

# Masters of Public Administration Handbook

Department of Political Science, International Affairs  
and Public Administration  
East Tennessee State University  
309 Stout Drive  
Johnson City, TN 37614-1702

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## Part A. Contact Information

### Administrative Staff

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East Tennessee State University  
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### MPA Faculty

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Advisor-Non-Profit; Public Management  
230 Rogers-Stout Hall  
(423) 439-5374  
[trogenp@etsu.edu](mailto:trogenp@etsu.edu)

## **Student Services**

### **Financial Aid Office**

Burgin Dossett Hall, Room 105

(423) 439-4300

[finaid@etsu.edu](mailto:finaid@etsu.edu)

<http://www.etsu.edu/finaid/>

### **Office of Housing & Residence Life**

Burgin Dossett Hall, Room 108

(423) 439-4446

[housing@etsu.edu](mailto:housing@etsu.edu)

<http://www.etsu.edu/students/housing/>

### **Office of Information Technology**

Help Desk

(423) 439-5648

[shdesk@etsu.edu](mailto:shdesk@etsu.edu)

<http://www.etsu.edu/oit/>

### **Office of the Registrar**

Burgin Dossett Hall, Room 101

(423) 439-4230

[registrar@etsu.edu](mailto:registrar@etsu.edu)

<http://www.etsu.edu/reg/>

### **Parking Services**

132 Stout Drive

(423) 439-5650

[parking@etsu.edu](mailto:parking@etsu.edu)

<http://www.etsu.edu/fa/fs/parking/default.aspx>

### **School of Graduate Studies**

Burgin Dossett Hall, Room 309

Queen Brown – Office Manager

(423) 439-4221

[brownq@etsu.edu](mailto:brownq@etsu.edu)

<http://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/Home.aspx>

### **Sherrod Library**

1-866-542-3878

<http://Sherrod.etsu.edu/>

### **Student Health Services**

Roy Nicks Hall, Room 160

(423) 439-4225

<http://www.etsu.edu/nursing/shserv/>

## **Part B. Program Description**

The Master of Public Administration is a professional degree program that integrates the theory and real world practice of public administration to prepare you for work in the public or nonprofit sectors. Students enter the program from a wide variety of undergraduate majors and backgrounds. Full-time students usually complete their 36-39 semester hours for the MPA program in 18-24 months.

This highly marketable degree produces leaders who have the skills and passion to become effective administrators in the public sector. Despite the economy's up and downs, demand remains high for skilled and trained public administration professionals. Let our education strengthen your future.

The Public Administration MPA program at ETSU offers a core of classes and three distinct concentration areas:

- Economic Development and Planning
- Local Government Management
- Nonprofit and Public Financial Management

This is an interdisciplinary program which has two broad objectives: (1) to develop the managerial and technical skills necessary for the effective administration of public and social services, and (2) to develop a professional understanding of the values and social conflicts inherent in creating and administering public policy. This program provides a basic preparation in the skills and concepts that are necessary to deal with the challenges and issues relevant to public policy and public service management careers.

Over 90 percent of our MPA alumni are currently employed in some aspect of public administration. Over two-thirds of those positions are in urban administration. Approximately a third of the alumni are city managers or municipal administrators. Others hold positions as planners, financial and personnel officers, federal and state civil servants, lead non-profit organizations, or work in the private sector.

During the course of your studies you will enjoy many unique opportunities such as meeting current city managers, planners, politicians, and other public professionals. Other opportunities include attending meetings and conventions of professional organizations (such as the American Planning Association and the International City/County Management Association), interning with a wide variety of organizations and municipalities, and networking with peers in this and other similar programs.

The MPA program is a hands-on educational experience. Within this interdisciplinary program you may pursue classes and activities offered in a number of cooperating academic departments. What you get from the program will be in direct proportion to what you put into the program.

## **Part C. Admission/Degree Requirements**

A student applying to the MPA program must meet both the requirements for admission to the university as a graduate student *and* the admission of criteria for the program. The student must submit transcripts of all academic work previously completed, scores on the verbal and quantitative sections of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or GMAT, and three letters of recommendation. Admission criteria include satisfactory undergraduate grade point average, satisfactory GRE or GMAT scores, and letters of recommendation. Questions about admission requirements should be directed to the MPA director, Dr. David Briley.

