

**College of Urban & Public Affairs  
Mark O. Hatfield School of Government**



**Department of Public Administration**

**Student Handbook for:  
Master of Public Administration  
Master of Public Administration: Health Administration  
Master of Nonprofit Leadership**

**2022 - 2023**



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This handbook provides Master of Public Administration, Master of Public Administration: Health Administration, and Master of Nonprofit Leadership students with important information about Department requirements pertinent to the pursuit of a degree.

Students should also consult relevant pages in the Portland State [University Bulletin](#).

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 College of Urban & Public Affairs (CUPA)

The College of Urban & Public Affairs (CUPA) houses two schools, the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government, and the Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning. Together they form six academic units all under one roof:

- [Criminology & Criminal Justice](#)
- [Economics](#)
- [International & Global Studies](#)
- [Political Science](#)
- [Public Administration](#)
- [Urban Studies & Planning](#)

We teach our students to flex boundaries and conceive new and practical approaches to 'wicked' problems. The Portland metropolitan area offers students a hands-on regional laboratory—world renowned as a forward-thinking model of civic engagement and livability. Here they can design and carry out multidisciplinary projects that address salient topics in transportation, sustainability, economic development, governance, social justice and globalization.

CUPA's Dean's office ensures coordination and synergy among CUPA's schools and departments. The College offers three doctorate programs, more than a dozen master degrees and graduate certificates, as well as a number of undergraduate bachelor degree programs. The College has several research institutes, centers and public service units. Full descriptions can be found on the [College of Urban & Public Affairs website](#).

## 1.2 Mark O. Hatfield School of Government (SOG)

The Mark O. Hatfield School of Government is one of the largest public policy schools in the country. Students participate in highly acclaimed programs in public administration, health administration, non-profit management, political science, and criminology/criminal justice—including hands-on public service projects in collaboration with the community and faculty members.

Locally renowned, the Hatfield School and its programs have also gained national prestige as one of the top 50 Public Affairs graduate programs in the nation, according to the U.S. News and World Report rankings.

Mark O. Hatfield served as a U.S. Senator, Oregon Governor, and Secretary of State for more than 40 years. Hatfield was born in Dallas, Oregon, an only child whose father was a railroad blacksmith and whose mother was a teacher. Hatfield attended Willamette University and graduated in 1943. He served in the U.S. Navy, fought in Iwo Jima, and arrived in Hiroshima after the bombing, all of which had a profound effect on Hatfield and his later politics. He returned to the states, received a graduate degree in political science at Stanford, moved to Salem and within ten years, was elected Governor in 1958 at the age of 36. He was the youngest person ever to serve in that office.

“Hatfield's turbo-charged rise in state politics was marked by his oratorical skills and a singular kind of charisma that was magnetic. He earned a reputation as an unusually spiritual politician and, even more atypically, an independent one” ([Zusman, 2017, para. 5](#)).

## **1.3 Department of Public Administration**

### **1.3.1 Vision Statement**

The Department of Public Administration’s vision is to be an agent of change to develop and enhance public leadership through education, scholarship and service. Building upon Portland State University’s commitment to community-engaged scholarship and service, the Department of Public Administration is uniquely placed to prepare current and emergent leaders in local, regional, national and global communities.

We recognize that solutions to contemporary problems require innovative approaches and alliances among governments, nonprofits and businesses. We encourage our faculty and students to engage in multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches to advance the public interest.

We aim to contribute to the integrity, effectiveness, and transparency of the next generation of trusted public leaders.

### **1.3.2 Mission Statement**

The Department of Public Administration at Portland State University is dedicated to preparing individuals for ethical, competent and effective public service in a range of roles in policy, management and leadership. We seek to improve practice by facilitating learning through community engagement, promoting scholarship, and encouraging reflection as we develop and work with leaders representing diverse communities across all domains of public service.

### **1.3.3 Value and Belief Statements**

We recognize that public service professionals work within a complex set of constitutional, institutional, sociocultural, and legal structures. We believe that they must understand the ways in which economic and political interdependence, both global and domestic, shape the exercise of administrative leadership and management. Our collective efforts support the educational and professional preparation of public service professionals and new scholars.

