

CAPSTONE PAPER AND SURVEY REQUIREMENT

Part I: Capstone Paper

After the internship work requirement has been completed or waived, students must submit a paper describing their internship/professional experience and relating their coursework to that experience. The paper provides an opportunity for the student to demonstrate both analytical ability and writing skills and should consist of four parts:

Section 1: Description of Professional Work Experience (approx. 2 pages)

A description of the student's work at their internship or prior professional experience, including tasks performed, responsibilities assigned, and projects attempted.

Section 2: Applying Classwork to Career (approx. 3 pages)

A description of the skills and concepts learned in coursework that applied to the student's professional work, including what was/was not useful and what the student learned about the needs and challenges in the public sector. He or she should also describe the specific lessons gained through the elective coursework in their specialization or generalist degree.

Section 3: Mastery of the Five Core Competencies (approx. 5 pages)

Below are the Five Core Competencies the MPA program intends to teach. The student should provide an assessment with justification of whether he or she mastered each of the Five Core Competencies, including analysis of the classes and skills that applied to each respective competency.

❖ Competency One: To Lead and Manage in Public Governance

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will learn the implications of the unique political and legal environment in the public sector and its human management implications. They will be able to understand the importance and dynamics of working in groups or teams to make collaborative decisions, incorporate diverse viewpoints, and create a cohesive and professional product. Furthermore, students will be equipped to identify leadership and management demands across sectors, particularly in the public and nonprofit sectors, including their similarities and differences as well as unique intergovernmental and inter-organizational challenges.

❖ Competency Two: The Public Policy Process

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will understand the public policy process at the federal, state, and local

levels, including formulating, implementing, and evaluating policy. They will develop the ability to interpret and persuasively communicate information regarding policy alternatives through memoranda and presentations. Additionally, students will analyze policy alternatives using quantitative and qualitative tools to evaluate decisions and explain potential ramifications for diverse constituencies. They will learn to manage financial resources and develop a comprehensive budget proposal to achieve organizational goals.

❖ **Competency Three: Analyzing/Synthesizing to Solve Problems and Make Decisions**

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will utilize various methods and analytical tools to analyze and interpret data to provide effective reasoning for decision-making and policy creation. Students will learn to effectively and concisely inform the public and other stakeholders of decisions and initiatives through the presentation of data and research findings. Furthermore, they will produce policy papers involving the synthesis of information, evaluation, and analysis of critical questions or problems currently facing the field of public administration and policy.

❖ **Competency Four: The Public Service Perspective**

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will understand and appreciate the intellectual history of American public administration, competing ideological frameworks, and major issues or controversies that have emerged over time. They will learn to apply the profession's code of ethics to decisions and value conflicts unique to the public sector, ensuring practices remain accountable and transparent. Moreover, students will demonstrate an appreciation of the complex legal/political/fiscal environment of public management.

❖ **Competency Five: Communicating with a Diverse Workforce and Citizenry**

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will exhibit knowledge of principles and practices associated with effective public personnel management. Such skills will include the ability to recognize, consider, and respect differing points of view in administrative and policy decisions. Students will execute specific strategies to enhance equity within and representativeness of the public workforce to ensure all people within a government's jurisdiction are well served. Finally, students will demonstrate an appreciation for diversity and will be able to work productively in teams by displaying composure, professionalism, and effective communication skills.

Section 4: Program Assessment and Recommendations (approx. 5 pages)

An assessment of the MPA program and any recommendations to improve it, including such topics as:

- Faculty involvement and mentorship
- Class offerings and frequency
- Career and internship services
- Classroom and meeting spaces
- Specializations
- Academic resources (library, computers, etc.)

The paper should be approximately 15 pages in length. Address all aforementioned sections (all bolded titles should be used as subtitles for the paper); otherwise, the paper will be considered incomplete. A copy of the paper must be emailed to the MPA Recruitment and Career Services Coordinator at aredman@uga.edu within two weeks after the Comprehensive Exam in fall/spring semesters and within one week following the Comprehensive Exam for the summer term.

Part II: Survey Requirement

The student needs to also fill out a brief survey on the program, which can be found at:

https://ugeorgia.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_eRwrejZLWW5wH9X

This survey needs to be completed by the time the Capstone Paper is due.