

**Master of Public Administration  
Program  
Graduate Student Handbook**



**SJSU** | COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

MPA Student Association  
Is a member of



**ASSOCIATED STUDENTS**  
**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY**

# POLITICAL SCIENCE

## POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The Master of Public Administration Program is housed in the Department of Political Science, College of Social Sciences. It is the oldest program in the department, and it benefits from access to well-known and widely published scholars in ethics, comparative governance, American government, and Constitutional law. MPA students may take up to two 100-level courses in Political Science. Political Science professors also teach occasional special seminars for the MPA program.

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

-- Nelson Mandela

"Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow men."

-- Mahatma Gandhi

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The San José State University Master of Public Administration Graduate Student Handbook is made possible through the combined efforts of the MPA Student Association and the MPA Faculty.

The MPA Student Association (MPASA) would like to thank the Founding Officers of the MPASA for creating the Graduate Student Handbook, and Dr. Frances Edwards, MPA Director, for her guidance, support, and annual editing of this guide.

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## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Welcome to the Public Administration Program! .....</i>	9
<i>The Program .....</i>	9
<i>Meeting the Challenge of Public Administration.....</i>	9
<i>Mission and Goals of the Public Administration Program.....</i>	10
<i>Program History.....</i>	12
<i>Program Administration.....</i>	13
<i>Ethics and Honesty in the Program .....</i>	14
<i>Faculty .....</i>	15
<i>University Resources .....</i>	18
<i>Joining Your Professional Association .....</i>	19
<i>MPA Student Association.....</i>	19
<b>BEGINNING THE PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Beginning Classes Your First Semester: The Mundane Details.....</i>	23
<i>First Steps When Beginning the Program.....</i>	25
<i>Initial Course Selection .....</i>	28
<i>Accessibility Accommodations .....</i>	31
<i>Scholarships and Financial Assistance .....</i>	31
<b>FULFILLING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<i>Curriculum &amp; Degree Requirements .....</i>	35
<i>The Internship Requirement.....</i>	36
<b>GRADUATING WITH YOUR M.P.A. ....</b>	<b>39</b>
<i>Steps for Completing Your MPA .....</i>	41
<i>Culminating Experience Requirements .....</i>	41
<i>Applying for Graduation .....</i>	41
<i>Leaves of Absence and Seven Year Time Limit .....</i>	43
<b>APPENDIX: PROGRAM AND UNIVERSITY FORMS .....</b>	<b>45</b>



# **INTRODUCTION TO THE MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM**





## **WELCOME TO THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM!**

Welcome to the Master of Public Administration Program (the Program) at San José State University (SJSU). We are looking forward to working with you to help you achieve your academic, career, and life goals.

The goal of the Program is to educate the next generation of leaders for local, regional and state government agencies and non-profit organizations. Our program emphasizes the ability to write well, to think analytically, to research public issues, to maintain high ethical standards, to develop public policy, to manage public programs, to manage public funds, and to engender civic engagement in communities of great diversity. Professors include recognized scholars in the field of public administration, as well as experienced leaders in public agencies. Recognizing that each student is an integral part of the learning experience, all courses are taught as participatory seminars. Readings and projects are designed to stimulate thought about, and discussion of, the major issues facing public administrators today.

## **THE PROGRAM**

The Program offers students an opportunity to learn and apply necessary skills to meet the challenges of government agencies and not-for-profit organizations.

The Program emphasizes the practical application of administrative theories and skills related to:

- the special environment and problems of administration in local government;
- government's place in the social and economic systems;
- ethics;
- critical thinking;
- project management;
- techniques and strategies for program analysis, planning, evaluation and implementation;
- the nuts and bolts of non-profit management;
- budgeting;
- public personnel management; and
- national intelligence.

The courses require students to master written and oral communication, interpersonal relations, the art of problem solving, and information management. San José State University is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The MPA Program is an accredited member of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA).

## **MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Local and state government agencies in the United States are coping with the twin challenges of COVID-19 and community values' evolution. While the economic impacts of COVID-19 limit resources for all levels of government, demands for equity in community resource allocations are requiring new approaches to budgeting, community engagement and resource management. Therefore, public administration professionals must have the skills to plan, organize, staff, direct, coordinate, budget and measure the outcomes for the organizations that perform the most critical community functions. Governments are contracting with NGOs to continue the delivery of essential services in an economically austere environment. As a result, each public agency and NGO staff member must have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide excellent service across a variety of tasks and endeavors, which requires the recruitment and retention of the most able individuals in community service, both governmental and NGO.

Those entering the public service for the foreseeable future will be called upon to deal with such problems as a shrinking tax base, a decaying infrastructure, environmental hazards (notably those related to climate change), personnel pension reform, public safety services revisioning, and a public that demands more services, and services that are delivered efficiently and effectively. Such an environment leaves little margin for error. Thus, public administrators must be highly competent and possess analytical skills, managerial acumen, ethical sensitivity, cultural competency, and organizational sense.

In *The Transformation of Governance and Public Affairs Education*, award-winning educator Don Kettl said, "Public affairs education faces a critical challenge in providing managers and analysts with the right knowledge and skills in a time when governance has been transformed. While government's traditional institutions and processes have become less central to the attainment of public purposes, new institutions and processes that rely on private partners and networks have become more important. The challenge facing public managers is to frame new tactics to manage programs effectively while preserving basic processes of democratic accountability. The challenge for public affairs programs is to prepare students to manage in a world in which not all public service will be in government; more program implementation will occur through nonhierarchical relationships; more domestic policy will be shaped by global forces; and government will need to incorporate new forms of public participation."

## **MISSION AND GOALS OF THE PROGRAM**

The Program has engaged in strategic planning since 1997 and has updated its plan six times. Its current plan is designed to deliver courses encompassing the competencies to meet the needs of public and NGO agencies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **The Mission of the Program**

The mission of our MPA program is to educate and train individuals to become the leaders, managers, and analysts in public and non-profit agencies that serve the Silicon Valley and its diverse population, using tools that enable them to recognize and value diversity, behave with high ethical standards, manage personnel resources equitably, recognize and manage risk, and manage programs and policies efficiently and cost-effectively. Upon completion of the degree students will employ critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and public service focus in the delivery of community services through the city, county, special district, state agency, or non-profit agency.

The program includes core courses, advanced seminars, and elective courses from within the program and also from related areas, such as communications studies, political science and urban planning. A faculty of academically and professionally-qualified professors imparts both education and inspiration, leading to a community-focused view of a public service career. The curriculum emphasizes the values of social equity, transparency, and community engagement, and includes:

- core courses in the theory and practice of public management at the local and state government levels, and in locally-serving non-profit agencies, focused on management skills and tools, and policy development and analysis recognizing community needs;
- opportunities for practical experience through internships in local public and non-profit organizations for those without public or non-profit agency administrative experience;
- encouragement to use the culminating experience project as a service to a public or non-profit agency, providing research and survey services, analysis and recommendations for implementation of policies and programs to enhance their service delivery.

The program is focused primarily on expanding the knowledge and skills of fully employed professionals in public and non-profit agencies, on adults seeking career changes, and on selected recent college graduates who are highly motivated toward a career in public services or non-profit agencies. The MPA Advisory Committee, made up of leaders in community public and non-

profit agencies, alumni and faculty, provides guidance on curriculum development to meet the evolving needs of their organizations and communities.