Based on this recognition, we are guided by the following values which encompass our commitment to integrated, rigorous and relevant teaching, learning, and scholarship, all geared toward the sustainability of our increasingly diverse and rich communities:

- We believe that the integration of theory and practice is essential for successful management and leadership in public, nonprofit and health organizations, and that reflective practice enhances this integration.
- We believe that a public service education that integrates ethics and experience is essential to our society.

- We seek to model in ourselves and develop in our students the values of public service and provide mechanisms through which students can explore potential roles for engaging the public in their work.
- We are committed to addressing the life-long learning needs of our graduates and career public service professionals.
- We value scholarship that is both rigorous and relevant.
- We value Portland State University's commitment to community-engaged teaching and scholarship.
- We are committed to collaborating with public and nonprofit organizations and communities to create rich learning experiences that both assist the community and prepare graduates for productive public service careers.
- We believe that public service professionals must understand the ways in which a multiplicity of interests help to shape, and in turn are shaped by, the underlying values of our systems of democratic governance.
- We believe that understanding the dynamic social relationships in diverse and global communities is essential for public service leaders and managers.

### **1.3.4 Learning Competencies**

Students in the Master of Public Administration (MPA), Master of Public Administration: Health Administration (MPA:HA), and Master of Nonprofit Leadership (MNL) programs will attain the following competencies by graduation, as evident through their demonstrated ability to:

1. Articulate and exemplify the ethics, values, responsibilities, obligations, and social roles of a member of the public service [nonprofit] profession.
2. Identify and apply relevant theories and frameworks to the practice of public service.
3. Respond to and engage collaboratively with diverse local and global cultures and communities.
4. Identify and engage with the key elements of the public policy process.
5. Employ appropriate qualitative and quantitative techniques to investigate, monitor, and manage resource use.
6. Create and manage systems and processes to assess and improve organizational performance.
7. Conceptualize, analyze, and develop creative and collaborative solutions to challenges in public service [nonprofit] leadership, management, and policy.
8. Assess challenges and explore solutions to advance cross-sectoral and inter-jurisdictional cooperation in public [nonprofit] programs and services.
9. Demonstrate verbal and written communication skills as a professional and through interpersonal interactions in groups and in society.
10. Think critically and self-reflectively about emerging issues concerning public service [nonprofit] leadership, management, and policy.

### **1.3.5 Accreditation**

The MPA and MPA:HA Programs are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration ([NASPAA](#)). The MNL is a new program, approved by the university in 2018. The Department of Public Administration will pursue NASPAA accreditation for the MNL Program soon.

## 2 PROGRAM STRUCTURE

### 2.1 Overview

Each of our programs will provide students with the theoretical foundations, practical skills, and hands-on experience to lead in the students' chosen field.

The **Master of Public Administration (MPA)** degree focuses on preparing students for administrative and leadership positions in governmental and nonprofit organizations. The program is structured as follows:

- 60 credits total (20 courses), each course is 3 credits
- 30 credits (10 courses) of core coursework in public policy, budgeting, research methods, and other aspects of organizational administration
- 9 credits (3 courses) of Skill Development coursework
- 15 credits (5 courses) in their chosen [Field of Specialization](#)
- 6 credits of an Integrative Field Experience
- One course must also fulfill the [Diversity Requirement](#)

The **Master of Public Administration: Health Administration (MPA:HA)** degree integrates the MPA's core curriculum with a special focus on health services. An MPH:HA degree prepares graduates for a wide range of careers in public or health services administration, planning, policy, evaluation, consulting, and related careers. The program is structured as follows:

- 60 credits total (20 courses), each course is 3 credits
- 39 credits (13 courses) of Required coursework
- 15 credits (5 courses) of electives
- 6 credits of an Integrative Field Experience
- 30 credits (10 courses) must be healthcare specific
- One course must fulfill the [Diversity Requirement](#)

The **Master of Nonprofit Leadership (MNL)** degree marries the best of theory and practice to provide students with critical insights into nonprofit leadership and management. This includes the skills to affect meaningful change through nonprofits. The program is structured as follows:

- 54 credits total (18 courses), most classes are 3 credits
- 12 credits (4 courses) in the Foundations of the Nonprofit Sector and Nonprofit Leadership
- 12 credits (4 courses) in the Fundamentals of Nonprofit Management, including governance, fundraising and financial management
- 9 credits (3 courses) in Analytic Skills
- 6 credits (2 courses) in Advocacy, Policymaking, and Community Change
- 9 credits (3 courses) of electives
- 6 credits of an Integrative Field Experience

## **2.2 Degree Requirements**

### **2.2.1 Degree Completion Worksheet**

[The Degree Completion Worksheet](#) for both the MPA and MNL is an important document for tracking progress toward degree completion. Students should maintain their worksheet term by term and have it on hand for their advising appointments. This worksheet ensures that students have met (or will meet) all the requirements for the degree.

Approvals for transfer or pre-admission credits, substitutions, or waivers are typically completed by the department during the fifth week of the student's expected graduation term. These department approved changes show up in the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS). Until then, the Degree Completion Worksheet is the best way to track degree progress.

### **2.2.2 Specializations and Field of Specialization Form**

The MPA program offers fields of specialization in human resource management, nonprofit management, natural resources policy and administration, local government, and global leadership and management. Students select a field upon admission, identify 5 courses (15 credits) to make up the field, and are required to complete a [Field of Specialization Form](#) with a proposed program of study by the completion of 30 credits of the MPA program, which must be signed by the faculty advisor. Once the proposed program of study is approved, the form will be kept on file at the department. [The field of specialization descriptions](#) for required and elective courses are available on the website. On occasion, a student may create a unique field of specialization with advisor approval, which must be documented in the student's graduate file.

### **PA/PAH 509 (Organizational Experience):**

PA/PAH 509 consists of 200 hours of hands-on applied field projects in collaboration with public, nonprofit, or health service organizations. During this time, students will work on administrative or management issues confronting these organizations. Approximately 150 hours will be spent in the field, and up to 50 hours may be allotted for writing a report on the culminating project.

At the end of the 200 hours of engagement, a culminating project report should be submitted to the field organization and the university. The report typically includes description of the work completed, detailed written documentation developed for the organization (as relevant), and may include recommendations, conclusions, and/or policies. The report is graded and is worth 40% of the overall grade.

The PA/PAH 509 is intended for students who have limited or no administrative experience. Students are required to attend the PA/PAH 509 orientation (offered Fall, Winter and Spring terms) to learn about the requirements and expectations. They then consult with their faculty advisor and develop a draft of the learning contract in conjunction with the faculty advisor and the potential field placement site, before contacting the designated PA/PAH 509 Faculty.



Students should begin arrangements with the field organizations no later than the quarter prior to registering for PA/PAH 509. Students may not begin the project until the faculty advisor has approved the draft learning contract, and the student, field supervisor, and PA/PAH 509 faculty instructor have all signed the student's final learning contract.

**NOTE:** Registration requires Department Approval, confirmed by the PA/PAH 509 faculty. You must have a contract in place to register. Also, students are allowed to sign up only for 3 credits during the Summer term. Those who wish to complete the PA/PAH 509 over Summer term should plan for taking 3 credits during Spring term, and complete it over two terms.

### 2.2.3 Suggested Course Sequencing

There is no strict course sequence suggested for the MPA, MPA:HA, and MNL students. However, some courses are better taken at the early stages in the program. Students should note that some courses have prerequisites, or must be taken in sequence.

Guidelines for course sequencing MPA:

- **PA 511 (Public Administration)** is an introductory course that should be taken as early in the program as possible. It provides a context and foundation for other courses. This course is a prerequisite for:
  - PA513 (Administrative Ethics and Values)
  - PA540 (Administrative Theory and Behavior)
  - PA590 (Human Resource Management in the Public Sector)
- **PA 551 (Analytic Methods in Public Administration I)** is a prerequisite course for PA 552 (Analytic Methods II). These courses should be taken in successive quarters with the same instructor relatively early in the program so that students can use the analytic tools in other courses.
- **PA 540 (Administrative Theory & Behavior)** is a prerequisite for:
  - PA 545 (Organization Development).

