Student Handbook
2013-2014
Dear MPA Student:

Welcome to the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at the University of Southern Indiana! You are about to embark on an important course of study aimed to train and prepare you to be future managers, administrators, and leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors throughout the Evansville area, Southwest Indiana, and the Tri-State region.

The MPA program is the preferred degree program for individuals who hold or hope to acquire a supervisory position in the public or nonprofit sector. Individuals interested in these career sectors pursue the MPA to improve their management-related job skills and performance, obtain leadership positions within their current organizations, or begin their career in a public or nonprofit organization. Some pursue the MPA to strengthen their academic credentials and knowledge of the public sector in order to prepare for law school or doctoral level work.

As the newest students to the MPA program, you will be among the first students to matriculate under the program’s new curriculum, which is comprised of a core curriculum and two specializations for those seeking to be trained in either public sector administration or nonprofit administration. Over the next few years, students will enjoy more course offerings, including courses on special topics in public administration, and opportunities to do original research for credit through independent studies and thesis projects.

This program handbook will serve as a guide for you during your tenure at USI. Please consult the 2013-2014 Bulletin under “Office of Graduate Studies” and “Master of Public Administration” for further information. The USI Bulletin can be found at http://bulletin.usi.edu.

If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at (812) 461-5204 or by e-mail at mjhanka@usi.edu. Best of luck in your academic career at USI!

Sincerely yours,

Matthew J. Hanka, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Political Science
Director, Master of Public Administration Program
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Mission Statement: The Master of Public Administration Program at the University of Southern Indiana strives to meet the needs of current and future civic leaders and managers by providing students with the practical knowledge and professional and academic skills, rooted in a strong understanding of the theories of public administration, to become ethical, creative, and inspirational leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors. Our graduates are prepared to meet the economic, social, and political challenges that face leading public sector institutions and nonprofit organizations.

Vision Statement: Preparing civic leaders to meet society’s challenges in the 21st century.

Goals of the MPA program

1. Obtain knowledge of the theoretical and institutional foundations and the internal operations of the public and nonprofit sectors, and how these sectors are shaped by their economic, social, and political environments.

2. Master an understanding of how key concepts and theories in the field of public administration can be used to formulate applied solutions to problems associated with public and nonprofit administration.

3. Acquire practical skills necessary for the management of public and nonprofit organizations, such as grant writing, budgeting, public speaking, human resources management, organizational behavior, electronic communication, and report writing.

4. Learn how to gather and analyze qualitative and quantitative data (through data bases, web sites, printed material, and other information-based resources) and develop research skills that can be used to advance the knowledge and practice of public administration.

5. Understand the ethical consequences of decisions made by managers and administrators in the public and nonprofit sectors.

6. Increase faculty and student diversity.

7. Improve the recruitment and retention of MPA students.
Placement of MPA Graduates

The Master of Public Administration program at the University of Southern Indiana strives to meet the needs of current and future public managers by providing educational opportunities that enable them to become ethical, skillful, creative, and inspirational leaders. Graduates of the program possess a unique blend of practical knowledge and professional skills, rooted in a strong understanding of the theories of public administration. Our graduates are prepared to meet the economic, social, and political challenges that face leading public sector institutions.

The MPA program has placed a number of our graduates in high profile positions in the public and nonprofit sectors throughout Southwestern Indiana and the Tri-State Region (which includes Western Kentucky, Southwestern Indiana, and Southeastern Illinois). Some of the placements of our graduates include: The Chamber of Commerce of Southwest Indiana, the Mayor’s Office of the City of Evansville, the City of Evansville Department of Metropolitan Development, Old National Bank (headquartered in Evansville), offices and departments in Vanderburgh County government, the Indiana Treasurer’s office, Ivy Tech Community College in Evansville, and TRANSPO (the Transit Authority in South Bend, Indiana). One of our graduates recently served as Vanderburgh County Highway Superintendent and serves on the board of the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC).

