

AUBURN UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT *of* POLITICAL SCIENCE



# MASTER *of* PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION



PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2026-2027

8030 Haley Center  
Auburn University, AL 36849  
334.844.6155



# Program History

MASTERS *with* MISSION

The MPA program was created within the Department of Political Science in 1985 upon design and recommendation by a faculty committee. To prepare for the new program, the University administration provided a new faculty position (the Director), a secretary, offices, an operating budget, funds for adjunct faculty, the creation of seven new courses, and significant supplementary funds for library acquisitions. By the late 1980s, the program had also greatly improved its ability to offer financial aid by gaining graduate assistantships and by negotiating several on-campus paid internships.

Because of Auburn University's location away from urban centers and places of major government employment, enrollment growth was slow; and the students were primarily pre-service. Given these environmental factors, the MPA faculty defined the program's primary mission as training well educated generalists in public administration. In line with this mission, the program's curriculum was built around eight Core seminars that cover the major fields in public administration (seminar in public administration, policy and administration, organization theory, administrative leadership and ethics, public personnel, public budgeting, program evaluation, and research methods), in addition to four electives and either an internship or research project. By the early 1990s, all eight Core seminars were offered annually; and 8-to-15 students were entering the program each year. Since then, the program has grown gradually to 20-25 new students per year.

The MPA program conducted its first Self-Study Report for NASPAA accreditation in 1989-90. In July 1991, the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation notified the Director that the program conformed to NASPAA standards and received accreditation. Since then, the program developed and strengthened in many ways, yet it has largely maintained its original philosophy and mission. Subsequently, the program was reaccredited in 1999, 2006, and 2011, and 2021. The Program just completed its self-study year and is going through the re-accreditation process this academic year.



# MPA Program

The mission of the MPA program at Auburn University is to advance responsible public service leadership in a changing environment through teaching, research and outreach.

## OVERVIEW

The Master of Public Administration degree program at Auburn University is a NASPAA-accredited program with diverse course offerings, dedicated faculty actively engaged in research, and an internship requirement for pre-service students that builds successful leaders for careers in public service. The program provides an environment for networking, research opportunities, and program personalization through various graduate certificate options or a dual-degree program with Community Planning. Students come from a variety of backgrounds, some directly from undergraduate studies, while others have significant work or military experience.

The mission of the Auburn University MPA program is to advance effective and accountable public service in a dynamic, increasingly global environment that includes government agencies and nonprofit organizations. We accomplish this using a collaborative model of teaching, research, and outreach that instills in a diverse group of students the capacity for civic agency, providing them with the knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make a difference in the civic life of their communities.

Our program emphasizes the necessity of professional knowledge, skills, and abilities that help ensure our students can serve as effective, accountable leaders and managers in government and nonprofit organizations.

We view the environment of public service as increasingly dynamic and globally interconnected. Therefore, we strive to create students who are global citizens, and who are flexible, innovative, and capable of handling changing dynamics in the public service environment.

Our collaborative model of teaching, research, and service as echoed in our mission is carefully designed to instill what we call "civic agency" in our students. This means we not only equip them with the knowledge, skills, and abilities they need to be successful in public service but that we also seek to instill in them the motivation to make a difference in local and global communities.

Most of our graduates go on to hold positions in public agencies, nonprofit organizations, or the private sector. Our alumni are effective members of their communities, whether at work or in volunteer activities. This is Auburn MPA.



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## ACADEMIC STANDING

Students pursuing a Master of Public Administration at Auburn University are required to maintain a Master of Public Administration Program GPA (MPA GPA) of 3.0 and above.

Grades in Auburn University courses approved by the MPA Program Director for graduate credit will be used in determining the MPA GPA for continuation in the Master of Public Administration Program. If at the end of any semester the Master of Public Administration Program GPA (MPA GPA) falls below 3.0, the student will be placed on **academic probation**.

If the MPA GPA remains below 3.0 after the next eleven credit hours of graduate enrollment (both graded and ungraded) or two consecutive terms (whichever comes first), the student will be placed on **academic suspension**.\*

Students on academic suspension may not hold a graduate assistantship or tuition fellowship. The student may be readmitted only after completion of a remediation plan recommended by the Master of Public Administration Program Director and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Course work taken as part of the remediation plan must be completed within one term and may count toward both the student's degree and MPA GPA with the recommendation of the program director and the approval of the graduate dean.\* Upon completion of the remediation plan, the student must have addressed academic deficiencies and have a MPA GPA of 3.0 or above. Once approved by the graduate dean, remediation plans may not be amended or extended beyond the original deadline.

If a student fails to complete the remediation plan as approved or if the student earns a grade of C or below while completing the remediation plan, the student will be dismissed from the MPA Program and the Graduate School, and the designation ACADEMIC DISMISSAL will be placed on the student's official record.