Guidelines for course sequencing MPA:HA:

- **Please consult with your advisor.**

Guidelines for course sequencing MNL:

- **PA 513 (Administrative Ethics and Values)** and **PA 540 (Administrative Theory and Behavior)** are required courses for the MNL. MNL students are, however, not required to take PA 511 Public Administration, which is a pre-requisite course for the above two courses. Contact [publicad@pdx.edu](mailto:publicad@pdx.edu) when taking PA 513 and/or PA 540 in order to make an arrangements to override the pre-requisite requirement.
- **PA 551 (Analytic Methods in Public Administration I)** is a prerequisite course for PA 552 (Analytic Methods II). These courses should be taken in successive quarters with the same instructor relatively early in the program so that students can use the analytic tools in other courses.

### 3 STUDENT ADVISING

During the admissions process, new students are assigned a faculty advisor based on a review of their interests. Students should contact their advisor upon admission and communicate regularly. A communicative, good working relationship between students and advisors leads to successful program outcomes.

Faculty members typically maintain regular office hours for advising, however if this conflicts with a students' schedule they can contact the advisor for accommodations.

Students may switch advisors at any point in the program. The assigned advisor, the student, and the new advisor should make an agreement and inform the department staff of the change.

The following are guidelines for working with faculty advisor:

- **Initiate contact with faculty advisor and meet at least once per quarter:** Students should try to see the faculty advisor early in the term, and follow-up as necessary to confirm the decisions about course selections. Consult with the faculty advisor before signing up for elective skill development and specialization courses. Also note that the faculty advisor must approve the students' program before graduation.
- **Check email regularly for notices and other important communications:** All students should have PSU email account, and the faculty and University administration offices will use PSU email address as a main channel of communication with the students.
- **Faculty advisor may not be able to respond on the same day:** Faculty advisors receive large amounts of email and other contacts each day. It may take a few days to a week for the faculty advisor to get in touch with the students. If the faculty member does not get back in a reasonable period of time, feel free to leave a message on their office voicemail and send an email reminder. If there is an urgent need for information, also contact the Department's front desk (503.725.3921). **Please note:** many faculty are not on contract during the summer months (June 16 to September 15) and may not be available for advising.
- **Contact faculty advisor as soon as possible for problems or change in program status:** Students are encouraged to address any issues or problems with their faculty advisor as soon as possible. In the event of any changes in the student status and course planning, students are encouraged to inform the faculty advisor as soon as possible.

## **4 MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 Continuous Enrollment**

Students must be continuously enrolled for at least one credit per term (excluding Summer term), unless on an approved Leave of Absence. If unable to maintain continuous enrollment, they are required to request a Leave of Absence (LOA) from the department. The student should email their advisor and copy the department ([publicad@pdx.edu](mailto:publicad@pdx.edu)) to begin the request process. Leaves may be granted for a period of one to three terms with the approval of the student's faculty advisor, and extended for an additional three terms with the approval of the Department Chair. A maximum of six terms of leave may be granted during the student's tenure in the program.

Students failing to register or complete a LOA for three (non-Summer) academic terms will have their admission status revoked by the Graduate School. Students will need to contact the department and submit a [Graduate Re-Enrollment Request Form](#) in order to return and complete the degree.

### **4.2 Full-Time vs. Part-Time Status**

Students taking the recommended maximum credits per term can expect to complete the degree in two years, with the inclusion of Summer terms. Students can switch between full-time and part-time status without needing to contact the Department. All students should regularly meet and consult with their advisor to develop an appropriate plan of study.

### **4.3 Grades**

All admitted graduate certificate and degree students at PSU must maintain good academic standing during the course of their graduate program. Good academic standing is defined as maintaining a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.00 or higher in all graduate credits earned at PSU. Students who fail to do so will be placed on immediate probation until a B average is once again attained (see PSU Bulletin for the removal of probationary status). No student may have more than two "probations." Any student who is placed on probation a third time will be automatically dropped from the program.

A "B-" is considered the minimal passing grade in graduate programs and a student cannot use any course with a grade lower than a C- for the degree. If a grade lower than a C- is received in a required course, the student must repeat that course. In addition, students may not use more than two courses with grades lower than a B- for the degree, and students must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher to graduate.