The Program follows and supports the mission of SJSU in

- attracting, retaining, and graduating a highly diverse body of public administration students;
- providing a disciplinary and interdisciplinary professional education in public administration that is academically rigorous and intellectually challenging;
- providing a public administration curriculum that reflects its location in the nation's most culturally and ethnically diverse large city, and that encourages critical thinking and social and cultural awareness; and
- fostering a collegial and cooperative intellectual environment for students and faculty that includes recognition and appreciation of differing viewpoints and promotes academic freedom within the Program community.

### **Goals of the Program**

As an accredited program of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), San Jose State University's MPA program has adopted the program learning outcomes articulated by NASPAA.

#### *Program Learning Outcomes*

##### **1. Lead and manage in public governance**

- a. Apply the project management approach to public management models
- b. Manage projects
- c. Understand the relationships between public policy, whether proposed or enacted, and leadership and management in implementation

##### **2. Participate in and contribute to the public policy process**

- a. Apply techniques for program evaluation and policy analysis
- b. Describe and execute the policymaking process, including defining the problem, setting the agenda, formulating policy, implementing policy and evaluating policy
- c. Prepare a budget reflecting policy priorities

##### **3. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions**

- a. Employ analytical tools for collecting, analyzing, presenting and interpreting data, including appropriate statistical concepts and techniques
- b. Identify and employ alternative sources of funding, including grants, taxes and fees
- c. Understand and apply the legal context of public affairs, administration and policy

**4. Articulate and apply a public service perspective**

- a. Behave ethically and with integrity: tell the truth, keep confidences, admit mistakes
- b. Understand and apply criteria appropriate to public affairs, administration and policy

**5. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry**

- a. Communicate effectively in writing: prepares clear, concise and well-organized written materials tailored to the audience's level of expertise and needs
- b. Communicate effectively in speech: presents oral information accurately, clearly, concisely and persuasively, tailored to the level of expertise and needs
- c. Work productively in teams
- d. Respect and value community diversity

## **CAREER OUTLOOK**

Graduates from the Program pursue their professional careers in various government and NGO agencies, principally at the local, regional and state levels, and in non-profit agencies. As the Baby Boom generation of public employees retires, and staffing levels shrink based on budgetary limitations, there is an increased demand for qualified leadership for public agencies at all levels. Homeland security, public safety and social service demands will continue to grow with the changing world order. Housing, medical care and education will require more governmental oversight, funding, and program innovation. Nationwide more than 60% of senior managers are eligible for retirement. Thus, a critical need exists for persons with advanced degrees who are ready to step into these positions.

## **PROGRAM HISTORY**

Public Administration at SJSU has a long and distinguished history, longer than that of the Department of Political Science within which it resides. A bachelor's degree in Public Administration was instituted by the Department of Social Sciences in 1947. Not until 1952 was a degree in Political Science offered

by the newly formed Department of Public Administration and Political Science. The MPA degree was first offered in 1972.

The program has been revised throughout its history based on the needs of its graduates and their employers, and the accreditation requirements of NASPAA for the MPA program and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) for the university as a whole.

- There are five core courses:
  - PADM 210 Introduction to Public Administration
  - PADM 212 Research Methods
  - PADM 213 Public Policy Analysis and Evaluation
  - PADM 214 Public Management
  - PADM 218 Public Budgeting
- Core courses are offered every semester. In general, core courses should be completed before taking advanced seminars. The MPA Director works with students in the advising process to ensure that they take core classes in a timely fashion.
- Advanced seminars are offered to enhance students' understanding of specialized areas of public administration:
  - PADM 202 Regional Governance
  - PADM 215 Public Personnel Administration
  - PADM 217 Organization Theory
  - PADM 219 Public Financial Management
  - PADM 220 Non-Profit Management
  - PADM 223 Law and Public Administration
  - PADM 295 Special Topics, such as national intelligence, and other topics related to specialized areas of interest to MPA scholars
- Electives are offered within the MPA curriculum as well as from other departments:
  - PADM 281 Internship – required for those without government or non-profit experience in administrative roles, but optional for all other students
  - PADM 297 Optional Capstone course, creating the prospectus to prepare for PADM 298 project
  - MCOM 104 – Intro to Mass Communications Research
  - URBP 205 Private Development and Urban Planning

- URBP 206 Market Analysis, Appraisal and Finance of Real Estate Development

Other courses from other appropriate departments can be taken as electives with permission of the MPA Director

- Students take five core courses, three advanced seminars, and three electives, which may be from PADM courses, or graduate courses in other departments, or up to two 100 level undergraduate courses from Political Science or another appropriate program. Permission of the MPA Director is required for all courses outside the PADM selection.
- The culminating experience is Option B, a project developed in PADM 297 and completed in PADM 298, executed in consultation with the instructor for these courses. Alternatively, a student may develop the culminating experience project's prospectus independently with an adviser from among the Political Science Department's fulltime faculty, and then take PADM 298 as an independent study/supervision course under the direction of the selected faculty member.
- Other aspects of the program are documented elsewhere in this handbook.

The program is a mainstay of public management education in its region, with increasingly competitive admissions. It ranked 111 nationally among over 370 such programs evaluated by US News and World Report in 2021. Its alumni include numerous city managers, chiefs of police, fire chiefs, department heads and NGO leaders, as well as military officers, state-level department leaders, elected officials and educators. A list of selected alumni and their current positions is available at the [www.sjsu/mpa](http://www.sjsu/mpa) website.

The underlying educational philosophy of the program is that public managers need a grounding in democratic, organizational and managerial theory, and training in the practical application of the theories in order to properly conduct the people's business. Professors therefore seek to illustrate theory with practical applications through the case study approach and class exercises that use data from the real world. Faculty members are encouraged to conduct research in their respective fields, and to engage the community through service, consultations and participation in professional organizations.

## **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

The Public Administration Program is located within the College of Social Sciences, Political Science Department in Clark Hall Room 471. The Program Director is Dr. Frannie Edwards, whose office is Clark Hall 447. Day to day operations are managed by the Department Coordinator, Kristy Williams, and the MPA coordinator is Shannon Gallagher. Office hours vary by semester.

Please contact the Political Science Office directly at 408-924-5550 or look on the Political Science Department's website (<http://www.sjsu.edu/polisci/>) to obtain office hours.

## **ETHICS AND HONESTY IN THE PROGRAM**

The Public Administration Program at San José State University expects ethical and honest behavior in its students, faculty, and staff. The Program maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty.

“Plagiarism, defined broadly, is the presentation of another's words and/or ideas as one's own without attributing the proper source. It is grounds not only for failure of a given piece of work, which could result in failure for the entire course, it could also result in being reported to the administrative body responsible for student conduct violations and being subject to disciplinary action, which includes expulsion, suspension, and/or probation.” (Political Science Department, San Francisco State University, 2016).

The Program regards any form of cheating, including but not limited to plagiarism, as a serious matter of academic dishonesty which threatens the integrity of the assessment process and award of grades and/or the degree, to the detriment of all other students and graduates of SJSU.

