



MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

OVERVIEW:

The program's curriculum consists of 12 courses. No prerequisites apply to students with an undergraduate degree. Taught from a Christian worldview, the MPA equips students to lead and manage top-level teams effectively. It is ideal for people in both public-sector and nonprofit organizations, including churches.

The MPA program is ideal for aspiring leaders, equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need to lead in any organization. Students in this program focus on topics such as understanding organizational processes, building strong & effective teams, organizing and leading groups, managing conflicts, and leading organizational change.

DESCRIPTION:

Over the past decade, critiques of today's public sector have become commonplace. From elected government officials and voters to media and scholarly researchers, all agree that confidence in institutions serving the public good is low. The gap between what nonprofit organizations and governments need from MPA graduates and what they receive is widening. Many programs focus heavily on rigorous quantitative analysis, often at the expense of values-driven perspectives. This trade-off may improve net revenue, but it may not improve leadership and innovation for the public good.

Because disciplines are not integrated, students in most MPA programs do not develop a complete range of knowledge to prepare for management work. Therefore, MPA students develop skills training to prepare them for managing human capital, and decision-making permeates the entire program curriculum. MPA courses equip students to enter careers as professional managers. To best equip students to meet public-sector management needs, the MPA balances theoretical research with technically oriented training, and practical research with blended soft- and hard-skills training.

Decision-making from a biblical worldview will equip students with a foundation based on the truth of God's word, not the moral relativity so commonly accepted in today's societal environment. As such, the curriculum fully integrates faith and learning with a biblical worldview. The MPA curriculum was selected using several criteria, including fulfilling program objectives, supporting the institutional mission, and ensuring courses are relevant to public-sector management needs. Classes blend theory and practical application. Instructors use case studies, lectures, guest lecturers, scholarly reading, and technical training to meet each course's learning objectives, and the curriculum prepares students to manage organizations and government entities of all sizes and missions.

**PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

1. Empower graduates to be on mission for Christ in the public sector.
2. Integrate faith with learning, bringing forth the perspective of a biblical worldview.
3. Provide a blend of academic rigor and practical application to prepare the graduate to fulfill the role of a well-rounded professional manager.
4. Build the skills necessary to succeed in today's secular public sector environment, including critical thinking, teamwork, project management, research and evaluation, public speaking, creative thinking, competitive and collaborative strategy.
5. Equip graduates to manage decision-making processes, drive collaboration in workgroups, develop interpersonal skills, and manage human, financial, and physical capital.
6. Incorporate biblical and ethical foundations for all aspects of leadership.
7. Justify the necessity of a leader's spiritual life.

DEGREE:

The program consists of 36 semester credit hours. Students must complete 24 core credit hours through 8 courses. Students may earn a 12-credit-hour concentration in either Nonprofit Management, Public Leadership, or Rural Economic Development by taking at least 4 of the available concentration courses. Alternatively, a student may take any 4 electives of their choosing without a concentration.

Graduate students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 for courses being earned toward the degree. Students must complete the program within 5 years (sixty months) of the start date. Students must repeat the program if they do not complete coursework within the time frame.



CURRICULUM:

Program Total: 36 Credit Hours

CORE (24)

- PA 530 Public Administration (3)
- OL 500 Critical Thinking (3)
- OL 510 Ethical Leadership in Public Life (3)
- OL 530 Organizational Culture (3)
- OL 540 Leading through Change in a Corporate Context (3)
- OL 560 Organizational Communication & Conflict Management (3)
- OL 570 Financial Statement Analysis (3)
- OL 599 Capstone Project (3)

ELECTIVE (12)

- PA 500 Public Sector Financial Management (3)
- PA 510 Contemporary Political Philosophy (3)
- PA 520 Political Power Versus Public Service (3)

- PA 540 Nonprofit Management (3)
- PA 550 Nonprofit and Social Enterprise Start-Up (3)
- PA 560 Social Entrepreneurship (3)
- PA 570 Program Evaluation and Strategic Planning (3)
- PA 580 Grant Writing (3)

