

Southern Utah University
Master of Public Administration

Student Handbook

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Welcome

Congratulations on your admission to Southern Utah University's Master of Public Administration (MPA) program! Your admission demonstrates you meet the highest standards for professional and academic performance required by SUU's MPA program and we are pleased to have you as a student.

This Handbook provides you with some general information about the program, courses, experiential learning opportunities, administrative standards and program goals. More importantly, the Handbook includes a list of competencies that you will develop and strengthen throughout your coursework. The faculty create their course materials around these competencies and assess your development toward specific competencies in each course.

This Handbook should be considered a guide, not a substitute, for interactions with program administrators and faculty. For SUU's policies specific to graduate studies, please visit <http://suu.edu/pub/policies/pdf/PP651Graduate.pdf>.

We are proud to have achieved NASPAA accreditation in 2014, which means we have successfully met NASPAA Standards for Professional Master's Degree Programs in Public Affairs, Policy and Administration.

The NASPAA Standards are the quality benchmark used by graduate public service programs around the world. NASPAA's accreditation process is mission-based and driven by public service values. Accredited programs must contribute to the knowledge, research, and practice of public service, establish observable goals and outcomes, and use information about their performance to guide program improvement. They must practice truth in advertising and ensure their students achieve learning objectives in five domains essential to public service.

(<http://naspaa.org/accreditation/NS/about.asp>)

You'll find references to NASPAA standards throughout this Handbook and in your course syllabi.

Once again, welcome to the MPA program. We look forward to getting to know you and to partnering with you for lifelong learning.

Sincerely,

MPA Faculty and Staff

Program Overview

The 36 semester hour MPA program is a professional degree suitable to all students interested in pursuing a career in management within the public or non-profit sectors. The MPA program provides an intellectual, collaborative and engaged learning environment where practical and theoretical concepts of public administration are presented within the historical, political, social, cultural and economic contexts. Students learn to act as facilitators in defining and pursuing the public interest.

Classes focus on developing the ability to reason critically, to analyze important dimensions of public service, and to take coherent positions on key public administration and policy issues. Upon graduation, students in the program should communicate effectively through written and oral means, and possess the competencies outlined below.

Versatile in its design, students may customize the program to suit their personal interests and career objectives. A variety of electives are available within the MPA program and through other graduate programs at Southern Utah University (SUU). All MPA students can enroll in either online or on-campus courses. Students may choose from all course offerings in any combination of on-campus or online courses as long as the minimum credits are earned at the required performance level.

The MPA degree at Southern Utah University will give the student a rich experience in learning and will challenge them to rise to each occasion whether it is academically or professionally. In addition, the MPA at SUU will train those who are new to the Public Administration field how to effectively manage in their organization and make ethical decisions that will benefit, not only their organization, but their community.

Admission

Most students receive this Handbook after admission to the program. However, some prospective or non-matriculated students may receive a copy as part of the decision to apply for full admission. Hence, the admission criteria have been included in this Handbook to provide information about admission standards, and to remind all students that they were outstanding candidates, having met these requirements.

Applicants for the Master of Public Administration at Southern Utah University must:

- Achieved and awarded a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited university or college.
- Demonstrate an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0
- Submit three letters of recommendation from professional, academic, or other individuals. Family members should not write letters of recommendation.
- Submit a Letter of Intent, written by the applicant.
- Submit a writing sample: Answerer the question "Should Government be run like a business?" APA writing style, 2 pages, and cite 3 scholarly sources.
- Submit all official transcripts from institutions other than SUU.
- Submit a SUU Graduate Admissions application.
- Pay the application fee.
- Submit an updated resume.
- Meet language standards for international students. International applicants from non-English-speaking countries must demonstrate competency in the English language. A minimum score of (550: Paper based test, 213: Computer based test, or 79: Internet based test) on the Test of English as a Foreign

Language (TOEFL) taken within past two years satisfies this requirement. Or, students must score 6.0 on the IELTS.

The MPA, as with most graduate programs, is writing intensive. You should plan to focus on and improve your written communication skills, and become familiar with various academic writing styles. Additionally, students are expected to have read the American Psychological Style Guide (APA Guide) prior to their first day of class.

SUU's Mission

Southern Utah University, as our founders envisioned, is a dynamic teaching and learning community inspired by its unique natural surroundings. As Utah's designated public liberal arts and sciences university, SUU engages students in a personalized and rigorous experiential education, empowering them to be productive citizens, socially responsible leaders, high achievers and lifelong learners.

SUU's Vision

Southern Utah University will be nationally recognized as a premier institution of learning known for enabling its students to honor thought in all its finest forms, achieve excellence in their chosen field, and create positive change in the world.

MPA Program Mission

The Master of Public Administration degree program builds upon Southern Utah University's individualized, experiential learning through our mission and goals.

Our Mission is to:

- Prepare pre-service and in-service students to meet the challenges of public and nonprofit service.
- Develop student knowledge and competencies through scholarly activity, experiential learning, and applied research.
- Offer coursework that presents a framework of understanding based on academic literature and skill development through activities, projects, and assignments.
- Promote public service values, a culture of democratic administration, leadership and management skills, and ethical decision-making in all aspects of public and nonprofit sector organizations.
- Provide on-campus and online students with comparable academic experiences that develop knowledge and skills for public service.

Faculty Goals

1. Educate and train students to be innovative leaders in public and nonprofit organizations.
2. Enhance the field of public administration regionally, nationally, and internationally through the academic and service contributions of our faculty and students.
3. Create a learning environment where our students develop public service values, thoughtful and ethical decision-making skills.

4. Assess student learning and use assessment research to continuously enhance the program offerings.
5. Embrace and partner with a diverse student body, faculty, workforce, and public to enhance public policy and administration.

MPA Program Competencies

The MPA program is designed to develop the knowledge and skills in the MPA student necessary to successfully perform in an efficient and effective manner in the public or nonprofit sectors. These skills are referred to as “competencies.” The MPA accrediting body (NASPAA) requires the program to focus on competencies that are universal to all public administrators, as well as mission-specific competencies, and competencies for any tracks or areas of emphasis.

