**MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM
POLICY MANUAL**

Current as of November 2023

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SECTION 1. MISSION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE MPA PROGRAM

1.1 Mission Statement

The Augusta University Master of Public Administration program enhances the performance of public and nonprofit organizations in our region, state, and the nation by preparing public service leaders to competently and ethically lead public and nonprofit organizations. As an interdisciplinary professional degree program, we seek to:

- provide a broad education for individuals entering government and nonprofit organizations in administrative positions,

- enhance the capabilities and performance of individuals currently serving in management positions in our region,

- produce impactful public administration research,

- emphasize the importance of diversity and inclusion in public service, and

- provide curriculum offerings and outreach that strengthen the governing capacity in the region.

1.2 Values

Values: In support of the mission statement, the program faculty have articulated the following values which we believe reflect the heart of our discipline. We seek to have a program that:

1. Emphasizes integrity—accountability, honesty, fairness and ethical behavior in personal and professional relationships and activities

2. Inspires faculty and students to public service that reflects the highest ideals of citizenship and service to the community, the nation, and the world

3. Emphasizes democratic values so students observe and respect the Constitution and the rule of law in service to the public

4. Develops professionalism by emphasizing competence, excellence, efficiency, objectivity, and impartiality

5. Focuses on equity and diversity through emphasizing that public administration professionals' exercise of authority and responsibility must always be tempered by a respect for human dignity, fairness, and social equity.

1.3 Program Description

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) at Augusta University is the preferred degree for professionals working in government and the nonprofit sector. Accredited by the Network of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), the MPA degree is a versatile degree that allows students to advance their careers in numerous fields in the public sector, such as managing cybersecurity, economic development, criminal justice, city-county management, emergency management, and many others.

Many of our classes are scheduled in the evening and on the weekends to better accommodate the working professionals in our program and our faculty includes traditional academics, "pracademics" (academics with career experience in government or non-profit organizations) and working professionals to offer you hand-on experience.

1.4 Governance

The MPA program is understood to be an integral part of the Social Sciences Department and the Katherine Reese Pamplin College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and is recognized as such by the university. The department maintains general human resources, supervisory standards, and promotion and tenure guidelines for the faculty. The Director of the MPA program administers program directives, and in consultation with the Department Chair, the Director manages the program budget. The MPA Director consults with faculty on issues relating to the program structure and administration. Responsibility for administration of Augusta University's MPA program rests with the Director of the program. The Director is appointed by Dean of Pamplin College.The administrative chain of command is as follows: Program Director, Social Sciences Department Chair, Dean of the Katherine Reese Pamplin College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and/or the Dean of the Graduate School, the Provost of the University, and the President of the University.

The policy directives of the program originate with the MPA core faculty. This includes those full-time faculty who 1) have primary responsibility for at least one of the core courses in the MPA program OR teach at least one course a year in the program; and 2) contribute to the effective operation of the program through participation in activities needed to properly administer and govern the program.

While the program does have a larger governing committee, which is made of all nucleus faculty members and other select faculty who: (1) may hold core faculty status in other years and/or (2) those who are of strategic value to the program, only faculty who hold a nucleus status within an academic year may be able to vote on policy. At the first meeting of each academic year, generally in the early fall, the program director will inform faculty whether or not they are considered core faculty.

1.5 History and Background

In 1991 Augusta College and Georgia Southern University entered into a memorandum of agreement in which Georgia Southern University's Master of Public Administration program being offered in the Augusta metropolitan area would become a program offered in cooperation with Augusta College. This was initiated by Dr. Ralph Walker, Chair of the Department of Social Sciences. It was anticipated that the arrangement, which included a jointly-staffed faculty member, would extend for five years. By 1996, pending approval by the Board of Regents, the Augusta "satellite" MPA degree program of Georgia Southern would transfer to and become a new graduate offering of Augusta College. Dr. Gwen Wood joined the faculty as a joint appointment between Augusta College and Georgia Southern University. She served as site coordinator for Georgia Southern University's graduate programs at Fort Gordon, Georgia and taught courses in public administration.

In 1994 the University System of Georgia Board of Regents staff indicated its willingness to consider the transfer approval if the new program would be structured so that it would be set on a course to meet the accreditation standards set by NASPAA (National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration; now the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration). Subsequently, in 1995 Augusta College engaged a consultant to determine the feasibility of having the planned new program meet the standards for accreditation set by NASPAA. Dr. Brian Fry was a member of the executive council of NASPAA. He was a member of NASPAA's Outcome Assessments Committee, and he served as chair of the Section on Political Science-based MPA programs. Dr. Fry was a member of four site visit teams for schools seeking NASPAA accreditation. After his visit to the campus, he issued a report to the Regents. His findings concluded that the program, as designed, could be accredited if all went as planned during the four-year cycle in which the MPA program must be in existence before it is evaluated. The Regents' staff concurred after reviewing Augusta State's response to Dr. Fry's report and its plan of action for meeting accreditation standards. Dr. Wood and Dr. Walker guided the process of creating the separate program.

