Master of Public Affairs
Graduate Policy Manual
Mission Statement

The mission of the School of Public & Environmental Affairs Program is to sustain a diverse, collaborative community of learning that provides professional education to develop ethical, motivated, and effective leaders and to impact our changing region, nation and world through community engagement and research.

The SPEA MPA Graduate Program Policy Manual was developed by the Graduate Program Committee (GPC) to be a usable, comprehensive document which identifies the program specific standards and policies used to govern the Graduate Program in the School of Public & Environmental Affairs at Indiana University Northwest.

The implementation of the policies developed in this manual are in effect the semester immediately following the acceptance of the policy by the GPC.
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SCHOOL OF PUBLIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
MPA POLICIES

ADMISSIONS

MPA APPLICATION REQUIREMENT:

All students must submit a complete MPA application; there will be no exceptions.

MPA DEADLINE FOR ADMISSION:

Students intending to enroll in the MPA degree program must have submitted a complete application by August 1 of every year in order to start summer or fall classes with their cohort.

However, certificate students applying for admission who are unable to submit their graduate transcript by August 1 because they are enrolled in Summer II classes and wish to join the fall cohort, may submit an incomplete application if the file is ONLY missing these grades. In these cases, the SPEA Director and GPC Chair will review the applicant after receipt of Summer II grades.

For full consideration by the committee, a complete application consists of the following:

- Letter of Intent
- Resume/Curriculum Vitae
- Official undergraduate transcript and/or a graduate transcript
- Writing sample conforming to the application guidelines
- GRE scores in the 50th percentile (if the student does not have an undergraduate GPA of 3.0)
- Three letters of reference from individuals who know the candidate in a professional capacity, such as a college professor or work supervisor.

ADMISSION OF CERTIFICATE STUDENTS:

Certificate students who intend to enroll in the MPA program are subject to the same admission requirements as MPA students. Students must submit a letter of intent, a writing sample conforming to the application package instructions, an official undergraduate transcript, GRE scores in the 50th percentile of IUN SPEA MPA students in the previous three years (if the undergraduate final GPA is below 3.0), a graduate transcript (if the applicant has previously enrolled in, or completed, a previous graduate certificate or degree) and three letters of reference from individuals who know the candidate in a professional capacity, such as a college professor or
work supervisor. Students admitted as certificate students who apply for the MPA must go through the admission process again and submit the above required information, with the addition of the official graduate transcript. Students who intend to complete the MPA degree should apply as MPA students and not certificate students. Students should also be advised that admission as a certificate student does not guarantee admission as an MPA student.

Certificate students intending to enroll in spring classes must submit a complete application no later than November 15. Certificate students intending to enroll in summer or fall classes must submit a complete application no later than **April 15**.

**ADMISSIONS CRITERIA REGARDING CERTIFICATE STUDENTS**

In addition to the previous requirements noted, certificate students applying for admission to the MPA program will be evaluated at the time of admission following successful completion of their certificate to determine if they exhibit the required professional attitude and successful classroom collaborative skills to be admitted to the MPA program. Students who do not exhibit these skills may not be admitted to the MPA program.

**CERTIFICATE STUDENTS SEEKING MPA ADMISSION BEFORE THE GPC MEETS:**

All certificate students must wait until the Graduate Program Committee (GPC) meets to make a determination about admission before continuing beyond the certificate courses and/or nine hours.

**STUDENTS PREVIOUSLY ADMITTED TO A DIFFERENT MASTER’S PROGRAM:**

Students who have been previously accepted to an accredited graduate degree program and completed the program do not need to take the GRE in order to complete the application process for SPEA at IUN, however, all other items are required for the application process. (Created 10/12/12)

Graduate student grades awarded outside of SPEA may be excluded from admission decisions.
CONVERSION FROM OLD APPLICATION TO NEW APPLICATION:

IUN SPEA is in the process of converting from an open admission approach to a cohort approach and is changing the application process. Therefore, the following dates are relevant for MPA and certificate students:

- MPA and certificate students applying for Spring 2013 admission must submit a complete application using the current application no later than December 1, 2012.

- MPA and certificate students applying for Fall 2013 admission may apply as early as January 1, 2013 and up to April 15, 2013 using the NEW application. These students will fall under the new admission guidelines, which mandate that all MPA students must include evidence of:
  - GRE score taken within the last year in the 50th percentile or higher of IUN SPEA MPA students in the previous three years or an official undergraduate transcript with a GPA at graduation of 3.0 or higher.
  - The GRE 50th percentile shall be recalculated every three years or more often as appropriate. Upon admission, students will be assigned an advisor and will be given a list of recommended courses and schedule.