Students are expected to cite materials and ideas based upon the work of others, using appropriate citation methods. The appropriate citation strategies will be covered in PADM 210. A tutorial on plagiarism is also available on the Library website - <http://library.sjsu.edu/video/plagiarism-graduate-level>. The Program uses APA style for citations. Guides for using APA citations are found at <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/writeandcite>

## **THE FACULTY**

### **Frances L. Edwards - *Program Director***

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Frannie Edwards is a professor in the Political Science Department and the Deputy Director, Allied Telesis National Transportation Security Center, at the Mineta Transportation Institute, an organized research unit of the College of Business. She is an active researcher and writer in the fields of emergency management, transportation security, continuity of operations, cultural diversity and climate change, and a member of the Editorial Boards of four professional journals. She is the co-author or editor of four books, thirteen reports for the Mineta Transportation Institute (available at

<https://transweb.sjsu.edu/> ), has chapters in sixteen books, 35 professional publications, has delivered 45 papers at professional meetings, and given numerous media interviews and talks at community groups. Dr. Edwards has been a researcher or advisor to the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, the Transportation Research Board, the National Academy of Sciences, Turkey, Japan, NATO, the European Union, and state and local governmental emergency management and homeland security review groups. She was the governor's appointee to the California Seismic Safety Commission and a member of the California Hospital Building Safety Board. She has been on the Board of Directors of the Orange County Chapter, American Red Cross, the Volunteer Center of Silicon Valley and many other community non-profit groups, and is currently on the Supervisory Committee (Board of Oversight) for Premier One Credit Union. Prior to joining the faculty at SJSU Dr. Edwards was the Director of Emergency Preparedness for the City of San José, America's tenth largest city, for fourteen years. In 2016, she was named the winner of the SJSU College of Social Sciences August Warburton Award for Outstanding Scholarship.

**James C. Brent**

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James Brent teaches in the Public Administration and Political Science programs. His area of interest is Constitutional law and judicial politics. Dr. Brent has a chapter in Vogelsang and Compaine, *The Internet Upheaval* for MIT Press. He has published articles on judicial politics in journals such as American Politics Quarterly, Justice System Journal, American Politics Review, and the Southeastern Political Review. Dr. Brent is active in the American Political Science Association. He has given papers at the Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. He teaches PADM 223 Law and Public Administration in the MPA program. Professor Brent is the Don Edwards Lecture Series Director. This series brings public figures who have shaped Silicon Valley's public history to campus. These lectures are followed by a discussion period when the audience interacts with the speaker, enabling MPA students to ask questions about the ethics and public service values exemplified in the speaker's public service career. Recent speakers have included Judge Vaughn R. Walker whose landmark decision on Gay Marriage was let stand by the Supreme Court; Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, who created bi-partisan support for California's innovative environmental legislation; and recently retired Congressman George Miller, whose service to Silicon Valley spans the post-Watergate period to the War on Terror.

**Xintong Chen**

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Xintong Chen joined the faculty in Fall, 2021. Previously, she was an assistant teaching professor in the School of Public and International Affairs at North Carolina State University. She taught Introduction to Nonprofit for undergraduate students. Her research interests include nonprofit management, disaster response and women's leadership. To be more specific, her research explores how organizations sustain their operations and serve their missions in the face of adverse events and environments. Her research has been published in journals such as *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly (NVSQ)* and *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs (JPNA)*. She obtained her Ph.D. in public administration at North Carolina State University in 2020, her master's degree in social work at Columbia University in 2014, and her Bachelor's in public administration from Hebei University of Technology in China in 2012. She will teach PADM 212 Administration Research Methods at the graduate level and POLS 100M (political inquiry) at the undergraduate level.

### **Mary Currin-Percival**

Ph.D. University of California, Riverside

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Mary Currin-Percival earned her PhD in Political Science at the University of California, Riverside in 2006. Her main areas of research are public opinion, political participation, and teaching and learning in political science. She and co-authors Larry Gerston, Terry Christensen, and Garrick Percival are completing the 15th edition of *California Politics and Government: A Practical Approach*, which will be published in January 2021. Her work has also appeared in journals including *Journal of Political Science Education*, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, *State and Local Government Review*, *Journal of Elections*, *Public Opinion and Parties*, *International Migration*, and *Newspaper Research Quarterly*. Her teaching interests include research methods, campaigns and elections, the presidency, politics and film, American and California government and politics, and campaign advertising. She also serves as the Director of the Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (IPACE) and for SJSU Votes! an on-campus voter registration, mobilization, and education initiative <https://www.sjsuvotes.org>. She also serves as the faculty advisor for Pi Sigma Alpha, Epsilon Iota chapter and as the Political Science Department Internship Coordinator. In her spare time, Professor Currin-Percival loves playing board games with her family, practicing Tae Kwon Do with her son Ethan, cooking, listening to music, cycling, hiking, and traveling.

### **Leonard Lira**

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Len Lira joined the faculty in 2017. Previously, he was the founding Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence at the Army University, where he also taught Strategic and Operational Studies, Enterprise Leadership and Public Management for Army U's Army Command and General Staff College and the Army Management Staff College. His additional teaching experiences include teaching American Politics at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. He has over 20 years of public service with direct, organizational and enterprise public management and leadership experience. He retired from the Army as a Colonel in 2016. Dr. Lira's scholarly and teaching focus is on Organizational Theory and Public Management, and he is developing a new area of study in veterans' education. His current research effort is on collaboration and its impact on performance. He received a Ph.D. in Public Administration from the University of Kansas in 2016, an M.A. in International Relations, a Masters of Public Administration, and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Conflict Resolution from the Maxwell School of Public Affairs and Administration, Syracuse all in 2003. He received a B.A. from Sam Houston State University in Criminal Justice and Police Administration in 1994. He teaches PADM 214 Public Management, PADM 218 Public Budgeting, and PADM 217 Organizational Theory at the graduate level, and International Relations and American Politics at the undergraduate level.

**Raina Marwan**

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Raina Marwan joined the faculty in the fall of 2021. She is the founder of a nonprofit organization in Cairo, Egypt called Haweyya Foundation, which focuses on educating women in Egypt's rural areas. Her nonprofit is part of her passion for supporting women to become socially independent. Marwan received her Ph.D. in Public Administration from Auburn University (2021). She received her DBA from Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt (2017). Dr. Marwan's fields of specialization are public administration and nonprofits. Her dissertation focuses on assessing nonprofit networks serving women in the Middle East and North Africa region in terms of enhancing the capacities of their members. Dr. Marwan's interdisciplinary background that combines Business and Political Science is one of her strongest assets. This guided her research interests to encompass four main areas: civil society, public-private partnerships, government incentives and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). She teaches PADM 220 Nonprofit Management, POLS 15 American Government, and PADM 213 Public Policy Analysis. She has published work in organizational culture, knowledge management, strategic innovation and gender, and leadership styles in international peer reviewed journals.

## UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

San José State University and the College of Social Sciences have numerous resources available to support student scholarship. These include the following:

- **The Martin Luther King Jr. Library** (<https://www.sjlibrary.org/>) has traditional and online resources. Classes will be given by the Political Science librarian about using resources such as electronic databases, reference materials in the Library, and the computer and media laboratories within the Library, as well as books and periodicals. In PADM 210 you will be given an orientation to the library and all its online services, as well as inter-library loan systems.
- **The Writing Center** ([www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/)) offers graduate student-specific mentors and tutors to help you improve your business English writing skills and capabilities. They can also coach on the segments of the final project, such as the literature review. Its many workshops include proofreading, citations, and writing coherent essays. Students challenged by writing should use this service to become proficient, as writing is the primary skill required of all MPA graduates.
- **Accessible Education Center** (<http://www.sjsu.edu/aec/>) offers assistance to any student with a functional or special need. The DRC can assist with special academic accommodations, assistive technologies, and counseling. They also have a Veterans' Services Office. More information on the DRC is on the SJSU website.
- **Military and Veterans Student Services** (<http://www.sjsu.edu/veterans/>) The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) is designed as a one-stop resource that plays a primary role in serving the university's growing community of veterans and military students. The one-stop VRC is dedicated to assisting eligible student veterans, reservists, National Guard, active duty, and dependents with state/federal education benefits and certification, campus resources, and intentional student programs that aid in the transition from military to education to career.
- **Student Health Center** (<http://www.sjsu.edu/studenthealth/>) The Student Health Center provides medical care to students enrolled at SJSU. In addition to treating acute conditions, injuries, and illnesses, the Health Center provides a family planning program and maintains an in-house licensed pharmacy, a physical therapy department, a federally certified high complexity laboratory, and an x-ray department.
- **Student Counseling Center** (<http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling/>) The center offers counseling, life enrichment skills, groups and workshops, anonymous crime reporting, and crisis response. They also have special programs for students concerned about immigration status issues.