In 1996 the memorandum of agreement with Georgia Southern expired and a new one was reached which outlined an amicable separation of the two institutions so that, by August of that year, the Augusta State MPA program was ready to accept applications for its fall class in a new program. It also agreed to assist Georgia Southern students who had already begun their degree work and who wished to continue their MPA studies in Augusta. The first class enrolled in Augusta College MPA classes in September 1996 and the first six graduates of the program completed their studies and graduated in June 1998.

In 2002 the MPA program completed its first self-study and applied for accreditation. The program was not accredited, primarily due to the lack of faculty and other resources necessary to comply with NASPAA standards. In the 2006-2007 academic year, after successfully addressing the resource issues, the program did another self-study. The program was officially accredited in 2008.

On January 8, 2013, Augusta State University officially consolidated with Georgia Health Sciences University to become Augusta University. Because of the consolidation, NASPAA granted a one-year extension to the program's accreditation.

In 2016 the program's accreditation was reaffirmed by NASPAA. Today, the program houses seven core MPA faculty and over 50 students. Students complete 21 required credit hours in core public management areas and 15 elective credit hours in specialized areas of public administration. The program offers students the option to earn a Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership, a Certificate in Urban Planning and Community Development, or a concentration in criminal justice. Since the first class in 1996, the program has graduated over 220 students. Many of these alumni work in key public service positions in the August Metro area, such as: the city administrators of North Augusta, South Carolina and Grovetown, Georgia; the chief deputy for the Augusta-Richmond Sheriff's Department; and the directors of several local nonprofits. The AU MPA plays an important role in building the local governing capacity of the Augusta-Richmond County Metropolitan Statistic Area's public agencies and nonprofits.

SECTION 2. CURRICULUM

2.1 Program of Study

The Master of Public Administration requires the satisfactory completion of 36 semester hours of course work. The program of study must include the prescribed courses of the core curriculum and electives. Students who have little or no public or nonprofit agency experience will take the internship course (see section 2.4) in lieu of one elective course.

The MPA program offers one specialized concentration in Criminal Justice, a Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership, and a Certificate in Urban Planning and Community Development. The Certificate in Urban Planning and Community Development prepares students for careers in public planning and development with state, regional, and local governments. The certificate is directed at individuals working in public administration who already have a bachelor's degree and are seeking to further their knowledge and abilities. By completing the certificate, students learn the following: theories and practice of urban planning; land-use planning; zoning; economic development planning; geographic information systems; and grant writing. The Nonprofit Leadership Certificate provides students with the skills specific to the nonprofit sector. It is designed to allow students to develop the necessary knowledge to manage and lead sustainable nonprofit organizations. The concentration in Criminal Justice is designed to provide students in careers in law enforcement and other justice-related careers with an opportunity for graduate-level instruction in theories and practices common in the field while still

acquiring a strong management education.

The curriculum is designed to meet the standards for accreditation set by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) and prepare students for the practice of public and nonprofit management in our local community, the region, and the nation. The responsibility for curriculum design rests with the MPA core faculty. To ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the profession, the Community Advisory Board plays an active role in periodically reviewing the curriculum and making recommendations for change. In addition, surveys of public and nonprofit agencies in the region, and benchmark institutions in the region, are used as inputs for further review and refinement of the curriculum. All curriculum changes originate with the MPA core faculty before proceeding through the normal curriculum approval process. Writing is an important component of all MPA courses. The MPA program uses the American Psychological Association's style manual.

2.2 Core Curriculum Elements for the MPA Degree

Required Courses for students pursuing the general degree:

- PADM 6000 - Survey of Public Administration (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6050 - Constitutional and Administrative Law (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6150 - Leadership and Ethics (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6300 - Public Budgeting (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6600 - Analytical Tools for Decision Makers (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6650 - Public Policy Analysis (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6750 - Program Evaluation (3 Credit Hours)

Required Courses for students in the Criminal Justice Concentration

In addition to the above, students in this concentration must take:

PADM/CRJU 6430, Social Deviance
PADMCRJU 6436, Intimate Partner Violence OR PADM/CRJU 6432, Juvenile
　　　Delinquency and Justice

See 2.8 for the Curriculum for the Nonprofit Leadership Certificate

Electives

Students in the general degree program take 15 hours of electives (or 12 hours of electives and the internship class if the internship is required). Students in the CJ concentration take 6 hours of electives (or 3 hours of electives and the internship class if the internship is required).

