

# MPA Student Guide

Master of  
Public Administration Program

Appalachian State University  
Department of Government and Justice Studies  
Fall 2022

## Information for MPA Students

Welcome to the Master of Public of Administration program at Appalachian State University.

The faculty and staff of the Department of Government and Justice Studies join me in wishing you a most successful academic career. Despite the challenges society is facing broadly, we will do everything in our power to make your time in the MPA program intellectually challenging, engaging, and rewarding.

You, along with 60 or so other students, are enrolled in our MPA program. Each semester, we enroll approximately 40 on-campus students and 20-30 in our off-campus cohorts in Hickory and Winston Salem. Each year, between 20 and 25 students receive their MPA degree from the University. Since the inception of the MPA program in 1989, over 600 individuals have received MPA degrees from Appalachian and with hard work on your part, you will join the list of graduates. We are very proud of the wide array of jobs in local, state, and federal government that our alumni hold (see Attachment A).

Approximately twenty-three years ago, Appalachian State University celebrated the centennial of its founding in 1899. During its first century, Appalachian established a reputation for quality educational programs that met the needs of this region and of the State of North Carolina. Known for our emphasis on practical problem solving, Appalachian State challenges its students to “do your best” and to become professionals. Though Appalachian has experienced considerable growth in past decades, it has not grown so large that you become a number. In our MPA program, we are passionate about mentoring students into careers that enable them to govern and manage well within their communities.

Whenever you have questions about the MPA program or about Graduate School requirements or procedures, please feel free to talk with me. Faculty members are available as a resource to you and will post office hours during which you should feel free to talk with them. Appointments may be scheduled with faculty at times other than their posted office hours, or you may contact them for an email discussion.

Best wishes for a successful academic year.



Dr. Patricia Mitchell, CEcD  
Director, MPA Program  
September 2022

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### AppState MPA Mission Statement:

The mission of the Appalachian State University Master of Public Administration program is to educate and prepare in-service and pre-service students to be public service leaders by fostering foundational knowledge, analytical and practical skills, and professional networks. To achieve this mission, the MPA program will emphasize the values of accountability, responsiveness, and expertise as it:

- Delivers a curriculum that reflects core disciplinary content and provides flexibility for student specialization;
- Develops collaborative relationships with local government and across the university, non-profit, and criminal justice professionals in the region and state;
- Promotes high-quality faculty teaching, scholarship, and service; and
- Sustains and enhances the program's governance, resources, and established strengths.

The following includes a telephone and email directory as well as a brief introduction to the MPA faculty.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email Address</u>	<u>Telephone (prefix 828)</u>
Dr. Patricia Mitchell, CEcD	<a href="mailto:mitchelljp@appstate.edu">mitchelljp@appstate.edu</a>	262-6342
Dr. Yongbeom Hur	<a href="mailto:hury@appstate.edu">hury@appstate.edu</a>	262-8328
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Dr. Tatyana Ruseva	<a href="mailto:rusevatb@appstate.edu">rusevatb@appstate.edu</a>	262-8238
Dr. Brian Bulla	<a href="mailto:bullabr@appstate.edu">bullabr@appstate.edu</a>	262-6916
Dr. Jay Rickabaugh	<a href="mailto:rickabaughja@appstate.edu">rickabaughja@appstate.edu</a>	262-6908

#### **Dr. Patricia Mitchell, MPA Director and Assistant Professor**

Dr. Mitchell teaches PA 5060 Seminar and other elective courses for the MPA program. She received her MPA and doctorate in Public Administration from the University of Georgia and has taught at ECU and as adjunct at AppState and NC State. Dr. Mitchell, who joined the faculty in 2017, most recently served as the Assistant Secretary for Rural Development at N.C. Department of Commerce where she oversaw the Rural Economic Development Division. She previously was a county manager and economic developer in Ashe County.

#### **Dr. Yongbeom Hur, Associate Professor**

Dr. Hur joined the MPA faculty in August 2007 and holds a Ph.D. in Public Administration from the University of Kentucky and MA in Public Administration from Ohio State University. Dr. Hur has work experiences in both public and private sectors as a manager. His teaching and research interests include improving organizational performance, research methods, and quantitative approach to public management. Dr. Hur teaches the Organizational Theory course in the core curriculum of the program.

#### **Dr. John Brooks, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Brooks teaches PA 5460 and other elective courses for the MPA program. He received his MPA from the University of Georgia and PhD in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Brooks joined ASU in Fall 2022. Prior to that, he was an Assistant Professor at Auburn University at

Montgomery for five years following the completion of a one-year post-doctoral position at Duke University's Social Science Research Institute. His research broadly concerns the intersections between budgets, public management, and politics at all three levels of American government.

**Dr. Brian Bulla, Associate Professor**

Dr. Bulla teaches the PA 5180 Public Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation and other elective courses for the MPA program. He earned his MPA and Ph.D. from North Carolina State University. Dr. Bulla completed a Post-Doctoral Research Associate position at Purdue University. His research and teaching interests revolve around public management and public policy, with particular interests in environmental and natural resources. Prior to attending graduate school, he was an operations manager.

**Dr. Jay Rickabaugh, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Rickabaugh received his Ph.D. in Public and International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh in 2018. During his time in Pittsburgh, he taught courses in Public Policy Analysis and Quantitative Methods. His main research interests center around local government cooperation and regional intergovernmental organizations, including North Carolina's Councils of Government (COG) system.

**Dr. Catherine Marcum, Department Chair and Professor of Criminal Justice**

**Dr. Jefferson Holcomb, Professor of Criminal Justice**

Drs. Marcum and Holcomb teach in the Criminal Justice program with the Department and serve as points of contact for MPA students interested in graduate CJ coursework and the Administration of Justice concentration.