Students with other needs not addressed through these resources should contact the Student Services Center at 9<sup>th</sup> and San Fernando Streets for additional guidance.

## **JOINING YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

### **American Society for Public Administration**

Membership in a professional association is important in the intellectual development of members of any field. The primary professional association in public administration is the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) (<https://www.aspanet.org/>). Discounted rates are available for students—take advantage of it!

Membership in ASPA includes subscriptions to the *Public Administration Review*, the major academic journal in the field, as well as the monthly *PA Times*, *The Bridge* newsletter and ASPA Smart Briefs daily, in addition to access to ASPA's website that includes a library of webinars. There are annual national conferences, regional conferences, and a San Francisco Bay Area chapter, which offers meetings and the chance to network with other professionals in the field.

### **International City/County Management Association**

ICMA (<https://icma.org/>) is the professional and educational organization for city and county executives, administrators, and assistants in cities, towns, counties, and regional entities throughout the world. The San Jose State University chapter is currently provided as a free benefit to all SJSU MPA students. Dr. Len Lira is the ICMA chapter adviser.

Since 1914 ICMA has provided technical and management assistance, training, and information resources to its members and the local government community. The management decisions made by ICMA's nearly 8,000 members affect more than 100 million individuals in thousands of communities, from small towns with populations of a few hundred to metropolitan areas serving several million.

ICMA is an internationally recognized publisher of information resources ranging from textbooks and survey data to topic-specific newsletters, and e-publications. ICMA provides technical assistance to local governments in emerging democracies, and assists local governments in the United States through programs such as the Center for Performance Measurement, the Smart Growth Network, and other programs that focus on specific areas of management and administration.

**MMANC** (Municipal Management Assistants of Northern California)

MMANC offers opportunities to develop a network with people currently working in public agencies throughout Silicon Valley. Several times each year members of MMANC and SJSU MPA students gather for social networking and mentoring opportunities.

### **MPA STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

The MPA Student Association (MPASA) is a registered student association of the San José State University community. All currently registered MPA students are members. The MPASA strives to collaborate with faculty to support and advocate for university initiatives that enhance the program for all students, provides social opportunities to develop a network within the program, and ensures that those who graduate from San José State University with a Master's in Public Administration are sought as employees of choice for government and NGOs.

The three goals of the Association are:

1. Provide opportunities for students to advocate for the MPA Program;
2. Provide educational opportunities that supplement in-class learning;
3. Provide mentorship/networking opportunities with faculty, student colleagues, alumni and current practitioners

Events organized by the MPASA are announced on the Association's Facebook page and on LinkedIn. Annual events include New Student Orientation (every Fall, and in Spring if there are admissions), a spring luncheon honoring the year's outstanding scholars, and the Spring Convocation honoring graduating MPA students. For more information, you may contact the MPA Student Association at [sjsumpa@gmail.com](mailto:sjsumpa@gmail.com).

New leaders and active members are always needed. Please contact the officers to see how you can become active in arranging events and serving on the Board of Directors. Get connected to the latest news through Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

### **THE PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

(<https://www.pmf.gov/> )

Graduating students are eligible to apply in the academic year that they finish their programs. To be considered one must be recommended by her/his institution. The application window is September 1 to October 15 each year. Interested persons should contact Dr. Edwards to request a letter of recommendation from the SJSU MPA program. The number of persons SJSU may nominate is limited based on program size. Note that applications are accepted only by fax, and early application is essential to ensure that the application gets through in time.

Revised 1/22/22

# BEGINNING THE PROGRAM





## **BEGINNING CLASSES YOUR FIRST SEMESTER: THE MUNDANE DETAILS**

### **The Office of Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations (GAPE)**

(<http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/>)

The Office of Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations is responsible for all administrative functions related to current graduate students. The office is located in the Student Services Center, on the Ninth Street side of the North Garage. Their number is 408-924-2480.

### **Obtaining a Student ID Card**

The SJSU student identification card is called the “Tower Card”. You are required to use this card as student identification to obtain services at the Library, Event Center, Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority (buses & light rail passes), Health Center, Admissions & Records, Career Planning and Placement, as well as to obtain parking permits and other frequently used student services. Tower cards are available at the Cashier's Office windows 9-11 located in the Student Services Center (Bottom Floor of the North Garage). Present your driver's license or other photo identification to have your picture taken. A plastic cardholder will be issued to hold your Tower Card.

### **MySJSU**

MySJSU is an online site that provides students with access to registration, fee payment, and other services. A student can also find his or her priority registration date, review grades for completed courses, pay fees, and other services. It can be accessed at <https://one.sjsu.edu/> . For more information access <http://www.sjsu.edu/it/self-service/one-sjsu.php>

### **How to Register for Classes**

Information on course registration can be found at MySJSU (<https://one.sjsu.edu/> ). Students should check their MySJSU account on the web to determine their priority registration dates and times—use your priority time and date!

MPA students should take the five core courses in any order that their prerequisite status permits. Remember— the completed Candidacy Form is your guide for registration class selection. Before completing three courses and filing the Candidacy Form, you must get the permission of the MPA Director prior to registering for any non-MPA courses to ensure that they are appropriate. Once the Candidacy Form has been filed you will follow it.

### **SmartPass Clipper Card for VTA**

With the Associated Students SmartPass Clipper card and SJSU Tower Card, students and employees can have unlimited free rides on Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Local & Rapid buses, Limited routes, and Light Rail lines. To obtain one, visit the AS General Services Center located on the

main level of the Student Union Building, Room 1800, open 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

### **Student Parking**

Under California state law, parking on a California State University campus is subject to a specific fee. Employees and students may purchase either a semester parking permit or a single day permit to park at SJSU. Visitors may purchase a single day permit. If you have a question about parking, please call Parking Services at (408) 924-6556.

There are three garages on campus for student parking. The South Garage is a five story parking structure located on the corner of S. Seventh and E. San Salvador Streets. The Parking Services Office is located in front of the South Garage on South 7th Street. The West Garage is a five story parking structure located on S. Fourth & E. San Carlos Streets. The North Garage is a six story parking structure located on S. Tenth and E. San Fernando Streets. The Student Service Center is located on the ground floor of the North Garage. **Only the North Garage has an elevator.**

Student "S" semester parking permits should be purchased on-line with a credit card or at the Bursar's Office with cash only. Both the North Garage and South Garage have automated pay stations starting on level 3 and above. The automated pay stations accept coins, \$1, \$5 and \$10 bills and credit cards. The pay stations will provide change for the denominations listed. Single day permits are available in incremental rates of \$1.00 per half-hour and all-day parking for \$8.00. Single day permits must be displayed on the vehicle's dashboard. Single day parking passes are valid only on level 3 and above of the North Garage and the South Garage. Parking in the West Garage requires a semester employee or a student parking permit. Students may obtain a replacement for lost or stolen permits at the Parking Services Office. Stolen permits need to be reported to UPD before they can be replaced. A \$10.00 replacement fee is charged for lost permits. Phone 408-924-6556.