\*The summer term is counted as one of the consecutive semesters only if a student is enrolled during the summer term.



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## AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON GRADES

To receive a graduate degree at Auburn University, a student must earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on all courses carrying graduate credit. No more than nine hours beyond the student's Plan of Study is allowed in obtaining the cumulative graduate GPA (CGGPA). No grade below C (including unsatisfactory grades for courses taken under the S/U option) is acceptable for credit toward a graduate degree. Each graduate course in which a grade below C is received must be repeated at Auburn University if it is counted toward the student's degree.

Both the original grade and the grade for any repeated course will be counted in calculating the CGGPA. Course credits transferred from another institution may not be used to satisfy this requirement. Courses retaken will not count against the nine-hour limit beyond the student's Plan of Study in obtaining the minimum CGGPA. See the [Auburn Bulletin Academic Progress website](#).

## Academic Honesty

Auburn University expects students to pursue their academic work with honesty and integrity. The Academic Honesty Code is available in the [Student Policy eHandbook](#) and contains a list of those actions that are considered cheating and the possible consequences they carry.

Violations of the Academic Honesty Code will NOT be tolerated in any MPA course. Students who transgress the codes will be subject to all applicable sanctions.

For violations of academic honesty, including those involving the use of AI, students will receive a grade of "0" (zero) on the assignment. The faculty member may also report the violation to the Academic Honesty Committee in the Office of the Provost.

## Artificial Intelligence

The most important work of any academic enterprise is writing. It is the foundation of how we communicate our ideas to each other as well as to the outside world. As such, it is absolutely essential that all written work, authored and signed by a student, be their own work.

Accordingly, the MPA program takes very seriously the use of generative AI in any capacity to create text that is used for any submission: a course assignment, a seminar paper, or, much more egregiously, ePortfolio.

Submitting text generated by AI as your own work, or working from AI-generated text and then "revising" or "reorganizing" it: the program will view these acts as plagiarism. Violations of this policy, including but not limited to a course assignment, a paper, or the ePortfolio, will be viewed as grounds for dismissal from the program. If a student ever has a question about the use of AI, they should consult the course instructor, their Chair, or the MPA Director, as relevant.

Individual courses might have their own tailored AI policies. If you are invited to use AI in a particular course for a particular assignment, you should feel free to do so.



# MPA Program

The mission of the MPA program at Auburn University is to advance responsible public service leadership in a changing environment through teaching, research and outreach.

## REQUIRED COURSES

| Required MPA Core Courses (18 hours) |                                                             | Semester             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| POLI 6150                            | Intergovernmental Relations and Federalism (3)              | Spring               |
| POLI 7000                            | Research Methods for Public and Nonprofit Organization (3)  | Spring               |
| POLI 7350                            | Foundations of Public Administration and Public Service (3) | Fall                 |
| POLI 7360                            | Foundations of Public Policy (3)                            | Spring               |
| POLI 7520                            | Program Evaluation (3)                                      | Fall                 |
| POLI 7920                            | MPA Internship (3)*                                         | Fall, Spring, Summer |
| POLI 7AA0**                          | MPA ePortfolio                                              | Fall, Spring         |

## ELECTIVE COURSES

| Elective Courses (18 hrs)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Students are required to complete the elective requirement by completing one of the graduate certificates. Students are required to complete one of the four graduate certificates offered by the MPA program (12 credits). Students can choose from available electives for their remaining elective hours. Students wishing to take course electives outside of the MPA program and political science department are required to get approval from the MPA Director prior to enrolling. No more than one course is allowed outside the program/department, and is allowed only if there are no suitable courses available in the department/program. |

\* In-Service MPA students who are full-time employees in a public service-related profession are not required to complete the internship.

\*\*The ePortfolio is submitted during the final semester of the MPA program. Students graduating in summer are required to complete the ePortfolio in Spring.



# Graduate Certificate in Economic Development

## OVERVIEW

The Graduate Certificate in Economic Development is administered by the Master of Public Administration program, and the Certificate offers graduate students the opportunity to specialize in Economic Development. Designed to address the state's need for professional education and training in economic development, the program curriculum was developed with significant input from Alabama's economic development community through a partnership with the Economic Development Association of Alabama. As a result, the Graduate Certificate in Economic Development features a strong academic orientation along with the opportunity to engage in practical experiences through special research projects.

The 12-credit hour Graduate Certificate's interdisciplinary curriculum provides students and practitioners with an excellent opportunity to build upon their existing knowledge and to acquire new skills in this challenging discipline.

MPA students completing a certificate are required to complete an internship in the substantive area.