**Adjunct Instructors** may teach courses throughout your time in the MPA program. Such adjunct instructors will bring an invaluable mix of professional experience and academic credentials to the classroom and they provide an essential service to the program.

## ETHICS

Your classes will provide extensive exposure to the techniques, issues, and practices of modern public administration. Some classes will focus more heavily on ethics, and you will learn that people lose their jobs and reputations when they allow themselves to be ethically compromised.

Like any quality MPA program, Appalachian's MPA program is designed to train persons to be able to manage agencies and to evaluate how well programs and agencies function. Your classes will teach you a great deal, but one thing that we cannot do is "make you honest." We expect honesty and will not tolerate dishonesty in your graduate studies. Most of the jobs that you will likely be seeking in the future are jobs that involve public trust. Ask yourself how it will be possible to present yourself as worthy of a position of public trust if you have shown yourself to be compromise your ethics in graduate school.

As you manage your graduate school experience, think about the need for future recommendations from professors to employers. One of the frequent questions that faculty receive when they are contacted about a student is not only about the student's knowledge, but also about their behaviors in school.

Unacceptable actions that have caused students problems in the past include:

- disrespectful attitudes and behaviors in class
- lack of attendance
- submission of recycled papers



- submission of work done by other students in different programs
- papers obtained over the Internet from various sources
- plagiarism in papers or failing to offer proper attribution to others for their work
- collaboration with others on individual exams

Please do not embarrass yourself by engaging in any of these activities, as there are serious consequences to your education and future.

## MPA CURRICULUM

Each of you should carefully examine the check sheet for the MPA program that is a part of this information packet marked as **Attachment B**. Please take note that the form reduces to a single page a large volume of information that is contained in the *Graduate Bulletin*. Nothing on the check sheet can modify an official Graduate School requirement.

On the check sheet are several items to which you need to pay attention. On the bottom third of the check sheet, you will see listed each of the concentrations within the MPA program. **All MPA students, regardless of the concentration they choose, must complete 42-semester hours credit.** Each of the concentrations corresponds to a particular career objective but regardless of which you choose, you must complete 42 semester hours (including the eight core courses that are common to all concentrations).

### A. Public Management

This concentration is appropriate for persons who wish to have any of the following careers:

- Serve as a Department, Division or Section Head in a state or local government agency
- Serve as an evaluator of other programs, as in a budget office
- Serve in a policy position, as an advisor to the head of a program
- Serve as Executive Director of a non-profit organization
- Serve as an Emergency Management professional

You may want to consider the Public Management concentration as it allows students to design a custom-made program of study when other concentrations in our MPA do not seem to fit their interests or when you want a public sector job involving management and want to combine graduate courses from another graduate program. For example, public management is ideal for persons who direct economic development programs or senior citizens' programs since ASU does not specifically offer programs to prepare persons for these careers. **Please note that all off-campus students are Public Management concentration students.**

### B. Town, City, and County Management

This concentration is appropriate for persons who wish to have any of the following careers:

- Serve as a town manager or a county manager
- Serve as an assistant manager in a town or county
- Serve as a department head in a local government unit
- Serve as an advocate for local government, e.g., service with a League of Municipalities

- Serve as an evaluator of local government programs, e.g., with a state legislature

Historically, Appalachian State University has been strong in preparing persons for careers in City and County Management. More than 125 individuals now serving as manager or assistant manager in North Carolina communities earned either their undergraduate or graduate training in local government management in this department. A key element in the success of ASU graduates has been their familiarity with land use planning and local government administration. If you have no prior exposure to these subjects, be sure to consult with the MPA program director to ensure that you are getting the courses that you need to prepare you for the profession of city and county management.

### **C. Administration of Justice**

This concentration is appropriate for persons who wish to do any of the following:

- Serve in a senior administrative position in a criminal justice agency
- Serve as planner, budget analyst or evaluator of a criminal justice agency
- Accelerate career movement into or within local, state, or federal law-enforcement agencies

### **D. Not-for-Profit Management**

This concentration is appropriate for persons who wish to do any of the following:

- Serve as an executive director or administrative officer of a non-profit organization
- Serve as program manager or program staff of a non-profit organization
- Serve as a community engagement or advancement professional of a non-profit organization

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Many universities across the country are struggling with the problem of how to offer educational opportunities to students who are located some distance from their campuses. Appalachian continues to develop new Distance Learning initiatives as one means of accommodating the addition of more students, which has been mandated by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors. The off-campus MPA cohorts are part of Appalachian's growth management strategy and are designed to meet its mission of service to the region.

Some universities offer MPA courses via internet or two-way instructional television, but we do not use technology as a primary means of delivering instruction. The Department uses face-to-face instruction to deliver the MPA program in its off-campus locations. Approximately 30 persons, working full-time for local, state, non-profit and federal government agencies, enroll in Appalachian MPA classes away from the Boone campus. Each student enrolled in an off-campus cohort takes a predetermined schedule of courses designed to fulfill the requirements of the Public Management concentration. We offer two evening classes each semester (including summer session) at each cohort location. Students who successfully complete the two classes each semester will graduate with the MPA degree in seven semesters. Typically, one core course and one predetermined elective course are taught each semester, although scheduling constraints may dictate the need for other arrangements. The Capstone course, offered late in each cohort, has the same requirements as the on-campus course.

## CORE COURSES

Although the *General Bulletin* describes each course and a detailed syllabus is available from the instructor, the following are thumbnail descriptions of the core courses in the MPA program. Off-campus students should refer to the schedule of classes to determine the order of classes for their cohort. The below schedule is the usual semester the course is taught but it can vary. Check schedules each semester.