Also, several of our graduates are employed at the University of Southern Indiana. The MPA degree has enabled them to earn supervisory positions in various departments throughout the university, such as the Office of the Registrar, Career Services, and the Division of Outreach and Engagement. Several of our students also serve as graduate assistants in various intercollegiate athletic programs at USI while enrolled as a student in the MPA program. Their degree has allowed them to earn an assistant head coach or head coach position at area high schools, and Division I and Division II programs throughout the Midwest and the United States. In addition to job placements, we have placed a couple of our students in law school (Saint Louis University and the University of Cincinnati) and doctoral programs, including the Ph.D. program in Urban and Public Affairs at the University of Louisville, the Ph.D. program in Political Science and Public Administration (PSPA) at Mississippi State University, and the Ph.D. program in Counseling Psychology at Iowa State University.
MPA Program Curriculum

The course offerings in the MPA program place a high priority on the application of the theories of public administration to real work situations. In our courses, the students complete applied exams and analyze specific case studies. They write grant proposals, develop personal leadership philosophies, and learn how to write memos in a clear and succinct manner. Our students learn to write surveys, “crunch” data, and evaluate programs. They build interpersonal communication, leadership, and teamwork skills. Through papers and presentations, our students refine their written and oral communication skills. Students who do not have extensive work experience also have the opportunity to complete an internship within a public agency in order to gain experience in the field.

The MPA program consists of 36 credit hours. Starting with the Fall 2012 semester, students in the MPA program will be required to complete a core curriculum of six courses (18 hours), a capstone seminar (3 hours) and 15 hours of elective courses in one of two specializations: public sector administration or nonprofit administration. Since most MPA students are working professionals attending school part-time, courses offered each term meet once per week in the evenings or are taught using a hybrid distance education format. Courses are offered each fall and spring semester and during the summer in four, five, eight, or 10-week sessions. Students who take two courses during the fall, spring, and summer can complete their MPA degree in two years.

Core Curriculum (6 courses, 18 credit hours)
PA 601: Organizational Behavior
PA 606: Public Personnel Administration
PA 609: Budgeting in Public and Nonprofit Administration
PA 618: Research Methods in Public Administration
PA 632: Introduction to Public Administration
PA 653: Ethics in Public Administration

Capstone Seminar (3 credit hours)
PA 697: Capstone Seminar

Two Specializations
Public Sector Administration (5 courses, 15 credit hours)
PA 527: Urban Politics and Governance
PA 564: Environmental Politics and Policy
COMM 602: Qualitative Research Methods in Communication
COMM 613: Political Communication
COMM 621: Advanced Public Relations
PA 603: Technology Issues and E-Governance
PA 611: Leadership Skills in Public Administration
PA 612: Connect with Southern Indiana
PA 614: Interpersonal Communications within Organizations
PA 615: Legal Aspects of Public Administration
PA 644: Policies and Processes in the Public Sector
PA 690: Special Topics in Public Administration
PA 695: Internship in Public Agency
PA 698: Independent Study in Public Administration
PA 699: Thesis in Public Administration (6 hours)

**Nonprofit Administration (5 courses, 15 credit hours)**
COMM 602: Qualitative Research Methods in Communication
COMM 613: Political Communication
COMM 621: Advanced Public Relations
COMM 624: Nonprofit Advancement
PA 603: Technology Issues and e-Governance
PA 605: Foundations of Nonprofit Administration
PA 611: Leadership Skills in Public Administration
PA 612: Connect with Southern Indiana
PA 614: Interpersonal Communications within Organizations
PA 615: Legal Aspects of Public Administration
PA 631: Fundraising and Volunteer Administration
PA 644: Policies and Processes in the Public Sector
PA 684: Grant Writing for Nonprofit Organizations
PA 690: Special Topics in Public Administration
PA 695: Internship in Public Agency
PA 698: Independent Study in Public Administration
PA 699: Thesis in Public Administration (6 hours)

**Note:** Students who decide to complete a thesis project and enroll in PA 699: Thesis in Public Administration are exempt from taking PA 697: Capstone in Public Administration, but will be required to take another elective course (3 hours) in one of the two specializations.

All MPA students will be required to complete a capstone seminar (with the exception of students doing a thesis project), which is centered on a specific issue, problem, or topic in the field of public administration. Students in the seminar will be required to complete a capstone project, which is based on assessing a student's ability to relate theoretical knowledge and skills to solving a practical applied problem in the field of public administration. Students will work collaboratively to present a question to a problem, collect and analyze data, present their findings and results, and propose possible solutions.

Students will have an opportunity to enroll and complete a thesis project PA 699: Thesis in Public Administration. The thesis course is designed to allow students an opportunity to conduct original academic research in an area of public administration. PA 699 is a variable credit class that is offered as a three or six credit hour course. PA 699 is repeatable up to six credit hours and will be graded on a Pass/No Pass (P/NP) basis. Students wishing to enroll in three credit hours in a semester will register in PA 699.001 and students wishing to enroll in six
credit hours in a semester will enroll in PA 699.002. Students who have not completed the thesis course during the semester in which they are registered will be assigned an “in progress” (IP) grade. An IP grade means a student cannot receive credit for the thesis course without re-registering in the course. In order to receive credit for the thesis, the student must successfully complete a written paper and defend the thesis project in an oral defense. Students will be required to choose an advisor and two faculty members to serve on the thesis committee for a total of three committee members. The advisor must be a full-time member of the MPA faculty who has taught the student in at least one course in the MPA program. The two committee members must be full-time members of the graduate faculty, and at least one committee member must be a member of the MPA faculty.