Students admitted to other graduate programs in the university may enroll in public administration courses (prefix PMGT), if they have completed the prerequisites, if any.

## **Part D. MPA Student Guidelines**

The program of study leading to the Master of Public Administration degree is designed to involve graduate students in academic work which differs from undergraduate work in both quantity and quality. Graduate students must expect the program to be more discriminative in its judgment of its advanced students than of undergraduate students.

Success or failure in the program are matters which must be left primarily to the initiative, intelligence, persistence and professionalism of the individual student. Faculty and staff will be eager to render any needed assistance.

To remain in good standing, a graduate student must maintain an overall grade point average of "A", "B", or "C" in graduate level courses. All graduate course grades earned by a student will be used in computing the grade point average. An overall average of 3.0 is required for graduation.

## **Part E. Once You Are Admitted**

Once you are admitted to the program, there are a few more steps you need to follow before attending classes. These include requisites such as registering and paying for classes, getting a student ID card, and filling out health services paperwork. The Admissions Office [website](#) has provided an outline of these steps, though not all of the steps may apply to you. For example: If you live off campus, you do not need to contact the on-campus housing office.

## **1. Complete the financial aid process**

You'll find a list of important financial aid dates [online](#), as well as a list of scholarships available at ETSU.

Note: You must attend classes regularly and meet the requirements of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress [Policy](#) to continue to receive Financial Aid.

For more information about scholarships, contact the Scholarship Office at 423-439-7094. For more information about financial aid, contact the Financial Aid Office by phone at 1-423-439-4300 or email [finaid@etsu.edu](mailto:finaid@etsu.edu).

## **2. Complete Student Health Form**

Tennessee law requires new students to provide [proof of immunization](#) prior to enrolling in classes. Contact the Student Health Services, 423-439-4225, for more information.

## **3. Apply for housing and select a meal plan**

### **• Housing**

The University offers a variety of on-campus housing which can be viewed on the [website](#) for Housing and Residence Life. Please contact the housing office for information.

Questions: Office of Housing and Residence Life, Room 108 in Burgin Dossett Hall, 423-439-4389.

### **• Meal Plans**

Students may apply for a meal plan through the [Campus Dining Services](#). Meal plans are optional.

Questions: Campus Dining Services, top level, DP Culp Center, 423-439-4389

## **4. Attend orientation**

## **5. Register for classes**

The schedule of classes is offered online about a month before registration. You must register through Goldlink OnLine. You can also register in person at the Office of the Registrar, 102 Burgin Dossett Hall.

You must meet with Director before registering. You must be advised by MPA faculty before registering for each term. This can be done via email.

Note: Graduate students must enroll in at least 9 hours to be considered a full time student.

Questions: Office of the Registrar, 102 Dossett Hall, 423-439-4230.

## **6. Get your student ID card**

Have your ID card made at the ID Office in the DP Culp University Center any time after you have registered. The ID card will allow students to access many activities on campus. Students may also use their ID as a campus debit card (ID BUC\$). A brochure explaining all the features is provided in the orientation packet or you may request a copy at the ID Services Office located on the middle level of the DP Culp Center.

Question: ID Services, middle level, DP Culp University Center, 423-439-8316.

## **7. Confirm registration, pay fees, get parking sticker**

**Registration:** All students must pay fees by the fee payment deadline. Those on full financial aid must confirm registration prior to the fee payment deadline. You may do this through GoldLink Online.

**Pay fees:** Paying your full balance before the fee payment deadline will automatically confirm you. You can pay fees online, by mail, or in person. Bills for tuition and fees are not mailed to students. To see your account statement, visit Goldlink.

To pay online, click GoldLink Online Registration/Fee Payment. You must use Visa, Discover, or MasterCard and have a student PIN.

Mail checks to Office of the Comptroller, Box 70732, ETSU, Johnson City, TN 37614. Be sure to mail your check in time to be received in the Comptroller's Office before the payment deadline.