- PA 590 Rural Policy Administration and Analysis (3)
- PA 600 Rural Business Retention and Expansion (3)
- PA 610 Rural Enterprise & Small Business Development (3)
- PA 620 Rural Workforce Development Strategies (3)
- PA 630 Rural Entrepreneurship-Led Economic Development (3)

- PA 640 Public Leadership Theories and Practice (3)
- PA 650 Organizational Fundraising and Development (3)
- PA 660 Organizational Behavior and Theory (3)
- PA 670 Public Management and Public Policy (3)
- PA 680 Organizational Culture and Change (3)

- PA 690 Public Administration Internship or Practicum (3)
- PA 700 Public Administration Capstone Project (3)



- OL 501 Biblical Principles for Global Leadership (3)
- OL 520 Principled Leading in A State and Local Context (3)
- OL 550 Challenges and Opportunities of Leading in A National Context (3)
- OL 590 Dynamics of Leading in An International Context (3)

MPA CONCENTRATIONS

NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT (12)

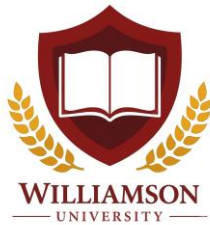
- PA 540 Nonprofit Management (3)
- PA 550 Nonprofit and Social Enterprise Start-Up (3)
- PA 560 Social Entrepreneurship (3)
- PA 570 Program Evaluation and Strategic Planning (3)
- PA 580 Grant Writing (3)
- PA 660 Organizational Behavior and Theory (3)
- PA 680 Organizational Culture and Change (3)
- PA 690 Public Administration Internship or Practicum (3)

PUBLIC LEADERSHIP (12)

- PA 500 Public Sector Financial Management (3)
- PA 510 Contemporary Political Philosophy (3)
- PA 520 Political Power Versus Public Service (3)
- PA 640 Public Leadership Theories and Practice (3)
- OL 501 Biblical Principles for Global Leadership (3)
- OL 520 Principled Leading in A State and Local Context (3)
- OL 540 Leading through Change in a Corporate Context (3)
- OL 550 Challenges and Opportunities of Leading in A National Context (3)
- OL 590 Dynamics of Leading in An International Context (3)

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (12)

- PA 590 Rural Policy Administration and Analysis (3)
- PA 600 Rural Business Retention and Expansion (3)
- PA 610 Rural Enterprise and Small Business Development (3)
- PA 620 Rural Workforce Development Strategies (3)
- PA 630 Rural Entrepreneurship-Led Economic Development (3)
- PA 650 Organizational Fundraising and Development (3)
- PA 670 Public Management and Public Policy (3)
- PA 700 Public Administration Capstone Project (3)



COURSES:

PA 500 Public Sector Financial Management (3)

As an introduction to the theory and application of today's public finance, this course examines the rationales for government intervention in the marketplace, analyzes methods of resolving conflicts over the size and nature of the public sector budget, extensively analyzes the rationales and issues of various sources of public revenue, and reviews the effects of public sector spending and taxing on the economy. Other topics include the history and trends of how government acquires and distributes funds, and the government's accountability to taxpayers and other governing bodies. The course will also examine the "politics" of the public budgeting process in depth.

PA 510 Contemporary Political Philosophy (3)

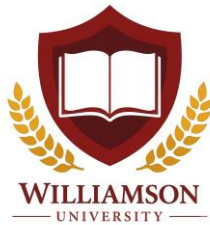
This course introduces contemporary political philosophy as it applies to today's public administration, policy formulation, and implementation, examined through major political philosophers of the Western tradition. Four broad themes that are central to the understanding of the political life that oversees today's government efforts and activities, including the polis experience (Plato and Aristotle), the sovereign state (Machiavelli, Hobbes), constitutional government (Locke), and democracy (Rousseau, Tocqueville), will serve as the foundation of the course. The course also examines how different political philosophies have shaped various forms of political institutions and our current ways of life.

