

PPPM

Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management
School of Architecture and Allied Arts



2009-2010 Master of Public Administration University of Oregon

The master of public administration (MPA) at the University of Oregon is a rigorous two-year program for people interested in training for careers addressing the critical social, economic, and environmental issues of our times. The curriculum is designed to provide a combination of academic theory, analytic skills, and real-world applications so that students become effective and creative leaders in public service. The program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration.

A central focus of the program is to prepare students to become evidence-based policy makers, analysts, and managers. Evidence-based policy making is a concept that has been gaining widespread acceptance in the policy community, both in the U.S. and abroad. It is based on the idea that the formulation of policy and its implementation should be based on evidence of effectiveness. Fostering evidence-based policy making requires a closer connection between research and practice. On the one hand, it requires that researchers ask policy relevant questions and conduct meaningful and timely analyses that can support the policy process. On the other hand, it requires that policy makers, managers, and leaders think critically about research and integrate appropriate evidence in the implementation and formulation of policy and practice. The MPA curriculum has been developed to train students in applied research and provide opportunities for real-world applications. The faculty strives to support evidence-based policy making through our research and community outreach activities, as well as our teaching.

Recent UO graduates work as advisors, policy analysts and strategic planners in all levels of government, in Oregon, throughout the US and around the globe. Their work addresses the full range of social, economic, environmental and development issues of the day, from improving health care access, increasing government efficiency and responsiveness, to creating new governmental structures in developing democracies. Alumni also work in a broad range of nonprofit organizations, for instance, as executive staff in social service, arts, and environmental organizations, and in for-profit companies serving the public sector.

The State of Oregon is an exciting place to study public administration. As a “laboratory of democracy” it has a long and distinguished record of policy innovation. Most recently, Oregon has been on the forefront of innovations in land use, health care, and environmental policy. Oregon is also a beautiful place to live and be a graduate student. The University of Oregon is located in the Willamette Valley, with easy access to snow-capped mountains and scenic coastlines.

The Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management (PPPM) houses three graduate programs: a Master of Public Administration, a Master of Community and Regional Planning, and a Certificate in Nonprofit Management. The Department has a national reputation for scholarship, excellence in education, and strong connections with professional communities. PPPM is both an academic home and a community of students, professors, staff, and alumni. The Department is supported by a dedicated group of alumni who maintain strong links with the professional community.

Faculty

Faculty in the Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management have a wide range of interests, including social welfare policy, nonprofit management and philanthropy, citizen engagement, health policy, collaboration, and transportation. The faculty members are leaders in their respective fields, publishing in top journals and serving in nationally prominent advisory roles.

- Professor Judith Hibbard serves as a member of the National Advisory Council to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.
- Professor Renee Irvin is the chairperson of the Non-Profit Management Education section of the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration.

Information on individual faculty member's interests and publications can be found on the departmental [website](#).

Unique Aspects of the Program

- **Class sizes are small** in the UO MPA program and faculty members are on a first name basis with students.
- Our curriculum emphasizes applying classroom learning to **real-world policy and management issues**. Students participate in a short term, 48-hour policy project as well as an in-depth two term Capstone project examining issues that affect public and nonprofit agencies in the region.
- Students interested in a **career in nonprofits** can earn a Certificate in Not-for-Profit Management concurrently with their MPA. The Certificate program offers innovative classes including one in philanthropy, in which students award a \$10,000 grant to a local agency.
- The **University of Oregon** is a leading public research university. MPA students have the flexibility to customize their concentration course work to take advantage of offerings throughout the university, including the highly ranked College of Education and School of Law.
- **Oregon** is an exciting place to study public policy. Oregon is known for its policy innovation, from the Bottle Bill, to vote-by-mail, to current efforts to reform the health care system. Policymakers and public managers in Oregon are remarkably accessible.