ASSIGNMENT OF ADVISORS FOR MPA & CERTIFICATE STUDENTS:

It will be the policy of the Graduate Program Committee that new graduate students be assigned for advising to a graduate faculty member based on the student’s stated interest. Certificate students will be assigned to the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Programs & Outreach for academic advising.

Some deviation from this practice may be necessary to even out faculty responsibilities. If the student and the faculty advisor deem it appropriate, the student may be reassigned after initial advising periods have been completed, subject to the agreement of the new faculty advisor and the approval of the Director.

TRANSFER CREDITS FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES:

MPA students may transfer up to nine hours of SPEA-equivalent electives (on-line or traditional classroom format) from other accredited graduate programs if the student received a grade of B or higher. No transferred courses will be allowed to substitute for courses in the MPA core. The transfer must be approved by the appropriate graduate program director.
HOME CAMPUS CORE COURSE POLICY

All core courses must be taken at IUN campus or IUN online. In rare circumstances exceptions can be made provided that the student submit a written request explaining the circumstances regarding the core course being taken outside of IUN or IUN online to the Chair of the Graduate Program Committee.

ACADEMIC STANDING

GRADUATE PROGRAM COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS:

Certificate and MPA students must have completed their certificate in a maximum of 18 hours unless there is a scheduling conflict. All certificate students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher based on the entire number of classes taken. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 for three semesters will be dismissed.

MPA DOUBLE MAJORS

IUN MPA students who choose to double-major must complete the core requirements for both areas of concentration before the MPA degree will be awarded. This will necessitate taking additional six to nine credit hours of courses, for a total of 54-57 hours. Failure to successfully complete each course will result in the double-major status not being awarded.

GRADUATE NON-DEGREE STUDENTS:

Graduate non-degree students may take up to 12 hours of SPEA classes. These classes will not automatically count towards a certificate or MPA.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Students are considered to be in good standing during any semester in which their academic grade point average is at least 3.0 (B) both for their last semester's course work and for the cumulative average of all course work completed. Only courses with grades of C (2.0) or above may be counted toward degree requirements. However, grades below C are used in computing the cumulative grade point average, even if a course is repeated and a higher grade is earned. Certificate students who do not have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average within their first 9 credit hours will be dismissed.
CERTIFICATE AND MPA STUDENT GPA REQUIREMENT:

All MPA and certificate students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students must receive grades of C or higher in all SPEA courses. However, students may receive one grade of C in a SPEA course once during their certificate or MPA. Students whose grades fall below 3.0 will be placed on probation. Students may be on probation no more than two semesters during the course of their certificate or MPA. Students placed on probation a third semester shall be dismissed.

MPA PROBATION AND DISMISSAL:

All certificate and MPA students must maintain GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students may only receive one grade of C in their entire certificate and/or MPA degree. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be on probation and may be limited in the classes they are allowed to take. Probation may not exceed two semesters. Any certificate or MPA student exceeding two semesters on probation shall be dismissed.

The first semester which the students' GPA falls below 3.0, the student’s file will be reviewed by the GPC. Students will be informed of what they must do in order to stay enrolled in SPEA. Likely requirements will be to reduce the number of courses allowed to be taken (even if this means the student no longer qualifies for financial aid), courses that must be taken and the grade that the student must receive in that course, etc. Students who do not follow the instructions of the GPC are likely to be dismissed.

The GPC will also review students at risk of dismissal based on SAP criteria. Students are reminded that over 75 percent of their courses must be successfully completed; students with 25 percent of courses with grades of W, F and I are likely to be dismissed.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF DISMISSED GRADUATE STUDENTS:

MPA or certificate students who have been dismissed due to poor grades or for any other reason may reapply to the GPC after 12 months. Students should submit a letter explaining the circumstances of their dismissal and include a prevention plan to ensure that a second dismissal does not occur. Such decisions are completely at the discretion of the SPEA Chair with the input of the GPC. (Created 12/03/12)
GRADUATE STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN UNDERGRADUATE CLASSES

SPEA Students who have been accepted into either a graduate certificate program or the MPA are expected to make progress towards their degrees by taking graduate level courses every semester. Undergraduate courses must have prior approval of the graduate academic advisor assigned to that student or a SPEA/CHHS administrator. This approval must be in writing and evidence of that approval is to become a part of the student's academic file. Undergraduate courses may not be used to satisfy graduate program requirements. Exceptions are possible for some pre-defined, upper-level undergraduate courses, subject to approval by the academic advisor and SPEA/CHHS administration and are limited to a maximum number of six credit hours.