### **4.4 Time Limits**

According to PSU's Graduate School, all work toward a graduate degree must be completed within seven years, and no coursework that is more than seven years old at the time of graduation may be accepted towards the degree. A limited number of PSU courses that are more than seven years old at the time of graduation, but no more than 10 years old, may be used toward master's degree requirements after a

successful validation exam. The full requirements for validation of out-of-date graduate credits is provided on the GO-15 form available on the [OGS website](#).

#### 4.5 "Credit By-Arrangement" Hours

In addition to regularly scheduled courses, students may register for courses "by arrangement" with individual faculty, to complete a "reading and conference" around a specific subject or body of literature not covered in other classes (PA 505). The number of credits may vary, but it is expected that such credits will be commensurate with the demands of regular course offerings, approximately 3.5 hours of work per week for each credit hour. Students are expected to develop a proposal with specific tasks, deliverables and timelines, in consultation with the faculty member. [By-Arrangement Requests can be initiated and tracked online](#).

#### 4.6 Incomplete Grades

From time to time, students may need to take an Incomplete (I) grade in a course where unforeseen circumstances preclude the student from completing essential work in a timely manner. Students do not have a right to receive or demand an Incomplete grade. The option of assigning an Incomplete grade is at the discretion of the instructor when the following conditions are met:

- **Required satisfactory course completion/participation:** The quality of work is satisfactory, but some essential work remains. In addition, the student must have successfully completed most of the course work at the time the student requests the Incomplete, with a minimum grade up to that point of a B- for a graduate course.
- **Reasonable justification for the request:** Reasons for assigning the Incomplete must be acceptable to the instructor. A student does not have the right to demand an Incomplete. The circumstances should be unforeseen or beyond the control of the student. The instructor is entitled to request appropriate medical or other documentation to validate the student's request.
- **Incomplete grade is not a substitute for a poor grade:** The Incomplete grade is not meant to create the opportunity for special or additional work for a student to raise a poor grade, or for the opportunity to take the course over by sitting in on the course in a later term without registering or paying for it.
- **Written agreement:** A written or electronic agreement will be endorsed by both the instructor and student. The document will specify a) the remaining work to be completed, b) the highest grade which may be awarded upon submission of remaining items, and c) the date which the missing work is due. The latter may not exceed one year from the end of the term of enrollment for the given course. A template Incomplete Contract is available from the Registrar.

- **Resolving the Incomplete:** Instructors may not encourage students to "sit in" an entire future course in order to resolve the Incomplete grade. If the student needs to retake the entire course, they should be given the grade presently earned, and must formally register for the future class they will be attending. If the missed portion of the course is no longer available, instructors may offer an alternate assignment. Grading weight of the alternate assignment should not exceed the original assignment. Students are fully responsible for monitoring all due dates.

Students have one calendar year to resolve an Incomplete; e.g. an incomplete taken in Fall 2016 will need to be resolved by the grading deadline in Fall 2017. After that point, the Incomplete is frozen on the student's transcript, and will not impact the student's GPA. With approval of the instructor and Department Chair, students may petition the Graduate Council (using the [Graduate Petition Form](#) from OGS) for a longer deadline, but only in the case of extenuating circumstances.

#### 4.7 Waivers and Substitutions

- **Waivers:** There are situations in which students may believe that they have previously taken a course that satisfies a particular degree requirement. Students may petition to waive a class requirement if they have comparable previous experience through coursework. The student should first have a conversation with their advisor to determine how to proceed. Waiver of a required course does not waive the credit towards the degree.
- **Substitutions:** Students wanting to request an alternative course for the required courses should meet with their advisor for approval. The student should submit a petition form documenting the reasons for the substitution request, and obtain approval signature from the advisor and the Department Chair.
- **Skill Development/Field of Specialization/Elective Courses not listed in the recommended list:** For Skill Development (MPA), Field of Specialization (MPA), and elective (MPA:HA, MNL), students are allowed to take courses that are not listed in the Department's 'recommended' course list after consulting with the advisor. Submit the [Field of Specialization Form](#) and have the advisor notify the Department staff ([publicad@pdx.edu](mailto:publicad@pdx.edu)) indicating the courses taken outside the Department's 'recommended' course list, so the courses will be reflected in the DARS system.