Incoming MPA students share a passion and commitment to improving the social, economic and environmental conditions locally and globally. The MPA program draws students from across the United States and from a number of other countries. Most incoming students have several years of experience in the public or nonprofit sectors. Students' undergraduate backgrounds are varied. While most majored in a social science field, it is not at all unusual to admit students with backgrounds in the arts and humanities or the natural or physical sciences. What unifies the students is their interest and commitment to public service.

Approximately 25 students join the program each fall, for a total of roughly 50 graduate students in the MPA program. Students are selected for the MPA program based upon a combination of their undergraduate academic performance, intellectual aptitude, public service experience, and written statements. GREs are highly recommended for admission. The average undergraduate GPA for students in the program is 3.6 and their mean GRE scores are 580 for verbal reasoning, 624 for quantitative reasoning, and 5 for analytical writing.

The deadline for fall admission is February 1st. Applications from exceptional applicants will be considered for winter and spring terms. Most students complete the MPA as full time students over two academic years. Students may complete the program part time, but doing so requires a flexible employment situation. Application materials are available on the department [website](#). The department strongly encourages applications from people of all backgrounds. PPPM is dedicated to fostering a diverse academic environment to prepare future public leaders.

Prospective students are encouraged to visit Eugene and learn more about the MPA program. Contact Zudegi Giordano at pppm@uoregon.edu (541-346-3635) to set up meetings with students and faculty, and to attend a class.

MPA Curriculum

The 72-credit program prepares students to become effective and creative leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors. The curriculum provides students with a combination of substantive knowledge, analytic skills, and professional experience that prepares students for careers as evidence-based policymakers, analysts, or managers. The program is comprised of four components: 1) core courses, 2) an area of concentration, 3) an internship and professional development training, and 4) synthesizing applied research projects.

MPA Core Courses

The seven core courses (33 credits) provide students with the theoretical foundation and analytic skills to be effective leaders in the public or nonprofit sector.

PPPM 618, Public Service Theory (Fall)

4 credits

The context of professional public services includes the history and theoretical foundation for public policy and management in the government and nonprofit sectors.

PPPM 628, Public Sector Economy (Fall)

4 credits

Reasons for governmental intervention and analysis of revenue sources available to governments. Introduces economic framework commonly used in public service decision-making.

PPPM 629, Public Budget Administration (Winter)

4 credits

Resource allocation through the budget process. Includes analysis of budget system reforms and applied budget-making exercises.

PPPM 636, Public Policy Analysis (Winter)

4 credits

Understanding the rationale for and impact of public policy interventions. Developing systematic methods for analyzing policy design, adoption and assessment. (Prerequisite: PPPM 628)

PPPM 633, Public Management (Spring)

4 credits

Principles, issues, and practices in public management. Emphasizes the theory and practice designed to improve the performance of public service organizations.

PPPM 656, Quantitative Methods in Planning and Public Policy (Fall)

5 credits

Develop skills in using quantitative analysis to evaluate policies and programs. Emphasizes selecting appropriate analysis procedures, interpreting results appropriately, and writing clearly about findings.

PPPM 657, Research Methods in Public Policy and Management (Winter)

4 credits

Overview of the basic methods of research design in planning and public policy. Emphasizes the development of appropriate research questions, reviewing academic literature, measurement, data collection, types of data sets, causality, and the design of research projects. (Prerequisite: PPPM 656)

PPPM 684, Public and Nonprofit Financial Management (Spring)

4 credits

Financial management decision and control processes in public agencies and nonprofit organizations. Financial resources (taxes, donations, grant) stewardship, expenditure systems, and capital project analysis.

MPA Areas of Concentration

Students develop a substantive area of expertise by taking a minimum of 24 credits (6 courses) of coursework in a concentration area. There are five concentration areas that students may choose from: policy, public management, nonprofit management, planning, or environmental policy. Examples of the courses that are appropriate for each concentration area are detailed on the departmental [website](#).

Students may alternatively develop their own concentration in consultation with a faculty advisor. Recent graduates have created customized concentrations in labor issues, health policy, and international development.

