2020-2021

Master of Public Administration
Student Handbook:
Executive Format

Master of Public Administration Program
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Welcome to the College of Charleston Executive MPA Program

Welcome to the Executive MPA Program at the College of Charleston. We are very pleased that you have selected the College of Charleston and are confident the mutual learning that will take place throughout your time in the program will provide benefits for all. Since its inception over 30 years ago, the MPA program has been preparing public leaders to serve in leadership positions in our region and throughout the state and nation.

Over the years our program has evolved and expanded in ways that allow our students can customize their learning through options such as: taking classes in a traditional or executive format and completing two graduate degrees at the same time through an MPA/MESS concurrent degree. Traditional on-campus students also can complete an Arts & Cultural Management or Urban Planning Certificate as part of their degree program.

Our program faculty are committed to excellence in education, experiential learning, and the kind of collaboration that makes an essential difference in the work of the leaders and agencies committed to serving the Lowcountry. Moreover, our strong affiliation with the Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Center for Livable Communities means that, through the Center, faculty, staff, and student expertise is leveraged to support the economic and cultural vibrancy of the City of Charleston and other communities throughout South Carolina. As a result, our students have multiple opportunities to participate in exceptional professional education experiences through our partnership with the Riley Center as well as through applied research projects in the classroom; various internships and applied learning experiences; and through connections with alumni and other leading professionals through sponsored events, guest speakers, and professional associations such as the Southeast Chapter of Public Administration (SECOPA), Conference of Minority Public Administrators (COMPA), and the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). Being in at the College of Charleston offers you outstanding opportunities to engage in the important work of the public service and civic life in the region.

We are also deeply committed to exploring issues of racial justice, social equity, institutional racism, and unconscious bias, and to do so with intent to dismantle systems of oppression and revise policies that perpetuate injustice. Charleston is the “Holy City”, a city with a history of violence as well as a history of resistance and resilience; a city where almost half of all enslaved Africans brought to British North America first arrived; and a city where racial disparity and segregation continue to define education, transportation, housing, and policing for all who live here. As public servants responsible for promoting the public good we have a responsibility to continuously learn about and disrupt the role of policy and bureaucratic decision making in reinforcing systems of white supremacy and oppression that dehumanize people of color, and Black people in particular. And, we must develop a deeper understanding of how race has shaped and continues to shape decision making. Together we will think critically about our own identities, power, and the ways both shape the production of knowledge.
Structurally, the MPA Program is housed within the Department of Political Science in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The program office is located at 14 Coming Street. Dr. Judy Millesen is the MPA Director. Her email is millesenjl@cofc.edu and her telephone number is 843.953.6697. Marla Robertson, the Program Coordinator and Community Assistance Program (CAP) Director, is also available to answer specific questions about the MPA program; her telephone number is 843.953.6690; and her email is cochrannm@cofc.edu.

MPA program faculty and staff are here as a resource for you as you embark on an educational experience that will prepare you for an exciting future, whether you are building the foundation for a new career or charting the path to the next stage of your current career. We hope you will find our program exciting, engaging, and challenging and we look forward to our collective work. In addition, we hope that this is just the beginning of a long and mutually beneficial relationship you will forge with the program and the College.

There will be plenty of opportunities for you to stay engaged with our work once you have graduated. You might consider guest speaking in a class, offering a workshop, hosting an intern, or something else all-together. The bottom line is that we hope you will stay engaged. Congratulations on entering the MPA program and joining the College of Charleston!

**COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON MPA PROGRAM MISSION**

The mission of the MPA Program at the College of Charleston is to prepare public service leaders. Upon graduation our students will have the ability to think critically and creatively about public issues; the dedication and capacity to serve a diverse community; and the skills to enter a professional position in a public organization. Our program provides the academic and applied skills necessary for upward mobility in the public service sector. To accomplish this mission, our program provides the following:

- A rigorous core curriculum that combines applied learning with an examination of the theoretical underpinnings of public service and provides concentrated areas of study in arts management, environmental policy, nonprofit management, and urban and regional planning;
- An environment that nurtures a commitment to public service;
- Opportunities to support collaboration and the creation of partnerships among communities and public service organizations.
PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES
The public service values emphasized by our program are reflected in our mission, goals, curriculum, and program activities. The MPA Program advances:

Democratic Institutional Values: public administration professionals must contribute to institutional efforts that serve the public interest and the expectations of the public and its representatives.

Professional Values: public administration professionals must serve with competence, excellence, efficiency, objectivity, and impartiality.

Ethical Values: public administration professionals must act at all times in ways that uphold the public trust.

Social Justice Values: public administration professionals' exercise of authority and responsibility must be dictated by respect for human dignity, fairness, and social equity.