In addition to the thesis course, students can enroll in PA 698- Independent Study in Public Administration, where students can conduct independent research on an issue in the field of public administration under the supervision of a member of the MPA faculty. Students can also enroll in PA 690: Special Topics in Public Administration, a course that deals with a special topic in the field of public administration. Some of the potential topics may include Facilitation and Mediation, Government Reorganization, Housing and Community Development, Historic Preservation, and Arts and Heritage Management courses.

All students will be required to complete a comprehensive examination as a requirement for graduation from the program administered by the MPA Examination Committee, which consists of members of the MPA faculty. In the comprehensive examination, students will be required to demonstrate a mastery of universal competencies in public administration that are covered in the MPA core curriculum, as well as demonstrate a mastery of the competencies in either the public sector administration or nonprofit administration specializations.

Certificate in Public Sector or Nonprofit Administration

The MPA program plans to create a certificate program. Students interested in completing a certificate in public administration will be required to complete 12 credit hours in one of the two specializations. Students interested in seeking a certificate in public sector administration must complete the following courses: PA 632: Public Administration; PA 609 Budgeting; PA 615: Legal Aspects of Public Administration and one elective in the public sector administration specialization. Students interested in a certificate in nonprofit administration must complete the following courses: PA 605: Foundations in Nonprofit Administration; PA 609: Budgeting; PA 631: Fundraising and Volunteer Management or PA 684: Grant Writing for Nonprofit Organizations, and one elective in the nonprofit administration specialization.
Master of Social Work/Master of Public Administration (MSW/MPA) Dual Degree Program

The Master of Social Work and the Master of Public Administration programs at the University of Southern Indiana are offering the University’s first dual degree program. Beginning with the Fall 2013 semester, students will have the opportunity to complete a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in two years. Refer to the Master of Social Work and the Master of Public Administration sections of the USI bulletin for specific admissions requirements and curriculum guidelines.

Students must be admitted to both graduate programs before beginning the dual degree program. Below is the curriculum for the joint MSW/MPA degree programs. Students can enroll in the full-time liberal arts track for non-BSW degreed students or the two-year advanced standing track for BSW degreed students. A minimum of two years is needed to complete the MSW/MPA dual degree program.

New Student Orientation

All students admitted into the MPA program, either through conditional admission, guest student status, or regular admission, are required to attend a mandatory orientation the Saturday before the first week of classes in the fall and spring semesters on the USI campus.

The orientation program will provide all incoming students with an overview of the program’s mission and goals, the procedures, student and faculty expectations, a tour of the campus, a study skills seminar, the use of Blackboard and e-reserves, an overview of the university’s library resources, academic writing, plagiarism, and APA citation style, and an opportunity to meet MPA faculty.

It is the student’s responsibility to attend this orientation program. Students admitted for the summer session will be required to attend the fall semester orientation. Failure to attend the orientation program will result in not being able to enroll and take classes in the MPA program.

Students are also required to meet with the program director during the first month of the semester for advisement in their courses and academic and career goals.

Student Expectations

Students in the MPA program are expected to follow all of the standards for graduate students at the University of Southern Indiana, which includes fulfilling the program requirements (36 credit hours) and conforming to all the rules and regulations of the Office of Graduate Studies.

Student Load. A full-time course load for graduate students is eight hours of graduate course work. A half-time load is four hours to fewer than eight hours of graduate courses. The
maximum number of hours in which a graduate student may enroll without permission is 12 hours. When exceptional situations prevail, a student may request permission to enroll for additional hours. Such permission must have the approval of the advisor, the program director, and the director of Graduate Studies. The full-time course load of any combination of graduate and undergraduate courses during any semester including the combined summer sessions is 12 hours.

Students are expected to attend all classes, take notes, and are responsible for all assigned readings and other information covered in the class. Students are expected to adhere to the Department of Political Science and Public Administration’s electronic media policy (as seen on p. 19) and are expected to adhere to standards of proper etiquette and decorum. Students are expected to arrive to class on time and stay for the entire class, refrain from disruptive behavior in class, be respectful and courteous to their classmates and professor, pay attention to the lecture and other students’ presentations, contributions and comments, and pick up any papers and trash before leaving the classroom.