### **PA 5000 Research Methods – Fall and Spring Semester in Boone**

This course builds upon the foundation that you received in an undergraduate statistics or research methods course and prepares students to carry out complex research assignments. *All incoming students MUST have taken an undergraduate statistics or research methods course prior to enrolling in PA 5000.* Topics covered include research design and the basics of the philosophy of science. Following a brief review of basic statistics, the course will move the student into advanced statistical techniques including correlation and multivariate regression. Students will become proficient in data gathering and entering data into the computer, as well as choosing and interpreting appropriate analytical techniques. This class will require substantial effort on your part to master all needed computer and research skills.

### **PA 5060 Seminar in Public Administration - Fall Semester in Boone**

This course exposes students to the major ideas and approaches in historic and contemporary public administration. A substantial amount of reading will be required, along with presentations in class, that have as their purpose acquainting students with the major writers and with significant problems facing modern public administrators. A research paper is required.

### **PA 5180 Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation - Spring Semester in Boone**

This course provides students with an understanding of the elements of public policymaking, focusing primarily on the techniques for analyzing policy alternatives at each stage of development including evaluation of implementation processes and program outcomes. Classroom presentations, exams, and a research paper are all involved.

### **PA 5260 Organization Theory and Behavior – Fall and Spring Semester in Boone**

This course deals with the social and psychological climate of organizations and the ways in which leaders of organizations either succeed or fail. Attention to the role of leaders in creating and modifying the practices and norms in their organizations are emphasized. Substantial readings, group exercises, multiple classroom presentations and written papers are required.

### **PA 5360 Public Personnel Administration – Fall and Spring Semester in Boone**

This course focuses upon the difficult task of selecting, retaining, compensating, and supervising public employees. The legal framework in which public personnel management occurs is emphasized. A significant number of readings and a research paper are included in the assignments.



## **PA 5460 Public Budgeting and Financial Administration – Spring Semester in Boone**

This course acquaints students with the preparation and administration of budgets in public agencies. The legal framework in which public agencies work, the mechanics and politics of budget preparation, auditing, as well as other tools used in financial administration is emphasized. Students will become proficient in using spreadsheets and in understanding an audited financial statement. A research paper is involved.

## **PA 5558 Capstone Research – Fall and/or Spring Semester in Boone – 1 hour**

## **PA 5559 Capstone – Fall and/or Spring Semester in Boone – 2 hours**

Capstone courses are taken during the final semester of study. The courses integrate the theory and practice of public administration covering a variety of topics including ethics, finding a job, and negotiating benefits, as well as practical problem solving. Each student conducts a major research project on a management issue. The paper is prepared in consultation with three faculty members within the MPA program and presented during a formal Capstone Conference attended by MPA students, faculty, administrators, and sometimes friends and family. Each student will work with an MPA faculty member on his or her project for PA 5558. A meeting is held each semester prior to the Capstone semester with students who plan to complete their Capstone so that topics, supervisors and reading committees can be discussed.

## **Courses Specific to Particular Career Concentrations**

Please refer to Attachment B. There are currently four available career concentrations: Public Management, Town/City/County Management, Not-For-Profit Management, and Administration of Justice. You should choose the concentration that relates most closely to your career objective. Please note that all concentrations, except Public Management, require courses specific to the field that you intend to enter. Also, remember that all off-campus students enroll in Public Management.

## **Elective Courses**

Depending upon the concentration selected, you will complete at least one and as many as six elective courses. You can choose almost any graduate-level course as an elective provided it logically relates to your career objective; *at least one elective must be taken outside of the Public Administration (PA) program.* You should discuss your choice of potential electives with the MPA Director so that no problems arise regarding the suitability or approval of your elective courses. **No course numbered below 5000 can be used for credit toward a graduate degree; if you took a dual-listed course at the 4000-level, you cannot take the same course again at the 5000-level and receive credit toward the MPA degree.** New courses are developed in a variety of departments so you should look at the current schedule of classes to see if other courses might be of interest to you.

## **Transfer Courses**

It is possible to take a limited number of courses at another university and apply these hours to your degree here. The *Graduate Bulletin* states that no more than nine hours credit can transfer into ASU graduate programs and the courses cannot have counted for credit toward another degree. All courses transferred into the MPA program must be for credit and have a recorded grade on an official transcript from an accredited university. Discuss your wish to transfer in credits from another university or college with the MPA Director. Because ASU courses are usually 3 semester hours each, it is possible to

transfer in up to three courses from another program. However, *always* discuss this with your MPA advisor before assuming that the courses will transfer into the MPA program.

If you have earned another graduate degree, speak with the program director about possible waivers.

### **Time Limits**

The *Graduate Bulletin* specifies that all course work applied to a degree must have been completed no more than seven years prior to graduating. Courses older than seven years are not counted towards a degree at Appalachian.

### **Experiential learning: Internships and Field Based Research (Summers in Boone)**

All pre-service students (i.e., those not yet in a career) should plan to complete two internships. The faculty members in this Department believe strongly that internships form an important part of the educational experience of a student. Six credit hours are earned in internships and applied to the 42 hours of credits required to graduate with the MPA.

Early in your academic career at Appalachian, you should start planning for your two internships. Generally, they will occur during the summer session between years one and two and then just after completing the coursework in year two. Two internships are useful for these reasons:

- a. Students will have twice as large a network of contacts when seeking a permanent job
- b. Students will have twice as many projects to list on their resumes and will be able to show greater experience and skill.
- c. Students will avoid being on the job market in May and June when tens of thousands of other students are seeking employment

Students should look at an internship as an important step in achieving their career goals (see Appendix A). As such, choose the location of the internship carefully. The MPA faculty believe that an internship should provide students:

- a. An opportunity to see the world of professional work
- b. An opportunity to learn about government and the public sector beyond what has been learned from textbook and class descriptions
- c. An opportunity to work closely with an experienced mentor who can give you invaluable practical advice
- d. An opportunity to network with important persons with whom you would otherwise be unlikely to meet or talk, let alone have frequent access to
- e. An opportunity to have an insider's advantage when it comes to finding a job

Remember that overall, about 40 percent of the internships nationwide result in offers of employment to the student intern. Choose an internship in the type of agency in which you hope to work following your graduation. For example, if you want to be a manager in a small town in the mountains, do not seek an internship in Raleigh.