STUDENT LEARNING COMPETENCIES
The MPA program at the College of Charleston is fully accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). To that end, we have adopted the recommended five core competencies and implemented a competency-based curriculum so that when our students graduate from the MPA Program, they will have demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for career success in public and nonprofit administration. Specifically, our students should hold the program accountable to ensuring student learning and professional preparedness in the following five core competencies:

- Lead and manage in the public interest
- Participate in, and contribute to, the policy process;
- Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make evidence-informed decisions in a complex and dynamic environment;
- Articulate, apply, and advance a public service perspective;
- Communicate and interact productively and in culturally responsive ways with a diverse and changing workforce and society at large.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND ACADEMIC POLICIES
The MPA Program welcomes students from all academic and professional backgrounds interested in public service. Executive MPA students should have five or more years of accumulated professional experience, yet each application will be considered in its entirety. Incoming graduate students are expected to have had previous course work in the social sciences, business administration, or public policy. Generally, a minimum of six undergraduate classes or the equivalent is expected, although exceptions can be made for those with coursework in closely related fields or with practical political or administrative experience.
Graduate students are expected to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0, or a “B” average. Regular degree-seeking students whose GPAs fall below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Students who are on probation must raise their averages to a satisfactory level (3.0 or better) upon the completion of three additional courses, or within one calendar year from the date they were placed on probation. A student who fails to make this progress will be withdrawn from the program. Students receiving three grades below the grade of “B” or one grade of “F” in their program will be withdrawn from the College and will not be permitted to reapply to their programs for one calendar year.

Those who are conditionally admitted into the program should meet with the Program Director prior to registering to determine academic expectations and must earn the grade of “B” or better in each course taken during their first twelve hours. Failure to meet this requirement will result in dismissal from the program. Calculation of the GPA for purposes of establishing academic standing in the program will only include classes taken after formal admission (this excludes courses taken as a non-degree student). In addition, nine of the first twelve semester hours will be restricted to core courses.
EXECUTIVE MPA STRUCTURE

Hybrid Format
The Executive MPA format is designed for working professionals, allowing students to maintain full-time employment and earn the MPA degree in two years. Executive MPA students will take classes in a hybrid format consisting of online learning and in-person seminars. Students meet on six Saturdays throughout the semester with online learning taking place between each in-person session.

Express Schedule
The Executive MPA follows the Graduate School’s Express Schedule. The traditional semester is split into two terms, Express I and Express II, each 7-8 weeks in length. Students are enrolled in one course per Express term, thus taking two courses each fall and spring semester.

In the first semester, students will take one additional course that will span both terms called The Practice of Public Administration. This course will focus on the providing students with an overview of the professional competencies required graduation. The sessions will be integrated into each Saturday session and feature a series of guest speakers discussing special topics. See Appendix for sample schedules.

Saturdays at the Lowcountry Graduate Center
The in-person Saturday seminars be held at the Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Center for Livable Communities. The Riley Center is located at 176 Lockwood Drive in downtown Charleston. This modern facility features advanced classroom technology, communal space, and free parking.

Each Saturday class will be held 9:00am – 5:00pm, with lunch and breaks in between. Breakfast and lunch will be provided by the MPA program during scheduled class meeting times.

Course Registration
The Executive MPA is a cohort model where students begin and complete their programs together as an intact community of learners. The program will register students for classes, ensuring all program requirements are satisfied. It is important to keep in mind that although the hybrid format provides a more convenient structure for full-time employees, students are enrolled in a full-time academic program, with 6-9 credits in the spring and fall semesters, and 3 credits in the summer (May – June). See Appendix for MPA core course descriptions, a course checklist and an example schedule.
MPA PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
The MPA is a professional degree requiring:

- 33 semester hours, including the following:
  a. 21 hours of core required courses.
  b. 12 hours of electives

- A minimum grade point average of 3.0

Transfer Credit
The Director must approve all transfer credits completed at another institution: a maximum of 12 credit hours can be transferred into the program. Decisions on transfer credits are made after the student has been admitted to the program.

Core Curriculum
The program’s core curriculum is designed to explore the essential elements of public management and policy, as well as to prepare students for increasingly complex responsibilities in state and local government, nonprofit organizations, public/private partnerships, and in regional and federal agencies. The core curriculum emphasizes both the skills and knowledge required to effectively manage and develop organizational resources and to understand the larger constitutional and political setting in which policy is developed and administrative tasks are defined and assessed. Throughout the curriculum, students are regularly challenged to examine issues of unconscious bias, institutionalized racism, and structural oppression.