Students are expected to complete a minimum of fifty (50) pages of written work for each course in the MPA program. The written work may include (but not limited to) class assignments, summary papers, memos, policy briefs, research papers, and take home midterm and final examinations.

**Faculty Expectations**

Each faculty member of the University of Southern Indiana is considered to be an officer of a public educational institution, a member of a learned profession, and a citizen of the community. As an officer in the University, the faculty member is expected to abide by the established policies, rules, and regulations for the operation of the University and the conduct of its instructional programs; to participate in and contribute to the development and improvement of educational services within the scope of the accepted purposes of the University (See Mission Statement of the University http://www.usi.edu/president/mission.asp); to perform assigned duties to the best of one's ability; and to be concerned about the educational welfare and achievement of the students.

As a member of a learned profession, the faculty member should continuously endeavor to improve scholarly attainments; should participate in appropriate organized professional activities; and should contribute, through research, teaching, and service, to the expansion of knowledge and the advancement of learning. As a citizen, the faculty member will accept and uphold the principles and ideals of American democracy and will assume the duties and obligations of all citizens in promoting the general welfare in the community, state, and nation. Personal conduct and relationships with students and colleagues should conform to the accepted ethics of the academic profession and will be judged by the highest standards of personal integrity.

**Course Outlines and Syllabi.** Instructors are required to prepare course outlines or syllabi for their courses. If there are questions about the content of outlines and syllabi, the chair of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration should be consulted. Two or more
instructors teaching the same course may use the same outline or syllabus. Outlines of the course should be available to classes at the beginning of the term so students may know what is to be covered during the term. Course outlines or syllabi for each course must be on file in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. **Syllabi, books, or other teaching materials are not to be sold to students by faculty members. All such materials will be sold only through the University Bookstore.**

**Examinations.** Each instructor is required to plan strategies for complete and comprehensive evaluation of students’ performance. Students have a right to an explanation of the procedures to be used for all classes. It is suggested that a detailed explanation of evaluation procedures be given during the early stages of each semester. The final examination schedule is prepared by the Office of the Registrar, in consultation with the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, for each semester. The two-hour final examination period assigned is part of the total commitment required for completion of a course, and it is scheduled to provide a longer class period for the administration of a comprehensive examination.

An instructor may elect not to require a final written examination, but is obligated to hold the class in session during the time indicated. Exceptions may be made in courses in which individual student-work projects, term papers, demonstrations, or performances are more suitable measures of the student's achievement. No student shall be excused except for illness or conflict with a legitimate university activity, in which case the instructor may require that the excuse for absence shall be approved by the dean. Students are required to make up a missed final examination before the course grade is given. Other examinations and quizzes are given at the discretion of the instructor.

All credit classes of the University are to meet according to the time schedule published in the official Schedule of Classes. All final examinations are to be administered according to the schedule published by the Office of the Registrar. It is recognized that situations may arise which call for exceptions to these rules. Exceptions to class meeting times may be arranged with the approval of the dean and unanimous concurrence of the students in said classes. Exceptions to the final exam schedule may be arranged with the approval of the dean and the provost, provided that such changes do not conflict with other examinations of the members of said classes, and provided that the students involved are notified at least two weeks in advance. Students who feel that these policies have been violated should register their complaints first with the dean.

**Grades and Standards.** Grade distributions for all academic disciplines of instruction are available each semester from the Office of the Registrar. These reveal grading trends in each academic discipline. Selectivity of the class group and excellence of teaching are, of course, factors to be considered. Instructors, however, must be their own judge of what scholarship standards to require in their classes.

According to MPA program policy, faculty members are required to assign a minimum of fifty (50) pages of written work for each course in the MPA program. The written work may include (but not limited to) class assignments, summary papers, memos, policy briefs, research papers, and take home midterm and final examinations.
All instructors must be in a position to justify whatever grades are given. Students sometimes report that their final grades were assigned without regard to class work on which they had been given definite grades. Usually, it is advisable to make clear the basis of grade assignments early in the term. Any change in any assigned grade which has been reported to the Office of the Registrar must be made in writing by the instructor in a memorandum to the dean. The memorandum should be accompanied by the appropriate Change of Grade form furnished by the Office of the Registrar. Any such change must be approved first by the dean of the college. Final grades are to be reported to the Office of the Registrar in accord with the schedule issued by the Office of the Registrar.