Students should expect to see some of these competencies in each of the course syllabi. Faculty are required to illustrate how the competencies are developed through course assignments. Also, students are required to identify competencies they wish to develop in the experiential learning courses, and they will assess their personal competency development in the PADM 6990 Capstone in Public Administration course.

Universal or Core Competencies

The MPA faculty modified NASPAA’s universal competencies to create SUU/MPA’s core competencies.

After completing the degree, all students will be able to:

1. Lead, manage, and apply effective public governance.
2. Participate and contribute to the public fiscal and economic policy process.
3. Solve problems using analytics, critical thinking, ethical thinking, and conceptualizing and applying best practices.
4. Articulate and apply public service perspectives, norms and legal skills.
5. Communicate orally and in writing in a way that is productive and effective in a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

Experiential Learning Competencies

The MPA faculty also defined mission-specific competencies and ensures they are developed through the experiential learning courses. In addition to the universal/core competencies defined above, students must develop experiential learning competencies as follows:

After completing the experiential learning course(s), students will be able to:

1. Develop a project proposal and complete tasks related to a problem, policy or operational issue in the public or nonprofit sector.
2. Analyze and articulate the real world context and usefulness of a project.

State and Local Government Competencies

In combination, the elective courses for the state and local government track develop the competencies listed below. After completing the state and local government elective courses, students will be able to:

1. Identify and apply relevant legal issues and regulations for state and local governments.
2. Demonstrate ability to manage state and local government resources and programs in an effective and ethical manner.
3. Communicate and coordinate between different levels of government, the private sector and the general public.

Higher Education Administration Competencies

In combination, the elective courses for the state and local government track develop the competencies listed below. After completing the student services in higher education electives, students will be able to:

1. Manage and administer student services in higher education in an ethical and effective manner.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the developmental stages of students in higher education environments.
3. Navigate organizational structures of higher education and prioritize competing interests.

Interacting with Faculty

Students are strongly encouraged to develop a personal relationship with faculty. Do not hesitate to contact them through emails, telephone, Canvas Inbox or a personal visit. All students, whether online or on-campus, should feel comfortable contacting any faculty during their office hours or by making an appointment.

The MPA faculty want to support each of our students during the program and, when possible, throughout their careers. We understand our role in facilitating your experiential learning courses and anticipate contact from students who need an academic supervisor for the course. We're accustomed to writing letters of recommendation for job applications, doctoral programs, and other student endeavors. Don't hesitate to ask!

We do our best to reply as quickly as possible and strive for a 24 hour response time to all inquiries. Please be patient if we are a little slow sometimes, and be sure to follow-up when necessary!

Degree Requirements

To receive the MPA degree you must complete thirty-six (36) credit hours of course work and earn no lower than 3.0 GPA. All students must complete a Professional Project and/or Thesis. *Please note that if you are a pre-service student (less than one year of experience in the public sector), you are required to do an internship and either a professional project or a thesis.* If you are in-service, (more than one year of public sector experience), then you may formally request that the internship requirement be waived. See the Experiential Learning Courses for more details.

This handbook is designed to answer most of your questions about the program and faculty. The contents of this handbook should be considered a guideline. Consult with the Director or your faculty adviser to if you have questions specific to your program or personal interests.

Your study will be under the direct supervision of the Director of Master of Public Administration Program (“Director”) within the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice. You may choose any of the MPA faculty nucleus, or adjuncts on a case-by-case basis, to serve as your advisor. The advisor serves as a mentor throughout your program, and guides your Internship, Professional Project, or Thesis. Be sure to keep the Director and your advisor informed of any concerns, academic challenges, or personal problems that might impact your successful completion of the program.

The MPA has several program options for your consideration. First, the general MPA degree is the most common and allows you to select elective courses (12 credit hours, including Internship) that develop a broad range of public administration and management skills.

Additionally, you may elect an area of emphasis in State and Local Government or Higher Education Administration. Each emphasis requires electives that develop competencies specific to the field. The list of courses for each emphasis can be found at <http://catalog.suu.edu/index.php>.

List of Courses

Core Courses (21 credits)

PADM 6000 – Program Overview and Theory of Public Administration
PADM 6200 – Public Finance and Economics
PADM 6300 – Administrative Law
PADM 6440 – Research Methods*
PADM 6500 – Human Resource Management
PADM 6620 – Critical Thinking and Ethics in the Public Sector
PADM 6990 – Capstone in Public Administration*

Experiential Learning Courses (1-6 Credits) *

PADM 6890 Internship**
PADM 6900 Thesis
PADM 6950 Professional Project

Elective Courses (9 - 12 Credits)

PADM 6540 – Higher Education Law and Policy
PADM 6550 – Student Affairs in Higher Education
PADM 6560 – American Higher Education Environments
PADM 6570 – Student Development in College, Theory and Practice
PADM 6580 – The History of American Higher Education
PADM 6600 – Leadership and Management in the Public Sector
PADM 6610 – Public Policy Analysis
PADM 6615 – Comparative Public Policy
PADM 6630 – State & Local Government
PADM 6640 – Constitutional Law
PADM 6650 – Managing America's Cities
PADM 6670 – Public Sector Contracting
PADM 6750 – Special Topics*
PADM 6830 – Readings & Conference*

*PADM 6440 Research Methods, PADM 6750 Special Topics, PADM 6830 Readings and Conferences, PADM 6990 Capstone, and Experiential Learning Courses require instructor approval to register.

**Pre-Service students are required to complete PADM 6890 Internship and PADM 6950 Professional Project or PADM 6900 Thesis.

Program Updates and Communication

It is imperative that you receive communications from MPA administrators. Regular announcements about courses, tuition waivers, internships, jobs, Pi Alpha Alpha honor society, meetings, faculty changes, and other topics are posted through SUU's learning management system, Canvas. During your first two weeks of class, if not sooner, we strongly recommend you accept the invitation to join HSS: MPA Program Information and check your settings. You can receive announcements instantly, or on a daily (recommended), weekly, or monthly basis. The Canvas home page offers instructions on How to Use Canvas and a Help function.

We cannot be responsible for missed deadlines or other things that impact students if you do not set-up your Canvas account.

We also recommend that you personalize your SUU email by adding a photo or icon unique to you. If you enroll in online classes, a photo or personal icon helps other students and faculty remember you and recognize you in other settings.