Capstone Project in PADM 6750, Program Evaluation. Exit Requirement (for the general degree and all tracks)

PADM 6750, Program Evaluation is the program's exit requirement. PADM 6750 is ideally taken in the student's last semester in the program. In that class, students will participate in a team, service-learning project. Successful completion of the project will serve as the program's exit requirement.

2.3 Elective Curriculum Elements

Electives: (number of courses required depends upon track, see description in section 2.1 and 2.2)

- PADM 6020 - Geographic Information Systems for Public Management (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6030 - Grant Writing and Administration (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6250 - Introduction to Urban Planning (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6301 - Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6302 - Nonprofit Management (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6350 - Emergency Management (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6351 - Introduction to Homeland Security (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6400 - Community Development (3 credit hours)
- PADM 6430 - Social Deviance (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6432 - Juvenile Delinquency and Justice (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6436 - Intimate Partner Violence (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6500 - Research Methods in Public Administration (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6550 - Human Services Administration (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6700 - Urban Government Administration (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6900 - Graduate Internship (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6950 - Selected Topics (1 TO 3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 7000 - Directed Reading (1 TO 3 Credit Hours)

MPA students who are not in the CJ concentration may take the CJ courses for elective credit.

2.4 Internship

The purpose of an internship is to give students realistic exposure to a professional public sector workplace. The internship experience should enhance the student's awareness of the internal dynamics of a public or nonprofit organization and the values and attitudes of employees toward their clientele and their administrative or political superiors. The internship should give students the opportunity to become aware of their obligations as professionals and to those they will serve.

A student who has had little or no public or nonprofit agency experience will be required to take a 3-hour internship course (PADM 6900). This course will substitute an elective course. The internship may not be scheduled until the student has completed at least three core courses in the program.

The MPA Director identifies students in need of an internship as they are admitted to the MPA program. Being a full-time employee does not automatically exempt a student from the internship requirement. Students whose work experience comes solely from the private sector, is limited in time (less than one year), in depth or breadth may be required to take the internship course.

The Director works with the Department of Social Sciences Internship Director, the Career Center, and the Community Advisory Board to identify appropriate internship opportunities and match students to them based on student interests and abilities. The expectation by all parties is that the student will put forth effort in the process and assist as needed to ensure an appropriate internship is secured. Students should not expect automatic placement without communication or effort on their part. Internships may be undertaken only at organizations with which the university has a written agreement.

All internships last for a full semester and may be scheduled as needed. Internships begin on the first day of the semester and end on the last day of the semester. Student interns are expected to work at least 20 hours per week for the semester for a total of 300 hours. Interns may be compensated for their work by the agency, if the agency has funding available. Students who already hold full-time jobs, but lack adequate exposure to the public and nonprofit sector may be required to take the internship course. In such a case, the student will be assigned to an agency and given a project to work on that will give them the needed exposure to the public/nonprofit sectors. In the case of the latter, the student is expected to take initiative in alerting the MPA Director to the need of a project-based internship and assist in finding an appropriate worksite given such constraints.

MPA interns are expected to be doing work that is appropriate and supportive of the students' educational goals. Thus, students should be in an applied learning experience to gain management and analytical skills. Appropriate work includes:

- Conducting research
- Developing or revising regulations, policies, or plans
- Evaluating the effectiveness of programs, policies or regulations
- Facilitating meetings or group discussions
- Writing technical or nontechnical documents
- Training others in specific skills
- Setting up information systems
- Developing standards and measures for agency performance
- Drafting agency budgets, preparing grant applications, or assisting in other fundraising initiatives

All interns are supervised by the site supervisor and the instructor of the internship course. The instructor of the internship course will be in touch and/or visit worksites as needed throughout the semester. The site supervisor will evaluate the intern at least once at the end of the semester, assessing progress based on the initial goals set by supervisor and student at the start of the internship. These reports will be used as part of the grading process for the internship and will additionally document the completion

of appropriate hours. Additionally, regular electronic journal entries will be submitted by the student to enable the instructor of the internship course to track progress. The site supervisor is required to discuss the objectives for the internship at the start of the semester, assess adequate progress towards these goals at the conclusion of the semester, and discuss this progress with the student. In addition to work performance, the instructor of the internship course will require the intern to write a major paper on some aspect of the internship experience. The precise topic will be determined by the intern and approved by the instructor of the internship course.