To pay in person, see a cashier in the Comptroller's Office during fee payment periods, 202 Dossett Hall or call at 439-4316

### **Student parking**

Get a parking sticker: All students (full or part-time) who intend to park a motor vehicle (including mopeds, motor scooters, or motorcycles) on the Johnson City campus or at the ETSU/Kingsport or the Nave Center must properly display the appropriate parking permit. Parking permit fees are included in the campus access fee for full-time students. You can pick up your parking permit from the Parking Services Office, 132 Stout Drive or call at 423-439-5650.

## **8. GoldLink**

Goldlink is an online service used by ETSU to manage everything pertaining to your life as a student. You will use Goldlink to view class offerings and schedules, register for classes, complete financial aid, pay fees and tuition, etc. You may also update personal and contact information using Goldlink. Before using Goldlink you must first be issued an ID card that will have your student number on it. If you go to the registrar's office for help with registering for classes, they will walk you through the process of using Goldlink.

To get started, go to <https://selfserv.etsu.edu>

## 9. **Registration**

Students admitted to the MPA program are required to have a meeting with the program director to discuss their plans and be assigned a graduate advisor. This meeting will take place prior to registering for classes. Please call the director to make an appointment. Students who are already enrolled should seek academic advice from the appropriate academic advisor.

Students whose applications for admission have not been fully processed may register as special or non-degree students. They should make sure, however, that their applications are fully processed before the end of their first semester so that the credits earned will be counted toward graduation.

The normal course load for full-time graduate students is 9-12 credit-hours.

## 10. **Courses of Study: Required Classes**

To complete the candidacy requirements for a Masters of Public Administration Degree you must complete 36-39 credit-hours of coursework. This includes both required core and concentration area classes as well as a selection of elective classes.

There are three concentration areas offered within the MPA program:

- Economic Development and Planning
- Local Government Management
- Nonprofit and Public Financial Management

### Core Course Requirements for all MPA Students

- PMGT 5100 Introduction to Public Administration
- PMGT 5120 Public Personnel Management
- PMGT 5140 Public Organization Theory
- PMGT 5160 Public Budgeting and Finance
- PMGT 5180 Quantitative Policy Analysis for Public Managers
- PMGT 5200 Law & Ethics in Public Service

### Capstone Course Requirement

- PMGT 5800 Public Management Internship **OR**
- PMGT 5820 Public Management Consultanship

**AND** one of the following options:

- Option A: PMGT 5840 Public Management Report
- Option B: Two additional PMGT courses

#### Economic Planning and Development Concentration

- PMGT 5310 GIS for Planning and Development
- PMGT 5320 Transportation Planning and Development
- PMGT 5340 Economic Development Planning
- PMGT 5637 Local and Regional Planning
- One 3 Credit Hour Guided Elective

#### Local Government Management Concentration

- PMGT 5240 Seminar in Public Management
- PMGT 5400 Legal Considerations in Local Government
- PMGT 5500 City Management Profession
- PMGT 5520 Urban Government
- One 3 Credit Hour Guided Elective

#### Nonprofit and Public Financial Management Concentration

- PMGT 5280 Seminar in Public Risk Management
- PMGT 5300 Nonprofit Resource Development
- PMGT 5750 Public Sector Financial Management
- One 3 Credit Hour Guided Elective

### **11. Candidacy Requirements and Graduate Committee**

Being admitted to the MPA program with approval to pursue a degree program does not in any way imply that a student is admitted to candidacy for the master's degree. To be admitted into candidacy for the MPA degree, the student must:

1. Complete a minimum of 12 semester hours in the concentration area.
2. Have a scholastic average of 3.0 or higher.
3. Remove all conditions imposed at the time of admission.
4. Submit the completed forms for the admission to candidacy and an approved program of study to the associate vice president for research and dean of the graduate school before the beginning of the last semester of residency.
5. Students may not apply for candidacy until their Graduate Committee is formed. Please note that a Graduate Committee is not necessary if the student selects Option B (two additional PMGT courses).

When the application is approved, the student may be considered a candidate for the graduate degree.

