences outlined and handled by the Department of Student Consequences and Academic Integrity (SCAI).

The MPA program is committed to training emerging public governance leaders and upholding the ethical standards required of public servants. Accordingly, students and faculty are expected to adhere to the university's code of conduct and the professional's American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) Code of Ethics (within the context of the program). ASPA, the leading association for public servants that serves as the critical bridge between public administration scholarship and practice in the field, maintains a code of ethics that includes:

- **Advance the Public Interest:** Promote the interests of the public and put service to the public above service to oneself.
- **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.
- **Promote democratic participation:** Inform the public and encourage active engagement in governance. Be open, transparent, responsive, and respect and assist all persons in their dealings with public organizations.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Demonstrate personal integrity:** Adhere to the highest standards of conduct to inspire public confidence and trust in public service.

- **Promote ethical organizations:** Strive to attain the highest standards of ethics, stewardship, and public service in organizations that serve the public.
- **Advance professional excellence:** Strengthen personal capabilities to act competently and ethically and encourage the professional development of others.

Students are expected to review and practice the behaviors ASPA expects in carrying out its principles. The SCAI Department, in alignment with university protocol, will investigate any alleged violations and advise the MPA faculty of the findings. A panel of at least three (3) MPA faculty will determine the program-specific sanction, in alignment with or in addition to any university sanctions. Students may appeal the faculty panel sanction decisions to the Director of SGIA.

## **COURSE LOADS**

A full-time course load is considered to be nine (9) credit hours per semester at the graduate level. During the summer sessions, a full course load is considered one (1) credit hour as students are not required to be enrolled during the summer 1 or 2 terms. The program is designed to be completed in a two-year period of full-time enrollment. The two-year plan requires full-time enrollment during the fall and spring semesters and enrollment in six (6) credit hours during the summer between the first and second year. However, students who maintain employment during the program should consult their advisor before attempting a full course load. It is common for students to enroll part-time, attempting only one or two courses during a semester.

Students should use the following as a guide in planning their course schedule and when registering: if working full time, one or two courses is appropriate; if working 20 to 30 hours per week, two or three courses; and, if working less than one-half time, three courses. Students should consult with their advisor concerning the number of courses to take each semester. It should also be noted that a student must take at least six (6) credit hours to be eligible for financial aid.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Please see the graduate student catalog for information pertaining to university graduation requirements.

## **GRIEVANCES**

Most problems encountered by graduate students can be resolved through communication between the student and the instructor. If, however, a matter arises which cannot be resolved through student-instructor or student-advisor interaction, then the matter should be brought to the attention of the MPA director. If the MPA director cannot resolve the matter, or if they are the subject of the matter, it should then be brought to the attention of the SGIA Director. More details can be found in the student rights and responsibilities section of the Graduate Handbook.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

A student in good academic standing who must interrupt their graduate program for a good reason may request a Leave of Absence from graduate study for a definite period, not to exceed one year (two academic semesters) within a given graduate program. The request must be made before the term that the leave of absence is to apply. Upon endorsement of the request by the student's advisor and the MPA director and approval by the Graduate School, the student would not be required to be registered during the leave of absence. However, the time that the student spends on an approved leave of absence will be included in the time allowed to complete the degree (i.e., six years for a master's degree).

Students who fail to get prior permission and do not register will have their graduate admission terminated and have to apply for readmission to graduate school. However, there is no guarantee that readmission will be granted.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. To take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Student Disability Services (470) 578-3197 or sds@kennesaw.edu.

## **TIME LIMIT FOR DEGREE COMPLETION**

All requirements for the MPA degree must be completed within six (6) years from the date a student takes their first graduate course applicable to the MPA degree. Students transferring courses from another graduate degree must

complete all requirements within the same six (6) year period. In addition, courses transferred from another master's degree must meet the transfer criteria.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Students who wish to drop all their semester or summer-session courses must officially withdraw from the university. A student who had pre-registered and prepaid is considered registered and must officially withdraw unless they have notified the university prior to the beginning of the semester.

