

Public Administration, Master of

The Tseng College

Director: Henrik P. Minassians

Bookstore Annex

(818) 677-5635

tsengcollege.csun.edu/mpa

Faculty:

James David Ballard (Sociology), Lawrence Becker (Political Science), Maurice Bisheff, Matthew A. Cahn (Political Science), Sakile Camara (Communication Studies), Warren M. Campbell (Political Science Emeritus), Kenya Covington (Urban Studies), Ronald A. Davidson (Geography), Herman L. DeBose (Sociology), Alexandra Gerbasi (Sociology), Thomas Hartman (Political Science), Tom Hogen-Esch (Political Science), Paul Krivonos (Communication Studies Emeritus), Daisy Lemus (Communication Studies), Christopher A. Leu (Political Science Emeritus), Mingfang Li (Management), Kristy Michaud (Political Science), Henrik P. Minassians (Urban Studies), Boris Ricks (Political Science), Martin Saiz (Political Science), Victor Shaw (Sociology), Kathryn Sorrells (Communication Studies), Karin Stanford (Pan-African Studies), Ward Thomas (Urban Studies and Planning), Stella Z. Theodoulou (Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences), Zeynep Toker (Urban Studies), Deborah Ching, Shauna Clark, Elan Melamid, John Nicoll, David Powell, Ravi Roy, Eric Schockman, Jason Stillwell, Bryce Yokomizo, Steven Wantz

Degree Program

Graduate:

Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Program Overview

The Master of Public Administration degree program is entirely funded by student fees and is administered through The Tseng College, hence the designation.

Special Sessions Degree

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) is the appropriate professional degree program for administrators who are currently employed in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors and wish to improve their management knowledge and skills. The program has been designed to provide an academically sound and effective course of study for mid-career professionals who have successfully earned their baccalaureate or master's degrees in fields other than public administration, but whose career paths and interests have heightened their need for advanced professional study and preparation in public administration. Because most MPA students are busy professionals, the program is designed to fit their schedules and is offered in two formats, open enrollment and cohort. Students joining the open-enrollment MPA have the flexibility of taking classes at their own convenience. In the cohort model, a group of approximately 25 students moves through the program as a unit, starting and finishing at the same time. The schedule is fixed and classes, which are offered off campus, are guaranteed for each cohort student.

Academic Advisement

For information regarding the on-campus program, contact Alice Lu at (818) 677-5635. For information regarding off-campus cohorts, contact Patti Burleson at (818) 677-3217. The MPA office fax number is (818) 677-3886.

Program Features

Multidisciplinary Curriculum: The university MPA program is multidisciplinary and draws upon a wide array of scholarly resources that

are most relevant to the changing professional practice of the public administrator.

Emphasis on Scholarship and Application: The MPA program provides a strong academic foundation while also emphasizing current practical applications. Faculty members include both professors from several university departments and senior-level public managers.

Academic Oversight: The academic oversight of the MPA program has several interconnected components: the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Department of Political Science, The , the program director, and an MPA Program Advisory Board comprised of participating full-time university faculty members. The Program Advisory Board and the MPA program director provide the primary academic oversight of the program.

Student Learning Outcomes of the Graduate Program

Completion of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree will provide students with a knowledge and understanding of the following learning outcomes:

Critical Thinking and Analytic Skills:

1. Acquire a sophisticated and thorough understanding of the unique challenges, obligations, and opportunities of public sector administration in a diverse, dynamic urban context.
2. Develop a foundation of financial management skills required to critically calibrate, analyze, develop, implement, and manage budgets and resources in the public sector in an open and ethical manner.
3. Develop the foundational skills and abilities needed to address the essential issues of human resources management to build a strong and effective team in the public sector through effective recruitment that results in sound hiring, retention techniques, staff development, performance evaluation and improvement, progressive discipline and appropriate termination procedures.

Collective Decision-Making Skills:

4. Develop the skills and theoretical knowledge needed not only to redesign public sector organizations, and staff and delivery systems, but also to foster cooperation and collaboration across unit lines and with both internal and external community partners.

Community and Cultural Skills:

5. Acquire an appreciation of civic engagement first through transition from personal development to the recognition that every decision has impact on the community.
6. Develop skills to competently incorporate policy decisions affecting community issues.
7. Understand the importance of service as a catalyst to the improvement of civic life in the public and not-for-profit organizational settings.

Synthesis Skills:

8. Develop advanced communication skills essential for leadership in the public sector.
9. Develop strong oral communication skills both in small groups and in larger public contexts.
10. Develop strong written communication skills appropriate to write reports, explain issues and policies, persuasively present initiatives, and correspond with colleagues and clients.