Waivers and Substitutions require the student to complete a [Department Petition](#) (not a Graduate Petition). Once the Department Petition is completed, the student should submit it to the Department Staff for final signatures and processing.

#### 4.8 Pre-Admission and Transfer Credits

The department prefers to limit the amount of Pre-Admission and Transfer credits to 12 (4 courses) for the Master's programs and 6 (2 courses) to the Graduate Certificate. They Department may approve up to the maximum allowable per

University policy, which is 21 credits for the Master's programs and Graduate Certificate. The transfer credits must be graduate-level courses with a grade of "B" or higher and were completed within 7 years of the projected graduation date.

- **Pre-Admission Credits:** Graduate credits taken at PSU on a post-baccalaureate (nondegree) basis prior to admission to the program must be approved by the advisor as part of the degree. Approval of pre-admission credits can be emailed to the department at [publicad@pdx.edu](mailto:publicad@pdx.edu) to be recorded and entered into the DARS system. There are no additional forms that need to be completed. **Note:** Students who completed the Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit and Public Management (GCNPM) can count all 21 credits completed for the certificate as pre-admission credits for the MPA and MNL programs (and MPA:HA program, if approved).
- **Transfer Credits:** Graduate credits earned at other accredited higher education institutions within the United States may be applied toward the MPA, MPA:HA, and MNL degrees provided they were not utilized toward a degree at that institution (e.g., as a non-degree student, or if you later withdrew from a program). In addition to being approved by your advisor, you will need to complete and submit a [GO-21M Form](#), available from the Graduate School website.

## 4.9 Course Evaluations

Students are asked to complete an evaluation at the end of each course for which they are registered. Course evaluations assist faculty and staff in assessing the quality of the courses and identifying opportunities for improvement, as well as scheduling future offerings. Evaluations are emailed in the last two weeks of the term. If you do not receive an evaluation, please contact the Department.

## 4.10 Communications

### 4.10.1 Email Account

Students are required to use their pdx.edu email account for university business. Students are advised to check this email account regularly (or forward to a personal email) as all PSU communications will be sent to pdx.edu addresses.

Students not enrolled for 6 months may have their account deactivated.

### 4.10.2 Canvas

Some courses utilize [Canvas](#), PSU's online learning management system. Students can access support and tutorials online at [OIT](#). Students should be sure to check with their instructors to see if they will use Canvas and its email feature.

### 4.10.3 Google Groups

Upon acceptance into the department, students are added to the PA Google group, used for communicating with students. All current MPA, MPA:HA, MNL and GCNM students are added to the following list:  
PA-CurrentStudents-group@pdx.edu

## 5 STUDENT RESOURCES

### 5.1 Public Administration Student Groups

- [The Public Administration Student Association \(PASA\)](#) at Portland State University provides information, opportunities and support for Public Administration students. PASA assists students from the beginning of their graduate program by providing peer support, facilitating student-faculty social interaction and helping build professional networks. Learn more about how to get involved on their website.
- [The PSU & OHSU Institute for Healthcare Improvement Open School Chapter](#) seeks to empower learners and leaders in the Portland region and beyond to develop interprofessional connections and competencies to improve the services and systems that promote health. Learn more about how to get involved on their website.
- [The PSU PA Alumni Association](#) seeks to foster a strong collaborative network among current students, alumni, and faculty to promote the division, create a cohesive identity, and enhance opportunities for social and professional relationships in the public-sector community. Join them for networking events throughout the year or learn more on their new website.

### 5.2 Computing Resources

Students have access to a variety of computing resources on campus and through the [PSU Office of Information Technology](#). Additionally, there are several [OIT Labs](#) around campus.

### 5.3 Career Development Resources

CUPA Career Services, overseen by Cathy LaTourette, offers a number of workshops specifically related to careers in public service. Cathy can be reached at [latourec@pdx.edu](mailto:latourec@pdx.edu).