2.5 PADM 7000, Directed Readings

PADM 7000 is not a regularly scheduled course; rather, it is an opportunity for a student to do intensive study into an area that is not covered in the regular curriculum. Students wishing to do a directed reading must propose the topic to the MPA Director at the beginning of the fall semester (for the spring semester), the beginning of the spring (for the summer term), or the beginning of the summer term (for the fall semester). If the proposal is suitable, the MPA Director will assist the student in locating a faculty member to direct the reading. Faculty members are not obligated to accept directed readings and should consider his or her current workload and research activity before accepting a directed reading.

2.6 Course Scheduling

The MPA Director will develop a course rotation in cooperation with the program faculty to ensure students can graduate in a timely manner. In support of this goal,

- All core courses (with the exception noted below) will be taught at least once per academic year. For purposes of this manual, the term "academic year" includes the summer term.
- All elective courses will be taught at least once every two years. Elective courses which cannot be taught at least once every two years will be considered for elimination by the MPA core faculty.

The course schedule will be presented to the Chair of the Social Sciences Department to be balanced against the needs of the undergraduate schedule prior to becoming part of the final course schedule. In addition, if the course is to be taught by a faculty member from another department, the MPA Director or Department Chair will negotiate this with the appropriate department chair.

2.7 BA to MPA

The accelerated Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree option allows students majoring in Social Sciences and Criminal Justice, who meet certain guidelines, the opportunity to apply 9 hours of MPA classes to both the 124-hour undergraduate degrees and the MPA degree.

Students applying for this program option must:

- Have completed at least 30 hours of coursework at Augusta University.
- Have an overall cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better.
- Be within 30 semester hours of graduating with either a BA in criminal justice, BA in Communications, BA in Nonprofit Leadership and Administration, BA in Integrated Studies, or a BA in Political Science
- Have written permission of the chair of the department of the undergraduate major to use the graduate level courses as acceptable substitutes to fulfill related requirements of the bachelor's degree (students must satisfy all prerequisites for those graduate courses).
- Meet all requirements for admission into the MPA program and be in good standing with the university (except for receipt of the undergraduate degree and the completion of the GRE).
- Submit an application for admission in the spring semester of the junior year to the Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Degree Program, along with all necessary admissions documentation to The Graduate School according to institutional policy.

2.8 Nonprofit Leadership Certificate

The Nonprofit Leadership Certificate provides students with the skills specific to the nonprofit sector. It is designed to allow students to develop the necessary knowledge to manage and lead sustainable nonprofit organizations. The certificate is directed at master students and individuals in the nonprofit field who already have a bachelor's degree and are seeking to further their knowledge and abilities. The certificate is a partnership between Augusta University's Master of Public Administration and Master of Business Administration programs. Currently, the certificate is reserved for students earning a degree in either one of these programs.

The curriculum for the Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership is detailed below.

Required Courses: 6 Hours

- PADM 6301 - Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6302 - Nonprofit Management (3 Credit Hours)

Electives: 6 Hours

Choose two of the following courses:
- MGMT 6510 - Managerial Leadership: Professional and Personal Development (3 Credit Hours)
- MKTG 6700 - Marketing Management (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6020 - Geographic Information Systems for Public Management (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6030 - Grant Writing and Administration (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6250 - Introduction to Urban Planning (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6400 - Community Development (3 Credit Hours)

- PADM 6700 - Urban Government Administration (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6750 - Program Evaluation (3 Credit Hours)

Total Hours for Certificate: 12 Hours

2.9 Certificate in Urban Planning and Community Development

Public planning and community development are growing fields in the public sector. The Certificate in Urban Planning and Community Development prepares students for careers in public planning and development with state, regional, and local governments. The certificate is directed at individuals working in public administration who already have a bachelor's degree and are seeking to further their knowledge and abilities. By completing the certificate, students learn the following: theories and practice of urban planning; land-use planning; zoning; economic development planning; geographic information systems; and grant writing.

The Certificate in Urban Planning and Community Development can be completed in conjunction with the MPA degree and by students as a standalone degree. Students interested in earning the certificate provide the following materials to the Admissions Office of Augusta University:

- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited college or university. Admission to the program would require a minimum 2.75 cumulative grade average on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent.
- The names and contact information of references familiar with applicants' employment experience and/or academic abilities. References will be contacted electronically and must submit an evaluation of each applicant's work ethic, ability to communicate orally and/or in writing, and moral character.
- A current resume.
- A typed personal statement of 500 to 1,000 words describing the applicant's present prospects, goals for five years in the future, and how the Certificate would help to realize these goals.