## COURSES\*\*

| Economic Development Courses |                                                            |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| POLI 7700*                   | Economic Development (Summer) (3)                          |
| AGEC 7110                    | Agricultural Economic Development (3)                      |
| RSOC 6610                    | Rural Sociology (3)                                        |
| RSOC 7630                    | Political Economy of Development (3)                       |
| RSOC 7620                    | Sociology of Community (3)                                 |
| RSOC 6650                    | Sociology of National Resources and the Environment (3)    |
| CPLN 6050                    | Land and Urban Economics (3)                               |
| CPLN 6090                    | Community Development (3)                                  |
| CPLN 6460                    | Geographic Information Systems for Planning and Policy (3) |

| Economic Development Courses |                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| POLI 7AA1*                   | First week of the Auburn Government & Economic Development Institute's Professional Development Program (Summer) |
| POLI 6150                    | Intergovernmental Relations and Federalism (3)                                                                   |
| POLI 7140                    | Financial Mgmt. for Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3)                                                       |
| POLI 7330                    | Seminar in Administrative Leadership (3)                                                                         |
| POLI 7520                    | Program Evaluation (3)                                                                                           |
| POLI 7920                    | MPA Internship (3)                                                                                               |

\*Required

\*\* MPA students are not permitted to use MPA core classes to meet the requirements of the certificate. This includes POLI 6150, POLI 7520, and POLI 7920. POLI 7920 may be used if a student competes 6 credits of internship in economic development.



# Graduate Certificate in Election Administration

## OVERVIEW

The Graduate Certificate in Election Administration is a 12-credit hour program within the Auburn University Master of Public Administration Program. The certificate requirements include 2 required courses and 2 electives, which are available online.

The curriculum is designed to provide graduate-level students and practicing professionals with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to function effectively in election administration. The certificate can be earned while pursuing an MPA or independently. Courses cover institutional arrangements, law and policy, and critical contemporary issues facing the election administration community. Students are also required to complete an ePortfolio.

MPA students completing a certificate are required to complete an internship in the substantive area.

## COURSES

| Election Administration Courses (15 hours) |                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| POLI 6270*                                 | Seminar in Election Administration (3)           |
| POLI 6280*                                 | Election Regulation and Reform (3)               |
| POLI 7920*                                 | MPA Internship (3)                               |
| POLI 6150                                  | Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations (3)   |
| POLI 6290                                  | Public Sector Information, Security and Risk (3) |
| POLI 6470                                  | Comparative Election Administration (3)          |
| POLI 7520                                  | Program Evaluation (3)                           |

\* Required



# Graduate Certificate in Global Public Service

## OVERVIEW

The Graduate Certificate in Global Public Service is a 12-credit hour program within the Auburn University Master of Public Administration program. The certificate addresses the increasing globalization of public service and prepares students for careers in public service both inside and outside the U.S. It is an interdisciplinary graduate certificate offered by faculty in Public Administration and Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies. Students are also required to complete an ePortfolio. MPA students completing a certificate are required to complete an internship in the substantive area.

## COURSES

| Global Public Service Courses (12 hours) |                                                                                     | Semester       |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| POLI 6360                                | Nonprofit Resource Development (3)                                                  | Fall           |
| POLI 6380* OR<br>POLI 6390*              | INGOs and International Organizations (3)<br>NGOs and International Development (3) | Fall<br>Spring |
| POLI 6470                                | Comparative Election Administration (3)                                             | Summer         |
| POLI 6550                                | Public Administration, Civil Society, and Democracy (3)                             | Varies         |
| POLI 7520                                | Program Evaluation (3)                                                              | Fall           |
| CADS 6780*                               | International Philanthropy (3)                                                      | Fall           |

\* Required



# Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Organizations and Community Governance

## OVERVIEW

The Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Organizations and Community Governance is a 12-credit hour program within the Auburn University Master of Public Administration Program. The certificate requirements include 3 required courses and 1 elective.

The curriculum is designed to prepare graduate-level students and practicing professionals for leadership positions in nonprofit organizations. The certificate can be earned while pursuing an MPA or independently. Courses cover nonprofit management, law and governance, and resource development for domestic and international public service. The certificate is aligned with the curricular goals of both the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), and the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC). Students are also required to complete an ePortfolio.

MPA students completing a certificate are required to complete an internship in the substantive area.