The Executive core curriculum consists of the 21 semester hours of coursework listed below:

- PUBA 600 Public Service Roles and Responsibilities
- PUBA 601 Research and Quantitative Methods for Public Administration
- PUBA 602 Public Policy
- PUBA 604 Managing Human Resources
- PUBA 605 Managing Financial Resources
- PUBA 701 Capstone Seminar
- PUBA 720 The Practice of Public Administration

Elective Courses
In addition to the core courses, students will take 12 hours of elective courses. Elective courses offered in the Executive format will be determined by student interest and faculty availability.

Capstone Requirement
All students must register for a culminating experience to complete the MPA program, choosing either Capstone Portfolio or Thesis (although it is highly unlikely that an Executive MPA student would complete a thesis). The Capstone Portfolio documents student learning throughout the program, focusing on how each student achieved mastery of the five MPA/NASPAA competencies. A list of these competencies can also be found in the Appendix.
FACULTY AND STAFF

Gerald Gordon, Instructor and Riley Fellow, PhD Catholic University of America
he/him/his

Dr. Gordon joined the faculty of the Graduate School of Public Administration and also serves as a Fellow at the Joseph P. Riley Center for Livable Communities. He teaches classes in Economic Development and Strategic Planning. Dr. Gordon was born and raised in Washington DC and attended The Citadel. After graduating, he returned to the DC area and worked for the United States Department of Labor and Arlington County before going to the Economic Development Authority in Fairfax County, Virginia, where he served as President and CEO for 35 years. Dr. Gordon was instrumental in creating the Emerging Business Forum and bringing the 1998 World Congress on Information Technology to Fairfax County. Dr. Gordon received a Fulbright Senior Scholarship in 2008 and has taught at Catholic University, the University of Maryland, George Mason University, and Virginia Commonwealth University; and consulted with city and state governments throughout the United States and around the world, as well as the governments of Poland, the island of Vieques in Puerto Rico, and Micronesia. Dr. Gordon is the author of 15 books, mostly on strategic planning and economic development, although the last two books have been biographies. Dr. Gordon also chaired the boards of the Fairfax Symphony, the Arts Council of Fairfax County, the Foundation for Fairfax County Public Schools and the George Mason University Honors College. He also has served on the board of the International Economic Development Council and is a Fellow Member and Honorary Life Member of the organization. In 2000, Virginia Business Magazine cited Dr. Gordon as the “Virginia Businessperson of the Year.” Dr. Gordon and his wife (who attended the College of Charleston) live on Seabrook Island and have two grown sons and two grandchildren. Dr. Gordon can be reached at gordongl@cofc.edu or at (703) 314-6975.

Gibbs Knotts, Interim Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ph. D., M.A. Emory University
he/him/his

Dr. Knotts joined the Department of Political Science as Department Chair in 2012 and currently serves as the interim Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. He teaches undergraduate courses in American politics and graduate courses in the public administration program. He has published works on political participation, southern politics, public administration, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. He has co-authored two books: First in the South: Why South Carolina’s Presidential Primary Matters (University of South Carolina Press, 2020) and The Resilience of Southern Identity: Why the South Still Matters in the Minds of Its People (University of North Carolina Press, 2017). He received the College of Charleston’s Distinguished Research Award in 2017. Prior to arriving at the College of Charleston he worked at Western Carolina University where he served in a variety of administrative roles including MPA Director, Graduate School and Research Associate Dean, Political Science and Public Affairs Department Head, and College of Arts and Sciences Interim Dean. When not at work, he enjoys traveling with family, fishing, running, listening to live music, and exploring the Lowcountry. Dr. Knotts can be reached at knottshg@cofc.edu
**Hyokyung Kwak, Assistant Professor, PhD University of Kentucky**

she, her, hers

Hyokyung Kwak joined the College of Charleston in August of 2020 as an assistant professor. She will teach POLI 101 American Government and POLI 210 Introduction to Public Administration in Fall 2020. A South Korean native, Dr. Kwak completed her BA in British and American Literature at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies and her MPA at SungKyunKwan University in Korea. Having interests in experiencing different cultures and studying abroad, she took opportunities to visit Switzerland, the UK, and Thailand, working as a student fellow or intern. She obtained her MA in Political Science at Syracuse University and her Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration at the University of Kentucky. Her primary research interests relate to the provision of social welfare for economically disadvantaged individuals and related politics, with a primary focus on the United States. Specifically, Dr. Kwak’s work seeks to understand political and socio-economic conditions that shape state welfare policies, the interplay of politics and institutions as they impact welfare policy making, and the ways in which welfare policy affects well-being of economically disadvantaged individuals and families. Her recent project explores the impact of second-order devolution on inequality in welfare provision within and across states. In her free time, Dr. Kwak enjoys cooking and loves to hear Soyoon, her 6-year-old daughter, talking about her new recipes. In the near future, she wants to take up painting and capture the beautiful scenery around Charleston on canvas.