Applicants who are already enrolled in Augusta University's Master of Public Administration program will not need to apply for admissions into the Certificate of Urban Planning and Community Development.

Augusta University MPA graduates, who completed the coursework required for the Certificate in Urban Planning and Community Development during their MPA program of study, will have to take at least PADM 6250, Introduction to Urban Planning and PADM 6400, Community Development. Even if graduates completed PADM 6250, Introduction to Urban Planning during their MPA program of study, they will need to retake the course to earn the certificate.

Required Courses: 12 Hours

- PADM 6020 - Geographic Information Systems for Public Management (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6250 - Introduction to Urban Planning (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6400 - Community Development (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6700 - Urban Government Administration (3 Credit Hours)

Electives: 6 Hours

Select two of the following courses:
- PADM 6030 - Grant Writing and Administration (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6050 - Constitutional and Administrative Law (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6150 - Leadership and Ethics (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6350 - Emergency Management (3 Credit Hours)
- PADM 6550 - Human Services Administration (3 Credit Hours)

Total Hours for the Certificate: 18 Hours

SECTION 3. ADMISSIONS

3.1 Application Portfolio and Standards for Acceptance

The MPA program accepts applicants to start the program in the fall, spring, and summer. Below are the current admissions guidelines for the program.

- A minimum overall undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of a 2.75 on a 4.0 scale.
- A minimum of a Bachelor's degree or equivalent from an accredited college or university.
- Letters of recommendations (which include a reference form and letter of recommendation) from three individuals are required. Referees should be individuals qualified to critically assess the applicant's prior academic (usually college professors), employment, artistic, research and/or clinical experience (clinical or research supervisor/manager) and qualifications (as applicable) as well as the applicant's potential as a graduate student in the field/program selected. Applicants need to supply at least one recommendation from a former professor.
- A statement of purpose (500 to 1,000 words) discussing the applicant's career goals and how the MPA will help them achieve those goals.

When the portfolio is completed with each of the items listed above, the applicant's record will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee. The Committee will make admissions decisions based on a review of the submitted materials and consider the entire application. The Committee may elect to admit a student with provisions or conditions that must be met. These conditions may include, but are not limited to,

provisions that the student maintain at least a "B" average on the first three courses taken in the MPA Program. The Admissions Committee makes its decision and conveys it in writing to the MPA Program Director. If a student fails to successfully complete the provisions set by the Admissions Committee, the student cannot continue in the MPA Program.

Once a decision is made at the program level, the MPA Director forwards the applicant's material to the Dean of The Graduate School who makes the final decision on the applicant's admission to The Graduate School.

If the applicant is accepted by the graduate school, the MPA Director then contacts the applicant by letter to welcome him or her to the program provide follow-on information. The MPA Program Director supervises and monitors the student's progress towards meeting any admissions provisions.

3.2 Graduate Assistantships

During each academic year, the Department of Social Sciences and the MPA Program support graduate assistantships. The position provides a tuition waiver and a stipend based on the hours worked by the graduate assistant. Students are responsible for university fees. Only students who are enrolled as full-time students (at least 9 credit hours) with no academic restrictions will be considered for an assistantship. The assistantships are awarded based on the following criteria:

- Student's past academic performance
- Student's skills, abilities, and qualifications
- Student's past work experience
- Letters of recommendation
- The needs of the program and its faculty

MPA faculty members are eligible to request support from a graduate assistant. Graduate assistants will be determined based on a competitive process where MPA faculty submit a one-page memo describing the research project that will benefit from the work of the graduate assistant. Graduate assistants will work only on research projects with their assigned faculty members. Students to whom these assistantships are awarded must be capable of doing the research. At the end of the semester where the assistantship was award, the MPA faculty member will report to the MPA Director the outcome of the research and how the graduate assistant helped advance the research.

Students interested in obtaining an assistantship should notify the MPA Director when they submit their application for admissions to the program. To be considered for an assistantship for the fall semester, students need to complete their application for admission by April 15th, and for the spring semester, by October 15th. If there is a need for assistantships to be filled, the MPA Director can waive this requirement. A committee of faculty members will select the graduate assistants.

Graduate assistants are expected to work 10 hours per week. Graduate assistants are responsible for keeping track of the hours that they work each week, and they need to report the hours that they work in a timely manner. When accepting a graduate assistantship, students should be aware that they are making a commitment to work in the program for the semester stipulated in the terms of employment. Students who resign their assistantship during their semester of employment and/or withdraw from their classes will be expected to pay a portion or all of their tuition for that semester.