The Online Student

Background

Before offering the first online MPA course in spring of 2012, the faculty intensely debated and discussed how to ensure our online and on-campus courses were comparable in academic rigor, quality, dynamic instruction, assignments, and competency development. They reviewed over 20 years of research about online course delivery and best practices and decided on one basic standard to ensure comparability. Faculty who teach on-campus courses would be required to teach the same course online. This requirement ensures all MPA students, regardless of modality, receive the same opportunity to network and learn from the same faculty. And, the faculty can then ensure all courses meet the academic standards set for by NASPAA, the accrediting body.

The decision to offer online MPA courses resulted in significant growth. Between fall 2011 and fall 2014, the program approximately doubled in enrollments, partially attributable to online delivery. The administration supported the growth by creating two new faculty positions and a full-time Administrative Assistant.

The MPA program was fully accredited in 2014 by the Network of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and was recognized by the NASPAA site visit time for its "robust" online courses. The strategic effort to offer an online MPA was recognized!

Faculty Visits to the Wasatch Front

Each semester, at least one faculty travels to Salt Lake City to meet with current and prospective students. The meeting days and times are announced in advance through the Canvas system (which is another reason students should set-up their notices as soon as possible). Students are encouraged to schedule appointments or attend the open sessions. We often meet in the Salt Lake County building and provide pizza.

Enrolling

Online courses use the same numbering system as on-campus courses. However, online sections are designated as 70i. We do not differentiate between online and on-campus students. Any student, except for out-of-state online, can enroll in an online or on-campus course anytime it is offered.

We do not offer special online sections of the experiential learning courses (PADM 6890 Internship; 6900 Thesis, 6950 Professional Project). These courses are tailored to individuals and discussions must occur between the faculty advisory and the students prior to enrolling. Communication must occur throughout the semester and this takes place via meetings, telephone, skype, or other means. All students enroll in the regular sections. It is not necessary to establish an online section. Also, this allows students to avoid the \$20 per credit technology fee required for online courses.

Technical Requirements

Students who enroll in online courses must become very familiar with SUU's learning management system, Canvas. SUU provides extensive technical support that can be accessed through your Canvas course home page.

In general, online courses follow a weekly schedule of nonsynchronous (independent with no virtual classroom) assignments. However, most instructors will establish a few synchronous sessions (virtual classroom where everyone can chat) sometime during the semester. The expectations for those sessions should be included in the syllabus, so be sure to check with each instructor and mark your calendar accordingly. The synchronous sessions can be recorded for later viewing should the instructor decide to do so.

Students are strongly encouraged to purchase a headset with a microphone and a web cam (or a laptop/tablet with a built in web camera) prior to their first online class. The headset helps prevent audio feedback and allows you to easily be understood by your classmates. Also, students are strongly encouraged to test their Internet speed before enrolling in their first online course. Be sure your hardware must be capable of supporting your online course. Some Canvas functions are available on mobile devices. Seek details through Canvas Help or FAQs.

Both online and on-campus students often make great use of the technology that is available to them. For example, google.docs, Prezi, AdobeConnect, google hangout, FaceTime, texting, etc. are great ways to communicate with your classmates when working on group projects or networking for professional reasons. We do not restrict the use of these options in the online classroom. Be sure to keep your instructor informed if you're uncertain about a software or method that you'd like to use.

Experiential Learning Courses

Overview

As a terminal degree, the MPA develops practical skills in an applied setting, as well as in the classroom. The experiential learning courses offer students the opportunity to further develop the competencies in a professional setting. The content of these courses is unique to each student and specially designed around the student's needs and interests.

PADM 6890 Internship is a required elective for all students who have less than one year of full-time experience in a public or nonprofit organization (pre-service). Responsibility for seeking an internship falls upon the student. However, the Director and MPA faculty regularly facilitate internship opportunities and internship announcements are often sent to all current MPA students. Students with more than one year experience can request a waiver of the internship and substitute the 3 credit hours with another elective. Students must submit a written request for a waiver.

All students must complete PADM 6950 Professional Project or PADM 6900 Thesis to earn the MPA degree. The professional project offers students a unique opportunity to create a specialized learning environment in which to develop and apply competencies in a realistic setting. Under the supervision of an MPA faculty member, students partner with a host organization to develop and complete a project. Projects help students develop specific competencies in a safe, practical setting.

The thesis option creates a mentoring relationship between the student and MPA faculty for those students who anticipate pursuit of a doctoral program. If students elect a thesis option, the supervising faculty serves as a thesis committee chair, along with another MPA Faculty and one committee from outside the MPA.

The choice between the professional project and thesis is difficult for some students and we strongly encourage you to begin thinking about your options. We encourage you to talk with faculty to help you make the right choice. Explore your ideas and solicit feedback and comments with them. Students are more successful when they are confident in their decision and find the option that meets their particular needs.

We encourage you to consider your particular goals after you complete the degree. Are you starting a new career or making a change? What experience would make you a stronger candidate for a new or preferred job? What type of work do you expect to obtain with this degree? What projects or opportunities are available in your current workplace that could be adapted to the degree requirements?

The Professional Project requires an approach that is similar to a consultant. The student generally spends time at the hosting organization. Students often evaluate policies, issues, operations, etc. and then develop workable solutions or recommendations for improvement. In the past, students have developed strategic plans, written grants, managed fund-raising events, launched nonprofit organizations, collected data and analyzed government operations, and completed many other projects while developing their experiential competencies.

The thesis is a perfect choice for those students who intend to pursue a career in research or teaching in higher education. In addition, those students who hope to enter a doctoral level program upon graduation should consider the thesis. The thesis is ideal for those who will work at the cutting edge of the industry.

Each of the three experiential learning courses provides an excellent opportunity for competency development and is unique to each student. Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach to graduate research, the MPA faculty

created this unique opportunity where students maintain a significant amount of control and choice. With that in mind we can now turn to a detailed description and instructions for each of the three methods.

The Graduate Internship

Applying for an Internship

As a terminal degree, the MPA develops practical skills in an applied setting, as well as in the classroom. The experiential learning courses offer students the opportunity to further develop their competencies in a professional setting. The content is unique to each student and specially designed around the student's needs and interests.