**Judith Millesen, Professor and MPA Director, PhD University at Albany**

she, her, hers

Dr. Millesen identifies as a member of the LGBTQ community and joined the College of Charleston in January 2018 as the MPA Director. She is the proud parent of Ben and Amy, both adopted from Vietnam, and both entering their junior year as music performance majors at James Madison University. A native of Atlantic City, New Jersey, and a first-generation college student, she completed her BS in Business at Richard Stockton University. Upon graduation she worked for ten years as a nonprofit fundraising professional, both at the local community level and for a State College. She obtained her MPA at the University of Hartford, and her PhD at the University of Albany. Millesen spent the first 18 years of her academic career at Ohio University. Some of her most cherished experiences from Ohio University include serving as the MPA Director; traveling to Indonesia with a team of faculty interested in developing international NGO experiences for students; and serving as a faculty facilitator for the State Department’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Connect Camps in seven different African countries. Millesen’s current research focuses on making a strong link between theory and practice and is focused on nonprofit administration and capacity building in the sector with special interests in board governance and community philanthropy. When not at work, she enjoys traveling with family, visiting Ben & Amy, or being outside working in the yard, walking her dogs (Mike & Callie), playing softball, or training for her next triathlon. Dr. Millesen can be reached at millesenjl@cofc.edu or at 843.953.6697
**Matthew Nowlin, Associate Professor, Ph.D. University of Oklahoma**  
*he/him/his*

Dr. Nowlin has been at the College of Charleston since August of 2013. He is a native of Tulsa, Oklahoma and a first-generation college student. Dr. Nowlin completed his BA in Psychology and MA in Political Science at the University of Central Oklahoma. While an undergraduate, he worked full-time as a certified pharmacy technician in a supermarket pharmacy. After graduation he worked as a case manager at the Department of Human Services and then as a data analyst at the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission while working on his Masters. Dr. Nowlin completed his PhD in Political Science at the University of Oklahoma in 2013. His research and teaching interests are in public policy, with a particular interest in environmental policy and politics. He teaches courses in American government, research methods, public policy, and environmental policy. Dr. Nowlin’s current research interests include stakeholder engagement, public opinion, hazard mitigation, and governance of social-ecological systems, with a specific focus on climate change and climate policy. When not thinking about climate change, he likes to spend time with his wife, Robin and their black-lab mix, Lincoln. He also enjoys reading, music, napping, binging TV shows, and superhero movies. Dr. Nowlin can be reached at nowlinmc@cofc.edu or 843.953.0279.

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**Robert (Bob) O’Neill, Instructor and Riley Fellow, MPA Syracuse University**  
*he/him/his*

Mr. O’Neill joined the College of Charleston in 2018 as a Riley Fellow and an MPA adjunct professor. He grew up in an Air Force family and lived throughout the US, France, and Germany. He started his public service career as a 20-year-old intern in the City Manager’s Office in his hometown of Hampton, Virginia. The work was exciting and a career interest in effective government was launched. Mr. O’Neill completed his undergraduate degree in Political Science from Old Dominion University and earned an MPA from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. He returned to Hampton after graduate school and held several positions, becoming the City Manager in 1984. Getting an opportunity to be the Manager in your hometown is a wonderful and humbling opportunity. The “reinvention” of Hampton during his thirteen-year tenure was widely recognized and described in several books and publications. Mr. O’Neill was the County Executive of Fairfax County, Virginia from 1997-2000 and focused on financial restructuring and revitalizing older areas of the County. In 2000, he became the President of the National Academy of Public Administration and in that capacity served as Counselor to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget for management issues from May to September of 2001. In 2002, he was named Executive Director of ICMA. Mr. O’Neill led efforts to develop leadership and management development programs for local government professionals and provided technical assistance and support to local governments around the world. Among Mr. O’Neill’s commendations are the National Public Service Award from ASPA/NAPA, the Spirit of Public Service Award from the Maxwell School, and an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Old Dominion University. He is married to Karen, a retired nurse and professional chef, and is the father of four daughters, and grandfather to seven wonderful grandkids! Mr. O’Neill can be reached at oneillrrjrj@cofc.edu.
Jordan Ragusa, Associate Professor, Ph.D., he/him/his