Requirements for the Master's Degree

A. Admission Requirements

Applicants may be admitted to the University in classified graduate standing by satisfying the following:

1. Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
2. Minimum 2.5 grade point average in the last 60 semester or (90 quarter units) attempted

3. Graduate Record Exam – required for applicants whose GPA is below 3.0. Acceptable GRE scores must be in the 50th percentile or above in any one of the three portions: verbal, quantitative or analytical
4. Successful completion of the Writing Proficiency Exam (UDWPE)
5. Two years of work experience

B. Graduation Requirements

1. Completion of a minimum of 33 semester units of approved graduate courses
2. Completion of at least 24 of these units in residence
3. Completion of all coursework with a grade-point average of at least 3.0
4. Completion of a comprehensive examination equivalent to three semester units (in addition to the above 33 units of course work)

Students entering the program are required to declare their interest in at least one of the four tracks/specializations that are offered: Public Sector Management and Leadership; Non-Profit Sector Management; Public Policy Analysis and Management; and Performance Management and Productivity in the Public Sector.

1. Required Core Courses (15 Units)

MPA 610	Seminar in Public Administration and Its Environment (3)
MPA 620	Research Methods for Public Administration (3)
MPA 630	Organization Theory and Human Behavior (3)
MPA 644	Public Budgeting and Financial Administration (3)
MPA 650	Seminar in Public Policy Process (3)

2. Elective Courses (18 Units)

Select courses from one of the following tracks:

Public Sector Management and Leadership Track

MPA 612A	Intergovernmental Relations (3)
MPA 622A	Policy Implementation and Program Evaluation (3)
MPA 623A	Seminar in Effective Public Sector Management (required)* (3)
MPA 623B	Approaches and Methods in Program Evaluation (prerequisite: MPA 620) (3)
MPA 623D	Human Resources and the Basics of Competencies Measurement in Government (3)
MPA 632A	Organizational Leadership (3)
MPA 632B	Strategic Management (3)
MPA 632C	Communication in Public Organizations (3)
MPA 640	Public Policy Analysis (3)
MPA 642A	Ethics & Professionalism (3)
MPA 642B	Public Sector Labor Relations (3)
MPA 643	Human Resources Management (3)

*This is a required course for this track only.

Non-Profit Sector Management Track

MPA 612A	Intergovernmental Relations (3)
MPA 632D	Overview of Nonprofit Organizational Management (required)* (3)
MPA 632E	Strategic Planning, Needs Assessment and Program Design (3)
MPA 632F	Issues and Problems in Human Resources, Board and Volunteer Management in Non-Profits (3)
MPA 632G	Non-Profit Finance and Financial Management (3)
MPA 632H	Funding and Resource Development for Non-Profit Organizations (3)
MPA 632I	Program Implementation and Management for Non-Profit Services (3)
MPA 640	Public Policy Analysis (3)
MPA 642A	Ethics and Professionalism (3)

*This is a required course for this track only.

Public Policy Analysis and Management Track

MPA 612A	Intergovernmental Relations (3)
MPA 622A	Policy Implementation and Program Evaluation (3)
MPA 623A	Seminar in Effective Public Sector Management (3)
MPA 623B	Approaches and Methods in Program Evaluation (prerequisite: MPA 620) (3)
MPA 623C	Performance Reporting Measures in Government (3)
MPA 632B	Strategic Management (3)
MPA 640	Public Policy Analysis (required)*(3)
MPA 642A	Ethics and Professionalism (3)
MPA 642D	Community and Economic Development (3)

*This is a required course for this track only.

Performance Management and Productivity in the Public Sector Track

MPA 612A	Intergovernmental Relations (3)
MPA 623A	Seminar in Effective Public Sector Management (required)* (3)
MPA 623B	Approaches and Methods in Program Evaluation (prerequisite: MPA 620) (3)
MPA 623C	Performance Reporting Measures in Government (3)
MPA 623D	Human Resources and the Basics of Competencies Measurement in Government (3)
MPA 623E	Performance Budgeting in the Public Sector (3)
MPA 632B	Strategic Management (3)
MPA 632C	Communication in Public Organizations (3)
MPA 640	Public Policy Analysis (3)

*This is a required course for this track only.

3. Culminating Experience (3 Units)

MPA 697S	Comprehensive Examination (3)
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Special Sessions Public Administration Graduate Credit Certificate

Option: There are two graduate certificate options available for individuals who are not seeking a master's degree in public administration but who wish to update and expand their skills. Students must successfully complete all units of coursework in the field in which they wish certification. The options are described below. However, it is mandatory for students to make formal application to the program and to meet with staff in the department office to receive advisement prior to enrolling for courses.