The City of San Jose parking garage at the northeast corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and San Fernando Streets (above the Flames café) offers reduced parking fees for SJSU students. Inquire at the garage office (located in mid-block, after the art gallery) for the latest programs and costs.

## FIRST STEPS WHEN BEGINNING THE PROGRAM

There are several things to do when first starting the Program. They are:

1. Attend the New Student Orientation held by the MPA Student Association and receive a suggested course plan for fulltime or part-time attendance.
2. The MPA Director is your advisor initially, and in your last semester you select an advisor based on your project focus and the professor's research interests for your PADM 298 project.
3. Download the entire SJSU Catalog corresponding to your first year of classes. The section on policies constitutes your "catalog rights" should any aspects change before you graduate. This Catalog will contain the requirements that will follow you throughout your academic career at San José State University. The Catalog is available on line at <http://info.sjsu.edu/home/catalog.html>.
4. Register for classes after fulfilling University requirements (any required inoculations, forms, and paying fees).
5. Be sure to **fulfill any prerequisites** after admission and **before completing 4 courses** in the MPA program. Undergraduate courses such as statistics, microeconomics, and American government may be taken at any community college, in person or on-line, earning a grade of C or better. To clear your classification as a graduate student you must have the college send **sealed transcripts** demonstrating completion of the required courses **to the MPA Director at the Political Science Department, NOT GAPE!**

### First Semester Obligations

As a newly admitted SJSU graduate student, **please take time to carefully read your admission letter from SJSU, as it contains important information on your admission status, including the prerequisites and internship requirements.**

#### ***Official Matriculation***

You will not be considered an officially matriculated graduate student until you register for courses in the first semester of your admission. **SJSU does not defer admission**, so if for any reason you cannot attend your first semester, you will need to re-apply to SJSU at the next application period. Your enrollment in classes is your official notification to SJSU of your intent

to attend. Registration for summer courses does not count as an official matriculation.

### ***Provisional Admission (University)***

Some graduate students may receive a provisional admission. Your admission letter from SJSU as well as your 'To Do' list on MySJSU will state what specific documents or tasks you need to complete in order to have these provisions cleared. If you do not have these provisions cleared by October 15th for Fall Admissions or March 15th for Spring Admissions, a hold will be placed on your record, and you will not be able to register for subsequent semesters. Provisional admission is a status that is placed by Graduation Admissions, so it cannot be removed by your graduate department.

### ***Graduate Classification (Department)***

Your graduate department will also admit you in either conditionally classified or classified standing. If you are admitted “conditionally classified”, you will have certain prerequisites that you will need to complete which will be listed in your admission letter from SJSU. **These prerequisites must be met before you can be changed to “classified” standing.** If you have any questions about the prerequisites listed in your admissions letter, please contact the MPA Director.

All graduate students must be in classified standing before they can apply for candidacy. **Students must clear all prerequisites before registering for the fifth course.** A sealed transcript demonstrating completion of the missing courses must be sent **to the MPA Director by the college granting the units** to have the classification changed. Upon satisfying the prerequisite requirements, complete the Change of Classification petition on the GAPE website <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>, sign in the student signature space, and take to Prof. Edwards for review, approval, and submission to GAPE. You will get a copy of the signed form from the department. **KEEP THIS IN A SAFE PLACE UNTIL YOU GRADUTE.**

**Students should apply for candidacy as soon as all prerequisites have been completed and they have grades in three MPA courses.** Three grades in MPA courses must be listed on the candidacy form. The candidacy form is the contract between the student and SJSU for the program the student will complete to lead to the MPA degree. The student should plan his or her program in consultation with the MPA Director early in the program to ensure that courses offered only once a year, or only in alternate years, are listed on the candidacy form at the appropriate times. Individual courses may be changed after the candidacy form has been filed by submitting a course substitution form – also on the GAPE website - through the MPA Director. This form lists all the courses that you will take by semester for the rest of the MPA program.

**NOTE: ALL FORMS MUST BE COMPLETED ON LINE AND PRINTED FOR SIGNATURES**

***Department Advising or Orientation***

A New Student Orientation is held each semester in which students are admitted. Students attending will receive information about department requirements and what courses they are expected to enroll in. Students are urged to meet with an adviser each semester until the candidacy form is filed to plan appropriate courses for that semester. **Students may take non-PADM courses only with MPA Director's permission.**

**TRANSFER CREDIT**

**Before applying for Candidacy**, a student may petition for transfer credit for work that was completed earlier. Transfer credit may be obtained for courses taken at another University (in graduate standing only), through Open University at SJSU, or courses that were taken as an undergraduate senior (final semester) but were not applied to the undergraduate degree. Transfer work must be from institutions that were listed on the initial application to SJSU and must be from an accredited institution. Petitions must be signed by your graduate advisor before submitting them to GAPE for approval. A maximum of only 30% of your program can be transfer credit units, so the MPA program accepts only **three transfer courses or a maximum of nine credits. These cannot be core courses.**

Go to <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms> Request for Validation of Transfer Credit for information on supporting documentation required for transfer units.

**COMPETENCY IN WRITTEN ENGLISH**

All MPA students must demonstrate competency in written English. This requirement *must* be completed before a student can be admitted to candidacy. This can be accomplished by completion of a pre-approved SJSU graduate course, which has been approved by the Graduate Office, is at least three units, and in which a major report is required that is at least 30% of the course grade. **PADM 210 is the MPA's approved writing course** and a core course that must be taken by all MPA students. Most SJSU graduate students complete the competency requirement in this manner.

**INITIAL COURSE SELECTION**

As part of the New Student Orientation each student will receive a guide recommending the order in which to take courses for the most efficient and effective progress through the MPA program (note pages 49 and 51).

**PADM 210 - Introduction to Public Administration** should be taken in a student's first or second semester. This course is the overview of the field, serves as the writing course for the MPA degree, and provides access to important introductory material in its proper sequence—an overview of the basics of American Government and a review of important writing and presentation principles. If PADM 210 is full, **PADM 214 Public Management** serves as a good gateway course for the first semester. **All students should have completed PADM 210 by the end of the second semester in the program.**

The number of courses a student takes should be dependent upon the number of hours he or she works each week. Typically, MPA students take one to two courses each semester while working full-time. A full-time graduate student for financial aid purposes is considered one who takes 9 units, if at least 6 units are 200 level courses. This is only recommended for those not in fulltime employment.

It is most important to the faculty that students have a good experience in the program, particularly during the first semester. Therefore, students are cautioned against taking too many units, because graduate school requires significant amounts of independent and assigned reading, research and writing. All classes involve professional writing, oral presentations, use of computer applications and teamwork.

The expectation is that students will spend from 1 to 4 hours outside of the classroom for every hour within the classroom. A typical first semester schedule would include PADM 210: Introduction to Public Administration and one other core course.

The New Student Orientation offers an overview of the program, its requirements and faculty expectations. Notices listing the time, day and site of the orientation are sent out to the e-mail addresses of all new students. **All new students are responsible for the information imparted at the New Student Orientation.** For those who miss the New Student Orientation, handbooks are available from the MPA Program Director during her Office Hours.