## COURSES

| Nonprofit Organization and Community Governance Courses (12 hours) |                                                         | Semester |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| POLI 6350*                                                         | Nonprofit Law and Governance (3)                        | Fall     |
| POLI 6360*                                                         | Nonprofit Resource Development (3)                      | Fall     |
| POLI 6370*                                                         | Nonprofit Management (3)                                | Spring   |
| POLI 6150                                                          | Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations (3)          | Spring   |
| POLI 6380                                                          | INGOs and International Organizations (3)               | Fall     |
| POLI 6390                                                          | NGOs and International Development (3)                  | Spring   |
| POLI 6550                                                          | Public Administration, Civil Society, and Democracy (3) | Varies   |
| POLI 7520                                                          | Program Evaluation (3)                                  | Fall     |

\* Required



# 5-YEAR ACCELERATED BA/MPA PROGRAM

*Our goal is to give you the skills  
and tools you need in order to be  
effective “civic agents”.*

## OVERVIEW

The BA/MPA (Accelerated Bachelors/Masters or ABM) Program provides an opportunity for AU’s most talented undergraduates in the public administration major to complete graduate training in a reduced time frame. Many of these students in their senior years meet or exceed the standards for the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program.

This program attracts outstanding graduate students to the AU MPA program. By offering this opportunity to our best undergraduates, we attract highly qualified students to the MPA program. This improves the quality of classes and the learning experiences of all students. In addition, it aids the development of high-performing students into public servants.

Students typically explore the BA/MPA option in the Fall or Spring of their junior year. To apply, a student must fill out the application form and submit a short letter of interest indicating why he or she wishes to participate in the program to the ABM Program Director. After making sure that all minimum qualifications are met, she will circulate the file to the MPA Admissions Committee. In addition to the minimum requirements, the Admissions Committee may consider other relevant factors, such as work experience, level of maturity, and recommendations from faculty members. The MPA Director will notify the student of the Admissions Committee’s decision. For those accepted, a Letter of Acceptance to the Accelerated Program will be sent to the student, with copies to the student’s CLA advisor and the Graduate Dean.

Students admitted to the ABM program complete their undergraduate degree, and then formally apply to the MPA program under the same standards as other applicants. They are admitted to the MPA program in the fall or spring semester following completion of their undergraduate degree.

## ADMISSION

Eligible undergraduate students must meet a set of requirements for admission into the 5-year accelerated program. These requirements are set in place to ensure quality education for all students in the program. The requirements are as follows:

- All applicants must be a Public Administration or Political Science major OR minor
- Have completed 12+ credit hours in the major, including having earned a B or higher in POLI-3250 Introduction to Public Administration
- Have 45-96 total credit hours (including AP credits)
- Have completed at least 24 credit hours at Auburn University
- Hold a minimum 3.0 overall GPA



# DUAL MCP/MPA DEGREE

*Our goal is to give you the skills and tools you need in order to be effective in interactive and interdisciplinary environments.*

## OVERVIEW

Community planning is one of the essential activities carried out by governments in the United States, resulting in a significant overlap and synergism between expertise and career development in public administration and community planning. Thus, a dual degree program in the Master of Community Planning (MCP) and the Master of Public Administration (MPA) is valuable and attractive for many of the students in these two fields.

Students apply separately to each program and are admitted (or rejected) based on the program's current admissions criteria. They proceed normally through each program meeting the requirements for all MCP and MPA students. In essence (as detailed in the course requirements below), students take the core classes in both programs with the MPA core counting as MCP electives and *vice versa*. This allows students to receive both degrees with 57 credit hours, as opposed to the 88 credit hours that would be required if they were taken separately.

## COURSES

As mentioned, students pursuing the dual degree will need to complete course requirements of both the master of community planning and Master of Public Administration plans of study. Below, listed separately, are the course requirements for the dual degree.

| Required MCP Core Courses (21 hours) |                                        |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| CPLN 6010                            | Introduction to Community Planning (3) |
| CPLN 6050                            | Land and Urban Economics (3)           |
| CPLN 6460                            | GIS for Planning and Policy (3)        |
| CPLN 7200                            | Urban Design Studio (3)                |
| CPLN 7350                            | Planning History and Theory (3)        |
| CPLN 7430                            | Land Use Law (3)                       |
| CPLN 7600                            | Synthesis Studio (3)                   |
| POLI 7AA0                            | ePortfolio Project                     |
| Comprehensive Exam                   |                                        |

| Required MPA Core Courses (21 hours) |                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| POLI 7000                            | Research Methods for Public and Nonprofit Organization (3)      |
| POLI 7140                            | Financial Management for Public and Nonprofit Organizations (3) |
| POLI 7150                            | Public Personnel Administration (3)                             |
| POLI 7330                            | Administrative Leadership and Democratic Governance (3)         |
| POLI 7350                            | Foundations of Public Administration and Public Service (3)     |
| POLI 7360                            | Foundations of Public Policy (3)                                |
| POLI 7920                            | MPA Internship (3)                                              |
| POLI 7930                            | MPA Research Project (3)*                                       |
| POLI 7AA0                            | ePortfolio                                                      |

\*substitute MPA Elective



# MPA ePORTFOLIOS

## OVERVIEW

As a student in the MPA Program, you are required to develop an ePortfolio that demonstrates your mastery of each of NASPAA's "Universal Competencies" around which the MPA program is structured. The MPA ePortfolio is the culminating experience of the MPA program.