There are other assistantships available on campus in administrative departments, which are open to MPA students enrolled in at least 9 credit hours. Information about these is available through Career Services.

Once the selections are made, the MPA Director will complete the proper paperwork to submit to the Graduate School for final approval and match the selected students to faculty supervisors based on 1) the student's abilities and interests and 2) identified faculty needs.

3.3 International Students

MPA applicants from other countries must meet additional criteria for admission as determined by the institution. International students should consult the admissions portion of the Augusta University website, for complete application information and standards for admission.

3.4 Student Diversity

The MPA program at Augusta University is designed to help prepare an individual for managerial responsibilities in national, state or local government; in regional planning agencies, and in non-profit organizations. In pursuing this goal, the diversity and retention of students continues to be a major goal of the program. The program's plans for doing so are contained in the program's diversity plan. Please see the program's website.

SECTION 4. DEGREE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

4.1 General Requirements

In order to become eligible for the degree of Master of Public Administration, a candidate must have: a) completed the core courses specified in the curriculum summary with a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; b) completed the required number of elective courses with a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

4.1. a. Specified period of time for degree completion

Only that coursework completed within the six calendar years prior to completion of the degree requirements will apply toward graduation. The age of a course will be calculated from the date when the course would be expected to have been completed— the last day of class of the term in which registration for the course occurred. Under rare and exceptional circumstances, the MPA Director may grant an exception to this policy.

4.1 b. Residency and Transfer Credits

No more than nine semester credit hours shall be transferred from another institution for the purpose of earning credits for the Master of Public Administration degree. The institution from which the credits are transferred must be an accredited one, and each transfer course is subject to review in order to determine its equivalency in the Augusta University MPA Program.

4.1 c. Minimum number of credit hours required; course substitutions

The MPA degree consists of 36 semester hours. No more than three course substitutions are allowed in the MPA Program. A course substitution consists of having a graduate-level course taken at Augusta University or at another accredited institution in a subject area related to public management counted as an elective course for purposes of the requirements of the MPA degree. Requests for course substitutions must be approved by the MPA Director, the Chair of the Department of Social Sciences, the Dean of Pamplin College, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

4.1 d. Maintenance of Acceptable Grade Point Average

A student enrolled in the MPA Program must maintain a GPA of 2.8 or above. When a student's GPA goes below 2.8, he or she will be placed on academic probation. While on probation, the student must earn a minimum of a 2.8 GPA each semester until the cumulative GPA is raised to at least a 2.8. Students who fail to earn at least a 2.8 each semester while on probation shall be considered for academic dismissal from the program. Students who are on academic probation may take no more than 6 hours of

coursework. A student who earns a grade lower than a "C" in any class will be considered for dismissal from the program.

4.2. Application for Graduation

A student submits an application for graduation at the midpoint of the semester immediately preceding the semester in which he or she anticipates completing all degree requirements (coursework and capstone requirement). The graduation application is completed in consultation with the MPA Program Director, who certifies the courses completed (graduation check sheet); courses yet to be completed, and approximate time frame for completion. Upon approval by the Director and the Chair of the Department of Social Sciences, the application is given to the Registrar by the student along with payment of graduation fees.

4.3. Certification for Graduation

The student is certified for graduation at the time a) his or her transcripts indicate the completion of all courses required in the program of study; b) the grade point average is at least 2.8 on a 4.0 scale.

SECTION 5. ADVISING AND ORIENTATION

5.1 Advising

At the time the applicant is accepted, the MPA Program Director gives a written notification of his or her acceptance and in this letter the Director informs the new student that she or he will initially serve as the student's academic advisor. This letter also informs the new student of the procedures for registering for the academic semester in which he or she intends to enroll. For each student, the Director recommends a course load depending upon whether the student has indicated part-time or full-time enrollment.

The MPA Director will ensure each student is given a written plan of study clearly outlining those required courses and the elective options which a student will take during the course of this or her program of study and the approximate time frame when each of those courses will be offered. In the first semester of the program, students will have an in-person advising session with the MPA Director. In subsequent semesters, the MPA Director and the students will track student progress in JagTrax. After the first semester, students will have the option of a personal meeting with the MPA Director or advising via e-mail or telephone.

5.2 Advisement Practice Assessment

On a periodic basis, students will be surveyed to determine the level of satisfaction with and effectiveness of the advisement and orientation practices of the MPA program.

Advisement will be evaluated as part of the exit interview process.