Students who select Option A may not apply for candidacy until their Graduate Committee is formed. This committee is formed to aid in planning the students program of study. The committee is composed of three graduate faculty, at least two of whom must be program faculty. These faculty members will assist the candidate in planning their program of study, research, internship, and internship report.

The graduate committee is responsible for guiding the candidate through the research and writing of the internship report. They are also responsible for accepting or rejecting the manuscript.

Just a note of caution: The paper work involved in this process is extensive, detailed and time consuming. This is NOT a last minute detail. Just finding the members of your committee to sign the necessary documents is a challenge. Start early, don't change anything, and you'll have no problem.

## **12. Internship, Consultantship, & Report**

### **a. The Internship**

The internship is an integral part of the MPA program. Participation in an internship helps to develop the student's awareness of the internal dynamics of a city's or agency's organization. It also conveys the atmosphere in which the public manager must work, the substantive responsibilities of their job, the administrative and political arena of various projects and their relationship with superiors, co-workers, and subordinates.

The internship program mutually benefits the student and the organizations they are placed in. The intern is given the opportunity to test career objectives, to obtain professional experience and contacts, and to develop a greater sense of responsibility and independence. The organization receives assistance in administration, benefits from the intern's academic and theoretical learning, prior job experience and derives temporary staff help from the internship arrangement.

All MPA students are required to complete an internship, unless permission has been granted to serve a consultantship. Internships must consist of at least 300 hours, can last up to six months in duration, and will count for 3 credit hours. In order to receive academic credit, an internship must have prior approval of the director. The student must have his committee formed prior to beginning the internship, if writing the report.

Each student is responsible for coordinating his/her internship through the program director and the student's committee. Efforts to secure an internship should begin a semester prior to the start of the internship.

As the intern, you are expected to conduct yourself professionally at all times. This is to be treated as your FULL-TIME JOB. You are to make yourself available at all times to the organization for any assignment they ask.

### **b. The Consultantship**

The consultantship (PMGT 5820) is to be conducted with the same high degree of professionalism as the full-time internship. The same standards for committee/director

approval, supervision, acquisition, and report apply to the consultants, as well as the internship.

The Consultants were designed for those students who are employed full-time, or those who have sufficient employment in the public sector. The decision to grant a consultants is based solely at the discretion of the program director at the time of admission.

The Consultants differs from the internship in two major areas:

- 1) The consultants is held as a 20 hour per week contract between you and the organization for which you will work. You usually be given one major project to complete during the consultants.
- 2) You will receive 3 credit hours of academic credit for the consultants. Another 3 hours of course work.

The Student will be required to submit a Master's level report on the consulting experience. The same standards required for the intern report will be followed for the consultants's report. These standards are discussed in the following section.

### **c. The Public Management Report**

The report is to be considered a major paper. The length should be appropriate to the duration of the internship and subject matter of the report. The report will be prepared under the supervision of the graduate committee.

Specific details as to the style, standards, and quality of work is set forth in the ETSU School of Graduate Studies "Guide for Theses and Dissertations". READ THIS DOCUMENT PRIOR TO BEGINNING YOUR INTERNSHIP OR SELECTING YOUR TOPIC.

All students will prepare a prospectus describing the report subject, its limits and research methods. Changes in the prospectus may be made at the committee's discretion with the consent and knowledge of the student.

During the writing of the report, the student should meet with his committee to ensure that satisfactory progress is being made. After the report has been researched and written, copies must be distributed to the members of the committee.

Following review by the committee, the report must be word processed in final form, reviewed by the committee chair, and submitted to the Associate Vice President for Research and the Dean of the Graduate School for review. After review, a minimum of three copies must be filed with the graduate office for binding.

## **13. Application for Graduation**

Application for graduation must be made one semester prior to the semester the student intends to graduate. Neglecting this detail will cause you to graduate a semester later than you wanted. Details to this and many more important dates and requirements are contained in the graduate catalog: <http://www.etsu.edu/reg/catalog/graduate.aspx>

Any changes to the student's graduation status must be submitted to the Graduation Office as soon as possible. Graduation is held twice a year at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters. Permission to graduate in absentia is granted on a case by case basis. Written request to graduate in absentia must be made to the Graduation Office at the earliest possible time.