**Advising.** Graduate student advising occurs differently based on the needs and resources of each graduate program and its students. Some programs assign graduate students to faculty advisors, other programs require the graduate program director to advise all graduate students, and still other programs ask graduate program directors to advise students until a specified point in the student’s program at which time the student selects an advisor coinciding with his/her area of expertise. Each program is responsible for the accurate, efficient, and effective academic advising of its graduate students. However, the methodology of graduate student advising should be determined by the graduate program, its faculty, and the discipline’s best practices.
Program Admission Requirements

Students admitted into the Master of Public Administration program at the University of Southern Indiana must complete the following admission requirements:

1. A completed Application for Admission to Graduate Studies.
2. A completed MPA Personal Information Form.
3. A copy of your most recent résumé or curriculum vitae.
4. References from two individuals who are familiar with your work.
5. One official transcript from each undergraduate and graduate institution attended. All official transcripts must be sent directly from the Registrar of the institution attended to the Office of Graduate Studies. Applicants seeking admission to the MPA program must hold a baccalaureate degree (any major is acceptable) with a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.
6. A $40.00 nonrefundable graduate application fee.
7. International Students Only: A minimum score of 79 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or a 6 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test is required.

Conditional Admission

Students who meet the admissions requirements, but have a GPA between 2.75 and 3.0 may seek conditional admission to the MPA program. Conditionally admitted students may only take two graduate courses (six credit hours). If a grade of B or better is earned in each USI graduate course taken while the student is classified as a conditionally admitted student, the student will be unconditionally admitted to the program.

Guest Student Status

Individuals may enroll in PA courses as a guest student. Guest students may take up to two graduate courses (6 credit hours) without being formally admitted to the MPA program. If a guest student is subsequently admitted to the MPA program, public administration courses successfully completed will count toward the degree requirements.

Students seeking to enroll in PA courses as a guest student must submit a Guest Student application, one official transcript from each undergraduate and graduate institution attended, and the one-time nonrefundable $40 graduate application fee. The Director of the MPA program and the Director of Graduate Studies will not allow students with an undergraduate GPA below 3.0 (on a four point scale) to enroll in PA courses as a special student. Admission as a guest student does not guarantee enrollment in PA courses. Guest students may enroll in PA courses only when enrollment caps have not been met and when students formally admitted (or expected to be formally admitted) to the MPA program have had an opportunity to enroll.
**Full vs. Part-Time Status**

A full-time course load for graduate students is eight hours of graduate course work. A half-time load is four hours to fewer than eight hours of graduate courses. The maximum number of hours in which a graduate student may enroll without permission is 12 hours. When exceptional situations prevail, a student may request permission to enroll for additional hours. Such permission must have the approval of the advisor, the program director, and the director of Graduate Studies. The full-time course load of any combination of graduate and undergraduate courses during any semester including the combined summer sessions is 12 hours.

**Graduate Assistantships**

Students admitted to a graduate program and enrolled in a minimum of five graduate credit hours per semester may qualify for a limited number of graduate assistantships throughout the university. In addition to pursuing a formal program of graduate study, a graduate assistant performs professional duties and assumes responsibilities commensurate with his/her educational background and experience. A graduate assistant receives a fee waiver and is paid wages for work performed. Applications are available in the Office of Graduate Studies. **Note: The MPA program and the Department of Political Science and Public Administration do not have any assistantships available at this time.** Students interested in applying for a graduate assistantship, please go to the Graduate Studies website at [http://www.usi.edu/gradstudies](http://www.usi.edu/gradstudies) under “Graduate Studies Forms” and look for “Application for Graduate Assistantship.”

**General Eligibility Requirements for Federal Student Financial Aid**

To receive Federal Work Study and Stafford Loans, a student must meet the following general requirements and additional program-specific requirements:

- Demonstrate financial need (except for unsubsidized Stafford loans and graduate PLUS loans).
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen (for most programs) with a valid Social Security number (SSN).
- Be working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program.
- Have a high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
- Register with the Selective Service (males between the ages of 18 and 25).
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress.
- Not be in default on a Title IV or HEA student loan or owe a repayment of a Title IV or HEA grant received for attendance at any institution.
- Complete and submit all requested forms/documents (such as Verification) to the Office of Student Financial Assistance. Check your MyUSI to see what forms/documents have been requested.
University Scholarships, Grants, and Enrollment Reciprocity

Thanks to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and the Kentucky Council on Higher Education, a reciprocal agreement between Kentucky and Indiana provides an opportunity for the residents of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, and Union counties in Kentucky to attend the University of Southern Indiana while paying “in-state” tuition and fees. Students who begin a program under the Reciprocity Agreement will be permitted to complete the program after the agreement expires contingent upon continuous enrollment in all regular terms. An eligible student:

- Must be accepted and enrolled at USI;
- May enroll in any undergraduate or graduate degree program;
- May enroll on a full-time or part-time basis;
- Shall be subject to the same admission standards as resident students;
- Shall be assessed tuition and fees at resident student rates.