PA 520 Political Power Versus Public Service (3)

This course explores the core concepts of Political Science—the attainment, retention, and exercise of power, and Public Administration—the effective delivery of public services. Drawing on Aristotle's view, it examines how power and authority are established and exercised at local, national, and international levels. It also incorporates Woodrow Wilson's definition of Public Administration as the structured implementation of public law, emphasizing policymaking, service delivery, and the management functions of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling within government systems.

PA 530 Public Administration (3)

This course introduces students to the intellectual, historical, and practical foundations of public administration as both a field of study and a profession. Students examine the evolution of the administrative state, core theories of governance and bureaucracy, the role of public values, ethics, and accountability, and the dynamics of public management in democratic societies. Through scholarly readings, applied assignments, and case-based analysis, students develop a foundational understanding of how public institutions function, how administrators make decisions, and how public service contributes to the public good.

**PA 540 Nonprofit Management (3)**

This course will explore the principles and practices of management and administration as they apply to nonprofit and faith-based organizations. This course uses a strategic management perspective and an organizational behavior framework to understand and apply leadership theories to organizational issues such as board-staff relations, recruiting and motivating volunteers, public and private accountability, organizing for and managing growth, and strategies to respond to political, economic, cultural, and religious challenges.

PA 550 Nonprofit and Social Enterprise Start-Up (3)

This course evaluates the principles, practices, and pitfalls of forming a nonprofit organization and social enterprise. This course will then explore the nature and scope of the nonprofit sector, including historical developments, ethics and legal matters, social justice, community relationships, and emerging trends such as data analytics and technological advancements. Organizational theory and strategic management concepts will provide a lens to analyze issues such as recruiting and motivating volunteers, board and staff relationships, transparency and accountability, managing change, decline, and growth, and innovative responses to complex socio-cultural and political-economic environments. You will plan and propose a feasible and responsible nonprofit organization that responds to a market failure. The proposal will outline the need for the organization and its sustainability in the forecasted market.

PA 560 Social Entrepreneurship (3)

This course explores entrepreneurial philosophies, concepts, and skills needed to create social change and economic impact. Using knowledge from organizational development and missiological theory, you will be able to respond to your community's needs through program leadership, project management, team building, negotiation, and an understanding of complex social and cultural environments. You will learn from successful cases of social entrepreneurs, income-generating social enterprises, and self-sustaining community organizations. This course will help you identify funding sources for social enterprises, and you will propose a social project or program that positively impacts your community and the Kingdom of God.

PA 570 Program Evaluation and Strategic Planning (3)

This course explores strategic planning principles, practices, and pitfalls. Particular attention will be paid to the planning process and the role of program evaluation in organizational research and assessments. Both theoretical and pragmatic applications will be considered. You will learn to collaborate and participate effectively in organizational decision-making. You will prepare or evaluate an organizational strategic plan or program.

PA 580 Grant Writing (3)



This course equips graduate students with the knowledge and applied skills necessary to identify funding opportunities, develop competitive grant proposals, and manage awarded grants within public and nonprofit organizations. Students learn the full grant development lifecycle, including needs assessment, program design, budgeting, narrative construction, evaluation planning, and compliance. The course emphasizes evidence-based practice, strategic alignment with organizational mission, and ethical stewardship of public and philanthropic resources. Students will produce a complete, submission-ready grant proposal tailored to a real or simulated funding opportunity.

PA 590 Rural Policy Administration and Analysis (3)

This course equips students with the frameworks, analytical tools, and interdisciplinary perspectives needed to understand and evaluate public policy in rural contexts. Students examine demographic, economic, infrastructural, and governance challenges unique to rural communities, with attention to equity, sustainability, and regional development. Through case studies, applied research, and policy simulations, students learn to assess policy impacts, interpret rural data, and design evidence-based strategies that strengthen rural resilience and advance the public good.

PA 600 Rural Business Retention and Expansion (3)

Examines strategies to sustain and grow existing rural businesses. Topics include business visitation programs, local supply chain development, and community-business partnerships. Students will design a business retention and expansion (BR&E) plan for a rural community.