PADM 6890 Internship is an experiential elective for all students who have less than one year of full-time professional experience in a public or nonprofit organization (pre-service). Responsibility for seeking an internship falls upon the student. However, the Director and MPA faculty regularly facilitate internship opportunities and internship announcements are often sent to all current MPA students. Students with more than one year of professional experience can request a waiver of the internship and substitute the 3 credit hours with another elective. In some cases, students may wish to complete an internship even though they may be eligible for a waiver.

Students are encouraged to discuss the options for an internship early in their program. Students must intern for a minimum of 300 hours (approximately 20 hours per week for one semester) to meet the 3 credit hours required. All MPA faculty are available to supervise internships, and adjuncts can be approved to supervise internships on a case-by-case basis. The faculty supervisor ensures the internship experience is completed in a safe and appropriate learning environment for the student. The faculty supervisor also serves as an advocate on behalf of the student should difficulties arise during the internship.

Students should complete preliminary discussions with the prospective organization or apply for an internship position if announced. Once the organization and general responsibilities have been discussed, a student should complete these steps.

1. Submit the following information to the faculty who is supervising the internship or the Director of MPA. The submission must be a separate document, not embedded in an email.

Title of Internship:

Your name:

Preferred telephone number:

Alternate telephone number:

Email address:

T-number:

Semester the internship will begin:

Semester the internship will end:

Organization name:

Organization's address:

Supervisor's name:

Supervisor's telephone number:

Supervisor's email address:

2. Review the MPA required competencies and area of emphasis competencies (if applicable) and identify those you hope to develop through the internship. You do not need to include them all. If you select a competency from outside the MPA program but relevant to your personal goals, you must identify the source (e.g. other professional standards) and explain why you want to focus on it.
3. Along with the above, submit a written proposal that includes:
 - a. Brief description of the overall internship responsibilities, including goals and deliverables.
 - b. List of the competencies identified in #2 above and the tasks that align with the competency.
 - c. Anticipated challenges or concerns.
4. Once your advisor approves the above, submit the Internship Waiver of Liability form and register for PADM 6890.
5. An internship report must be submitted monthly to the faculty who is supervising the internship. The monthly report should include:
 - a. Number of hours completed toward the required 300 hours.
 - b. Major tasks completed, accomplishments, unexpected challenges, deliverables, or other internship related events or issues.
 - c. Other information deemed important by the faculty supervisor, internship supervisor, or you.
6. A final internship report should be submitted prior to the end of the semester in which the internship is completed. The final report can be combined with the last monthly report and should contain:
 - a. Total number of hours completed.
 - b. Major tasks completed, goals accomplished, etc.
 - c. Self-assessment of the competencies developed.
 - d. Major learning points from the internship experience.
 - e. Discussion of how the internship can benefit your career.
 - f. Copies of deliverables.
 - g. Other items as deemed important by the academic advisory or internship supervisor.

Faculty may adjust some of the above requirements to meet the unique needs of the internship or student. Similarly, faculty may require specific reading or other assignments to augment the experience.

Students must notify the faculty supervisor of any change in assignment, location, or conditions. Also, students must immediately notify the faculty supervisor of any significant conflict, harassment, accident, or incident during the internship.

Instructions for Internship Waiver

As a terminal degree, the MPA develops practical skills in an applied setting, as well as in the classroom. The experiential learning courses offer students the opportunity to further develop their competencies in a professional setting. PADM 6890 Internship is an experiential elective for all students who have less than one year of full-time professional experience in a public or nonprofit organization (pre-service).

Students with more than one year of experience can request a waiver of the internship and substitute the 3 credit hours with another elective. In some cases, students may wish to complete an internship even though they may be eligible for a waiver.

Students must submit a written request for a waiver. Guidelines for your waiver request:

- Please submit your request within the first two semesters of enrolling in MPA courses.
- Address the waiver request to the Director, MPA.
- Submit as an attachment to an email or hard copy to the Director or MPA Administrative Assistant.
- Attach a current resume that includes the timeline and work experience justifying the waiver.
- The length of the waiver request will vary, but generally consist of two to three pages of information.
- Explain the duration and extent of your professional experience that you believe justifies the waiver. Be sure to consider the MPA required competencies and the area of emphasis competencies, if appropriate. Also include information such as major projects, supervisory responsibilities, accomplishments, or other items that you believe should be considered.

The Director of MPA will review the waiver request and, in some cases, consult the MPA faculty nucleus. You will be notified in writing of the results. Please feel free to follow-up with 21 days of your submission.

The Professional Project

As a terminal degree, the MPA develops practical skills in an applied setting, as well as in the classroom. The experiential learning courses offer students the opportunity to further develop their competencies in a professional setting. The content is unique to each student and specially designed around the student's needs and interests.

PADM 6950 Professional Project is one of two experiential electives available to all MPA. Students may choose to enroll in PADM 6900 Thesis as an alternative. Responsibility for creating the project falls upon the student. However, the Director and MPA faculty regularly facilitate projects, and announcements about possible projects are often sent to all current MPA students.

Students are encouraged to discuss the options for a professional project early in their program with any of the MPA faculty. All MPA faculty are available to supervise professional projects, and adjuncts can supervise projects on a case-by-case basis. The faculty supervisor's role is to ensure the project experience is completed in a safe and appropriate learning environment for the student. The faculty supervisor also serves as an advocate on behalf of the student should difficulties arise during the project.

Although the topic and goal of projects can vary considerably, students should generally follow the steps listed below. The sequence of steps may vary somewhat.

1. *Develop a concept.* The professional project is an initiative that needs to be undertaken, but would not otherwise happen without support from the student. In most instances, the project is completed for the student's employer. If so, it cannot be part of the student's regular job responsibilities, but it can be related. (See the Student Handbook for example topics.) The student can develop a concept by soliciting comments from his/her supervisor or other people within the organization. Once a general idea is developed and the organization is interested in the project, the student should contact a faculty advisor.