The student bears the responsibility for finding the internship. We can give you names and telephone numbers of persons to contact, but **you** must make all arrangements concerning the internship. We will only approve public and nonprofit agencies as venues for internships. Working in private businesses, for

relatives, or corporations/private sector jobs **is not** suitable for MPA internships. The internship must involve at least 12 weeks of full-time service in a setting that allows the student to observe and participate in significant management issues. Students are expected to complete 6 credit hours of internships (12 weeks each).

Completion of a single 6-hour internship must be discussed and approved by the MPA Director. The MPA program prefers a student complete two 3-hour internships. The circumstances must be discussed with and approved by the MPA Director prior to your first summer session in the MPA program.

We support students to consider internships longer than a semester. Some students have completed internships lasting six months. There is a learning curve that affects anyone in a new job and agencies have reported that interns become more productive about 6-7 weeks into the job. Longer internships allow you to learn more and to build stronger ties to the host agency, thus you are more valuable to the agency. All of these will increase your chances for employment.

Interns are often paid during their internship, although frequently criminal justice and non-profit agencies do not have funds with which to pay interns. Approximate pay for MPA students is \$4500 - \$5000 for full-time service over the summer session. You are free to negotiate a higher or a lower rate of compensation or you may choose to work for no compensation for the experience you gain. The responsibility is on you to secure a suitable internship. If you choose to do a longer internship, the amount that you are paid should increase proportionally with the extended length of the internship.

Always secure approval from the MPA Director before you choose an internship so that no problem arises about the type of agency. An internship paper is *always* required of each student. **ALL INTERNSHIPS ARE COMPLETED DURING THE SUMMER. A STUDENT DOES NOT TAKE CLASSES DURING THEIR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE.**

**Exceptions to the internship requirement** are only for in-service students. In-service students are those persons employed full-time in a career. If you are in-service, you should not register for PA 5900 Internship in Public Affairs. As provided in the *Graduate Bulletin*, in-service students take an additional elective course (making a total of twelve rather than eleven courses) and are required to take PA 5010 Field-Based Research. Field Based Research is a course in which a management problem facing their agency is addressed, with a major research paper required. PA 5010 Field Based Research is a 3-credit hour course. **PA 5010 is only offered in the Summer Sessions.**

**Each student in the MPA program, regardless of in-or pre-service status, must complete 42 semester hours of approved graduate-level credit.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Set out below is information that we think will be helpful to you and addresses questions that have often been asked by students.

### Email

The primary means of communication among students, instructors, and the program director is via email accounts issued to all by ASU. You will check your university email account on a regular basis, as important announcements on numerous topics are made at all times of the year. Students can easily have all of their emails from their ASU account forwarded to another email account. Professors and the MPA Director communicate through ASU email addresses and not personal email addresses.

ALL students who do not regularly check their ASU email account should set up their ASU email account to forward messages to whatever personal email account you check regularly. The ASU faculty portal allows faculty members to send email messages to everyone enrolled in a class. **If you do not check your ASU email account and have not forwarded your mail, you are likely to miss important announcements from your course instructor(s).**

### Absences

Graduate students should attend *all* class meetings and to act professionally. You should advise the instructor in advance, why it is necessary to miss class. It is your responsibility to make the most of each class. Absences when group projects or individual presentations are due should be avoided. Again, the expectation is that you will attend all class meetings.

### Accreditation

The MPA program at Appalachian State University is accredited through 2024 by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration. NASPAA is the sole agency in the United States that grants accreditation to graduate programs in public administration; about half of the nation's MPA programs are accredited.

Appalachian's MPA program demonstrated adherence to a rigorous set of standards as part of its effort to obtain accreditation. NASPAA reviews the quality of the curriculum, faculty, students, facilities, internships, support services and off-campus offerings prior to granting accreditation for a seven-year period. Although the various programs across the country differ in their particular emphases on local, state or federal government and non-profit management, each of the accredited programs has to show that it meets the rigid requirements set down by NASPAA and that each of the programs seeking accreditation offer students a high-quality graduate education experience. For more information about NASPAA, visit [www.naspaa.org](http://www.naspaa.org).

### Adverse Weather

Winter in Boone can be rugged at times, but Appalachian State University rarely suspends classes due to adverse weather. However, no one expects students to place their safety in jeopardy by attempting to travel to Boone in severe weather. For those of you new to Boone, you may be surprised to learn that occasionally, most likely during January and February, temperatures can go below zero (Fahrenheit) with high winds. Mountaineers are hearty people who are much more used to winter than you may be,



so it is quite unlikely that classes will be cancelled due to snow. On the other hand, if the Boone area suffers unusually heavy snowfall or ice, it may be necessary for local authorities to impose a curfew that prevents the university from operating. Only you can determine if you feel that it is safe to drive up the mountain from neighboring counties. If you feel that the risk is too great, do not put yourself at risk. If the University closes due to bad weather, information about the closing is posted on the ASU webpage.

At the beginning of classes each semester, each off-campus student should give the instructor a telephone number at which they can be reached if deteriorating weather conditions force cancellation of a particular class.

Information about university closings due to weather or other emergency conditions are posted at [www.appstate.edu](http://www.appstate.edu).

## **Advising**

Appalachian provides students with several opportunities to obtain useful advice about courses, careers, employment, and health concerns.

Academic advising is available to you by appointment throughout the school year. It is best to make sure that the courses you plan to take in any semester meet the requirements of the program. You should talk to the MPA Director and your instructors about the classes in which you intend to enroll. If you make or change your plans after talking to other faculty, it is generally a good idea to send the MPA Director an email message outlining your plans for elective courses.