Dr. Jordan Ragusa joined the political science department at the College of Charleston in 2011 after graduating from the University of Florida with his PhD in political science. In 2019 he was appointed to serve as the political science department’s associate chair. He is a second generation academic—his father, Dr. Donald Ragusa, was a psychology professor at Bowling Green State University (in Ohio) and served as the university’s Dean of Students. He and his partner, Christine, are the proud parents of fraternal twins: Myles and June. Dr. Ragusa’s academic work focuses on research methodology, Congress, political parties, and national elections. He is the author of two books—"Congress in Reverse: Repeals from Reconstruction to the Present" (University of Chicago Press) and “First in the South: Why South Carolina’s Presidential Primary Matters” (University of South Carolina Press). In addition to his academic work, Dr. Ragusa frequently partners with local non-profits and government organizations, consulting on a range of topics including survey design, quantitative analysis, and policy implementation. In recent years he has worked with a diverse mix of organizations including Alliance for Full Acceptance, Lowcountry Local First, Charleston County Human Resources, and the City of Charleston Police Department. Dr. Ragusa can be reached at ragusajm@cofc.edu or 843.953.5219.

Douglas Rivet, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., University of Western Ontario he/him/his

Dr. Rivet joined the College of Charleston in August of 2019. Born and raised in the middle of automotive alley in suburban Detroit he developed an interested in transportation systems and their effects on planning and urban environments. These interests lead him to earn a BS from Eastern Michigan University, MA from Western Michigan University, and PhD in Geography from the University of Western Ontario. His research interests are focused on the relationship between urban environments, policy, and development and rehabilitation outcomes. His personal experiences with disability and mobility have also made him a passionate advocate for urban systems that accommodate all means and methods of transport for people across the urban space. He teaches courses on urbanization, planning, geography, and geographic information systems. In his spare time, he nurtures a unique relationship with college football and a tortured relationship with Detroit professional sports. Dr. Rivet can be reached at rivetdm@cofc.edu or 843.953.1036.

Kendra B. Stewart, Professor, Ph.D., University of South Carolina she/her/hers

Dr. Stewart is Professor of Political Science and Public Administration and Director of the Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Center for Livable Communities at the College of Charleston. Her research interests include South Carolina government, non-profit management, state and local government, food policy, and women and politics. She is co-editor of a book entitled The Practice of Government Public Relations. The articles she has authored have appeared in various journals including Urban Affairs Review, Public Finance and Management, Perspective in Politics, Journal of Public Affairs Education, Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition as well as in various scholarly books. Dr. Stewart is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), an independent, nonprofit, and non-partisan organization chartered by Congress to assist government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. She was also elected to serve as President of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) for 2020-2021. Dr. Stewart has conducted political analysis for a variety of print, radio and television media, including Good Morning America, Fox News Channel, the Associated Press, The New Yorker, and National Public Radio. Dr. Stewart received her undergraduate degree from the University of Central Florida and her Master of Public Administration and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of South Carolina. Prior to her current position, Dr. Stewart was
a faculty member at Eastern Kentucky University and worked for the state of South Carolina Budget and Control Board. In addition, she has conducted program evaluations and strategic planning assistance to a variety of public and nonprofit organizations. Dr. Stewart is very involved in the community as well, serving on the boards of several professional and non-profit organizations. She has two children (Paxton and Paisley) and three stepchildren (Grace, Henry and Ella), and two dogs, a chameleon and a sugar glider. She enjoys traveling, cooking and reading. Dr. Stewart can be reached at stewartk@cofc.edu or 843.953.6691.

**Maren Trochmann, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., University of Colorado Denver**  
*she/her/hers*

Maren Trochmann joined the College of Charleston as an Assistant Professor in August of 2019. Her research interests include bureaucratic discretion, social equity, and public management. Her research focuses on the links between citizen engagement, social equity, and policy formation and implementation. She teaches courses on public administration, ethics, housing policy, research methods, and human resources. Dr. Trochmann earned her bachelor’s degree from Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service and her PhD from the University of Colorado Denver. Prior to joining the College of Charleston, Dr. Trochmann worked for almost a decade as a manager in the federal government in the low-income housing sector. She strives to imbue her scholarship and teaching with insights and experience from her time as a practitioner. When she isn’t working, she enjoys listening to too many podcasts, playing volleyball, traveling (when there are not global pandemics), binging *The Office* reruns, and spending time with her partner and dogs, preferably at the beach. Dr. Trochmann can be reached at trochmannmb@cofc.edu or 843-953-1036.