2. *Discuss the concept with a faculty advisor.* The student should select and meet with a faculty advisor who is a member of the MPA faculty. If the student would like an MPA adjunct to serve as faculty advisory, the student must first discuss this option with the Director of MPA. The student should be prepared to discuss the project's scope, goals, organizational support, and other relevant aspects with the faculty advisor (and the Director when appropriate.)
3. *Submit a proposal.* Students must develop a written proposal and submit it to the faculty advisor and the project supervisor within the organization. The proposal is considered a roadmap that will guide the process and decisions. Once agreed upon by the faculty advisor, the supervisor within the organization, and the student, significant changes should not be made to the project. The proposal should include all of the following information:

Title of Project:

Your name:

Preferred telephone number:

Alternate telephone number:

Email address:

T-number:

Semester the project will begin:

Semester the project will end:

Organization name:

Organization's address:

Supervisor's name:

Supervisor's telephone number:

Supervisor's email address:

- a. Description of the project goals, specific deliverables, and the project's scope. A project's scope consists of the boundaries or limits of the project, such as the entire organization or simply specific parts of it, or data that will, or will not, be collected, etc.
 - b. Description of the MPA competencies and area of emphasis competencies (if applicable) that you hope to develop through the project. You do not need to include them all. If you select a competency from outside the MPA program but relevant to your personal goals, you must identify the source (e.g. other professional standards) and explain why you want to focus on it.
 - c. Anticipated challenges or concerns.
 - d. Signature line for the faculty advisor, supervisor within the organization, and the student.
4. *Register.* Once your advisor approves the above and everyone signed the proposal, register for PADM 6950 Professional Project. The advisor must approve the student's registration.
 5. *Submit Interim Report(s).* A progress report must be submitted monthly to the faculty who is supervising the internship. The monthly report should include major tasks completed, accomplishments, unexpected challenges, interim deliverables, or other project related events or issues.
 6. *Complete Final Project Report.* The content and format of the final report may be negotiated among the supervising organization, the faculty advisor, and the student. Typically, a written report is one of the final deliverables. Also, students are strongly encouraged to deliver an oral presentation to the

supervisor and stakeholders within the recipient organization. If this occurs, the faculty advisor should be advised of the presentation date and may attend. Students must ensure the faculty advisor receives at least one copy of the report that can be placed in the student's file (e.g. hard copy or flash drive). The final report should follow APA style or other style as agreed upon by the faculty advisor and student, and include:

- a. Executive summary and table of contents.
- b. Goal(s), project scope, methods.
- c. Major tasks completed and/or analysis of data or information.
- d. Conclusions and recommendations.
- e. Other sections as required by the faculty advisor or supervisor within the organization.

7. *Submit Self-assessment Report.* Students should write and submit to the faculty advisor a separate report on the experience. The self-assessment report should include:

- a. Discussion of how the competencies identified in the Proposal were developed through the project.
- b. Discussion of how the project can benefit your career.
- c. Reflection on key learning points from the project.
- d. Other items as deemed important by the academic advisor.

Due to the unique nature of the Professional Project, the faculty advisor may adjust some of the above requirements to meet the needs of the student or the organization. These adjustments should be made in the initial stages of the project proposal. Similarly, faculty may require specific reading or other assignments to augment the experience. The faculty advisor, supervisor within the organization, and the student should negotiate the details of the project before the project begins, and should make only minimal changes when necessary while completing the project.

Students must notify the faculty supervisor of any change in assignment, location, or conditions. Also, students must immediately notify the faculty supervisor of any significant conflict, harassment, accident, or incident during the project.

The Thesis

As a terminal degree, the MPA develops practical skills in an applied setting, as well as in the classroom. The experiential learning courses offer students the opportunity to further develop their competencies in a professional setting. The content of these courses is unique to each student and specially designed around the student's needs and interests.

PADM 6900 Thesis is one of two experiential electives available to all MPA. Students may choose to enroll in PADM 6950 Professional Project, as an alternative to PADM 6900 Thesis. Responsibility for creating the thesis falls upon the student. However, the Director and MPA faculty can provide preliminary ideas, and students interested in pursuing the Thesis option should consider expanding research projects completed for MPA courses. Students should refer to the Student Handbook for further guidance on whether to select a Professional Project or Thesis as the experiential learning requirement.

Students are encouraged to discuss the options for a thesis early in their program with any of the MPA faculty. All MPA faculty are available to supervise a thesis. Adjunct faculty who earned a Ph.D. or J.D. can supervise a thesis on a case-by-case basis. The faculty advisor serves as Chair of the thesis committee and as a mentor to the student throughout the entire process.

The thesis option is strongly recommended for those students who intend to pursue doctoral work and represents a traditional academic endeavor. Students should recognize that writing a thesis is an iterative process between the Chair and student. Seldom, if ever, are submissions accepted without revisions until the final thesis is approved by the Chair and committee.

Students who elect the thesis option should complete the steps listed below. The sequence of steps may vary depending on the topic, but should be adjusted only with advisement of the Chair.

1. *Develop a research question.* The student can develop a concept by soliciting ideas from peers and/or faculty. Similarly, research projects completed for MPA courses can be used to explore potential thesis topics. Students are encouraged to engage in discussions with multiple faculty in order to select a knowledgeable Chair, and committee members who understand the topic and appear interested in serving on the thesis committee.
2. *Form a thesis committee.* Once a general idea is developed, the student should ask a member of the MPA faculty to serve as advisor and Chair. If the student would like an MPA adjunct to serve as Chair, the student must first discuss this option with the Director of MPA, and the MPA faculty nucleus must approve the selection. The student should identify a second member of the MPA faculty to serve on the thesis committee, along with a third member from outside the MPA faculty. The third member must meet the MPA standards for professionally or academically qualified faculty, be willing to serve, and be approved by the faculty nucleus.
3. *Submit a written proposal.* Students must develop a written proposal and submit it to the Chair before distributing it to the committee. The proposal is considered a roadmap that will guide the research and inform the committee. Once agreed upon by the committee and student, significant changes should not be made to the research. All written submissions should follow APA format unless otherwise specified by the Chair. The thesis proposal should include all of the following information unless otherwise determined by the Chair:
 - a. Title of thesis – This should be a succinct statement which holds enough detail to convey the objective of the research.
 - b. Introduction – Usually one to two pages of narrative containing a definition of the problem or area of study along with an explanation of what the reader should expect in the completed thesis.
 - c. Research Objective – A short statement that outlines the research question, the goal or objectives of the researcher, and the items to be defined and explored in the thesis. In many instances the hypothesis or intended results are briefly outlined.
 - d. Literature – A brief list and discussion (with references and citations) of the academic and professional literature the student expects to use in the research or in preparation for the study.
 - e. Methods – Description of the research approach (exploratory, scientific, problem solving, etc.), the tools and research methods (survey, observation, etc.) and a clear statement of the methods for explaining or demonstrating the data and material obtained during the study period.
 - f. Timeline – A brief statement that outlines the time for conducting the research as well the time within which the thesis will be presented.