Students considering withdrawal should consult their advisor and refer to the Withdrawal from the University section of the Graduate Handbook for policies and procedures on officially withdrawing from the university.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

The MPA program has a number of graduate assistant positions to assist faculty or the program. Students selected for these positions receive course tuition waivers and stipends, with amounts varying depending on the level of the position. Students are selected based on several criteria, including resume, performance in the program or as undergraduates, and the program's needs. Preference will be given to students who are not working full-time, and students who are selected for a graduate assistant position who are working full-time will be limited to Tier I status. Graduate assistants are selected by a competitive process that renews each semester. No preference is given to students who have received a previous graduate assistantship. Students will receive announcements each semester about application deadlines.

## **HONORS, SCHOLARSHIPS, & AWARDS**

### ***Pi Alpha Alpha***

Pi Alpha Alpha (PAA) is the National Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration. The KSU Chapter of PAA invites and initiates new members each December. Eligible students are invited to apply, and successful applicants are invited to participate in an induction ceremony. According to the PAA website, "Membership in PAA is limited to persons who demonstrate academic achievement in public affairs and administration programs in NASPAA member schools and/or outstanding public service."

*Qualifications for membership include:*

1. A GPA of 3.7 or higher in graduate coursework
2. The completion of at least fifty percent (50%) of the required course work (a minimum of 18 semester hours)

### ***Juanelle Edwards Master of Public Administration Endowed Scholarship.***

The Edwards Scholarship is a merit-based scholarship of \$1,500 awarded to one KSU MPA student annually. The call for applications is announced each spring and is open to all current MPA students.

*The qualifications for the scholarship are:*

- Minimum GPA of 3.0
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours per semester (fall and spring) during the scholarship award year

The scholarship is in honor of the late Juanelle Edwards. "Miss Juanelle," as she was known, was a speaker and writer for the Democratic Party, born in Eastman, GA, in 1923. A resident of Marietta, Edwards was very active in her community and Democratic Party politics. In 1990, she was named one of Cobb County, Georgia's "Pioneer Women" by the Women's Political Caucus of Georgia. In 1995, Edwards was president emeritus of Cobb County Democratic Women, a member of the Governor's Club of the Democratic Party of Georgia, and a board member of several educational and charitable organizations.

***The Janet and David Hankerson Endowed Scholarship*** is a merit-based scholarship established by the Hankerson family to support future public administrators in their pursuit of graduate studies. The scholarship is a total of \$950.00 to be disbursed over two semesters.

## Scholarship Qualifications:

- Minimum GPA of 3.0
- Enrolled in 6 credit hours per semester (fall and spring)

### ***Outstanding Scholar***

Each year the College of Humanities and Social Sciences solicits nominations from each department or school to recognize one outstanding student from each degree program. The MPA Outstanding Scholar is recognized at a College-wide award ceremony held each spring semester. In addition, the recipient is asked to acknowledge one faculty honoree from their degree program. There is no monetary prize associated with this award.

## **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION STUDENT ASSOCIATION (PASA)**

The goal of the Public Affairs Student Association (PASA) is to enhance the educational experience of students, improve awareness of public administration issues, facilitate networking through meaningful interaction between students and public administrators, and to provide a means to learn about new study and job opportunities.

## **STUDENT RESOURCES**

Various resources are available to help support students during their studies. The Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences maintains a Graduate Student Resources webpage to help direct you to the appropriate unit on campus.

<https://chss.kennesaw.edu/gradstudents/index.php>

## **LIBRARY RESOURCES**

Students and faculty have access to and borrowing privileges from the collections in all of Georgia's public colleges and university libraries and many private university libraries through GALILEO and GIL, Georgia's virtual library system. In addition, GALILEO and GIL provide access to collections from the state's finest doctoral research university libraries. Students are encouraged to contact the library's collegiate liaison for specific subject matter expertise help and research consultations.

## **PROGRAM COMMUNICATION**

### ***KSUmail***

KSUmail is the primary method of communication between the MPA program and students. Students are required to check their KSUmail accounts regularly and respond to requests promptly. All official University communications will be sent to your KSU mail account as well. This includes information from the Registrar's Office, Financial Aid, and Campus Safety Notifications.

### ***D2L Brightspace – PAD 6000***

All MPA students are added to a "course" in D2L used to store and disseminate important program-related information. You can think of this as your MPA filing cabinet. For example, in PAD 6000, you can find a calendar of MPA events and resources related to the MPA program. Please note that this is not an actual course.

## **University Policies**

Students are expected to review the university's student rights and responsibilities, which pertain to their course rights and responsibilities. Additionally, all students are expected to comply with all other university policies.