

MPA Core Competencies

The MPA produces graduates prepared for positions that require management and strategic abilities, policy knowledge and skills, and overall analytical and evaluation abilities. It places special emphasis on the needs and opportunities of public sector organizations and institutions that deal with public sector organizations.

Six core MPA attributes characterized by 21 principal competencies provide the foundation of the MPA. The program curriculum is designed to ensure students graduating with this degree have successfully demonstrated competency in each of the identified areas.

1. Management, Governance, and Leadership

Attribute: *Ability to inspire support for a vision or course of action and successfully direct the teams, processes, and changes required to accomplish it.*

Competencies:

- Understand and apply key administrative concepts and principles (administrative regulations, strategic human resources management, strategic planning, financial management, project management and budgeting).
- Integrate value and ethics into organizational practices.
- Develop effective management skills and the ability to assess their impact on individual behaviour, group behaviour, and organizational culture and performance

2. Communication and Social Skills

Attribute: *Ability to communicate effectively and build enduring, trust-based interpersonal, professional relationships.*

Competencies:

- Work comfortably in multi-disciplinary groups, both large and small.
- Ability to communicate in a diverse organizational context and with citizens and stakeholders.
- Speak and write in a clear, logical, and grammatical manner in formal and informal situations, including cogent business presentations and use of social media.
- Networking and negotiation skills

3. Systems Thinking and Creative Analysis

Attribute: *Ability to identify key issues and problems, analyze them systematically, and reach sound, innovative conclusions.*

Competencies:

- Synthesize and apply pertinent concepts and principles of leadership in analyzing organizational issues through case studies and projects in public policy and program settings.

- Apply statistical principles and methods in analyzing organizational issues and interpreting the results.
- Apply economic principles and methods in analyzing organizational, regulatory and incentive issues and interpreting the results.
- Apply the basic concepts and principles of ethics in analyzing organizational issues, policy formulation, and decision-making processes.
- Develop and demonstrate the capacity for critical thinking and the ability to employ a systematic, analytical approach to decision making.

4. Public Policy and Community Engagement

Attribute: *Ability to understand how organizational and public policies are formulated, their impact on public policy and management and how to influence their development.*

Competencies:

- Understand the structure of policy making and program management in general and be able to apply that knowledge to one or more policy fields and/or governance systems.
- Identify and assess the impact of government policy and regulatory requirements on communities and stakeholders.
- Demonstrate understanding of the basic concepts of good public management (stakeholder engagement, transparency, accountability and responsibility) as they affect decision-making and policy and program implementation.

5. Continuous Evaluation and Improvement

Attribute: *Commitment to on-going evaluation for continuous organizational and personal improvement.*

Competencies:

- Apply key concepts and principles of change management in modifying policies, practices, and programs in public organizations.
- Create and apply basic approaches for monitoring the performance of public policy organizations and programs (e.g., setting standards and targets, benchmarking, balanced scorecards).
- Demonstrate commitment to objective self-assessment and on-going development that will lead to career-long personal and professional growth.

6. Policy Knowledge

Attribute: *Ability to analyze and contribute content to at least one applied policy field.*

Competencies:

- Apply policy analysis theory and methods
- Identify the evidence required, the methods for gathering and assessing the evidence, and the challenges and best practices in interpreting and presenting evidence.
- Identify and plan implementation and evaluation of new or existing policy.