## CANDIDACY REQUIREMENTS

### Pre-Candidacy Requirements

Most graduate students apply for candidacy after their first year in the program. Before a student can apply for candidacy, the following requirements must already be met. Please be sure that you have met the following pre-requisites or your candidacy application will be denied.

- **Be in graduate classified standing.** Students who are still in conditionally classified standing must submit a change of classification form that is signed by the MPA Director. This form can be submitted at the same time as the candidacy petition.
- Had any planned transfer units already approved (See Transfer Credit).
- Completed a minimum of three courses/9 graded units (100 or 200 level courses).
- Have completed the Competency in Written English through PADM 210.
- Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of a 3.0 in all courses taken as a graduate student. Lower division prerequisite courses are not included in this calculation.

Related Form available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>

- Change of Classification (From Conditional to Classified Standing)

### Advancement To Candidacy Petition

Once you have met your pre-candidacy requirements, you should meet with your advisor to start the advancement to candidacy process. Your advancement to candidacy serves as a contract between GAPE, your graduate department, and you that by successfully completing the courses listed on the candidacy petition you will receive a master's degree from SJSU. Students may either complete the candidacy form for themselves and then meet with the Director, or complete the form during a meeting with the Director. This will also be when you state whether you plan on completing a Thesis (Plan A) or Project (Plan B). The MPA program does not support the thesis option (Plan A). When filling out the candidacy form the following requirements must be met:

- All but 6 units listed for your graduate program must be from 200 level courses and no more than two (PADM 281 and PADM 298) may be CR/NC classes. All others must be letter graded courses.
- Only three (3) of the courses listed may be from transfer credit work (Note: courses from other departments at SJSU taken as a graduate student are *not* considered transfer work. They are accounted for in the

Other Departments section of the form.). Transfer credit work listed must be already approved. See Transfer Credit above for more information.

- Courses which may not be used on the candidacy petition are basic skills courses (below 100 level), student teaching, 300 level residence and 400 level extended studies courses taken at SJSU.
- **All courses listed must be less than seven years old at the time of graduation.**

### **Deadlines & Notification**

The deadline to submit your candidacy will depend on when you plan on graduating. GAPE needs many months to properly evaluate your candidacy petition and notify you. Please see the current SJSU candidacy deadlines at [http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current\\_students/deadlines/](http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/deadlines/) to determine the date to submit the candidacy form, based on the graduation date goal. You will be notified if your candidacy petition has been approved or denied through the mail, e-mail, and under 'Other Indicators' on MySJSU. Once you have been approved for candidacy, you will need to submit a graduation application when you are ready to receive your degree. Please read **Applying for Graduation** for further details. If your candidacy is denied, you will receive a letter in the mail detailing the exact steps you need to take to clear any deficiencies.

### **Course Substitutions to Candidacy**

After receiving your candidacy approval, any future course changes from the original candidacy program *must* be approved by the MPA Director and GAPE. You will need to complete a Course Substitution form, have the MPA Director sign it, and submit it to GAPE prior to your expected date of graduation. Please note that completed/graded courses cannot be removed from an approved candidacy petition.

Related Forms available at the website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>

- Departmental Request for Candidacy (Advancement to Candidacy Petition)
- Request for Course Substitution in Master's Degree Program

### **ACADEMIC STANDING**

After being admitted to candidacy, students must maintain certain academic requirements to remain in good standing. These include:

- Completing all courses in your candidacy program with grades of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, or CR. Unsatisfactory grades of C-, D+, D, D-, and F

remain on the program and will continue to be computed in your grade point average, but the credits are not counted toward graduation. You must petition through the MPA Director to add another course to your program with a unit value equivalent to that course in which you received the unsatisfactory grade.

- Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of a 3.0 ("B") in completing the requirements for the master's degree listed in the candidacy form. If you fail to maintain this GPA, you may be put on academic probation by SJSU. Failure to raise your GPA to a 3.0 or above after being placed on academic probation for one semester may then result in being academically disqualified from SJSU. If you are disqualified from SJSU, please contact the MPA Director as there will be several procedures you need to complete, including taking undergraduate courses for no credit, if you plan on applying for Reinstatement.

## **ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS**

The Accessible Education Center (AEC) is a comprehensive center providing accommodations and services to enable equal access to all facilities and activities at SJSU for all students and employees, in the classroom and throughout the campus. Students needing academic accommodations must register with the AEC, which will then provide letters for the student's instructors listing the required accommodations. Students with undiagnosed access and functional needs may be tested through the center. A comprehensive list of services is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec/>. AEC staff can be reached at 408-924-6000, or 408-924-5990 TTY Monday thru Friday. AEC is located in Room 110 of the Administration Building.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Each year the Political Science Department awards several scholarships to those who will be studying full-time (9 or more units) the following year. MPA students are eligible to apply for the Brazil scholarships All MPA students who are planning on a career in city management are also eligible to apply for the Horace E. Knapp, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. Other Financial Aid may be obtained through the Financial Aid office.

### **The Burton R. Brazil Scholarship (\$1,500)**

*The Burton R. Brazil Scholarship* is funded by an endowment created by the family, friends and colleagues of Burt Brazil, a respected professor of political science who specialized in political theory and public administration and who served as Executive Vice President for SJSU. Applicants must be full-time students, either graduate or

undergraduate, majoring in political science or public administration, with a strong academic record and a commitment to a career in public service or teaching. Applicants must submit a short statement on their career goals and how the scholarship will assist them in their studies. Awarded annually.

### **Horace E. Knapp, Jr. Memorial Scholarship (\$1,500)**

*The Horace K. Knapp, Jr. memorial Scholarship* honors the late Colonel Horace E. Knapp, Jr. USMC (Ret.), and commemorates his advocacy of professionalism in local government management, and his mentoring of aspiring local government leaders. Following a distinguished career in the USMC he was a city manager in New Jersey. Applicants must be MPA students with a commitment to service in city government, and must submit a resume and a 500-word essay on their career aspirations and city government service. A minimum 3.0 GPA is required.

### **Financial Aid**

Further information about scholarships and other financial assistance may be found at SJSU's Office of Financial Aid at <http://www.sjsu.edu/faso/> , or visit a financial aid counselor at the Student Service Building during their office hours.

# FULFILLING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS





## THE CURRICULUM AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

### Prerequisite Courses for Classified Standing

To attain Classified standing in the MPA Program students need to document successful completion of three undergraduate courses:

- American Government (POLS 001 or equivalent)
- Microeconomics
- Statistics (any semester-long statistics course)

Students must also provide evidence of basic EXCEL competence by taking SJSU LinkedIn Learning “Master Microsoft Excel.”

***Prerequisite credit will not be given for high school Advanced Placement courses or CLEP Tests.***

**Students must finish the prerequisites before completing FOUR MPA courses.** They must complete statistics before taking PADM 212 and complete microeconomics as well as demonstrate EXCEL competence before taking PADM 218.

### 36 Required Units (12 Courses)

The 36 units required for graduation include 15 units of core courses, 9 units of advanced seminars, 9 units of electives, and 3 units of PADM 298 to reach the total 36 units. Students who have not had substantial administrative work experience are required to take PADM 281 Internship as one of the 3 electives. Students may take PADM 297 as an elective to prepare for the final project.

### Five Required Core Courses:

- PADM 210 - Introduction to Public Administration
- PADM 212 - Administrative Research Methods
- PADM 213 - Public Policy Analysis and Evaluation
- PADM 214 - Introduction to Public Management
- PADM 218 - Public Budgeting

***Students are advised to complete these five core courses as soon as possible.*** Students must complete core courses before enrolling in PADM 297 and PADM 298 (Plan B), or beginning a thesis (Plan A).