Grading

The following grading standards apply to graduate work at the University of Southern Indiana:

A  Excellent  
B+  Above average  
B   Average  
C+  Below average  
C   Below average (minimal passing grade for graduate credit)  
F   Failure  

In computing scholastic averages, the following point ratios are used: A = 4.0, B+ = 3.5, B = 3.0, C+ = 2.5, C = 2.0. An average of at least 3.0 is required to remain in good standing. This is to be considered the minimum graduate program requirement and may be higher in specific programs.

According to university policy, an incomplete (I) may be given at the end of the term to a student whose work is passing, but who has left unfinished a small amount of work that can be completed without further class attendance. Students must complete the work within one calendar year, or the grade will revert to an “F” in most cases. Incompletes must be negotiated with the instructor. (See http://www.usi.edu/reg/grading.asp)

An In Progress (IP) final grade is given in graduate project classes that require enrollment in the same class in successive semesters. An IP grade means the student cannot receive credit for the course under any circumstances without re-enrollment in the course.
A withdrawal (W) is given when a student officially withdraws from a course during the automatic W period (see http://www.usi.edu/REG/withdraw.asp or http://www.usi.edu/REG/withsum.asp) and the W also is given if the student is passing at the time of withdrawal after the automatic W period has ended. A W means the student cannot receive credit for the course under any circumstances without re-enrollment in the course.

No grade is recorded for classes dropped prior to the second week of the term. A student who completes a Change of Class Schedule procedure beginning the second week of the term through the ninth week of the term will receive a W for all courses dropped. A student who completes a Change of Class Schedule procedure during the 10th week of the term through the last day of classes before final exam week will receive the grade W if passing at the time the course is dropped. However, if failing at the time the course is dropped, the student will receive an F.

Only appropriate undergraduate courses may be open for audit (AU). Graduate courses are not appropriate for audit. No graduate courses may be audited.

**Withdrawal for Non-attendance**

Students who are absent one-half or more of the class meetings of a full semester length class without excuse during weeks two through four may be notified by letter to their mailing address of the possibility of their being administratively withdrawn from their class. The students so notified will be given until the end of the seventh week (mid-term) to meet with their instructors to resolve the situation. The instructor of the class may complete the process of an administrative withdrawal of the student (at mid-term) if the situation is not resolved.

Merely not attending a course does not automatically remove the course from a student’s record. Students who do not accept the responsibility of completing a Schedule Revision or Withdrawal from the Semester/Term jeopardize their record with the possibility of incurring an F in a course not properly dropped.

**Academic Probation and Dismissal**

**Graduate Program GPA (GPGPA) below 3.0.** The Graduate Program GPA (GPGPA) is the cumulative grade point average of all USI graduate courses taken (courses numbered 500 and higher). Students must have a 3.0 overall GPA to remain in good academic standing in the MPA program. If a student’s graduate GPA falls below 3.0, a student is placed on academic probation. The director of the MPA program is responsible for notifying the student of such action. A student may remain on probation for an additional six (6) credit hours of graduate work. If the GPGPA is not above 3.0 after the additional six hours of course work, the student will be academically dismissed from the program. If the GPGPA anytime drops below 2.5, a student will be academically dismissed from the program.

**Two C’s | One F Policy.** Students who receive either 2 Cs or 1 F in their MPA graduate work will be dismissed from the program.
**Appeal Option.** A student who is academically dismissed may appeal that dismissal to the appropriate graduate faculty committee within his or her program of study. The reason for the appeal should be stated clearly in writing.

**Academic Misconduct**

Academic dishonesty including plagiarism, cheating, submitting another person's material as one's own, or doing work for which another person will receive credit will subject a student to disciplinary action which may include dismissal from the University. Academic misconduct by students in this class is defined and dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the University of Southern Indiana’s Code of Conduct. Students can view the “Academic Dishonesty Policy and Academic Affairs Student Grievance Procedure” on the Dean of Students’ website (http://www.usi.edu/stl/section_changes.asp). It is your responsibility to understand the issues concerning academic dishonesty. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. If a student is caught cheating, that student will receive an F for the assignment and will be reported to the Dean of Students’ office. A second offense will lead to an automatic dismissal from the MPA program.