### 5.4 Research and Writing Support

- [PSU Branford Millar Library](#): The library has a wide variety of online and in-person resources for students. CUPA has a dedicated library faculty member, Emily Ford (forder@pdx.edu), who is available as a resource for all CUPA students, especially in accessing research databases and other digital media to support academic projects.
- [Writing Center](#): PSU students have access to free, in-depth, one-on-one writing advice through the Writing Center, which is operated by the English Department. Special assistance is available to non-native speakers of English.

### 5.5 Health and Wellness

- [Center for Student Health and Counseling \(SHAC\)](#) provides mental health, physical health, dental health and testing services.

- [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) helps make the university accessible to students with disabilities, by working with students and faculty to develop an accessible and inclusive learning environment.
- [Campus Rec](#) offers access to fitness equipment and classes, outdoor adventure trips, and more. Membership is included in your tuition.
- [Campus Public Safety](#) offers late-night campus escorts, self-defense classes and other resources to help you feel safe on campus.
- [CARE Team](#) offers support to students facing crisis situations ranging from mental health to homelessness.
- [Food Assistance](#) provides support for members of the PSU community facing food insecurity. No personal paperwork or information is required to utilize the pantry.

## **5.6 Other Student Services and Resources**

The university offers a number of services and resources that address and support the needs of students. They include:

- [Diversity & Multicultural Services](#)
- [Cultural Resource Centers](#)
- [Queer Resource Center](#)
- [Women's Resource Center](#)
- [Veteran's Resource Center](#)
- [Services for Students with Children](#)



## 6 FINANCING YOUR EDUCATION

Graduate study is a substantial investment of time and money and there are a number of resources to assist you. Basic information is listed below and additional details and support may be accessed through the [Graduate School](#).

### 6.1 WICHE

[The Western Regional Graduate Program](#) (WICHE) offers in-state tuition to PSU students in the MPA and MPA:HA graduate programs who are residents of AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, ND, SD, UT, WA, and WY. Application for WICHE tuition rates must be made through the Graduate School prior to the taking classes. If you have questions about this, contact OGS. The Department of Public Administration will soon make an application to include the MNL degree in the WICHE program.

### 6.2 Funding Opportunities

Graduate assistantship (GA) positions provide an opportunity to work through graduate school in an instructional, research, or administrative capacity and receive tuition remission. The goal of any assistantship is to provide a service to the University and to aid the student in the successful completion of their graduate degree by providing employment related to their academic program and professional goals. [Details](#) on GA position types, eligibility, tuition and fee remission are maintained by the Graduate School.

There is no centralized system for obtaining GA positions. Timing for GA postings depends entirely upon the scope of work and funding source. Students interested in GA positions are encouraged to talk with faculty working in their field of interest and look for announcements on email lists.

Portland State also offers on-campus [employment opportunities](#) on the University's internal job postings site.

### 6.3 Federal Loans

Direct Loans are available to Portland State University graduate students through the cooperation of the University and the U.S. Department of Education. Both interest-subsidized and unsubsidized loans are available. To be eligible for federally-sponsored loans, a student must complete the [Free Application for Student Financial Aid \(FAFSA\)](#).

More information and support is available through the [PSU Office of Student Financial Aid & Scholarships](#) and through the [PSU Financial Wellness Center](#).

### 6.4 Federal Work Study

Graduate students may be eligible for the [Federal Work Study](#) financial aid program which enables students to earn money toward college expenses by working on campus, in the government, or in selected nonprofit agencies serving the community. Students may work up to twenty hours a week while classes are in

session and receive a monthly paycheck (based on an hourly wage) that they can use for educational expenses.

### **6.5 PSU Graduate Scholarships**

The Graduate School maintains a centralized [Scholarship Manager](#) site which allows students to apply for multiple scholarships with one application. Applications generally open in October and are due by February 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **6.6 Non-PSU Scholarships**

In addition, the Graduate School maintains a full list of In addition, there are many non-PSU scholarships and awards that can be researched on <https://www.pdx.edu/student-finance/scholarships> in the "External Scholarship Resources" section. The timing of these scholarships varies greatly.