As time for your graduation nears, you should stop by the Graduation Office in Burgin Dossett Hall for complete up to date information.

## **14. Graduate Student Resources**

### **a. The D.P. Culp University Center**

The Culp Center houses several student services including:

- U.S. Post Office – This is a full service postal facility located on the first floor of the Center.
- Bookstore – While books are cheaper online, this bookstore is fully stocked with office supplies, T-shirts, and basic sundries.
- SORC – The Student Organization Resource Center (pronounced “source”) is located in the lower level of Culp and houses a wide variety of student organizations. If you want to broaden your horizons or connect with students with similar interests, this is a good place to check out.
- Food Court – A variety of foods are offered here by ARAMARK, the private company contracted to feed the campus. It also features Starbucks, Taco Bell, Chick-fil-a, Toss, and Quiznos.

### **b. Student Health Services**

Student health services is located in the lower level of Nicks Hall. They provide basic health services such as check-ups, simple office visits for colds and flu, and women's health services. Emergencies are handled by the Johnson City Medical Center.

#### **Health Services**

Roy Nicks Hall, Room 160

(423) 439-4225

<http://www.etsu.edu/nursing/shserv/>

### **c. Sherrod Library**

Sherrod library is a full services academic library. It is featured as a Federal Documents Depository and Repository. The library is run by helpful staff that will assist you with:

- Electronic catalog system
- Periodicals and Academic Journals
- Inter-Library Loan System
- Legal Resources Center
- Archives of Appalachia
- Genealogy Information
- University Archives

The library also features a 24-hour study center on the first floor, as well as a room available (354) exclusively for graduate students with ETSU ID. Library operating hours change each semester, but may be found on their website.

Library Phone: 1-866-542-3878  
<http://sherrod.etsu.edu/>

#### **d. Computer labs**

Computer labs are abundant at ETSU. The Culp Center houses the main computer lab on campus. Its hours are different from other Culp functions and change each semester. Sam Wilson Hall also has a computer lab (318) open to MPA students. Additionally, the library has computers available for student use. For help with Goldlink or other computer problems contact OIT Helpdesk.

**Office of Information Technology – Help Desk**  
(423) 439-5648  
[shdesk@goldmail.etsu.edu](mailto:shdesk@goldmail.etsu.edu)

**Goldlink Helpline**  
102 Burgin Dossett Hall  
(423) 439-5584

#### **e. Financial Aid**

Financial aid is offered for the MPA program. Make sure you file your FAFSA on time every year! To find out more about what financial aid programs are currently being offered please contact the financial aid office. Have patience when dealing with this office. Bring a book to read, the wait is often more than an hour (or two) to see a financial aid counselor.

The program also has limited number of Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Scholarships available. Inquire with the David Briley, the program director or Kathi Horne in the Political Science Office to see if any positions are open.

**f. Housing**

Housing is available on campus, but space is limited for graduate students, especially those with spouses or children. Also note that ETSU is a dry campus- no alcohol is allowed on campus, even in your own living quarters, no matter your age. The best place to look for off-campus housing opportunities is the Johnson City Press or Craigslist.

Rent in Johnson City may run between \$400 - \$900. A typical water/sewer bill is \$20 - \$45 a month, and electricity can range between \$40 - \$100 per month.

**g. ICMA**

ICMA - The International City/County Management Association introduces and integrates students of all ages into the local government management profession. This organization aims to attract students who are interested in public service but may not be aware of career possibilities in local government. ICMA aims to create stronger relationships between the local government management profession and the academic community.

For more information, visit the [ICMA website](#) or contact Dr. David Briley at 439-6697 or at [briley@etsu.edu](mailto:briley@etsu.edu).

**15. Helpful Links**

- [ETSU Campus Maps](#)
- [Graduation Requirements](#) (also visit [Degree Works](#))
- School of Graduate Studies [Forms](#) – This page includes all necessary forms, such as Program of Study form, Appointment of an Advisory Committee form, Notice of Intent to Graduate form, and Application for Candidacy form, among others.