**Academic Integrity & Student Grievance Procedures**

The guidelines for student grievance procedures and penalties for academic misconduct can be located on the Dean of Students page at http://www.usi.edu/stl/section_changes.asp or in the USI employee handbook. All suspected acts of academic misconduct should be documented by the program director/faculty and reported through the designated appropriate university channels.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* is designed to protect the privacy of students and their academic records. Most information on a student’s academic record cannot be communicated to others. USI will allow faculty and administrators to only communicate “directory data,” or data that does not violate student privacy, to others without a signed student disclosure form. Students, if they wish to have their personal academic information released to others, must sign a FERPA student disclosure form in the Office of the Registrar.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance**

If a student has a disability, the student is encouraged to register for disability support services in the Counseling Center. If a student requires an accommodation, please advise the instructor by the end of the first week of class. Students may be required to provide written documentation to support these accommodations. The instructor will work with the student to provide reasonable
accommodations to ensure that the student has a fair opportunity to perform and participate in class.

**Attendance Policy**

A student is expected to attend all classes. It is the responsibility of an instructor to inform the student of the consequences of absence from class. It is the responsibility of the student to keep instructors informed regarding absences from classes.

A student who knows of necessary class absences should consult instructors prior to the absence. A student who misses classes is not excused from the obligations to instructors. Instructors are expected to provide the student with an opportunity to meet class commitments, when absences are for good and proper reasons. Further, instructors are expected to maintain attendance records and to report excessive absences to the Office of the Registrar.

**Residence, Transfer, and Extension Credit**

The Office of Graduate Studies may accept for transfer as many as 12 semester hours of credit earned at other colleges and universities accredited for masters or higher level study by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools or a comparable regional accrediting association. The total grade average in such study must be B or above and no grade lower than B will be accepted. All transfer work must be approved in advance by the student's graduate advisor and by the director of Graduate Studies.

Within the Office of Graduate Studies limit noted above, each graduate program determines the number of transfer hours acceptable. The Office of Graduate Studies will accept no more than those determined acceptable by the respective graduate program. The student must consult the appropriate graduate program director for such information. All transfer hours must be appropriate to the particular program in which the student is enrolled. Correspondence study will not count toward a graduate degree at this University, and such credit cannot be transferred from another institution.

**Time Limitation and Validation (The Seven-Year Rule)**

In order to count toward a master's degree, course work must be completed within seven years of a student's enrollment in the first course(s) counting for degree credit in the program. For courses that exceed this time limit, students must either validate the previous credit or retake the course(s) to meet degree requirements. The program director identifies a faculty member who sets validation requirements.
**Interruption of Program**

Degree seeking and non-degree seeking MPA students who have not enrolled in a graduate course for one academic year (consecutive fall and spring semesters) must fully reapply to both the Office of Graduate Studies and the MPA program. Students who have not enrolled in only one academic term (fall or spring) will not need to fully reapply to the Office of Graduate Studies and the MPA program. All students who have been out a summer term and one fall or spring term must fully reapply to the Office of Graduate Studies and the MPA program.

**Graduation**

A candidate for graduation should file with the Office of the Registrar a formal application for graduation and a diploma form no later than the third week of the semester preceding his or her final semester before May or December commencement. The application for graduation may be obtained from the student’s graduate program director. The diploma form may be obtained at the Office of the Registrar or online at [http://www.usi.edu/commencement](http://www.usi.edu/commencement) and is available under graduation information on the Graduate Studies web site at [http://www.usi.edu/graduatestudies](http://www.usi.edu/graduatestudies).

**Statement on Blackboard**

The MPA courses are conducted in three formats: course that meet in person once a week during the evening; a distance hybrid format, where class meets several times during the semester in addition to online discussion sessions, and a purely distance class format; there would be no on-campus meetings and all course content is online. Students are required to have access to Blackboard and participate in the online discussions. Students must actively participate in the Blackboard discussions in these courses. If a student is “technology-challenged,” please arrange for a technology tutorial with the instructor during the first week of the semester.

For courses that use discussion boards for the distance hybrid and purely distance formats, the instructor will monitor all online discussions. The professor will make comments (as needed) on the discussion boards.

For regular courses, students will be expected to consult Blackboard for information on assignments, exams, and other information shared in class. The instructor will be using Blackboard to communicate with students regularly about any changes in the class or syllabus, so it is your responsibility to check Blackboard periodically.