The five MPA core competencies include the ability:

1. To lead and manage in public governance
2. To participate in and contribute to the policy process
3. To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions
4. To articulate and apply a public service perspective
5. To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

Your ePortfolio must contain artifacts that demonstrate your proficiency in these five areas of core competency. In addition, your ePortfolio may also be used to identify your professional goals and can incorporate artifacts that showcase your preparedness for accomplishing those goals. Typically, your professional goals will focus on attaining a position of employment in public service. However, you may also decide to use your ePortfolio to pursue an additional internship or enter an additional program of higher education.

Your artifacts will be examples of work that you select from your MPA coursework (core courses and electives) and experiences (internship, research project, service learning and volunteer projects, etc.) to communicate with a professional audience about how this experience relates to your goals. You will begin developing your ePortfolio during your first semester in the program.

The ePortfolio is then intended to be developed and improved during your three semesters in the Auburn MPA program – it is iterative and will involve scaffolding and revision of course assignments. You will finalize your ePortfolio during your last semester in the program.

## REQUIREMENTS

1. Intro/Bio
2. Career Objectives/Professional Goals
3. Your Public Service Philosophy
4. Resume/Contact info
5. Your Internship (POLI 7920): You should present your internship as a separate component (tab) in the ePortfolio. The presentation of your internship should include a reflective essay that addresses the way the internship has enhanced your professionalism across all five MPA core competencies. 2 artifacts from your internship must be included.
6. MPA Core Competencies: Each of the five core competencies must be illustrated using at least one artifact per competency. Each competency must be introduced using a Reflective Essay.
7. You will also include a 2-minute video introduction and presentation of yourself as an emerging professional.

**See the ePortfolio Roadmap for more detailed information.**



# OPPORTUNITIES

*Outreach becomes an avenue by which students make contacts in the community for internship and employment opportunities.*

## Graduate Fellowships & Assistantships

### *Graduate Assistantships*

The MPA program offers a limited number of graduate assistantships each spring and fall. These are awarded based on academic performance or need. Graduate assistants are assigned to a faculty member who supervises them. Graduate assistants complete may complete tasks that that are instructional, administrative, and research focused. Assignments are determined by the faculty supervisor.

### *Election Center Fellowship*

The Election Center Fellows work with faculty who teach in the graduate program in election administration on a variety of projects related to the field of election administration. These fellows perform tasks that are both administrative and research focused and provide support for the Election Center.

### *City of Auburn Fellowship*

The Graduate Fellow works on tasks and projects of value to the City of Auburn while giving the Graduate Fellow practical, real-world experience in municipal government. If the selected candidate has a specific interest in a City Department, the hiring managers will try to match the Graduate Fellow with that department as resources allow and as projects arise, however in most cases the Graduate Fellow will be assigned to the Department with identified projects.

### *City of Opelika Fellowship*

The Graduate Fellow works on tasks and projects of value to the City of Opelika while giving the Graduate Fellow practical, real-world experience in municipal government. If the selected candidate has a specific interest in a City Department, the hiring managers will try to match the Graduate Fellow with that department as resources allow and as projects arise, however in most cases the Graduate Fellow will be assigned to the Department with identified projects.

**All graduate assistants and fellows are required to be registered as full-time students, work 15 hours a week, maintain a GPA of at least a 3.0, and complete assigned duties in a way that meets expectations. Students who do not meet these standards will have their assistantships terminated. Students should refer to the Graduate Assistantship Guidelines and Graduate Assistantship Assessment Form for additional information. Assistantships can be renewed for up to three semesters.**



# OPPORTUNITIES

*Outreach becomes an avenue by which students make contacts in the community for internship and employment opportunities.*

## Events

### *Public Service Week*

Established in 2015, every spring the Department of Political Science/Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at Auburn University sponsors public service days. On public service days, students engage in a variety of public service activities and events that celebrate a commitment to the ideals of civic agency and public service. Public service day events are planned by students with support from the MPA faculty.

### *Gordon Sherman Lecture*

The Gordon Sherman Lecture brings successful and highly visible public servants to Auburn University to discuss their professional experiences thereby enhancing the education of our students by providing them with examples of successful public service careers in government. This lecture series has a rich history at Auburn and was established by Mr. Sherman in view of his extensive federal service with the Social Security Administration at the national and regional levels.