5.3 Student Orientation

The MPA Director will conduct a formal orientation to the program for new students on the first night of class in the PADM 6000 class or individually if necessary. The orientation will cover program requirements, including exit requirements, standards, and other program policies.

SECTION 6. PROGRAM FACULTY

6.1 Faculty Qualifications

Each of the full-time faculty members of the Augusta University MPA program should hold the doctorate in a discipline directly related to his or her course offerings in the program. The MPA program may hire new faculty prior to the award of the candidate's doctorate (ABD), provided that the degree requirement is met within one year of the hire. The program follows the university's policies and rules on faculty qualifications.

6.2 Faculty Load

Full-time, tenure track faculty in the MPA program are expected to be involved in scholarly activity at a level appropriate both to our discipline and to the expectations of graduate faculty. Moreover, it is understood that it teaching graduate-level courses involves extensive preparation, mentoring of students, and evaluation of student work.

6.3 Faculty Diversity

The faculty of the Augusta University MPA program is sensitive to the ways in which racism has shaped our community's history. Recognizing that an important facet of the mission of Augusta University and of our MPA program is to serve the local community, the faculty is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and to promoting dialogue and understanding among all people. Consequently, the faculty believes diversity enriches our program and enhances our ability to serve the community. The program's plan for enhancing faculty diversity is found in the program's diversity plan. Please see the program's website.

6.4 Faculty Searches

Searching for full-time faculty members for the MPA program is an important task and demands that all the program's stakeholders take an active role. As a result, each search committee will insure each of these stakeholders have an opportunity to participate. During a candidate's visit to campus, every effort will be made to ensure that

all members of the MPA core faculty have the opportunity to meet and interview the candidate. This input will be considered in the search committee's final recommendation.

6.5 Part-time Faculty

In conjunction with the Department of Social Sciences Chair, the MPA Director is responsible for recruiting and recommending for selection part-time faculty for the program. In doing so, the MPA Director will actively seek highly qualified practitioners in the region, to bring practical experience into the classroom. The MPA Director will evaluate each part-time faculty member's application materials and determine which MPA courses the applicant can be certified to instruct. Finally, the Director will ensure all required documentation is completed and filed in the appropriate offices.

6.6 Evaluating Professional Development of Full-Time Faculty in the MPA Program

Full-time MPA faculty members are evaluated in accordance with institutional and appropriate departmental policies. In terms of assessment, faculty quality is evaluated in many different ways. The first is the end-of-course critique system. In this process, students are given both closed-ended and open-ended questions that measure students' perceptions of the faculty member's teaching. The results are provided to the individual faculty member for his or her use in self-improvement and to the faculty member's department chair for use in the annual evaluation process. The other evaluation processes include exit interviews with students, alumni surveys, peer review of teaching, the promotion and tenure process, and student participation in state, regional, and national conferences.

SECTION 7. PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The program's mission drives the decisions of the program. Multiple assessment methods are used to monitor program performance. These methods are designed to evaluate the program's progress towards meeting its stated goals, and ultimately, fulfilling its mission statement. Programmatic goals and student learning outcomes are set by the MPA core faculty. The MPA Director is responsible for monitoring progress on these goals. The Director will report progress on programmatic goals and student learning outcomes to the faculty these results, and subsequent faculty discussion, will be used to improve the program's administration and execution of its teaching mission. The program's evaluation plan is included as Appendix B to this document.

7. 1 Program Goals.

Programmatic goals will be evaluated using tools appropriate to the particular goal. These goals are included as part of the Department of Social Sciences Unit Plan. Progress on these goals is reported to the institution through its strategic planning process and to the MPA faculty at its regularly scheduled meetings.

7.2 Assessing Student Learning

Student learning will be assessed in the manner prescribed in the assessment schedule, updated and presented to the faculty at its last meeting in the spring semester. Student learning will be assessed using a variety of tools—exams, case studies, research papers, peer evaluations, and site supervisor evaluations. In addition, students will have the opportunity to assess their learning thru the exit survey process. The results of assessment will be presented to the faculty at the first meeting of the fall semester.

7.3 Assessing Curriculum

In addition to using the evaluation tools above, the adequacy of curriculum is assessed in three other ways.

7.3. A. Community Advisory Board evaluation. The Community Advisory Board will be requested to form a subcommittee to evaluate the curriculum at least every three to four years. This evaluation will be based on their expert opinion of the relevance of the courses offered to the current practice of the discipline. The results of these evaluations will be considered by the MPA Faculty Committee in its curriculum development decisions.