Internships & Professional Development

Internships and professional development are integral components of the MPA curriculum. In their first year, students enroll in Internship and Professional Development (1 credit), which is a class designed to have students identify their career goals and develop a plan to meet those goals. Students identify summer internship and post-graduation fellowship opportunities, develop polished resume and cover letters, and conduct informational and mock interviews.

Completing an internship is highly recommended for all MPA students, and required for those with less than two years of relevant professional experience (3 credits). Internships help to explore and clarify career goals, apply academic learning, enhance and learn new skills, gain experience, and network with professionals. Students have completed a wide range of internships, including with the Oregon Governor's Office, Senator Ron Wyden's Office, United Nations Internship Programme, City of Portland Office of Sustainability, and Holt International Children's Services. For more information on the Internship Program see the departmental [website](#).

MPA Applied Research Projects

The MPA curriculum provides students two key opportunities to synthesize classroom learning and apply their research skills to current policy and management issues. At the start of the second year, students engage in a 48-hour policy project. This project is intended to simulate the real-world environment where analysts and managers are given short time frames to research a topic that they know little or nothing about. Over 48 hours, students will read relevant policy and research documents, write a memo detailing the evidence base and key issues, and give an oral presentation. The 48-hour project takes place the week before fall classes begin, and incoming first year students will have the opportunity to view the presentations as part of their orientation to the program. This is a signature event and rite of passage each fall.

Students also enroll in a two-term terminal project sequence that serves as the synthesizing Capstone of the curriculum. Over the winter and spring terms of the second year of study, students will work on real-world or 'simulated real-world' projects that require conducting in-depth needs assessments, evaluations, cost-benefit analyses, or other applied research. A faculty member will work closely with student groups on these projects over the two terms. Past projects have included conducting a survey for a state commission to gauge attitudes among key stakeholders on potential policy change, an analysis of administrative data on how a past policy implementation impacted Oregonians, and an examination of three potential communities for a nonprofit's expansion.

Concurrent Degrees

The University of Oregon is very flexible in allowing students to develop concurrent degrees. No formal program between PPPM and the other UO program is required. Students need to be accepted into both programs and work out their academic schedule in conjunction with their faculty advisors. Students have recently combined the MPA with a master of community and regional planning (MCRP), master of business administration (MBA), doctor of jurisprudence (JD), Ph.D. in educational leadership, master of international studies, and master of geography.

Life in Eugene

Eugene, Oregon's 2nd largest city, combines the relaxed amenities of a small town with the cultural advantages of a much larger city. Here, rainbow and cutthroat trout rise in the clear riffles of the Willamette River, while world-class facilities host a diverse array of music, theater, and cultural events.

All of Eugene's amenities are within easy reach of campus by foot, bike, or bus. More than 100 miles of bicycle paths and jogging trails meander through the city's riverside parks and rose gardens and into the business and university districts. The city's bus system provides convenient and free transportation to UO students. Eugene's central location allows easy access to a world of recreational opportunities:

- **Fifteen** minutes from campus: fish for trout in a crystal-clear river; hike through lush, fragrant forests; relax in one of the 157 area parks; catch a concert at the world-class Hult Center.
- **Sixty** minutes from campus: walk for miles on pristine public ocean beaches; explore tide pools teeming with life; watch migrating whales and spectacular sunsets from rocky cliffs; float the wild and scenic McKenzie River.
- **Ninety** minutes from campus: charge downhill through a flurry of light powder or glide along miles of groomed cross-country ski trails at the Willamette Pass Ski Area; camp beneath the summer stars or explore clean mountain lakes hidden amid majestic conifers.

For more information

Master of Public Administration Program
Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management
119 Hendricks Hall, 1209 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1209
Telephone (541) 346-3635; FAX (541) 346-2040
E-mail: pppm@uoregon.edu
Website: <http://pppm.uoregon.edu/>
updated August 6, 2009

*An equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the
Americans with Disabilities Act.
This publication will be made available in accessible formats upon request.*