**Marla Robertson, Program Coordinator and CAP Director, MPA College of Charleston**  
*she/her/hers*

Marla is a 2006 undergraduate of the English Department and a 2019 graduate of the College of Charleston’s MPA Program. She spent the last 13 years working on campus at the College in Academic, Student, and Business Affairs. Marla is a board member of the Post Landfill Action Network (PLAN), which focuses on educating campuses and students on zero-waste and landfill aversion initiatives. Marla has served as the Black Student Union staff advisor for the last 6 years. She also serves on the executive board for the Gender Sexuality and Equity Center (GSEC) at the College of Charleston. She volunteers in other capacities as needed across campus and remains vehemently dedicated to the support, encouragement, and advancement of black students on the College of Charleston campus. Marla can be reached at cochranm@cofc.edu or 843-953-6690.
Being an MPA Student at the College of Charleston

All students are held to the highest academic and professional standards. Academically, students are expected to submit work on the date due and in ways that conform to assignment guidelines. All written assignments must follow APA guidelines and should be appropriately formatted with no spelling or grammatical errors; appropriate sentence structure; and writing that is concise yet thorough. Attached as Appendix A is a writing tip sheet.

The MPA provides a dynamic educational environment that substantively combines academic vigor with applied practical fieldwork. As an Executive MPA student, you are also a representative of the College and of the program. It is our expectation that you uphold the institutional, professional, ethical, and social justice values of our program; and that you serve with kindness and benevolence.

A meaningful and successful graduate experience is dependent upon individual student commitment to be engaged, professional, and responsible. Students are provided with materials and orientation sessions to increase their understanding of all facets of academic and applied learning experiences. The final responsibility for a successful education and experience lies with the student.

Program Assistance

MyCharleston
MyCharleston is the College of Charleston’s quick, easy way to access a variety of departments online. Your student ID and password allow you to log on to a personalized account and complete a variety of tasks. These include searching the course catalog and registering for courses, checking grades, paying tuition, and obtaining a degree audit.

Withdrawing from Courses
It is extremely important that any student withdrawing from a course procure a withdrawal form from the graduate school office. The importance of formally withdrawing from a course cannot be overstated. Students who withdraw from classes without notifying the graduate school office will receive the grade of "F" from their instructors. It is expected that students will familiarize themselves with due dates and deadlines.

Special Accommodations
If you need accommodations for your courses due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability Services at SNAP@cofc.edu or (843) 953-1431. MPA instructors are very willing to make any adjustments necessary to address student needs.

Student Grievance Procedure
Students may obtain a copy of the grievance procedures from the Graduate School Office at 843-953-5614. Students may also refer to the College of Charleston Student Handbook for policies and procedures http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php
Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society
Pi Alpha Alpha is the national society formed to recognize and promote excellence in the study and practice of public affairs and administration. The MPA program has hosted a local chapter of the honor society since 1994. Membership is open to graduate students who have completed 30 hours of coursework, maintained a GPA of at least 3.7, and who are in the upper twenty (20%) of their class. Induction into Pi Alpha Alpha occurs every spring semester. You will be contacted by the program director if you are eligible, and invited to join and participate in the induction ceremony. This honor is especially important as you make yourself uniquely qualified for potential employment.

Graduation
Students must apply for Graduation to the Graduate School Office by the dates indicated on the academic calendar for the semester in which they expect to graduate. If a candidate for graduation fails to complete his or her degree requirements, the graduation application must be canceled at least two weeks before the end of the semester. The application must be resubmitted in the semester the requirements are completed. Students must also pay a graduation fee at the time of submission or resubmission of the application. Fees may be paid at the Treasurer’s Office. No bill will be sent. Additionally, students MUST be enrolled in courses or in one-hour of continuous enrollment (PUBA 900) in the semester in which they intend to graduate.

Academic Support Services on Campus
The Center for Student Learning, the Reference Desk at Addlestone Library, and the Office of Career Services offer valuable campus wide services. See “College of Charleston Facilities” page 30 for contact information.

Career Development
Graduates of the MPA program have found employment in a wide variety of public settings at all levels of government as well as with nonprofit organizations. Securing meaningful employment requires efforts by program faculty, staff, and the student. In addition to the Director, program faculty can provide valuable academic and professional guidance. It is particularly important to develop clear career goals to help design the Executive course of study, and to advance your skills and competencies to be competitive in the job market or enhance your organization. It is also important to begin networking with professionals in the public sector – which includes your faculty, fellow students, and guest speakers.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the following organizations and opportunities to develop academic skills, practical experience, and professional contacts. Additionally, the College of Charleston Career Services office offers a wealth of knowledge and is available to both undergraduate and graduate students. Be sure to take advantage of their expertise and helpfulness.

Workshops, Speakers, and Roundtables
Periodic workshops, training sessions, and speakers are sponsored through the MPA program, MPASA and the Graduate School. Topics are open for student input and designed around their needs. Some recent topics included: grant writing, public/private partnerships in the Lowcountry, GIS training, time management, growth management in the Lowcountry, community nonprofit organizations, and an open meeting with a career panel.
Master of Public Administration Advisory Committee
The Master of Public Administration Advisory Committee is composed of alumni from the MPA program and established members of the public and nonprofit sectors in the Lowcountry. The Advisory Committee serves as an important bridge between the program and professionals working in the field and provides advice on a number of program issues.