7.3. B. Survey of Local Public and Nonprofit Managers. Periodically, the MPA Director will survey local public and nonprofit managers as a further measure to ensure that the curriculum stays relevant to the needs of the region. The results of these evaluations will be considered by the MPA Faculty Committee in its curriculum development decisions.

7.3. D. Benchmarking. Periodically, the MPA Director will evaluate course offerings, admission standards, and exit requirements from other institutions in the region that are similar in size and mission to our program. The results of this review will be considered by the MPA Faculty Committee in its curriculum development and policy decisions.

7.4 Other Assessment Methods.

The MPA Director will use other appropriate methods to assess progress towards program goals. The precise method will be determined based on the goal. For example, if the goal is to "increase enrollment by X%," then enrollment figures become the appropriate assessment tool.

SECTION 8. COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

The MPA Community Advisory Board is established as a consultative body which lends expertise to the degree program, and it will serve as an advisory panel on the program's policies and operations. The Community Advisory Board interacts with the MPA Director, the Chair of the Department of Social Sciences, the Dean of the Katherine Reese Pamplin College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and other campus officials in its advisory and consultative roles.

8.1 Purpose of the Community Advisory Board

The purpose of the Community Advisory Board is to assist the MPA program in fulfilling its mission statement. Specifically, the board's role is to assist in 1) designing curriculum that will help the program and its graduates meet regional needs for professionals in the discipline, 2) locating appropriate internship and applied research opportunities, 3) promoting the program, 4) providing practitioner insight, and 5) evaluating program performance.

8.2 Composition of the Community Advisory Board

The Community Advisory Board shall consist of at least nine members. At least five of the board members shall be holders of Master of Public Administration degrees. At least six of the board members shall be administrators in public or non-profit sector work settings.

8.3 Method of Appointment of the Community Advisory Board

New members will be nominated and voted on by the MPA core faculty with one board membership slot reserved for a representative of the program's alumni. If it wishes, the Board shall elect its Chairperson and adopt such by-laws as it may deem necessary to perform its mission.

8.4 Terms of Service of the Community Advisory Board

After the initial establishment of the board, the term of office shall be three years. The members of the charter board will serve terms which differ in length so that there will be some continuity after the initial three years and the board can avoid a complete turnover in membership.

8.5 Scheduling of Meetings of the Community Advisory Board

The Community Advisory Board will meet at least once per academic year. The meetings can take place either on campus or at another location in the community. The meetings will be called by the MPA Director.

8.6 Liaison

Staff assistance to the Community Advisory Board will be provided by the Director of the Master of Public Administration Program and the Department of Social Sciences. Staff assistance consists of issuing meeting notices and the preparation of agenda items as assigned by the board chairperson; preparation of reports as needed; and other tasks which may arise.

8.7 Board Reports and Activities

The Community Advisory Board may prepare such written reports as it deems necessary and appropriate from time to time. It may direct its reports and recommendations to the MPA Program Director, the Chair of the Department of Social Sciences, the Dean of the Katherine Reese Pamplin College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, or other university officials. The board may deem it appropriate to sponsor or host sessions at which MPA students meet practitioners and community leaders, or provide opportunities wherein students could visit work sites and interview public managers who are engaged in the types of skill areas in which students hope to work (human resources management, budgeting, planning functions, information technology).

SECTION 9. AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Master of Public Administration Student Association (MPASA) is the official student association for the MPA Program at Augusta University. The student organization is meant to enhance the student experience in the program, through connections with alumni and the community, as well as social events.

9.1 Purpose of the Community Advisory Board

The purpose of the Master of Public Administration Student Association (MPASA) is to organize, and facilitate activities beneficial to students of the Master of Public Administration program in serval areas including, but not limited to:

- Helping students solidify and actualize their career goals through professional development

- Supporting and aiding students in their pursuit of academic excellence
- Administering activities which allow students the opportunity to integrate themselves socially and professionally
- Planning and executing service projects to help the community

9.2 Members and Officers of the Master of Public Administration Student Association

All Augusta University MPA students are members of the MPASA. The members of the association elect their own officers.

SECTION 10. ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

The field of public administration must be effective, efficient, fair, and ethical. To ensure these standards, MPA programs need to teach ethics and hold our students to high ethical standards. In our MPA program, we strongly enforce the academic honest policy of our university and program.

The university regulations regarding academic dishonesty including (but not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, and credential misrepresentation will be strictly enforced. Plagiarism includes but not limited to the presentation of ideas, words, techniques, etc. of someone without properly acknowledging the source. Further information on academic dishonesty and the penalties that go with it is available from the Augusta University Catalog under *Student Rights and Responsibilities.*