- g. Tentative conclusions or recommendations – Assuming the hypothesis or research question is confirmed, a description of conclusions and recommendations.

Once the proposal has been accepted by the Chair, a copy should be distributed to the committee members. Their comments or concerns should be addressed and incorporated into the proposal. Any disagreement among the committee members should be resolved through a majority vote.

If the research method requires human subjects, the student must seek approval from SUU's Institutional Review Board (<http://suu.edu/pub/policies/pdf/PP620Institutional.pdf>) before initiating the research. The Chair can advise the student about this approval process.

4. *Register.* You and your Chair can decide the optimum semester for you to enroll in PADM 6900 Thesis and the number of thesis credit hours. You can enroll when initiating the proposal or after the proposal has been approved by the Chair and committee members. The Chair must approve the student's registration. It's fairly common for the thesis work to extend beyond the semester in which the student registers. In this case, the student will receive an Incomplete or Temporary grade until the thesis is complete.
5. *Complete the research and write the thesis.* The student and Chair should reach agreement on when to meet throughout the thesis development and set expectations for the meeting. For example, they may choose to meet on a regular basis (e.g. monthly) or when key portions of the research are completed (e.g. outline; literature review). Students should consult their committee members about various aspects of the research as needed. Once the Chair approves a final draft, the thesis should be sent to the committee members for review. Students should inform and consult the committee members as the research unfolds.
6. *Finalizing the thesis.* The Chair and student should decide how to receive and respond to comments from the members. An oral defense is recommended, but optional. All committee members must be satisfied that the thesis meets the academic standards for quality research. Disagreement among the committee should be resolved through a majority vote.
7. *Administrative requirements.* Students must submit a copy of the thesis to the Gerald Sherratt Library and ensure it conforms to the standards set forth by the Library. Additionally, students must submit a copy (hard or flash drive, but not via email) to the MPA Administrative Assistant so it can be placed in the student's file.

In addition to the above, students are responsible for conforming to all university policies and requirements related to a thesis.

Students must notify the Chair any change or disruption in the research. Also, students must immediately notify the faculty supervisor of any significant conflict, harassment, accident, or incident during the research.

Continuous Enrollment

Students often find a thesis cannot be completed in one semester. As mentioned earlier, the experiential learning courses, such as the thesis, are unique to each student and may begin or end in the middle of a semester. Your

thesis advisor can help you decide in which semester you should enroll in PADM 6900 Thesis and whether you should extend beyond the semester in which you first enrolled. Unlike a traditional MPA course, you should focus on the research of your thesis and not be too stressed if the thesis rolls into a second semester.

Students who extend beyond the initial semester must be enrolled in PADM 6900 for at least 1 credit hour for each subsequent semester until the project is completed. This requirement is called “continuous enrollment.” Students must register for at least one (1) credit hour and must get permission from their faculty advisor to register. Standard MPA tuition and fees apply.

Library Resources

The SUU Library provides a variety of resources to support the Master of Public Administration program including books and ebooks, research article databases, research guides and access to research librarians to assist student research efforts.

The library holds a large number of books and ebooks in political science, political theory, political institutions and administration, and local government can which can be retrieved using the library catalog. Increasingly, the selection of new books favors ebook purchases which allow online MPA students access online at any time. eBook usage is monitored closely to facilitate multi-title purchase when an eBook is heavily used.

The library invests in a number of online article databases to support public administration research. Databases such as Academic Search Premier, Annual Reviews, Business Source Premier, Dissertations, Education Full Text, JSTOR, WestLawNext, Public Administration Abstracts, Public Affairs Index are some of the article databases that MPA students find most useful in their research. Most of these databases provide access to the full text articles.

Books and journal articles that are not available online can be requested through the Interlibrary Loan program which will send the articles to the student Interlibrary Loan account and will deliver book requests to the student home address for off campus students within a week or less.

A SUU Library librarian is assigned to support the MPA program and provide research assistance and research webinars to students and faculty whenever requested. A Public Administration online research guide, <http://libguides.suu.edu/Public-Administration>, is also available to provide research assistance for students and faculty.

Academic Standards

All students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) to be eligible for graduation. Please recognize that students who consistently earn a B- will not meet this standard. Students who fall below the 3.0 standard will be contacted each semester and asked to develop a plan to improve their GPA. Students who do not meet the 3.0 requirement within two semesters of coursework will be dismissed from the program. Please see <http://suu.edu/pub/policies/pdf/PP654Graduate.pdf> for SUU’s grading policy.

Students will not receive academic credit if they earn a C+ or below in any course. If the course is a core or required course, students must repeat it and earn a passing grade. If the course is an elective, students have the option of repeating the course.

Students who complete at least ½ of a course's requirements are eligible to receive an Incomplete grade if circumstances prevent the completion of the course assignments. The instructor has the authority and responsibility to decide whether to issue an Incomplete.

Tuition Waivers

Each academic year, the Master of Public Administration program offers tuition waivers and graduate assistantships as a way to assist students with the cost of pursuing their degrees. A small amount of tuition waiver funds will be reserved for students that apply for admission no later than July 15th. All students regardless of prior award of tuition waivers must submit a Request for Assistance letter to the MPA Director to be considered for the tuition waiver or assistantship. In the letter, please describe your

- Status as an MPA student (newly admitted, first year, etc.).
- T-number
- Career interests, including a statement about your interest in the student services assistantship if appropriate.
- Current GPA if already enrolled.
- Explanation of why you should receive an award (financial need, academic performance, etc.).
- Other information you think would be relevant to the decision.
- If applying for assistantship, please visit the MPA website and click on the Tuition Waivers/Graduate Assistantships

The MPA faculty will consider all applications and notify students no later than June 30th each year. Late submissions will be notified no later than August 15th. For more information regarding tuition waivers, click <http://suu.edu/hss/polscj/mpa/tuition-waiver.html>. Please note that tuition waivers and graduate assistantships are based on the availability of funding each academic year.