### *Professional Lecture Series*

The Auburn MPA Professional Lecture Series strengthens and builds relationships between current MPA students, alumni, community members, and public service. It provides students with unique insights and perspectives from leading experts in their fields.

### *Election Symposium*

A national symposium on election administration, which is held bi-annually during odd numbered years. The Voting Rights Act at 50 was held in 2015, Inclusion and Integrity in 2017 and 2019, webinars in 2021, and Enhancing the Profession in 2023 and 2025. These national gatherings hosted over three days have convened scholars and practitioners at all levels of government including US EAC commissioners and elected election officials, and stakeholders in conversations about policy and administrative practice. Students are encouraged to attend to meet election officials and policy makers from around the country and to learn more about the complex and critical aspects of running elections from the national, state, and local levels across the United States and its territories.

### *International City/County Management Association (ICMA)*

Every semester the ICMA student chapter holds networking events with local government practitioners and hosts events that focus on engaging MPA students in the practice of local government and providing them with career and job market preparation.



# OPPORTUNITIES

*Outreach becomes an avenue by which students make contacts in the community for internship and employment opportunities.*

## Honor Societies

*Pi Alpha Alpha* is the national public administration honor society for students in the field of public administration. The purpose of Pi Alpha Alpha is to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in public affairs and administration.

*Pi Sigma Alpha* is the national political science honor society for students in the field of political science. The purpose of Pi Sigma Alpha is to recognize and promote high academic achievement in the field of political science.

*Nu Lambda Mu* is an international honor society established by the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) to recognize students dedicated to the study of nonprofit management, philanthropy, and social enterprise. Nu Lambda Mu seeks to advance the study of nonprofit organizations in society and promotes scholarly achievement among those studying the third sector.

## Student Organizations

*More Than Auburn* is an MPA service organization that engages in service projects for global nonprofits, allowing students to put their nonprofit classroom knowledge and skills into practice, while also supporting deserving organizations. Students plan and execute fun and innovative projects such as: virtual 5Ks, foot golf, and a “Chopped” event. Students have fun, hone their skills, and it looks great on a resume!

*International City/County Management Association (ICMA)* is the world’s leading association of professional city and county managers and other employees who serve local governments.

*Black Graduate and Professional Student Association (BGPSA)* is a campus wide academic and professional organization that exists to address the unique needs and concerns of minority graduate and professional students and to promote diversity within the Auburn community. The purpose of BGPSA is to advance scholarly activities of minority students and to improve the conditions of the social environment here on Auburn’s campus through consistent social interaction and multi-cultural programming.



# NASPAA Competencies

*Our program is designed to help our students articulate and apply the five following public service values and perspectives.*

## **To Lead and Manage in Public Governance**

The mission of the Auburn MPA program is to help our students become well trained generalists for careers in the public and nonprofit sectors. We believe that the central skill that will aid our students to lead and manage in public governance is the ability to develop, articulate, and advocate broad visions about policies and organizational cultures. More specifically this involves:

1. Discern and apply appropriate legal and ethical parameters for public service employment in government agencies and nonprofit organizations and voluntary activities including nonprofit board and other volunteer service.
2. Discern and apply managerial tools used in public service employment in government agencies and nonprofit organizations and voluntary activities including nonprofit board and other volunteer service.
3. Distinguish among competing approaches to employee evaluation and motivation in public service activities in government agencies and nonprofit organizations.
4. Prepare and deliver professional presentations to large and small citizen and workplace audiences.
5. Prepare and deliver professional reports for workplace and citizen audiences.

## **To Participate in and Contribute to the Public Policy Process**

The mission of the Auburn MPA program is to help our students become well-trained generalists for careers in the public and nonprofit sectors. We believe that there are several important skills that will help our students to participate in and contribute to the public policy process. These include:

1. Identify the stages of the public policy process and characteristics of each
2. Distinguish among competing theoretical perspectives and rationales for public action by government and by nonprofit organizations
3. Construct a written historical narrative of a policy field
4. Develop a problem statement and proposal for policy change across the stages of the policy process

## **To Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems, and Make Decisions**

The mission of the Auburn MPA program is to help our students become well trained generalists for careers in the public and nonprofit sectors. Our program emphasizes a wide variety of skills that help students to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions:

1. Collect relevant information to understand correctly an important question or problem
2. Curate an information set in a manner that is both comprehensive and parsimonious
3. Analyze that information using appropriate tools
4. Present that analysis in an understandable way to a lay audience
5. Using that analysis, identify questions and develop appropriate answers and solutions



# NASPAA Competencies

*Our program is designed to help our students articulate and apply the five following public service values and perspectives.*

## **To Articulate and Apply a Public Service Perspective**

The mission of the Auburn MPA program is to help our students become well trained generalists for careers in the public and nonprofit sectors. Our program is designed to help our students articulate and apply the following public service values and perspectives:

1. Understand the different ethical systems and perspectives that have been applied in public administration and, based on one or more of these theories, to act ethically at all times in performing duties and responsibilities
2. Serve the public, not just passively by considering what appears to be the “objective” public interest but actively by engaging citizens to discover their viewpoints and to promote “deliberative democracy”
3. Follow professional norms in acting effectively and efficiently while working in the public and nonprofit sectors
4. Determine the major stakeholders affected by policy and organizational decisions and ensure that their viewpoints are actively solicited and considered before action is taken (e.g., representative bureaucracy)
5. Understand and act on both normative values (e.g., regime values) and applied ethics for bureaucrats and public administrators.

## **To Communicate and Interact Productively with a Diverse and Changing Citizenry**

The mission of the Auburn MPA program is to help our students become well trained generalists for careers in the public and nonprofit sectors. Our program believes that the ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry rests upon a series of important skills:

1. Develop an understanding of the needs and values of specific communities in the United States and around the globe.
2. Develop an understanding of and commitment to the values of representative bureaucracy
3. Respect for the views and experience of all members of public or nonprofit organizations
4. Experience interacting with diverse individuals and groups
5. Observe public service function(s) in action



# Graduate Certificate in Economic Development

## Student Learning Outcomes

*The mission of the MPA Program Graduate Certificate in Economic Development is to provide a specialization in the theories and practice of economic development, primarily within the U.S and Alabama. It is an interdisciplinary graduate certificate offered by the faculty of participating departments (Public Administration, Community Planning, and Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology) and is administered by the Master of Public Administration program.*

**SLO 1:** Describe in broad terms, the concepts and strategies employed in the pursuit of economic development.

**SLO 2:** Discuss the roles of various practitioners in economic development, and how they work collaboratively to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity of the communities and regions they serve.

**SLO 3:** Describe the context (economic, political, social) in which economic development policy occurs.

**SLO 4:** Discuss the challenges economic developers face in regional, national, and global contexts.

**SLO 5:** Analyze employment trends and opportunities in the field and be prepared for relevant employment in the field.



# Graduate Certificate in Election Administration

## Student Learning Outcomes

*The mission of the Auburn University MPA Graduate Certificate in Election Administration is to provide graduate-level students and practicing professionals with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to function effectively in election administration.*

### SLO 1: To Lead and Manage in Public Governance

|               |                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Remembering   | Identify the array of methods by which election officials are selected.<br>Identify the array of state/local and local office structures.   |
| Understanding | Explain the implications for public understanding of selecting election officials through elections.                                        |
| Applying      | Apply an election office policy on social media to election day activities.                                                                 |
| Analyzing     | Diagram reporting relationships and influence relationships across the election administration system on a specific administrative problem. |
| Evaluating    | Write a job description for a new position in a local election office.                                                                      |
| Creating      | Prepare a budget proposal to address staffing needs and other resources needed for a transition to a new policy requirement.                |

### SLO 2: To Participate in and Contribute to the Public Policy Process

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Remembering   | Generate glossary of terms that identify major steps of election administration as an interactive intergovernmental system.                                                        |
| Understanding | Explain methods of election reform over time.                                                                                                                                      |
| Applying      | Discuss the implications of recent US Supreme Court decisions on election operations in specific states.                                                                           |
| Analyzing     | Map the state, local and national election offices, advocacy groups, and vendors involved in a major policy issue in election administration (e.g., voter identification methods). |
| Evaluating    | Reflect on lessons learned and best practices in cyber-security policy in election administration.                                                                                 |

### SLO 3: To Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems, and Make Decisions

|               |                                                                                                                      |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Remembering   | Identify primary metrics and measures used in election administration activities.                                    |
| Understanding | Examine the history of the development of measurement of election administration.                                    |
| Applying      | Express the measures that could be used to capture performance in a key area of election administration.             |
| Analyzing     | Investigate contemporary vendor products and methods designed to address a particular election administration issue. |
| Evaluating    | Appraise the strengths and weaknesses of various methods of auditing elections.                                      |
| Creating      | Design staff training for an election issue in an election office.                                                   |



# Graduate Certificate in Election Administration

## Student Learning Outcomes

*The mission of the Auburn University MPA Graduate Certificate in Election Administration is to provide graduate-level students and practicing professionals with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to function effectively in election administration.*