### Three Advanced Seminars From Among The Following:

- PADM 202 – Regional Government
- PADM 215 - Public Personnel Administration
- PADM 217 - Organization Theory
- PADM 219 - Advanced Financial Administration
- PADM 220 – Non-Profit Management

- PADM 223 - Law and Public Administration
- PADM 295 - Topics in Public Administration- may be taken more than once for credit provided the topic is different each time.

### **Electives**

Three Electives are required. MPA electives include

- PADM 281 – Public Administration Internship
- PADM 297 – Advanced Seminar in Public Administration (optional capstone preparation)

Electives may also include any non-core MPA courses not included in the count for the 3 Advanced Seminars, and approved 100- to 200-level courses in Political Science or other departments. Pre-approved non-PADM courses include

- COMM 144 – Organizational Communication (4 units)
- COMM 265 – Crisis Communications (offered in alternate years)
- POLS 102- State Government and Politics (4 units)
- POLS 103 – Local Government and Politics (4 units)
- URBP 205 Private Development and Urban Planning
- URBP 206 Market Analysis, Appraisal and Finance of Real Estate Development
- 

Other courses outside of the department may be approved by the MPA Director, based on a student's current employment, research interests, and career aspirations. *Note that students taking up to 6 credits pay parttime tuition, and students taking 7 or more credits pay fulltime tuition.* **Approval of all electives takes place when the Candidacy Form is filed** after a student has received four grades and changed to classified standing.

### **THE INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENT:**

#### **PADM 281 Public Administration Internship**

An internship is required of anyone who does not already possess significant fulltime managerial or administrative work experience before beginning the program. Once admitted to the program the student must accumulate at least three years of progressively responsible experience to waive the internship. To waive the internship, students must write a memo to Dr. Mary Currin-Percival, Internship Director, outlining the work experiences, with an up-to-date resume. The Internship Director will review the resume and the student will be informed in writing of whether the internship is waived.

Students who have work experience often seek an internship because they want to change careers or to find work in the nonprofit or public sectors. A student who wishes to take an internship for these reasons, or because he or she does not have work experience, should take PADM 281.

The Internship Coordinator keeps files of possible internship openings. Students may discuss possible internship opportunities with her. When new internship opportunities are received they are posted on the MPASA's Facebook site. In addition, a student may have a preference for an internship site, and may work with the Internship Director to develop the internship opportunity there.

#### **CULMINATING EXPERIENCE: Plans A and B**

- **Plan A: Thesis, (3 – 6 units), PADM 299**

A thesis demonstrating competence in original research and acceptable to the Department must be submitted to the Department eight weeks before the date on which the degree is to be awarded. The thesis must conform to University standards, including approval by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, and then by the Graduate Studies Committee. These approvals generally take at least one semester after the paper is completed. **The MPA program does not support this option.**

- **Plan B: Thesis Quality Applied Research Paper (3 Units), PADM 298**

In lieu of a thesis (Plan A), a student may complete a thesis quality research project (PlanB). Because this is a practical project, most students will derive more benefit and gain more knowledge and experience applicable to a public administration career from this option.

A student must develop an original research question that lends itself to a project that fully demonstrates the breadth of his or her knowledge and skills, and for which reliable and timely data can be acquired or developed. Students who are working are encouraged to explore opportunities to complete projects of direct benefit to their employers, for example, an outcome analysis of an existing program. Students in internships are similarly encouraged to seek out a topic of use to the employing agency. In each case, the student's connection to the agency will make access to data easier.

Independent research topics may be developed within the context of a course, or through evaluation of areas of public administrative concern that are not well understood or need to be updated. For example, one student studied the impact of the loss of tax revenues on the ability of Gulf Coast states to recover after Hurricane Katrina.

Examples of the best MPA final projects can be accessed at ScholarWorks at [http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/pols\\_grad/](http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/pols_grad/)

Students may choose to enroll in **PADM 297** for mentoring and peer advice on the research project, and for advising on the development of

the prospectus. A prospectus is generally 12 to 15 pages, but may be longer depending on the research design and literature review. Alternatively, guidance documents are available from the program for students wishing to work independently.

To receive an Add Code **to enroll in PADM 298** - Special Problems and begin the supervised research, a student must **complete a prospectus** consisting of a research question, a background, a literature review and a methodology design. In order to receive the Add Code, the student's adviser must approve this prospectus. In PADM 298, the student will complete the substantial paper under the supervision of the adviser. PADM 298 registration is good for one semester. If the project will not be completed for graduation within one semester, the student will have to register for PADM 1290R for every semester with an RP grade (report in progress). After 2 semesters, if the project is not finished, a one-year extension may be requested. **A student registers for PADM 298 once,** and for PADM 1290R for every further semester that work on the final project continues. The policy is at <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/AS1637.pdf>.

# GRADUATING WITH YOUR M.P.A.





## **STEPS FOR COMPLETING YOUR MPA**

### **CULMINATING EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS**

One of the major requirements for completing your degree is doing a department project, as described above.

### **APPLYING FOR GRADUATION**

When a student is ready to graduate he or she must submit an application for graduation. An approved Candidacy form is required before students can apply to graduate or the application will be denied. Deadlines for filing these forms are found at [http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current\\_students/deadlines/](http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/deadlines/).

There is no fee for the initial application for graduation, but students who fail to graduate in their intended semester must file a graduation date change form and pay \$10 to the Bursar's Office. The deadline to submit the change of date form is the same as the dates to submit the initial graduation application. The forms are at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>

### **Deadlines & Notification**

The deadline dates to submit graduation applications are early in the semester of your intended graduation, so be sure to plan accordingly. You will be notified when your application for graduation has been received by the Graduate Studies office through e-mail and under 'Other Indicators' on MySJSU.

Related Forms on the website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>:

- Application for Award of Master's Degree (Graduation Application)
- Graduation Date Change Request for Award of Master's Degree (Changing Graduation Date)

### **Completing Your Degree (Final Semester)**

Your final semester at SJSU will be very busy because in addition to taking your final courses, you will be in the process of completing your final project. There will be several university and department deadlines and requirements that you will also have to be aware of and complete. Here are several steps that you need to be sure that you have completed so that your degree is not delayed.

- Make sure you have applied to graduate in your intended graduation semester by the proper deadline. See Applying for Graduation for further

details. Remember, if you do not complete your graduation requirements, you will need to submit a change of date form to apply for graduation during a later semester.

- Clear up any incomplete grades that you may have, as your degree cannot be granted until you have grades in all courses listed on your candidacy program.
- If you did not take a course that was listed on your candidacy, you need to submit a **course substitution form** to replace that course with a course you did take. See Advancement to Candidacy Petition for more information.
- If you received an unsatisfactory grade (below a C) on any course listed on your candidacy, you need to add another course to your candidacy program. See Academic Standing for more information.
- Complete all department requirements. After you have completed your final project (Plan B) or thesis (Plan A), and submitted your final project as a bound hard copy volume to the Director, your department will notify the graduate school that you have completed all of the department requirements by submitting a Verification of Culminating Experience Memo. While students are not responsible for submitting this form, they should make sure that the advisor has sent a memo to the MPA Program Director stating that they have completed PADM 298, and that the hardcopy of the project has been given to the Director. The Director will then send the Verification memo to GAPE. You cannot get a diploma without this memo. Make sure that your PADM 298 adviser has also submitted a grade or change of grade for you for PADM 298.
- Finally, make sure to have your current mailing address and email listed on MySJSU so GAPE can send the diploma and email you important graduation notifications.