Jobs & Salaries

Many students who graduate with an MPA degree are qualified for a wide variety of job opportunities in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors. Our graduates have accepted positions as city managers, nonprofit managers, police officers, federal employees, academic advisors, public relations managers, and executive development associates in retail management.

Salaries for public administrators vary geographic region, experience and several other factors; however, according to U.S. Census Bureau those who obtain a Master's degree will earn \$19,000 more than those with a Bachelor's. Furthermore, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) the accrediting body for all Public Administration institutions put together a chart depicting the salaries of MPA graduates in various positions; again please note these salaries are varied due to geographic location, experience, and sector.

Salaries of MPA Graduates

Position	Sector	Salary
Local Government Analyst	State/Local Gov	\$26,000 - \$45,000
Program Coordinator	Nonprofit	\$30,000 - \$48,000
Program Assistant/Manager	Nonprofit	\$32,000 - \$63,000
Policy Analyst	Nonprofit/Government	\$40,000 - \$68,000
Statistician	Nonprofit/Government	\$46,000 - \$65,000
Research Associate	NP/Gov/Private	\$50,000 - \$60,000
Marketing/PA Specialist	NP/Gov/Private	\$66,000 - \$85,000
City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer	State/Local Gov	\$101,000 - \$108,000
Higher Ed Academic Advisor	Higher Education	\$38,000 - \$47,000
Higher Ed Administration	Higher Education	\$45,000 - \$500,000
Dean of Students	Higher Education	\$62,000 - \$97,000
Housing Director	Higher Education	\$43,000 - \$84,000

Sources: [Indeed](#), [Payscale](#), [ICMA](#), [University of Pittsburgh GSPIA](#)

Faculty Nucleus

The faculty nucleus is responsible for governing the MPA program. The MPA Director serves as Chair of the group, and together they form the admissions committee, set policies, implement the curriculum, define and ensure competency development, and direct the overall program. The Director and the Administrative Assistant manage the day-to-day program operations and are empowered by the governing body to implement policies.

Randall Allen, J.D., Instructor

Randall Allen earned his BA and MA in Public Policy from Brigham Young University, during his undergraduate and graduate work, he served as an intern for United States Senator Orrin Hatch and for Representative Kosugi Takashi, in the Japanese House of Representatives. In 1996, Randall graduated Cum Laude from the J. Reuben Clark School of Law at Brigham Young University. His experience while attending law school includes, Editorial Board Member of Law Review, Student Bar Association President, and the Distinguished Service Award. Professor Allen has over seventeen years of practicing law. This includes criminal and civil cases on in both jury and bench trials. In addition, he served as a Trial Clerk to United States Court of Appeals in the Tenth Circuit to Judge Michael R. Murphy. His wealth of experience, as a public defender, contract law, family law, business law, and several other fields; has allowed Professor Allen to bring his real-life scenarios into the class room at Southern Utah University, where he is currently an Associate Professor of Political Science. In addition, he serves on various committees within the university, including, but not limited to, Department Scholarship Committee, Grant Review Committee, and the Graduate Council. He also participates in writing Mock Trials and Moot Court Cases for SUU students.

Professor Allen has published and presented several papers, including, “Arizona’s 2010 Immigration Law: Theoretical, Political and Constitutional Issues” and “Reshaping the Conservatives’ Relationship with the Religious Right” and served as a panelist on a variety of political and social issues, including Gay Marriage, School Vouchers, and Obama Care. Furthermore, Professor Allen has been interviewed regarding the political hot topic of Mormons and the 2012 Presidential Election for the Danish Foreign Press.

In addition to Professor Allen’s scholarly and professional experience, he also serves within his community by volunteering for political campaigns both locally and nationally. He is a strong supporter of the Arts community by donating monies and time to ensure the entire population, especially children, have an opportunity to experience the Arts. Furthermore, he serves as a pianist to the Utah Shakespeare Festival and local elementary schools.

Rick Bairett, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Dr. Rick Bairett graduated Summa Cum Laude with a B.S. in Aeronautical Science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University before being commissioned an Air Force officer. Military deployments and flying global KC-135 and C-5 missions reinforced a fascination with international affairs. Accordingly, he pursued a master’s degree in International Relations, which he received from Webster University in 2001. After completing a foreign policy fellowship in Washington D.C. and New Delhi, Rick spent his final years in government implementing cooperative defense relations and foreign policy initiatives with key allies in the Asia-Pacific region. Upon retiring from the Air Force in 2008, he attended the University of California, Davis and received a PhD in Political Science in 2014, with emphases on comparative politics and research methods. Dr. Bairett has teaching and research interests in comparative democratization and comparative political

institutions. He has co-authored work with Josephine Andrews entitled “Institutions and the stabilization of party systems in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe” in *Electoral Studies*. His primary focus is on executive power structures and their impact on government transparency in Central and Eastern Europe. Rick teaches research methods in the SUU Master of Public Administration program, and undergraduate courses in comparative politics, national security policy, and American politics.

Roger Carter, MPA, Instructor and City Manager, Washington City, Utah

Roger Carter graduated from Brigham Young University in 1988 with a B.A. in Planning and Land Use. During his undergraduate, Roger participated in the development of the Lehi City, Utah Housing Quality Inventory Report and the U.S. 189, Provo Canyon Route for the Utah Department of Transportation. Since then Roger has worked in the private and public sectors. As a result, Roger has gained an extensive knowledge of both sectors and has been able to apply his learnings and experiences in the classroom. Further, Roger is a published author. His research on the Economic Analysis of the State of Utah’s bid for the Super Conductor Collier project was recognized by the Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management and the Utah Political Science Association. He presented his research at their respected conferences in Seattle, Washington and Salt Lake City, Utah in 1988.

In 2009, Roger graduated from Southern Utah University with his Master of Public Administration. Since then, Roger has been a strong advocate of SUU and has participated and dedicated his resources to growth of the MPA program. Roger first began teaching as an adjunct for SUU’s MPA program and received high accolades from: faculty, staff, and students. During his professional career, Roger has achieved several milestones in his life including, but not limited to: being a Credentialed City Manager by the International City/County Management Association. Serving as a Board Member for the Utah City Management Association and was a Utah Delegate for the White House Conference on Tourism in 1992.