The Career Development Center (located in the John E. Thomas Student Support Building) offers useful advice on writing resumes, as well as handling job interviews and salary negotiations. This office works primarily with undergraduates, but their services are available to *all* students. The personnel are friendly, and you are encouraged to contact them for assistance in developing your job-hunting skills.

Each of the MPA faculty members is familiar with the expectations of employers in their respective career areas. They can offer advice about courses that you might be considering. Each professor has office hours and will answer questions over the telephone or by e-mail.

In addition, you can address your questions, regardless of the track you have chosen, to the MPA Director. Graduate students are not required to meet with an advisor before registering each semester (as is the case with undergraduates) and you are presumed to be mature enough to make strategic choices on your own. However, you are encouraged to use the considerable experience of the faculty to help you when you need advice.

## **Offices**

On-campus, each graduate research assistant will be given (shared) office space in Anne Belk Hall.

## **Capstone**

Over half of all MPA programs in the United States require a final capstone project.

Although this course is completed just prior to graduating, you should note the following. In the semester prior to enrolling in the Capstone (i.e., your final semester), there will be an informational



meeting. You will be asked to choose a topic, arrange with a project supervisor for your project with a professor who is willing to guide you and then begin meeting with your supervisor to start your project.

The capstone research paper is a significant undertaking that allows you to demonstrate your ability to identify a researchable problem, conduct a literature review, gather, and analyze data, express yourself clearly in written form, prepare tables, write an executive summary and to formally present your findings using PowerPoint. Attachment C poses a set of questions that may help you organize your Capstone research paper.

### **Cheating**

Copying the work of someone else, submitting a paper written by someone else, or improperly using notes or prepared materials during an exam are examples of unacceptable behavior that will result in academic disciplinary actions that may include failing a course or expulsion from the MPA program.

There will be many times that your instructor will encourage group efforts but when individual work is expected, it should be your work and not the work of someone else. Proper attribution should be given in footnotes and quotations from materials previously published by others and should be properly attributed according to the APA style manual.

### **Communications**

By the end of the first week of class, please send Dr. Patricia Mitchell ([mitchelljp@appstate.edu](mailto:mitchelljp@appstate.edu)) your telephone number and email address. University email addresses are the usual method of communicating.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

The MPA does not require a comprehensive examination of students prior to graduation. In place of the comprehensive examination, students must successfully complete the Capstone courses discussed above.

### **Computer Access**

AppalNet is a computer system that Appalachian uses to facilitate student access to the computer network on campus. Through AppalNet you can send and receive email, register for classes, check on your financial account and participate in certain on-line classes. Each student at Appalachian State University is provided with nearly unlimited computer access. Upon being admitted you will be issued a **userid** that is needed to gain access to the ASU computer network.

You will be expected to be proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Students have access to several on-campus computer laboratories, including facilities in Peacock Hall, The Belk Library, the Student Center, and Anne Belk Hall. When you use labs other than those in Anne Belk Hall, you may be required to show your student ID card for access to the public labs. The computer lab in Anne Belk Hall is available for student use except when the rooms are reserved for a class or for an examination. Each of the computer labs has a wide array of word processing, statistical analysis, database, and other programs.

Each semester, more and more information are available over the web. Appalachian's library has a wide array of databases and information available to computer users. Students are encouraged to develop skills in searching on-line catalogs, databases, and government publications over the web.

Time spent with the reference librarians learning how to use the on-line sources will be a wise investment on your part. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to meet with a reference librarian during your first semester.

Off-campus Distance Education students will be given an orientation by a Distance Education Librarian from Appalachian as to how to access library materials via the Internet and to the other services that the Belk Library provides to Distance Education students.

## **Computers**

We do not require students to own computers, but you will find that in each of your courses you will likely use the computer, in some classes rather extensively. There are computer labs on campus in Anne Belk Hall, the Student Union, the Library and Information Commons, Peacock Hall, Walker Hall, and Sanford Hall. Approximately 400 computers are available for student use in the various campus computer labs. Most of the computers are IBM-compatible but some Macintoshes are available. Wireless internet service is available across campus.

Expect the computer labs to be heavily used near the end of each semester because many people tend to put off completing their term papers. Public labs have traditionally been open from 8 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 2 p.m. through 10:30 p.m. on Sunday. The labs in Anne Belk Hall are not public labs but are generally open from 8 a.m. through 10 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Anne Belk Hall lab is frequently reserved for use by Political Science, Criminal Justice, and Freshmen Seminar classes and may not always be available. Information on computer lab policies and procedures is available at <http://support.appstate.edu/services/computer-labs/policies-and-procedures>.

During your career at Appalachian, you will make extensive use of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. You are encouraged to become proficient in each of these programs early in your academic career. A good computer can be a real asset to you, particularly if you have internet access from your home, apartment, or dorm room. If you do not have access to a personal printer, you can bring your files to one of the labs and use one of the laser printers in the labs.

Laptops are expensive and much to the chagrin of the students, some have been stolen. Therefore, take necessary precautions to ensure the security of your laptop if you have one. Wireless internet access is available across campus. Currently, it is **not necessary** to have a laptop to succeed in the MPA program.

You should know that Appalachian provides a free service to help you solve your computer problems. Located in Anne Belk Hall, the Technical Support Services operates a walk-in service to help you with viruses and connectivity problems.

## **Conferences**

Students are given the opportunity to participate in several academic and professional conferences during the year. In some instances, financial support is available from the Graduate Student Association Senate or

Office of Student Research to offset costs associated with these conferences and in other instances groups may sponsor your attendance.

There are several essential meetings that you should plan to attend because of their professional relevance and for the help you will receive in getting a job. Opportunities exist for carpooling and sharing rooms to defray costs.

