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 leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors.

The MPA program is the preferred degree program for individuals who strive to make a difference in the public or nonprofit sector. Individuals interested in these career sectors pursue the MPA to improve their management-related 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 degrees.

The curriculum of the USI MPA balances the policy-focused and management-focused traditions of public administration. With a strong core in organizational behavior, research and policy analysis. Additionally, you have a choice to concentration in public or nonprofit administration. Your concentration area courses will develop mastery of those skills needed within the sector and prepare you for your continued career growth. Additionally, you are encouraged to consider an internship or an independent study in a topic of your choice.

This program handbook will serves as a guide for you during your tenure at USI. Please also consult the most recent Graduate Bulletin at http://www.usi.edu/graduatestudies for further information.
If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at (812) 465-1130 or by e-mail at taemgners@usi.edu. Best of luck in your academic career at USI!

Sincerely yours,

Trent A. Engbers
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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

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

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

- Understand the ethical consequences of decisions made by managers and administrators in the public and nonprofit sectors.
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), Vectren Corporation, local nonprofit organizations such as United Way of Southwestern Indiana and the American Red Cross of Southern Indiana, 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), and the Admission Office at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. Our graduates have also run for political office. For those graduates employed at the University of Southern Indiana. The MPA degree has enabled them to earn supervisory positions in various departments throughout the university.

In addition to job placements, past students have 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. Students in the MPA program are required to complete a core curriculum of seven courses (21 hours), a capstone seminar (3 hours) and 12 hours of elective courses in one of two specializations: public sector administration or nonprofit
administration. Alternatively, students can take the core curriculum with a six hour thesis option and 9 hours of electives. MPA courses are offered using three formats: in the classroom once-a-week in the evening or on Saturday morning; a distance/hybrid course that meets 4-6 times during the semester, while the remaining sessions are online; and a purely distance course with no class sessions and all coursework is online. Courses are offered each fall and spring semester and during the summer in four, five, nine, ten or 14-week sessions. Students who take two courses during the fall, spring, and summer can complete their MPA degree in two calendar years.

**Core Curriculum (6 courses, 18 credit hours)**
PA 606: Public and Nonprofit Personnel Administration
PA 609: Budgeting in Public and Nonprofit Administration
PA 618: Research Methods in Public Administration
PA 632: Introduction to Public Administration
PA 644: Policies and Processes in the Public Sector
PA 645: Program Evaluation in the Public and Nonprofit Sector
PA 601: Organizational Behavior

**Capstone Seminar (3 credit hours)**
PA 697: Capstone Seminar in Public Administration

**Two Specializations**

**Public Sector Administration (5 courses, 15 credit hours)**
COMM 602: Qualitative Research Methods in Communication
COMM 613: Political Communication
COMM 614: Interpersonal Communications within Organizations
COMM 621: Advanced Public Relations
PA 527: Urban Politics and Governance
PA 564: Environmental Politics and Policy
PA 565: Comparative Public Policy
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 663: Strategic Planning
PA 684: Grant Writing
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 614: Interpersonal Communications within Organizations
COMM 621: Advanced Public Relations
COMM 624: Nonprofit Advancement
PA 565: Comparative Public Policy
PA 603: Technology Issues and e-Governance
PA 605: Foundations of Nonprofit 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 663: Strategic Planning
PA 664: Nonprofit Leadership
PA 684: Grant Writing
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: Every student who chose this specialization must take PA 605: Foundations of Nonprofit Administration.

Capstone Option

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.

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.

Thesis Option

Students will have an opportunity to conduct original academic research in an area of public administration. The thesis will enable students to grasp important theoretical and methodological principles in the field of public administration. 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. 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 must select an advisor that most closely aligns with the faculty member’s research interests and areas of expertise. The advisor must be a full-time faculty member that is a member of the MPA faculty (see MPA handbook for current list of MPA faculty). Students must select an advisor for whom they’ve had at least one course in the MPA program. In addition to the advisor, students are required to select two committee members for their thesis committee, for a total of three thesis committee members. These committee members must be full-time tenure-track and tenured faculty members of the graduate faculty. The advisor and committee members must agree to serve on the committee, and the advisor and committee members must approve the thesis topic before the student can begin the project.

Students will be required to complete (Institutional Review Board (IRB) training at USI, if they haven’t already completed it, or it has been over three years since the student last completed the training. Students must note that it can take several weeks to receive IRB approval, depending on the nature of the project, and may also take additional time if the application is incomplete. IRB training must be completed before the IRB application will be reviewed. Students CANNOT begin their project until they received approval from the IRB. The student MUST receive IRB approval no later than the 6th week of the first semester they are enrolled in PA 699. Students may submit their applications for review to the IRB before the semester begins.

Students cannot register for PA 699 unless they have selected their advisor and committee members and their topic is approved. Students must have one person on the committee familiar with the methodology that the student chooses to use in their thesis project. The topic of the thesis project must be generated by the student. The advisor and committee members are responsible for guiding the student throughout the research process.

Each thesis project must consist of six sections: an introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion, and should be between 40-50 pages in length, not including title page, abstract, references, appendices, tables and figures, and other supplemental information.

In order to officially receive credit for PA 699: Thesis in Public Administration, students must complete a written thesis that complies with the Graduate Studies’ thesis guidelines, and successfully complete an oral defense that is evaluated by the advisor and the two committee members. The committee members and the advisor will be required to attend the oral defense. The advisor and the student will work with the other committee members to coordinate the oral defense.