Non-Profit Sector Management: The required courses for the certificate in this track are MPA 632D, MPA 632E, MPA 632F, MPA 632G, MPA 632H, and MPA 632 I (a total of 18 units.)

Performance Management and Productivity in the Public Sector: The required courses for the certificate in this track are MPA 620, MPA 623A, MPA 623B, MPA 623C, MPA 623D, and MPA 623 E (a total of 18 units.)

Course List

MPA 610. Seminar in Public Administration and its Environment (3)

Introduces graduate students to the major areas within public administration and encourages them to relate this knowledge to their own experience and career. Considers the political, social and economic environment of public administration.

MPA 612A. Intergovernmental Relations (3)

Provides an in-depth examination and analysis of the dynamics of the legislative, political, and intergovernmental processes. Analyzes the relationships of different levels and branches of government. Lobbying and change agents, decision-making procedures, and media impacts are evaluated. Involvement in creating change and impacting decisions through the use of intergovernmental techniques is explored. Explores the roles of the bureaucrat, administrator, and legislator at local, state and federal levels.

MPA 620. Research Methods for Public Administration (3)

Discusses theory and limits of scientific inquiry; quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis; research design and implementation. Encourages critical analysis of the research underlying policy recommendations. Introduction to a wide variety of social science research techniques and assists them in developing their own research projects.

MPA 622A. Policy Implementation and Program Evaluation (3)

Public administration is fundamentally a discipline interested in identifying public problems and implementing successful solutions. Focuses exclusively on strategies for successful implementation of policy solutions in a competitive policy environment and on mechanisms for evaluating program success.

MPA 622B. Management of Information Resources (3)

Examines the history, development and applications of Information Resources (IR) in the public sector. Provides a framework for understanding the technologies, trends, and planning processes and emphasizes the development of an individualized approach to managing Information Resources. Examines the role of information resources as an increasingly important management tool.

MPA 623A. Seminar in Effective Public Sector Management (3)

This course is designed to introduce students to the effective functioning and management of organizations in the public sector. The course will focus on key management issues in public sector organizations, and how to more effectively function in leadership roles in those organizations. Seminar participants are encouraged to relate work-life issues to theoretical perspectives and to bring in examples from their professional experiences to seminar discussions.

MPA 623B. Approaches and Methods in Program Evaluation (3)

Prerequisite: MPA 620. This course is designed to introduce students to the art and science of program evaluation, in both qualitative and quantitative ways. The course will review the dominant approaches to program evaluation and align these approaches to the social science research methods students study in MPA 620.

MPA 623C. Performance Reporting Measures in Government (3)

Prerequisite: MPA 620. This course focuses on methods and strategies for designing performance measures and indicators, and effective ways for measuring organizational outcomes. Students will be introduced to the art and science of government performance measurement in both qualitative and quantitative ways. The course will review the dominant approaches to performance measurement and align these approaches to the social science research methods studied in MPA 620.

MPA 623D. Human Resources and the Basics of Competencies Measurement in Government (3)

This course will strategically look at the area of human resources and its link to firm performance through the balanced scorecard method. Specifically, students will learn how to develop the balanced scorecard and use it in the analysis of human resource decisions. Students will learn how to analyze the various human resource functional areas and measure the overall worth of these areas.

MPA 623E. Performance Budgeting in the Public Sector (3)

The demand by public officials to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery and the way in which the organization allocates its resources has led to a greater emphasis in the utilization of performance measurement techniques. This course provides students with a foundation in the concepts, terminology, and methods of public sector budgeting and financial administration. Various techniques of budgeting including line item, performance, program and zero-base are covered in this course, with an emphasis on performance budgeting. By using real world examples, students will evaluate various

approaches to public budgeting and analyze how performance measures may be incorporated into the public budgeting environment.

MPA 630. Organization Theory and Human Behavior (3)

Traces the historical development of organization theory. Examines contemporary approaches to the study of organization. Discusses the various concepts, issues and approaches to the study of organizational behavior. Considers such concepts and processes as decision making, power, conflict, communication, leadership, motivation, group effectiveness, organizational change, and personal and organizational autonomy.

MPA 632A. Organizational Leadership (3)

Explores the theories and styles of leadership. Students become familiar with and work towards the incorporation of the traits and habits of effective leaders. Reviews the necessary qualities required and the challenges and ethical dilemmas which are facing leaders in the public sector today.

MPA 632B. Strategic Management (3)

Examines how managers guide their organization in establishing goals, setting priorities, coordinating disparate activities, and how they adjust to a changing environment. Class produces actual strategic plans.

MPA 632C. Communication in Public Organizations (3)

Highlights the function of communication as the lifeblood of public and nonprofit organizations, examining the nature of such communication issues as organizational culture, communication networks, and message distortion, communication climate, communication and conflict, new communication technologies and communication during crisis situations as these impact public and nonprofit organizations.