The ASU Local Government Alumni Association (ASULGAA) is a group of ASU graduates who are city and county managers and department heads in local governments in and around North Carolina. The annual meeting of this group is held each fall in Boone. **If you are an on-campus student, your attendance at the ASULGAA Conference is mandatory. Off campus students are cordially invited.** The ASULGAA provides scholarship support to graduate students preparing for careers in local government administration. The meeting normally involves informative sessions on topics relevant to city/county management and networking opportunities. Attending the sessions and engaging in conversations following the meeting facilitate obtaining an internship. Failure by on-campus students to attend this meeting will result in an indelible black mark on your record.

The North Carolina City and County Management Association (NCCCMA) meets in February; over 400 city and county managers will be in attendance and the meeting offers an extremely valuable opportunity to arrange internships and to talk about employment opportunities. The NCCCMA provides a scholarship each year to a student pursuing city management as a career. **You are expected to attend this meeting** as the program covers far more than city management topics. The ASU Local Government Alumni Association pays the registration fee for all ASU students attending the meeting; sessions include practical applications of much of that covered in class.

Opportunities exist for outstanding students to collaborate with faculty members on research projects and to present findings at regional and national conferences. There are regional and national conferences, such as the American Society for Public Administration, the Southeast Conference for Public Administration, and Teaching PA, for professionals in Public Administration, Political Science, and Criminal Justice. Frequently, ASU faculty members are presenters at these meetings; opportunities may exist for you to co-author a paper and travel to a conference with a faculty member. Limited financial support is available through your graduate school senator for travel to a national or regional conference if you are presenting a paper.

The North Carolina Political Science Association holds an annual meeting each spring at one of the universities or colleges in the state. Departmental faculty members are active in the association and the opportunity exists for students to present papers at the conference.

The North Carolina Criminal Justice Association also holds an annual meeting each spring on the campus of one of the colleges and universities located across the state. Topics relating to career development, changing professional standards, and research about new and emerging issues are covered.

See Drs. Marcum and Holcomb for information about the location and date of the next meeting.

## **Course Loads**

Students who wish full-time student status must register for at least nine credit hours each semester. A course load of less than nine hours will result in the student being classified as part-time. Whether you

are a part-time or full-time student generally does not matter to the Department, but it may affect whether you are covered under certain medical insurance policies or are eligible for Veterans' benefits. The Graduate School requires students **receiving assistantships, tuition scholarships, or other scholarship/fellowship support to carry at least nine hours each semester.**

## **Discrimination and Sexual Harassment**

Appalachian State University does not permit discrimination in its admissions or employment practices. It is the policy and intention of Appalachian State University that there be equal employment opportunity and freedom from unlawful discrimination in all employment within Appalachian State University. There shall be no unlawful discrimination in covered positions on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or age. Employment in covered positions shall be conducted in accordance with all provisions of state or federal law or regulations prohibiting any such discrimination, and in accordance with applicable affirmative action plans.

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on sex and falls within the scope of institutional policies and procedures regarding discrimination. As with other forms of discrimination, Appalachian State University is committed to maintaining a work and a study environment free of sexual harassment. Accordingly, in compliance with Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University will not tolerate any verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior which constitutes sexual harassment.

Personnel with supervisory responsibilities are required to take immediate and appropriate corrective action when incidents of alleged sexual harassment are brought to their attention by students, faculty, and staff, or by applicants for student admissions or applicants for employment.

Violations of the above policy proven through established procedures outlined below will lead to disciplinary actions, including reprimands, suspension or termination of offenders.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic decisions; or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct may be reasonably construed by the recipient of such conduct as an implication that compliance or non-compliance will be used as a basis for an individual's employment or academic decisions;
3. (a) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment; or  
(b) such conduct has the purpose or effect of emphasizing the sexuality or sexual identity of a student or an employee to impair the full enjoyment of educational or vocational benefits, climate or opportunities.

Any of the following are inappropriate actions on the part of any employee or student:

An instructor offers you a better grade, extra help, or an academic opportunity in return for sexual attention



or threatens to act against you for refusing.

- a. A fellow student, co-worker, supervisor, or faculty member continually makes sexual innuendoes, insults, or suggestive comments that unreasonably interfere with your academic performance or work environment.
- b. Your instructor or supervisor pressures you to have a sexual relationship against your will.

**Sexual harassment should be reported to the Title IX Office, I.G. Greer Hall. Reporting options are outlined on the following website: <https://titleix.appstate.edu/reporting>. An investigation of each sexual harassment complaint will be undertaken in accordance with established University policy. Faculty and staff have been severely punished for engaging in sexual harassment at Appalachian.**

### **Electronic Forms**

Appalachian has made progress in eliminating paper forms and is transitioning to gathering needed information directly from users via the computer. The Graduate School accepts electronic forms from students for the Program of Study and Graduation Application. For information about these electronic forms, go to the following web address:

[http://www.graduate.appstate.edu/forms\\_graduate/index.html](http://www.graduate.appstate.edu/forms_graduate/index.html)

### **Financial Assistance**

The Department of Government and Justice Studies is not involved in arranging or awarding student loans. To find out about student loans, you should contact Student Financial Aid at 828-262- 2190.

The Department of Government and Justice Studies has a limited number of **graduate research assistantships**. A student chosen to receive an assistantship is assigned to assist a professor in his or her research projects; this work will include activities such as photocopying materials, conducting bibliographic research in the library, searching databases, and entering data into the computer. Graduate Assistants might be assigned to work either 10 or 20 hours per week.

Research assistantships are awarded based on scores on the admissions formula used by the Graduate School, as well as recommendations from the faculty. It has been the policy of the Department to attempt to continue a student on an assistantship if his or her performance is satisfactory, and therefore a new graduate assistant may receive only a partial allocation despite a very good record. Students may receive an assistantship for a maximum of 4 semesters. As assistants leave campus for an internship, assistantships may become available for reallocation.