Students will receive the grade and credit based on the quality of the written thesis, a successful defense, minor revisions to the project, or major revisions requiring a second oral defense. Students must sign and complete a thesis agreement form, understanding that the student is responsible for following these requirements, and signed by the student, the thesis advisor, the committee members, and the program director.
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 are required to demonstrate a mastery of universal competencies in public administration from the MPA core curriculum, and demonstrate a mastery of competencies in the student’s chosen specialization in either public sector administration or nonprofit administration.

The exam will be offered three times per year (spring, summer, and fall) and will last 72 hours. The open-book take-home exam will require each student to sufficiently answer three essay questions. Each question will be graded high pass, pass, or not pass. A student must pass or high pass all three question. Failure to sufficiently attempt all three questions will result in failure of the exam, without the opportunity to retake the exam until the subsequent term. In instances where a student passes or high passes one or two questions, but is unsuccessful in some other portion of the test, the student will be given one week to retake the unsuccessful question(s). Failure to pass any question on the rewrite will result in the student taking the exam again in a subsequent term.

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. 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.

More information is available on the web at https://www.usi.edu/liberal-arts/master-of-social-work/degrees-and-programs/dual-degree

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

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1 Students without a background in social work, may require three or more years to complete the joint degree.
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.

**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.

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.

**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.

Students are expected to actively participate in class, 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 electronics policy 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; 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.

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.

Program Admission Requirements

Admission Requirements

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

- A completed Application for Admission to Graduate Studies.
- A completed MPA online application which includes
  - Personal information form
  - Uploaded resume or curriculum vitae; and
  - The names and e-mails of two references familiar with your academic or professional work.
- 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. Conditional admission is sometimes granted in situations where students have a undergraduate GPA of less than 3.0 but have other experiences valued in the classroom.
- A nonrefundable graduate application fee.
- 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 for whom the admissions committee maintains some reservation about admission may be granted conditional admission. 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

An individual may enroll in PA courses as a guest student. A guest student 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.

A student seeking to enroll in MPA 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. Admission as a guest student does not guarantee enrollment in MPA 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.

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. Students interested in applying for a graduate assistantship, please go to the Graduate Studies website at 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:

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\begin{array}{ll}
A & \text{Excellent} \\
B+ & \text{Above average} \\
B & \text{Average} \\
C+ & \text{Below average} \\
C & \text{Below average (minimal passing grade for graduate credit)} \\
F & \text{Failure}
\end{array}
\]

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.

**Progress towards Degree**

During the period of study leading to the master's degree, a graduate student must show evidence of sound scholarship. The following standards must be met to retain good standing as a graduate student.
• Maintain a B average or better in all graduate work (higher GPA may be required in certain programs).
• Maintain continuous enrollment in graduate work. Any student admitted to graduate studies and to a graduate program who has not enrolled and received graduate credit for work at USI for a period of longer than one calendar year from his or her last enrollment must reapply to the program.
• Complete degree requirements, including a minimum of 30 hours of graduate credit, within seven years of enrollment in the first course(s) counting for degree credit in the program or retake or validate courses exceeding this time limit.

A student who fails to meet these standards or others specified by individual graduate programs may be placed on probation, suspended from graduate study, or dismissed from the University. The director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Council of Program Directors and Chairs will determine appeals of those decisions in such matters.

**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 maintain a minimum grade of B or better in all graduate courses and a cumulative graduate program grade point average (GPGPA)* of 3.0 to remain in good standing and progress in the MPA program.

If a student’s Graduate Program 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 academic probation for up to six (6) credit hours of graduate coursework. If the GPGPA is not above 3.0 following completion of six credit hours of graduate coursework and/or at any point where the GPGPA falls below 2.5, the student will be academically dismissed from the program and the university.

**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. Students should contact the MPA Director regarding the appeal process.

**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.

**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.

**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 apply for readmission. Students who do not re-enroll for two or more consecutive fall/spring semesters, must fully reapply to the Office of Graduate Studies and the MPA program prior to returning for the next semester.

**Graduation**

A candidate for graduation should file with the Office of the Registrar a formal application for graduation and a diploma form by May 1st for fall graduation and October 1st for spring or summer graduation. 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).

**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:** To promote professional development for MPA students, and build relationships between students and local community leaders in government and nonprofit organizations throughout Evansville, Southwestern Indiana, and the Tri-State region.

**Purpose:** To provide the following to students and alumni of the MPA program:

- Professional Development
- Networking
- Educational Advancement
- Community Involvement
Any student in the MPA Program is eligible for membership. The MPA Society welcomes open participation regardless of race, sex, religion, disability, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Tara Riggs is the current president of the MPA Society. For more information about the society or if you would like to join, please contact Sara at tlriggs1@eagles.usi.edu.

Graduate Student Professional Network

"A network is better than a resume: Represent yourself!"

The Graduate Student Professional Network of USI exists in order to assist current and potential graduate students at the University of Southern Indiana and within southwestern Indiana, in areas such as professional development, transitioning into University life and networking.

In order to allow for appropriate representation of the targeted student body, a representative from the Graduate Student Professional Network will be in attendance at the appropriate University meetings and functions.

By providing programming centered upon the targeted population, the Graduate Student Professional Network works to engage graduate students, as well as enhance their overall connection to and experience at the University of Southern Indiana.

The GSPN e-mail address is gspnusi@gmail.com. You can find the Graduate Student Professional Network on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/usigspn/
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