## **COMMENCEMENT & DEPARTMENT CEREMONY**

The SJSU Commencement ceremony is held in December and in the last week of May. Students who have applied for graduation in the Spring semester participate in the May graduation. Students who have graduated in the most recent Summer (August) or Fall (December) semesters are eligible to participate in the December graduation. A few months in advance, all eligible students are mailed a commencement guide that details this event and how to participate in the ceremony. For more information please visit the SJSU Commencement page. <http://www.sjsu.edu/commencement/>

**The Public Administration Program holds its own Convocation ceremony, in the Spring**, usually during the week of graduation day. Details of this event

will be circulated several weeks in advance of the event. The MPA Student Association organizes the event. Graduating students attend for free. There is a small fee for each guest attendee to cover refreshments and arrangements.

### **Notification of Degree Posting**

At the end of each semester and after grades have been posted, GAPE begins clearing your graduation. They will verify that you have met all of the candidacy and graduation requirements. If you clear graduation, they will then post your degree on your transcript and mail your diploma. They will also notify you via mail, email, and under “Other Indicators” on MySJSU. If for any reason you do not clear graduation, Graduate Studies will also notify you via mail and detail the exact steps you need to take to clear your deficiencies. Due to the lengthy process involved, and the large number of applications for graduation that GAPE receives, the process for clearing graduation can take up to three months after your graduation semester is over.

### **LEAVES OF ABSENCE AND SEVEN YEAR TIME LIMIT**

San José State allows for several options if you need to take some time off from pursuing your graduate degree. The following are options that some graduate students may use if they plan on being away from SJSU.

#### **Missing One Semester**

Students who have attended at least one semester as a graduate student and are in good standing may leave SJSU for one semester (Fall or Spring) without applying for an official leave of absence. *Students must return in the semester following the one semester leave or they will have to re-apply for admission.* Summer and Winter registration is not required nor does it count as being in matriculation.

#### **Official Leave of Absence**

Students may miss more than one semester by applying for an official leave of absence. The acceptable reasons for taking a leave of absence are health leaves, primary caregiver, military leaves, and student educational leaves. Forms for applying for these leaves may accessed at [http://www.sjsu.edu/registrar/students/leave\\_request/](http://www.sjsu.edu/registrar/students/leave_request/)

#### **No Leave of Absence For International Students**

International students may not take a leave and must remain in the United States except for documented medical reasons. International students must be enrolled in a full course of study (minimum of 9 units) for two semesters annually. Winter and Summer registration is not required and do not count. If you have further questions please contact the Office of International Scholars and Students. The form is accessed at [https://www.sjsu.edu/registrar/docs/leave\\_request.pdf](https://www.sjsu.edu/registrar/docs/leave_request.pdf)

**SEVEN YEAR TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETING DEGREE**

***All work on your graduate degree program must be completed within seven years preceding the award of your degree.*** If courses become outdated a student has the following options:

- Submit a course substitution form to replace the outdated course, provided it is not a core class.
- Repeat the outdated course without credit
- Revalidate the outdated coursework by examination. This petition must be initiated by the MPA Director, and approved by the dean of the graduate school. **No more than 9 credits/3 courses may be revalidated.** All other expired courses must be repeated.

Related Form on website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>:

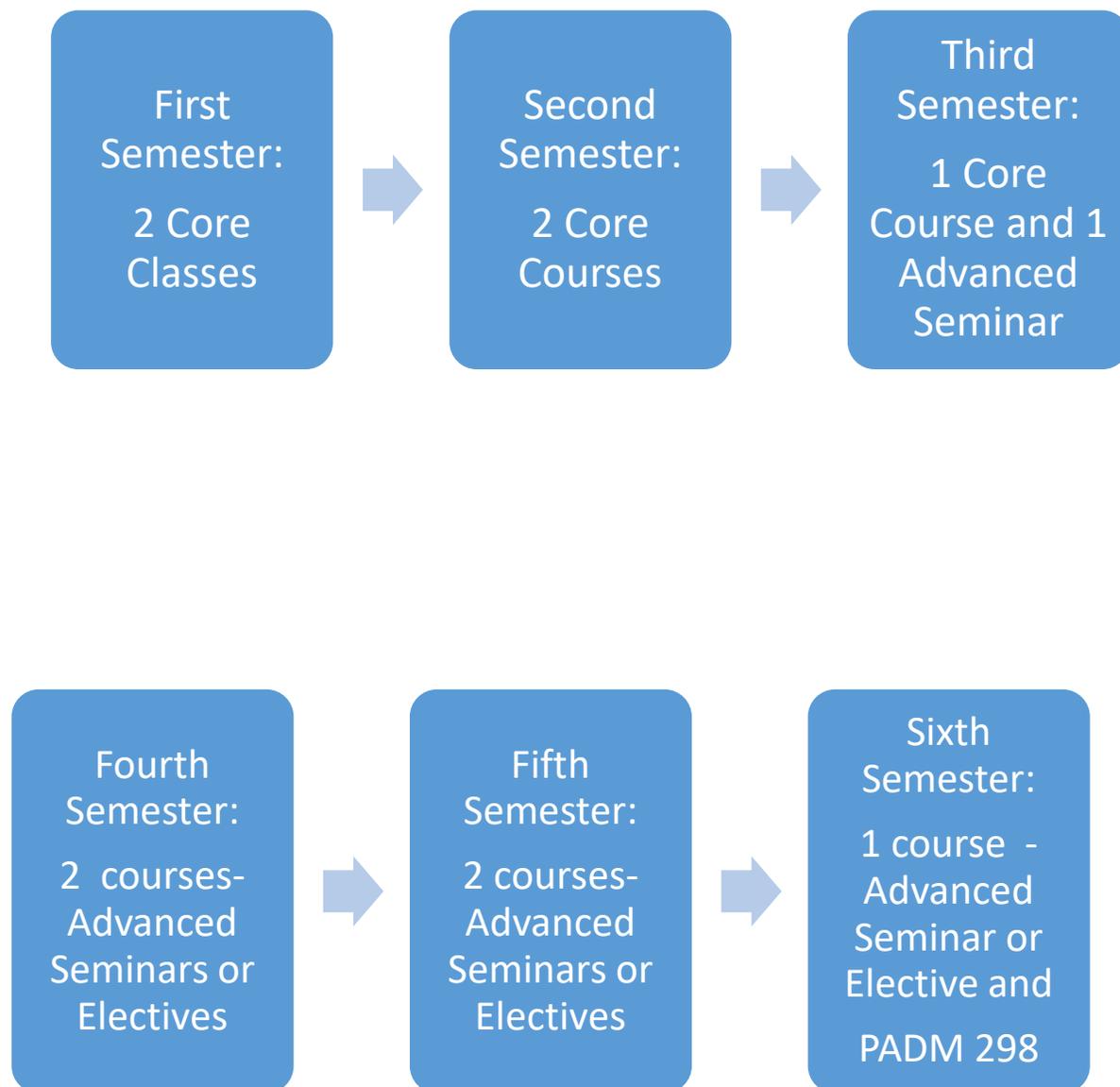
- Request for Revalidation (Seven Year Time Limit)

## APPENDIX: PROGRAM GUIDES





## PATHWAY FOR PARTTIME STUDENTS





## PATHWAY FOR FULLTIME STUDENTS