**Departmental Cell Phone and Laptop Policy**

The Department of Political Science and Public Administration has a classroom ban on laptops, cell phones, and other electronic devices. *All electronic devices must be turned off and stowed in your backpack or briefcase at the start of class.* In exceptional circumstances, students may leave his or her cell phone set to “vibrate” during class. However, students must clear this with the instructor prior to the beginning of class.
Master of Public Administration Society

The Master of Public Administration Society of the University of Southern Indiana is dedicated to promoting the education of the roles and responsibilities of our federal, state, and local municipal governments so that students can utilize, conceptualize, and understand the workings of the government entities which influence our lives.

Mission Statement & Goals

The mission of the MPA Society is to facilitate an ongoing relationship between graduate students and departmental faculty in order to promote public professional development between students and local community leaders within government and nonprofit organizations throughout Greater Evansville, Southwestern Indiana, and the Tri-State region. We welcome open participation among students, regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, and sexual orientation to achieve the aspirations contained within the MPA Society.

Goals of MPA Society

- Promote opportunities for professional development in the field of public administration for graduate students.
- Facilitate partnerships between leaders in the government and nonprofit sectors with graduate students, faculty, and program alumni for educational advancement.
- Encourage and enhance the educational experience and professional endeavors of the MPA students at the University of Southern Indiana through networking opportunities and social experiences.

Membership shall be open to any student currently enrolled and accepted in three or more credit hours within the Master of Public Administration program at the University of Southern Indiana who wishes to be associated with the MPA Society, regardless of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation. Membership within the MPA Society spans exactly one calendar year from first attended meeting after membership dues are paid.

Marilyn Brenton, a MPA candidate in the program, is the current president of the MPA Society. For more information about the society or if you would like to join, please contact Marilyn at mbrenton@ivytech.edu
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Statement of Professional Ethics

The MPA program at USI follows the ethics statement prescribed by the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA).

Serve the Public Interest
Serve the public, beyond serving oneself. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Exercise discretionary authority to promote the public interest.
2. Oppose all forms of discrimination and harassment, and promote affirmative action.
3. Recognize and support the public's right to know the public's business.
4. Involve citizens in policy decision-making.
5. Exercise compassion, benevolence, fairness and optimism.
6. Respond to the public in ways that are complete, clear, and easy to understand.
7. Assist citizens in their dealings with government.
8. Be prepared to make decisions that may not be popular.

Respect the Constitution and the Law
Respect, support, and study government constitutions and laws that define responsibilities of public agencies, employees, and all citizens. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Understand and apply legislation and regulations relevant to their professional role.
2. Work to improve and change laws and policies that are counterproductive or obsolete.
3. Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
4. Prevent all forms of mismanagement of public funds by establishing and maintaining strong fiscal and management controls, and by supporting audits and investigative activities.
5. Respect and protect privileged information.
6. Encourage and facilitate legitimate dissent activities in government and protect the whistleblowing rights of public employees.
7. Promote constitutional principles of equality, fairness, representativeness, responsiveness and due process in protecting citizens' rights.

Demonstrate Personal Integrity
Demonstrate the highest standards in all activities to inspire public confidence and trust in public service. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Maintain truthfulness and honesty and to not compromise them for advancement, honor, or personal gain.
2. Ensure that others receive credit for their work and contributions.
3. Zealously guard against conflict of interest or its appearance: e.g., nepotism, improper outside employment, misuse of public resources or the acceptance of gifts.
4. Respect superiors, subordinates, colleagues and the public.
5. Take responsibility for their own errors.
6. Conduct official acts without partisanship.
Promote Ethical Organizations
Strengthen organizational capabilities to apply ethics, efficiency and effectiveness in serving the public. ASPA members are committed to:

- Enhance organizational capacity for open communication, creativity, and dedication.
- Subordinate institutional loyalties to the public good.
- Establish procedures that promote ethical behavior and hold individuals and organizations accountable for their conduct.
- Provide organization members with an administrative means for dissent, assurance of due process and safeguards against reprisal.
- Promote merit principles that protect against arbitrary and capricious actions.
- Promote organizational accountability through appropriate controls and procedures.
- Encourage organizations to adopt, distribute, and periodically review a code of ethics as a living document.

Strive for Professional Excellence
Strengthen individual capabilities and encourage the professional development of others. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Provide support and encouragement to upgrade competence.
2. Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and potential problems.
3. Encourage others, throughout their careers, to participate in professional activities and associations.
4. Allocate time to meet with students and provide a bridge between classroom studies and the realities of public service.

Source: http://www.aspanet.org/scriptcontent/index_codeofethics.cfm