MPA 632D. Overview of Nonprofit Organizational Management (3)

Designed to meet the needs of the professional administrator who works within the growing not-for-profit sector and also the governmental employee who may work in cooperation with non-profit sector. Governance through boards of directors, impacts of public policy, planning and policy formulation, funding and social marketing, effective partnership with business and government agencies, and challenges of motivation and leadership are examined.

MPA 632E. Strategic Planning, Needs Assessment and Program Design (3)

Examines the critical interconnection among strategic goals and objectives; community needs assessment, program design and evaluation to the organization's mission. Students will gain knowledge of the strategic planning process through an experiential approach that creates the mission, identifies long-range goals, develops objectives and action plans. Provides students exposure to the full cycle of organizational activities to examine organizational effectiveness by exploring approaches to community needs assessment and building a program and evaluation process based on the needs assessment.

MPA 632F. Issues and Problems in Human Resources, Board and Volunteer Management in Non-Profits (3)

This course is an introduction to the aggregate of human resource management process in complex organizations. The course will focus on current policy issues and problems that challenge today's human resource specialists, supervisors, and managers. Further, beyond the internal focus, the course will also examine the external human resources brought to non-profit organizations by governing boards and volunteers. Students will study important policy issues for their political, legal, social, ethical and organizational ramifications.

MPA 632G. Non-Profit Finance and Financial Management (3)

This course will expose the student to non-profit financial management concepts and practices including the framework for budgeting, financial

analysis, internal controls and reporting. Students will engage in exercises and learn to use tools for financial management. The course will introduce and cement the partnership between non-profit programming and effective financial management, and identify the intersections among governance, programmatic vision and financial practices.

MPA 632H. Funding and Resource Development for Non-Profit Organizations (3)

This course examines how fundraising works and fits into non-profit management as a whole. Students will learn what must be in place before a non-profit organization raises money; how to plan and implement various approaches to raising funds, including grant writing, events and major gifts; and how to develop, manage and evaluate an annual fundraising plan.

MPA 632I. Program Implementation and Management for Non-Profit Services (3)

Examines the policies, strategies and the decision-making process to support successful program implementation from a manager's perspective. Non-profit policy formulation places emphasis on training managers to develop and analyze problems, both in terms of choosing goals and organizing resources to achieve them. Students will be given the opportunity to formulate strategic implementation considerations using environmental analysis, resource assessment, goal determination, program planning and evaluation, and performance overview. This course will concentrate on the process of implementing programs and the role of advocacy in achieving programmatic and overall mission attainment.

MPA 640. Public Policy Analysis (3)

Focuses on the methods and models of policy analysis used by public administrators. Emphasis on developing a perspective for putting social problems in the context of market failure as well as government failure. The basics of cost-benefit analysis and its application are also examined.

MPA 642A. Ethics and Professionalism (3)

Examines ethical issues and cases relevant to public administration. Focuses on professional relationships and responsibilities. Analyzes wider questions of public power, violence, deception, and justice for their important relevance to public administration. Prepares students to analyze and confront ethical challenges in their professional life.

MPA 642B. Public Sector Labor Relations (3)

Accelerated intensive study of labor-relations concepts and role-playing participation in labor/management negotiation and formal arbitration.

MPA 642D. Community and Economic Development (3)

The questions of community and economic development are inter-related and more important than ever. How can practitioners facilitate community growth and change? What approaches are fruitful in promoting economic development and what effect might this have on community development? Cultivation of community development skills such as intercultural communication, group facilitation and collaborative planning. Explores economic development tools such as assessment, strategies to induce investment, and ways to assess the social costs and benefits of economic development.

MPA 643. Human Resources Management (3)

Focuses on the development of public service concepts: personnel methods, testing and recruitment; interaction with other management functions and with the executive and legislative processes; human resources allocation, employee motivation and evaluation, manpower planning and forecasting; employee relations and affirmative action programs; career planning and development.

MPA 644. Public Budgeting and Financial Administration (3)

Discusses budgeting processes and administrative control; various techniques of budgeting; line item, performance, program and zero base; fiscal policy in implementing public policy; public revenues; sources and effect of principle taxes; intergovernmental aspects of revenue problems and revenue sharing.

MPA 650. Public Policy Process (3)

Examines the formation of the public policies which government agencies must carry out. Traces the process of problem identification, agenda setting, policy proposal and adoption. Includes both legislative and regulatory policies. Explores the role of public managers as active participants in the policymaking process.

MPA 697S. Comprehensive Examination (3)

Students selecting this option prepare for examination in General Public Administration and in two specialized subfields.