In allocating assistantships, the Department must consider how many assistantships are available, and whether current assistantship holders will be on campus next semester; in addition, we try to reserve some awards for new students entering the program. Consideration is also given to making an award to students who have not previously received an assistantship. At any given time, there will likely be 10-12 MPA students who receive full or partial assistantships.

Each assistant, regardless of the type of assistantship, must sign a **contract** in the Graduate School office prior to initiating any assistantship-related work.



To be considered for an assistantship, you should write a brief email to the MPA Director indicating your interest. Be sure to mention your GPA, hours earned, experience with utilizing computers, and other research skills that you possess. The department makes awards for the following semester near the end of each semester.

Scholarships available to graduate students are discussed under the heading Scholarships below.

### **Foreign Language Proficiency**

Students enrolled in the MPA program do not have to be proficient in a proficiency in a foreign language. There is a requirement to **demonstrate the ability to use statistics and research techniques** that is discussed below under the heading Proficiency in Quantitative Analysis as a Research Tool.

### **Graduation**

Graduation ceremonies are held in May and December; while you are very much encouraged to be present, it is not mandatory that you attend. Graduation is a special time during which students from each graduate program on campus are recognized during a hooding ceremony witnessed by family and friends.

Students must **apply for graduation** prior to a deadline that is announced by the Graduate School each semester. Each of the following must have been completed before a student will be allowed to graduate:

- a. An approved **Program of Study** must be on file in the Registrar's Office. This form should be filed at the start of your second semester at ASU.
- b. The student must have demonstrated a **Proficiency in Quantitative Analysis as a Research Tool** (see section heading of same name below for further information).
- c. Successful completion of all aspects of the **Capstone** course.
- d. The student must have maintained at least a **3.0 grade point average** and completion of **42 semester hours** of approved graduate courses.

### **Parking**

Parking space has become a very scarce commodity on campus and parking rules are strictly enforced. Until completion of additional parking facilities, the closest daytime parking is the parking garage that is located near the library. Evening parking is available without charge in the parking deck. Information is available at [www.parking.appstate.edu](http://www.parking.appstate.edu).

ASU Traffic and Parking officers write tickets for unregistered vehicles, parking in restricted spaces, parking in handicapped spaces, and for other violations. Repeat offenders may find a wheel lock that prevents movement of the car. Tickets do not "go away" and if you fail to pay a ticket there will be a hold on your account so that you cannot register for the next semester, get a transcript, or graduate. Parking behind the Baptist Church, the Turchin Center, or at Cottrell Apartments (on College Street) generally results in vehicles being towed away.

Register your vehicle with Traffic and Parking, obey the parking regulations, and do not hold out any hope that the Government and Justice Studies Department faculty can fix a ticket. We have to pay our tickets and cannot keep you from having to pay yours.

### **Pay Checks**

Checks can only be issued for work performed after the contract has been signed and is on file in the Graduate School.

If you are being paid for service as a graduate assistant, distance-learning assistant or as a research assistant, you should talk with Katy Marsh in the Department office for information about payroll.

If you are being paid for service as an intern and a problem arises because a check is missing, or the amount seems incorrect you should contact your internship supervisor.

### **Probation**

Any student who fails to maintain a 3.00 grade point average is automatically placed on probation by the Graduate School. Students placed on probation cannot register for additional work unless the MPA Director makes a request in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School to allow the student to continue in the program, and the MPA Director is not required to allow a student to continue. **The faculty members expect students to exceed the minimum grade point average (3.00) required for continued enrollment in graduate school.** No student is allowed to continue probation for two semesters.

### **Proficiency in Quantitative Analysis as a Research Tool**

Each student in the MPA program must demonstrate this proficiency prior to graduation. No testing is required if your academic record shows that you have successfully completed the following courses:  
An undergraduate statistics or research methods course that was taken for academic credit • PA 5000 Research Methods

These two courses will be accepted by the department and the Graduate School as prima facie evidence of your having met the proficiency requirement.

Sometime during your academic career, the Graduate School will mail you a letter advising you of your need to satisfy the proficiency requirement. The Department has a long-standing policy that faculty members are competent to determine your level of proficiency, and that we accept the two courses listed above to satisfy the university requirement. The MPA Director will send a memo to the Graduate School certifying your proficiency if you have indeed passed the courses listed above. *Do not take the Graduate School form to the Math Department as they will likely require you to pass a statistics test.*

### **Registration for Classes**

Each semester the Registrar's Office posts information on its webpage concerning registration. Information for the Fall Semester is available in February, Summer session information is available in April, and information about Spring Semester information is posted in October. Students register for classes through the AppalNet computer system.

At the beginning of a cohort, off-campus students are registered by Distance Education staff members. In subsequent semesters, continuing off-campus graduate students handle their own registration.

## **Safety**

The ASU campus is relatively safe, as is the Town of Boone. However, there have been occasions when students have been threatened or assaulted on campus and in town. Occasionally, strangers loiter on campus and the ASU Police will remove them from the premises.

Your attention is drawn to the blue light emergency signals on campus. These are directly connected to the ASU Police Department and can be used to summon the police. The campus police department can also be contacted by dialing 8000 from any campus phone.

## **Scholarships**

A limited number of scholarships are available to graduate students. Scholarships are grants and do not carry with them a work requirement.

The ASU Local Government Alumni Association (ASULGAA) annually offers scholarships to graduate and undergraduate students seeking careers in city or county management in North Carolina. The scholarships are awarded at the annual fall meeting of the Association. The North Carolina City and County Managers' Association provides a scholarship to a graduate student in the MPA program who is pursuing a career in local government management. The award is announced at the annual meeting of the ASU Local Government Alumni Association. Additionally, the NCCCMA Scholarship recipient is recognized, along with recipients of other NCCCMA scholarships, at the Annual Meeting of the NC City County Management Association that is held each year in February.