PA 610 Rural Enterprise and Small Business Development (3)

Focuses on fostering enterprise ecosystems in rural areas. Covers access to capital, incubator/accelerator models, mentorship networks, and policy frameworks that encourage small business growth.

PA 620 Rural Workforce Development Strategies (3)

Addresses workforce challenges in rural economies, including skills gaps, educational pipelines, and industry alignment. Students will develop a workforce development plan that integrates education, training, and employer engagement to support the development of a skilled workforce.

PA 630 Rural Entrepreneurship-Led Economic Development (3)

Explores how entrepreneurship can drive rural economic transformation. Emphasizes innovation, community-based ventures, and leveraging local assets to achieve a competitive advantage. Students will develop an entrepreneurship-led development proposal.

PA 640 Public Leadership Theories and Practice (3)



This course examines leadership theory through its historical development and applicability to current leadership trends. Because leadership is grounded in the complexities of human nature and our value systems, this course uses a pragmatic, interdisciplinary approach to leadership issues that incorporates theological, sociological, and political perspectives. In this course, you will critically examine your own leadership traits and practices. This course will challenge you to integrate your understanding of servant-leadership practices through the Christian faith.

PA 650 Organizational Fundraising and Development (3)

This course explores the principles, practices, and pitfalls of philanthropy and fundraising. The course concepts apply to social enterprises and nonprofit organizations. You will evaluate effective sponsorship strategies, successful funding proposals, and determine appropriate sources of monetary support and in-kind donations. Particular attention will be given to planning a capital campaign, fundraising project, and marketing ministries, including promotions and public relations. Strategic management issues relating to recruiting and managing volunteers, and the strategic messaging of an organization's mission, vision, values, and goals.

PA 660 Organizational Behavior and Theory (3)

This course examines the dynamics of organizational structure and the theoretical applications of human behavior in organizational settings. The course examines organizational theories and human behavior at all levels of organizational research and analysis. This course is interdisciplinary and draws on relevant literature and theory from management, economics, sociology, religion, public policy, and political science. You will develop analytical techniques to assess and evaluate organizational opportunities and build the skills to identify and create or maintain an organizational structure that fosters innovation, information sharing, and effective decision-making. This course will challenge you to integrate organizational management principles and strategies through the Christian faith.

PA 670 Public Management and Public Policy (3)

This course examines how public policy affects management in both not-for-profit and for-profit organizations. Public policy issues such as social justice and activism, religious freedom, personal liberty, individual decision-making, public health, civic engagement, and the common good are evaluated through the lens of Christian leadership and ethics. Students will explore the policy-making process and develop a deeper understanding of how organizations intercede, influence, and advocate for change. You will also think critically and strategically to positively impact your community and apply sound Christian leadership and management practices.

PA 680 Organizational Culture and Change (3)



This course explores organizational culture in pluralist contexts, focusing on structural power, interoffice politics, conflict management, and resistance to change. This course focuses on leading and facilitating organizational change processes in a highly competitive market. As such, you will utilize cultural theories and practices related to structural leadership, team dynamics, and effective communication to initiate and manage organizational change. You will develop analytical techniques to assess and evaluate organizational constraints and build the skills to identify and create or maintain an organizational culture grounded in a shared mission, vision, goals, and values. This course will challenge you to integrate organizational management principles and strategies through the Christian faith.

PA 690 Public Administration Internship or Practicum (3)

This course allows you to apply the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained in your graduate program to professional, hands-on experience in work settings. You must complete an approved practicum or internship with graduate-level responsibilities and submit a journal or summary and an evaluation of your experience. Your faculty mentor and employer will determine your scope of work.

PA 700 Public Administration Capstone Project (3)

In this course, you will successfully demonstrate your ability to research, synthesize, analyze, and communicate information at a graduate level. As a degree candidate, you will complete a project in accordance with your degree plan and concentration. As a final demonstration of the knowledge gained throughout the program, you will collaborate with or research an organization, for-profit or nonprofit, to develop actionable administrative solutions. Your faculty mentor will help you determine an appropriate project.