### **SLO 4: To Articulate and Apply a Public Service Perspective**

|               |                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Remembering   | Identify the array of methods of voter registration and electoral participation around the world.                                                     |
| Understanding | Describe different methods of voter convenience in American elections.                                                                                |
| Applying      | Create a panel to discuss the perspectives and election administrative perspectives about a method of election designed to improve voter convenience. |
| Analyzing     | Construct a network map of information sources that could be accessed to better understand an election administration issue.                          |
| Evaluating    | Prepare an evaluation of community outreach efforts to provide language assistance to voters.                                                         |
| Creating      | Create a flow chart of a plan to increase voter satisfaction with the voting experience.                                                              |

### **SLO 5: To Communicate and Interact Productively with a Diverse and Changing Citizenry**

|               |                                                                                                                            |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Remembering   | Name the federal laws that preserve civil rights in voter registration and election administration.                        |
| Understanding | Explain why some groups merit particular treatment in the election administration process.                                 |
| Applying      | Determine how Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 applies to a decision of a local election office.                 |
| Analyzing     | Map a community network of advocacy groups and government offices that support accessibility for voters with disabilities. |
| Evaluating    | Synthesize research about the voting experience and poll worker race and ethnicity.                                        |
| Creating      | Develop a plan to provide technology support for a local election office.                                                  |



# Graduate Certificate in Global Public Service

## Student Learning Outcomes

*The mission of the Auburn University MPA Program Graduate Certificate in Global Public Service is to equip students with the knowledge and skills to thrive in an increasingly diverse, dynamic, and globally interconnected public service environment.*

**SLO 1:** Students will possess knowledge of the scope and significance of the public administration and nonprofit sectors relative to their roles in international public service. (Sector Foundations).

**SLO 2:** Students will have the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to be successful global public servants. (Application).

**SLO 3:** SLO 3: Students will understand and apply global and comparative perspectives on the nonprofit and public sectors. (Global Perspective).



# Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Organizations and Community Governance

## Student Learning Outcomes

*The mission of the Auburn University MPA Program Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Organizations & Community governance is to prepare students to act as civic agents who possess the knowledge, skills, and motivation to affect innovation and change in local and global communities through nonprofit organizations. The mission of the nonprofit certificate is a reflection of the overall mission of the MPA program, concentrated in nonprofit organizations.*

**SLO 1: Students will possess knowledge of the scope and significance of the nonprofit sector, voluntary action, and philanthropy, including historical and theoretical foundations.**

1. Articulate the history and development of the nonprofit sector within particular contexts.
2. Communicate and summarize the main theoretical explanations for the sector, including political, economic, religious and socio-cultural perspectives.
3. Summarize the size and impact of the third sector.
4. Articulate the diversity in the types, forms, activities, and function of voluntary action in society.

**SLO 2: Students will have the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to be successful nonprofit managers and leaders.**

1. Understand and articulate the roles and responsibilities of nonprofit governing boards and executives, and how these roles and responsibilities contribute to achieving the mission and vision of nonprofit organizations.
2. Articulate the legal frameworks within which nonprofit organizations operate and are regulated, including legal rights and obligations of directors, trustees, officers, and members of nonprofit and voluntary organizations.
3. Summarize human resource issues in nonprofits involving paid and unpaid staff, and how human resource issues in nonprofit organizations are different from the experience in public and for-profit organizations.
4. Understand and articulate methods used to evaluate performance and effectiveness in nonprofits, at both organizational and programmatic levels.



# Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Organizations and Community Governance

## Student Learning Outcomes

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**SLO 3: Students will understand how to identify, secure, and manage nonprofit resources in a way that facilitates financial stability.**

1. Possess basic knowledge about the theory and practice of nonprofit finance, in order to make decisions about operations and management of organizational resources.
2. Understand the relationship between and among different sources of nonprofit revenue, and how each can influence achievement of an organization's mission.
3. Understand and articulate the various forms and structures through which ethical fundraising and resource development occurs.
4. Summarize and assess recent and emerging trends in sources of nonprofit sector revenue.

**SLO 4: Students will understand and apply global and comparative perspectives on the nonprofit sector, voluntary action, and philanthropy.**

1. Understand and articulate the impact of global social, economic, and political trends on the third sector.
2. Understand and articulate how individual philanthropy, voluntary action and volunteerism is expressed in different cultural and global contexts.
3. Possess knowledge of the structure and regulation of philanthropic and voluntary behavior within different social, economic, and political contexts.



# Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Organizations and Community Governance

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**SLO 5: Students will have the ability to engage in strategic, innovative, and entrepreneurial behavior in nonprofit organizations.**

1. Understand the roles nonprofit organizations play in effecting social change, including influencing the public policy process in local, national, and international contexts.
2. Apply theories of leadership to understand the role of volunteers, paid staff, and nonprofit leaders in building effective and sustainable organizations.
3. Apply effective nonprofit leadership and management practices to inform strategic thinking and action, and organizational planning and project management within nonprofit organizations.
4. Articulate how management and accountability are different in nonprofit organizations.