Patrick Clarke, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Dean, University College

In 2009, Dr. Clarke received his Ph.D. from the University of Northern Colorado in Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership. However, for over 15 years, Dr. Clarke has dedicated his life to student bodies where ten of those years have been serving at Southern Utah University.

Throughout his tenure in higher education, Dr. Clarke has served as a Student Advisor, Resident Hall Director, Executive Director for the Academic and Career Development Center and several other leadership positions. In addition, he has volunteered to sit on several community boards, including, but not limited to, the Utah Office of Higher Education's Complete College Utah Task Force and the State-Wide Community College Network. Dr. Clarke is currently serving as the University College Dean for Southern Utah University and he also serves as an Associate Professor for the Masters of Public Administration department where he teaches Introduction to Student Services in Higher Education, Higher Education Environments, and several others.

Within Dr. Clarke's academic and professional career, he has been a book reviewer, conference program reviewer, and several others. In addition, Dr. Clarke has received several awards for his outstanding research and service, including, but not limited to, Dean Citation for Excellence: Outstanding Dissertation Award and Building Block Award for the most improved Residence Halls under his direction. Furthermore, Dr. Clarke has authored and published articles within higher educational journals and has presented, on numerous occasions,

presentations regarding higher education that took place all over the world, including Washington, DC and Manchester, England.

Angela E. Pool-Funai, DPA, Assistant Professor, MPA Director

Dr. Pool-Funai graduated Cum Laude with her bachelor's degree from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. She majored in Journalism and minored in Economics. After several years of professionally working, Dr. Pool-Funai attended Baylor University where she graduated with a Masters in Public Policy and Administration. Shortly thereafter, she attended Valdosta State University where she received her DPA in Public Administration.

Dr. Pool-Funai focuses her interest upon virtual commerce and the implications of the tax system. The title of her dissertation was "Virtual Fundraising: Policy, Technology, and Philanthropy." Among her other scholarly activities, Dr. Pool-Funai has written articles about Social Work and has presented research on other projects including: "Virtual Fundraising: An Evaluation of the American Cancer Society's Virtual Relay for Life and Implications for the Nonprofit Sector" and "Economic Justice in Two MMORPGs: How Comparative Advantage Translates into Virtual Worlds".

Further, Dr. Pool-Funai has taught several courses including: Texas Government and Federal Government at McLennan Community College in Waco, Texas. She also taught English as a Second Language in the Shandong Institute of Economics in Jinan, Shandong; People's Republic of China. She is a member of several political associations and has experience as Research & Grant Coordinator and has served as the Director of Foundation and Corporate Development. Some of her leadership roles included: Chair of the Baylor University Staff Council, The Baylor University Presidential Search Advisory Committee, and Chair of the Baylor University Campus Diversity Committee.

Ravi K. Roy, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Dr. Ravi Roy graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles with a B.A. in Political Science in 1993 before going on to complete his Masters in Public Policy in 1997 and subsequently his Ph.D. in Political Science in 2000 at Claremont Graduate University. He later attended RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia where he received a Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Education.

Between his professional and educational career, Dr. Roy has authored or co-authored several articles and books. His latest highlights include a book chapter that he co-authored with Thomas D. Willett entitled "Market Volatility and the Risks of Global Integration" as well as a book with Oxford University Press that he co-wrote with Manfred B. Steger entitled *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction*. He is currently co-writing another book for Oxford with Stella Z. Theodoulou entitled *Public Administration: A Very Short Introduction*. Dr. Roy has a wealth of experience both as an administrator and educator. Some of the positions that he has held include: Director of the Post-Graduate Program in International Development at the RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, Associate Director of Graduate and Professional Education at California State University, Northridge. He was a tenured Senior Lecturer (associate professor equivalency) at RMIT University and Visiting Research Scholar at University of California, Santa Barbara, among others. He teaches in the areas of Political Science, Public Administration, and Public Policy. Dr. Roy has served on several committees that have helped alumni and current students in our program. Some of his past awards include a 2002 University

Ambassador's Teaching Award at California State University, Northridge and a Research Grant from the European Union Center of California.

Additionally, Dr. Roy has spent several years speaking at various conferences either presenting papers or guest lecturing. These locations include: Melbourne, Australia, Jakarta, Indonesia, Vancouver, Canada, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, Louisiana, and San Diego, California.

Student Conduct

Southern Utah University (SUU) establishes high expectations and community standards for its students through its policies and procedures. Students voluntarily assume the responsibility to meet these standards and expectations when they enroll at the University. The Student Conduct Staff educates students about the University's standards and expectations, and when those standards and expectations are not met, seeks to hold students accountable for their choices leading to conduct incongruent with SUU's policies and procedures.

As MPA students, you are encouraged to exceed these expectations, not only academically, but professionally. As part of the MPA program, we expect that each student will have:

- **Honesty** – Students will strive to be true to themselves and others while upholding the ideals of the SUU honor code and students will avoid all communication and actions that will mislead others.
- **Integrity** – Students will honor commitments by practicing highest ethical standards, and taking personal responsibility for your actions even when facing social and economic pressures.
- **Respect** – Students will treat everyone with respect, dignity, and fairness with no tolerance for discrimination.
- **Global Awareness** – Students will strive to understand and appreciate diversity of the global environment, and be sensitive to the ramifications of their actions in the international community.
- **Excellence** - Students will strive for a high level of academic excellence and professional achievement. Students will demonstrate their ability to perform while developing their intellectual capabilities and skills.

We hold these values in high regard and hope the student understands that their actions today and in the future reflect upon themselves and the Department of Political Science & Criminal Justice and the MPA program.

Plagiarism

Southern Utah University defines plagiarism as intentionally or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. It includes submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work which has wholly or in part been created by another person, or cutting and pasting of source material. It also includes the presentation of the work, ideas, representations, or words of another person without customary and proper acknowledgement of sources. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with their instructors for clarification in any situation in which the need for documentation is an issue.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding Academic Integrity, please consult the Student Code of Conduct found at <https://www.suu.edu/pub/policies/pdf/PP112Student.pdf>.