Lowcountry Chapter, American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)
The Lowcountry ASPA is the local chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. ASPA membership provides extensive networking opportunities in the Lowcountry, access to national organization resources, and a subscription to Public Administration Review, the leading journal in the field. Applications are available from the MPA office and online at www.aspanet.org. The Lowcountry Chapter is eager to include MPA students in their membership, and currently maintains two board seats for students in the MPA program. You are encouraged to contact Judy Millesen, the Chapter President at 843.953.6691 to ascertain if these positions are currently available and for further information about ASPA opportunities and membership. Fees for ASPA membership are reasonable – $40 for an electronic only membership and $75 for a full student membership.

The Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Center for Livable Communities
As the primary outreach vehicle of the College, the Center provides public assistance to local and state governments and nonprofit organizations. The Center’s technical assistance and research capabilities include survey research, formal evaluation design, data collection and analysis, planning, personnel studies, compensation studies, economic impact analysis, and budgeting.

Students are encouraged to become involved in Center activities. In addition, the Center often sponsors national and local conferences that are open for student participation and attendance. Please see Dr. Kendra Stewart, Director of The Riley Center, for more information or visit the website at riley.cofc.edu.
APPENDIX

College of Charleston
MPA Program
Operationalization of the NASPAA Competencies

The Master of Public Administration at the College of Charleston operationally defines the five NSPAA competencies, within the context of the program’s mission, vision, and values as follows:

Lead and Manage in the Public Interest
Mastery begins with a value system that shapes behavior, and then relies on vision, leadership, and technical skills to affect positive change. Upon graduation students will be able to:
- Describe approaches to and context of public sector leadership
- Demonstrate proficiency in executing administrative functions and motivating people
- Value people and display effective leadership qualities

Contribute to, and Participate in, the Policy Process
Mastery requires a strong sense of civic duty coupled with the technical skills to tackle complex social problems and an overarching respect for policy as a useful tool for change. Upon graduation students will be able to:
- Explain various policy frameworks, the policy process, and democratic systems
- Analyze policy problems; conduct and evaluate policy research
- Demonstrate an appreciation for how the past and present affects policy development and direction as well as the importance of including people affected by policy to participate in the process

Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems, and Make Evidence-Informed Decisions in a Complex and Dynamic Environment
Mastery requires an ability to make difficult decision alongside of those affected by the decisions in ways that are informed by logic, research, and reason with the ultimate goal of advancing the common good. Upon graduation students will be able to:
- Describe the scientific method/evidence-based methods and identify reliable data sources to inform decision making
- Employ appropriate qualitative or quantitative data collection and analysis methodologies to aid in decision making or problem solving
- Demonstrate a spirit of inquiry that values diverse perspectives, reflection, and transparency

Articulate, Apply, and Advance a Public Service Perspective
Mastery requires a commitment to justice when considering solutions to systemic inequalities that threaten the common good. Upon graduation students will be able to:
- Define the role of the public sector in creating public value
- Explain how the reconciliation of competing values, expectations, and goals build public trust and strengthen individual and institutional relationships
- Practice the values of fairness, justice, equity, responsiveness, empathy, and co-creation
Communicate and Interact Productively and in Culturally Responsive Ways, with a Diverse and Changing Workforce and Society At-Large

Mastery requires attention to the biases that may influence understanding, action, and decision making as well as a commitment to remedy barriers to active participation. Upon graduation students will be able to:

- Recognize bias and the ways privilege and power have shaped public sector institutions and outcomes
- Incorporates various communication tools and strategies (e.g., written reports, social media, oral presentations) that are appropriate to the context and audience in the management of public service organizations
- Demonstrate curiosity about and respect for individual and group differences; seek to engage diverse perspectives
MPA Core Course Descriptions

**PUBA 600 Public Service Roles and Responsibilities (3)**
This course explores the evolution and current status of the public sector in the United States. Students will study the ethical, legal, political, and professional dimensions of public service.

**PUBA 601 Research and Quantitative Methods for Public Administration (3)**
This course examines the various aspects of collecting and processing primary and secondary data utilized by public organizations for decision-making and program evaluation. Students will learn basic qualitative and quantitative methods for developing a valid research design, how to create and implement surveys, and basic statistical analysis techniques.

**PUBA 602 Public Policy (3)**
This course examines the activities of individuals, groups, and institutions that define or ignore public problems, participate or fail to participate in political struggles over these problems and confront or avoid opportunities to develop and implement solutions. The implications of these complexities for public employees and public management are emphasized.