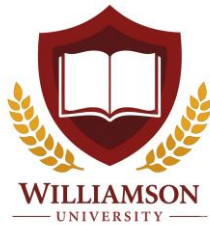
OL 500 Critical Thinking (3)

This course provides a framework for gathering and evaluating the challenges leaders face globally. The need for distinguishing between fact and fiction, sound principles and external biases, while developing solid strategies for addressing local, national, and global issues has never been greater. Students will be challenged to assess the basis for analyzing the information they receive and understand the biases in various sources. They will develop an organized, systematic approach to critically filtering the bombardment of data they receive as they lead their respective organizations.

OL 501 Biblical Principles for Global Leadership (3)

This course examines and analyzes the qualities and practices of the effective Christian leader, particularly across cultural boundaries. This study will be based on principles in Scripture and related literature, with attention to devising a personal philosophy of intercultural leadership.

OL 510 Ethical Leadership in Public Life (3)



This course surveys the development of ethical thought, both ancient and modern. The course covers various ethical systems and their proponents, including alternative Christian perspectives, and discusses contemporary ethical problems.

OL 520 Principled Leading in A State and Local Context (3)

Several seminars are conducted throughout the year; students must attend three seminars during their program. Special seminars that will consider the opportunities and challenges of leading at the state and local government and corporate levels. Leaders from these levels will serve as guest speakers. Topical areas include education, NPOs, business and economics, and political leadership.

OL 530 Organizational Culture (3)

This course builds critical skills and competencies that enable leaders to achieve their organizations' mission and vision and is designed to help leaders understand why organizational culture matters and how to create, discover, and transform it. Topics include interpersonal group behavior, complex organizational behavior, leadership styles, the role of communication, and management's integrative role in organizations.

OL 540 Leading Through Change in a Corporate Context (3)

This course examines change and its relationship to conflict within an organization. This course focuses on enabling leaders to understand, anticipate, and direct change, as well as handle criticism in their organizations.

OL 550 Challenges and Opportunities of Leading in A National Context (3)

This course is a special seminar that will consider the opportunities and challenges of leading at the national government and corporate levels. Leaders from these contexts will serve as guest speakers. The course examines aspects of managing a national business or ministry, with particular focus on ethical dilemmas, legal and political considerations, and competitive market forces.

OL 560 Organizational Communication & Conflict Management (3)

This course develops the leader's ability to create and effectively communicate a strategic vision within an organization and understand an individual's impact on others. Students learn to identify and improve self-awareness of communication styles and abilities, and to engage, influence, and motivate employees. Topics include creating a unified organizational climate and culture, managing conflict, understanding team dynamics, and building strong, enduring teams.

OL 570 Financial Statement Analysis (3)



Good decision-making, especially in complex matters, requires business leaders to review, analyze, and understand both qualitative and quantitative impacts on an organization. This course will equip students with tools to understand, analyze, and interpret company financial data and its implications for the organization. Key topics include financial statement analysis, operational analysis, budgeting, forecasting, capital structures, and investment analysis.

OL 575 Strategic Planning (3)

This course equips students with the core concepts, analytical tools, and language essential to crafting, implementing, and executing business strategies in today's competitive business environment. The curriculum blends well-established management principles in business strategy with recent research findings and contributions to the scholarly literature on the topic. Class discussions will focus on case studies of real-world companies led by active practitioners in the field.

OL 590 Dynamics of Leading in An International Context (3)

This course is a special seminar that will consider the opportunities and challenges of leading at international government and corporate levels. Leaders from these levels will serve as guest speakers. The course examines strategic aspects of managing a global or multinational business or ministry, with particular focus on cultural dynamics, legal and political considerations, and competitive market forces.

OL 599 Capstone Project (3)

This is a leadership project, selected by the student, which will pertain to a particular opportunity or problem in their organization or ministry. The purpose of the Capstone course is to help the students apply the organizational leadership elements they learned in the program. The student will develop this project throughout the program, guided by a program professor.