## 7 ACADEMIC HONESTY, INTEGRITY, AND ETHICS

All students have the responsibility to themselves, their fellow students and the faculty to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. This is particularly true of those who will one day serve the public and teach and act as role models for others.

The University assumes that students are honest, that all course work and examinations represent their own work, and that all documents supporting their admission and graduation are accurate and complete. Academic honesty is a requirement for all graduate activities, and any violation is grounds for disciplinary sanctions as provided by the University Student Conduct Code. Violations of this policy include, but are not limited to:

- **Cheating on examinations and course assignments:** the willful use, or provision to others, of unauthorized material in written or oral examinations, or in course assignments.
- **Plagiarism:** the appropriation of language, ideas, or products of another author or artist and representation of them as one's original work; failure to provide proper identification of source data; use of purchased or borrowed papers in graduate courses without complete identification of the source.
- **Selling or offering to sell course assignment materials:** knowing, or under circumstances when a reasonable person has reason to know, that all or a substantial part of the material is intended to be submitted by another person in fulfillment of a course requirement.

Any situations regarding academic honesty that cannot be solved within the College will be referred to the Associate Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. If the Associate Vice-Provost and Dean conclude that the policy may have been violated, the situation will be moved to the Graduate Council.

Students are encouraged to read the University Bulletin for more information about academic honesty. In addition, the PSU Library has a [tutorial on plagiarism, citations, and other topics](#) that may be useful.

## **8 GRADUATION**

When the students complete the course of study, and are ready to graduate, there are five steps to make everything go smoothly.

### **8.1 Apply to Graduate**

The most important step is to apply to graduate – students must do so by the first Friday of the anticipated term of graduation. Students should apply through Banweb under the “Student Services” tab, then “Graduate Application and Diploma Orders”. There is a required \$30 application fee per degree/graduate certificate as well as a \$2 service charge.

Students may graduate in any term during the academic year once their degree requirements have been met.

### **8.2 Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS)**

The Public Administration Department will make all DARS exceptions at week five of the term. Students should have been tracking their progress using the Completion Worksheet throughout their degree.

Students have actually failed to graduate on time because they mis-entered the credits for courses on their worksheet. By checking this ahead of the graduation term, students can adjust and add credits in time if necessary.

### **8.3 Take Care of Business**

Between the time students apply for graduation and actually graduate, they need to take care of any outstanding library fines, printing fees, unresolved incompletes, etc. before the grading deadline of the term in which the students intend to graduate.

If the students are unable to complete all the necessary degree requirements, OGS allows students to carry forward their graduation to a future term (typically the next term, but it could be at maximum up to one year in advance). To request that an application for graduation be carried, students must contact OGS in writing and provide an explanation for the graduation delay. If students do not graduate a second time, the application for graduation will be dropped; they will then need to reapply for graduation by the appropriate deadline (and will be assessed a new fee).

### **8.4 Celebrate!**

There are two official graduation ceremonies held at the end of the academic year in June: a “hooding ceremony” for all graduate degree recipients in the College of Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA) (generally held on Friday), and a University-wide commencement ceremony (generally held on Sunday) for all undergraduate and graduate degree recipients.

Students can expect information by email in the spring term about the graduation ceremonies, including cap and gown rental and hood purchasing.

The spring graduation ceremonies are open to students who have graduated in any term in the preceding academic year. Students who are within a few credits of graduating are generally allowed to “walk” at the CUPA hooding ceremony with their cohort.

After graduation, students will be officially notified and receive the diploma within 2-3 weeks of the degree award.

### **8.5 Keep in touch!**

- **Connect with us on LinkedIn:** Connecting with your peers on LinkedIn grows your network, while keeping you updated on possible career opportunities.
- **Join the PSU PA Alumni Association:** The PSU PA Alumni Association seeks to foster a strong collaborative network among current students, alumni, and faculty to promote the department, create a cohesive identity, and enhance opportunities for social and professional relationships in the public sector community. Join us for networking events throughout the year. Learn more and subscribe by visiting our [Alumni website](#).
- **Keep updated with our Facebook page:** Check out our [Facebook page](#) for information about upcoming events and other highlights of the Public Administration Department.