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The mission of the MPA program is to develop both the general knowledge and specific abilities needed for leadership in governance and community-based organizations. The curriculum is designed to prepare graduate students for careers in state, regional, and local governance; policy, advocacy, and evaluation; nonprofit management; criminal justice; and health administration. We are committed to developing in graduate students the capacities for ethical judgment, critical thinking, and the core competencies necessary to fulfill multiple roles as effective managers and public servants.

ACCREDITATION & DEGREE PROGRAM



1. Is the Master of Public Administration degree program accredited?

The MPA program is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). We have held this prestigious designation since 1995.

2. Is there a nonprofit component to the MPA degree?

Yes, we offer a 15-credit concentration in nonprofit management and leadership. An additional 6 credits of nonprofit courses can be taken to fulfill the MPA degree requirements. In other words, 21 of the 39 credits of course work for the degree could be nonprofit focused.

3. How many credits do I have to take and how long does it take to obtain the degree?

The MPA degree consists of a minimum of 39 credit hours for in-service, career professionals and 42 credit hours for pre-career students. In-service is defined as having three years of professional experience. Typically, full-time students complete the program in five semesters and part-time students taking two classes per semester complete the degree in seven semesters.

4. Can I begin the MPA while an undergraduate student at GVSU?

Yes. Qualified undergraduate students may be admitted to a combined degree program and obtain both a BS/BA and an MPA within an accelerated time limit. To learn more, click here or contact the Professor Jelier, MPA program director at jelierr@gvsu.edu.

5. Is there an internship requirement?

Pre-career students are required to take at least three internship credits, which equates to 300 hours (20 hours per week for 15 weeks).

6. Are there networking opportunities?

Students have the ability to connect with community leaders and alumni through student-led professional organizations such as the International City/County Management Association, Nonprofit Professionals Graduate Student Organization, and HPGSA.

7. Can I transfer graduate credits from another degree program?

Students can transfer up to 12 credits of graduate work from another graduate program at GVSU or another university. These credits must be approved by the MPA program director.

8. What is the format of the graduate courses?

Courses are offered in a variety of modalities including face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Courses are three hours in length and offered weekday evenings in Grand Rapids.

9. Who can I contact to discuss the program?

Contact Prof. Rich Jelier at jelierr@gvsu.edu or 616.331.6578 to discuss the program in more detail.

Enhance your skills with a degree that stands out.

APPLICATION PROCESS, REQUIREMENTS, FEES

10. What are the requirements for the application process?

To process your application and be considered for the program, applicants need to:

- Have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education
- Have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- Pay a \$30 nonrefundable application fee (unless you have previously applied to Grand Valley)
- Submit
 - a completed [graduate application](#) for admission [[graduate paper application](#)]
 - official copies of transcripts from all institutions of higher education previously attended. Transcripts must be sent from those institutions directly to the GVSU Admissions and Recruitment Office. NOTE: We do not require official transcripts from Grand Valley.
 - a detailed resume
 - three recommendation letters from informed sources
 - an essay/personal statement on career and educational objectives (250-750 words) that demonstrates commitment to community and public service
 - TOEFL scores for international students whose primary language is not English

11. Will the admissions committee review my credentials and provide a decision prior to formally applying to the program?

We can meet to discuss the requirements but we will not provide a decision prior to the application process. The only way to guarantee a response is to apply to the program.

12. Is the GRE or other standardized test required?

The GRE is NOT required but may be requested in cases where GPA is lower than a 3.0. The TOEFL is required for those students whose primary language is not English.

13. When is the application deadline?

We review applications on a monthly basis. To be considered for the fall semester (August – December), applicants should be submitted by **August 1**. To be considered for the winter semester (January – April), applicants should be submitted by **December 1**. Apply by **April 1** to start in the spring/summer semesters (May – August). Late applications are accepted as space allows.

14. How do I request a waiver for the application fee?

The \$30 nonrefundable application fee is waived if applied previously to GVSU. For first time applicants, contact the Admissions and Recruitment Office at gradadm@gvsu.edu to request a waiver for the application fee. In the email provide a brief description as to why you are requesting a waiver.

Apply now and start shaping your future with GVSU's MPA program!

TUITION AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

15. What is the current tuition rate and how much does the degree cost?

The current tuition rate is \$826 per credit hour. For those students who take 39 credits, the total cost for the MPA degree is approximately \$32,214. For pre-career students who take 42 credits, the total cost for the MPA degree is approximately \$34,692. [Learn more about financial aid at GVSU.](#)

16. Are graduate assistantship positions available?

As a department, we have six graduate assistantships. Currently all GA positions have been assigned for this academic year. Other opportunities are available throughout the University. You can find additional opportunities through [the Graduate School](#) and Workday.

17. What is the application process for a graduate assistantship?

If you are interested in a GA position, please know that we have a limited number of these positions in our department that typically begin in the fall semester. The process is competitive and there is no guarantee of securing an award. To apply for GA positions, visit Workday.

18. Does the program offer other types of financial assistance?

We have a variety of scholarships available to current students. [Visit our scholarship page for more information.](#) [Learn about additional types of financial assistance at GVSU.](#)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

19. Is the TOEFL required?

The TOEFL is required for those students whose primary language is not English.

20. Who can I contact about immigration, financial assistance, or other concerns?

The Padnos International Center at Grand Valley State University is here to help you succeed throughout your journey as a GVSU International Student. From immigration, to academics, to cultural adjustment, advising hours serve as a time for students to discuss questions and concerns. Please schedule an appointment with one of the team members by:

Calling 616-331-3898

Emailing istudents@gvsu.edu

Transform your career and make a lasting impact.