**The deadline for applying for scholarships will be announced in late August.**

The Graduate School has additional scholarships that are available in university-wide competitions. Please see the [Graduate Bulletin](#) or the Graduate School website for additional information.

## **Social Media**

We urge students to revisit their personal social media sites and remove images and content that could reflect poorly from a professional perspective. Students should assume that potential employers will search the web for such content to learn more about you.

We also urge you to engage with the program by joining the App State Public Administration LinkedIn Group and liking the App State Facebook Page.

## **Special Courses**

A special course means that the course does not fit the typical pattern of other courses.

For example, **individual study** refers to a course listed in the catalog that is taken when it does not appear in the regular schedule of classes. For a variety of reasons, an instructor might agree to offer a

regular course out of its normal sequence. The key is that the course is approved and listed in the catalog but that it is offered on a special, individual basis.

An **independent study** is a unique course that does not appear in the catalog and is offered by a professor to a student. The key difference between this and an individual study is that the independent study course is not listed in the schedule or the catalog. Independent studies can cover new or highly specialized subjects of interest to a single student.

Students who want to do an independent study should discuss their interests with a faculty member to see if he or she is willing to take on the extra work involved with an independent study. Permission must be obtained from the MPA Program Director and the Department Chair.

### **Student Contacts**

Appalachian State University provides each student with free access to a significant amount of support if you should confront problems.

	<u>See</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Problem	Your instructor	
In a course	Any faculty member	
Programmatic or Career	MPA Director	262-6342
Medical	ASU Health Services	262-3100
Emotional	ASU Counseling Center	262-3180
Sexual Harassment	Title IX Office in IG Greer Hall	262-2144
Computer Programs	Academic Computing Services	262-6266

### **Thesis**

**Students in the MPA program do not write a thesis.** However, during your courses, each student must write substantial research papers. Further, each student completing an internship must prepare a major paper in conjunction with the internship. A major research report is required of all students in the Capstone courses at the end of their studies. None of these in-course papers, however, are as formal as a thesis and none of them require use of high-quality bond paper or special binding.

### **All Other Topics**

If a problem arises that is not otherwise covered in this booklet, please feel free to discuss it with the MPA Director.

Each of the MPA faculty members is here to help you get the education and guidance you need to succeed. Asking a question and avoiding a problem is a lot easier than spending time on straightening out a problem after the fact.

**Attachment A**  
**A Sample of MPA Program Alumni Positions**

Town Manager  
County Manager  
FBI  
SBI  
Police Chiefs  
Special Agents with Railroad  
United Way and other  
Nonprofits Samaritan's Purse  
Assistant Managers in Towns & Counties  
Arts Organizations  
Downtown Development  
Probation Officers  
Data Specialist  
Public Information Officers  
Budget Officers  
Budget Analysts  
Planners  
Planning Directors  
Fire Services  
Emergency Management  
Parks and Recreation  
National & State Parks  
Sheriff Offices  
Economic Development  
Veterans Agencies  
United Way  
Development Officer  
Hazard Planning  
Town and County Clerks  
Correctional Facilities  
Alumni Affairs Directors  
Hazard Mitigation Officer



Attachment B  
Checksheet

Appalachian State University • College of Arts and Sciences • Department of Government and Justice Studies

# MPA Degree Requirements

42 Credit Hours

## Required Courses + Internship (27 hours)

- PA/CJ 5000: Research Methods (3)
- PA 5060: Seminar in Public Administration (3)
- PA 5180: Public Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation (3)
- PA 5260: Organization Theory and Behavior (3)
- PA 5360: Public Personnel Administration (3)
- PA 5460: Budgeting and Fiscal Administration (3)
- PA 5558: Capstone Research (1)
- PA 5559: Capstone in Public Administration (2)

### Internship for Pre-Service Students:

- PA/CJ 5900: Internship in Public Administration (3 + 3 or 6)

OR

### Field Research Option for In-Service Students

- PA 5010: Field Based Research (3)
- One additional graduate course (3)

## Concentration (15 hours)

### *Administration of Justice*

6 credits of graduate courses chosen from the following:

- CJ 5060: Administration of Justice (3)
- CJ 5660: Crime, Theory, and Policy (3)
- CJ 5670: Crime Analysis and Criminal Justice Planning (3)

6 credits of Criminal Justice (CJ) graduate courses

Plus an additional 3 credits of graduate elective courses

### *Not-For-Profit Management*

9 credits of graduate courses chosen from the following:

- PA 5270: Not-For-Profit Organizations (3)
- PA 5271: Grants Strategies and Preparation (3)
- PA 5665: Public Management (3)

Plus 6 credit hours of graduate courses in consultation with the MPA Director, including 3 credit hours of graduate elective coursework from outside the program.

### *Public Management*

15 credits hours of graduate courses in consultation with the MPA Director, including 3 credits of graduate elective courses from outside the program

### *Town, City and County Management*

- PA 5461 - Public Financial Management (3)
- PA 5560: Local Government Administration (3)
- A graduate-level course in Planning (3)

Plus 6 credit hours of graduate courses in consultation with the MPA Director

## **Attachment C**

### **Guide to Completing a Capstone Paper**

1. What is your research question?
2. Why is the topic important?
3. What has been written on the subject?
4. How do you propose to answer your research question?
  - a. What variables will you use in your study?
  - b. What data sources will you use?
  - c. What analytical techniques will you use?
5. What did you find in your analysis of the data?
6. Are the results generalizable beyond your study?
7. So what?
  - a. Why are your findings important?
  - b. What new avenues for further research are suggested by your study?
8. What were the sources of your data and what other literature, studies and reports did you consult in completing your study.
9. Prepare a one-page summary of your project.
10. Prepare a visual summary of your report with PowerPoint, using no more than 5 slides