**PUBA 604 Managing Human Resources (3)**
This course considers the context and practice of effective human resource management, with special emphasis on the political, legal, historical, and ethical dimensions of public employment. Students will apply personnel management theories and techniques to contemporary organizational challenges to investigate the tensions inherent to balancing competing values and demands.

**PUBA 605 Managing Financial Resources (3)**
This course examines the organization and techniques of governmental financial management, budgetary theories and intergovernmental financial relations.

**PUBA 701 Public Administration Capstone (3)**
The capstone seminar is designed to be a culminating experience that helps the student integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired throughout the program.

*PUBA 720 The Practice of Public Administration (3)*
The world of the practicing manager is complex. Making decisions with often severe limits on resources and time means that managers must consider various aspects of management - personnel, legal accountability, resource management and ethics - in rapidly changing contexts. This seminar addresses these complexities by exploring particular cases in depth.

*PUBA 720 is an elective that replaces the internship requirement for Executive students.*

To view elective course descriptions, [click here](#) or go to the Graduate School’s Course Catalog.
College of Charleston Executive MPA Course Checklist

MPA degree requirements include 33 credit hours of course work with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. Students are required to complete 18 hours of core competencies and 15 hours of electives.

### Core Courses

- PUBA 600 Public Service Roles and Responsibilities
- PUBA 601 Research and Quantitative Methods for Public Administration
- PUBA 602 Public Policy
- PUBA 604 Managing Human Resources
- PUBA 605 Managing Financial Resources
- PUBA 701 Public Administration Capstone

### Elective Courses

1. PUBA 720 The Practice of Public Administration
2. [Blank]
3. [Blank]
4. [Blank]
5. [Blank]
# Sample Schedule

### College of Charleston

#### Executive Master of Public Administration

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Executive MPA Orientation</td>
<td>Express I: PUBA 600</td>
<td>Express I</td>
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<td>Extended Summer</td>
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<td>The Practice of Public Administration</td>
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<td>Year II</td>
<td>Express I</td>
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<td>Capstone Seminar</td>
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<td>*May Graduation Ceremony</td>
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All assignments are expected to reflect these general guidelines:

General Writing Expectations:

- Follow APA guidelines for all in-text citations (i.e., quotations are framed effectively and properly attributed) and references
- Use Times New Roman 12-point font
- Indent the first line of each paragraph by 1/2 inch
- Spell out numbers under ten (e.g., six, not 6)
- Use precise, unambiguous, real words (e.g., thru is not a word)
- Do not use an undefined acronym
- Be sure your paper does not include unspecified pronouns
- Use proper tense
- Refer to people as “who” and things as “that” (e.g., Sally is a person who…; Yesterday, there was a meeting that…”)
- Insert page numbers
- Follow assignment guidelines regarding length, formatting, submission details, deadlines, etc.
- Proofread to assure submissions are free from spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors

Content:

- Submission incorporates and applies course concepts and ideas with facility
- Key points/central arguments/core concepts of the assignment (e.g., book review, presentation, literature review) are easily identified and well-articulated
- Writing demonstrates comprehensive grasp of theoretical concepts, major themes, or underlying assumptions of reference material
- Avoids extraneous detail (e.g., arbitrary reference to work experiences)
- Evidence used to support key points is rich, detailed, and well-chosen
- The conclusion logically flows from the material presented, bringing closure; which means that new concepts are not presented at the end of the paper/presentation unless relevant to the central arguments or couched in terms of directions for future research or study
- All recommendations include a clearly articulated rational that flows logically from previously presented ideas, themes, or concepts
Formatting and Flow:

- Overall organization is logical and quickly apparent, typically achieved with a strong introductory paragraph that lays out the topic, a nuanced central argument, and structure of the submission
- Connections among paragraphs are clearly articulated and transitions are smooth
- Each paragraph advances one distinct and coherent point that is clearly expressed
- All concepts are referred to in the same way (e.g., employee satisfaction is referred to as employee satisfaction throughout the paper; not as morale in one section and engagement in another)

General Tips about Language and Writing that are Likely to Affect your Grade:

- If you have received feedback on a previous assignment on any of the expectations above, be sure to incorporate that feedback into future assignments
- Public agencies are not “companies.” This is a public administration program; do not refer to public sector or nonprofit organizations as companies
- Refrain from using passive voice (if you do not know what this is, look it up)
- Critical writing is not always negative
- Avoid stringing together numerous quotations from various (or the same) source and submitting as your research paper, literature review, or some other summary-type assignment. These kinds of synthesis-related assignments require you to do independent research; identify key points, main ideas, or central arguments; and then reveal your interpretation of what was discovered

*See Executive Student Resource Guide for additional resources*