(Created 01/16/13)

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE COURSES USED IN GPA CALCULATIONS:

Only SPEA graduate courses will be used to determine a student's MPA or certificate GPA. Any undergraduate course(s) taken by a student while pursuing an MPA (which is not recommended) will not be used in the GPA calculation.

GRADING SYSTEM

SPEA follows the official grading system of Indiana University described in the introductory section of the bulletin. Additional information can be found at:
http://www.iun.edu/bulletin/policies/grades/.

INCOMPLETE

A grade of Incomplete must be removed within the time specified by the instructor of the course; if not, the grade automatically changes to an F one calendar year after the Incomplete was given.

WITHDRAWALS

Students must formally withdraw from courses in the timeframe allowed by the Registrar's office. This information can be found at the web site:
http://www.iun.edu/bulletin/policies/withdrawals.shtml.
COURSE WAIVERS

Requests for a waiver of specific courses or requirements on the basis of previous course work are to be submitted in writing to the appropriate faculty member or program director.

STUDENTS WISHING TO COMPLETE A CERTIFICATE AFTER THE MPA DEGREE:

Students who have earned their SPEA MPA degree will not ordinarily be allowed to return for a certificate in another concentration. If the student can show extraordinary circumstances, such as a significant career change, the student may be allowed earn one additional certificate after review by the GPC.

STUDENTS WISHING TO COMPLETE A CERTIFICATE AT THE SAME TIME AS THEIR MPA DEGREE:

Students may attempt completion of their certificate at the same time as their MPA degree. Students wishing to complete both programs will need to complete at least two additional classes (6 hours), which means it will require a minimum of 54 hours to obtain the certificate and MPA. Students enrolled in the MPA who wish to obtain a certificate at the same time must submit a letter of intent to the Graduate Program Committee (GPC).

STUDENTS WISHING TO PURSUE A CERTIFICATE WITH THE MPA DEGREE

MPA students who wish to obtain a certificate in a different area while pursuing their MPA degree must submit a certificate application to the GPC with a letter explaining the circumstances of the request.

MPA STUDENTS AND V580 AND V590 ARRANGED COURSES:

During the course of the MPA degree, students may take no more than six hours of any combination of V580 and V590 courses with SPEA faculty. All students enrolling in V580 and V90 courses must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 or higher. These courses should be taken only with full-time tenure-track or tenured SPEA faculty. Students must have the consent of the faculty member. The faculty member and student must agree on the topic, which should address an important issue in the field of the faculty member. The faculty member supervising this arranged class is responsible for completing the required form, obtaining the student's signature and requesting the signature of the SPEA Director. The student shall be given a copy of the paperwork once all the necessary signatures have been obtained and a copy shall be placed in the student's file. Certificate students may not enroll in V580 and V590 courses.

(Created 09/24/13)
V600 CAPSTONE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The M.P.A. core requirement ensures that each student acquires both the prerequisite analytical skills and an understanding of policy issues and governmental processes that compose the environment within which graduates will pursue their careers. Therefore, students enrolling in the Capstone in Public & Environmental Affairs (V600) must meet the following requirements prior to registering for this course:

• Must have completed a minimum of 39 graduate credit hours.

• Must have completed all core requirement courses which include all of the following: V500, V502, V506, V517, V540 and V560.

GRADUATE STUDENTS’ RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

In accordance with Indiana University regulations, student records are confidential and are available to other persons only under specific conditions as outlined in university regulations.

Additional information on confidentiality of records can be found at: http://www.iun.edu/bulletin/services/registrar.shtml

STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are responsible for planning their own academic programs and for meeting the requirements for their degree or certificate programs. Faculty and academic advisors may assist students in meeting their responsibilities. Due process is followed in the event of disciplinary or other actions. Students should read the IUN Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct, which can be accessed at http://www.iun.edu/bulletin/policies/student-rights.shtml. In addition to the University’s code, students should also familiarize themselves with the College of Health and Human Services Code of Conduct which can be accessed at www.iun.edu/chhs/docs/chhs_code_conduct.pdf, to ensure they are aware of these rights and responsibilities.
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity requires that students take credit only for their own ideas and efforts. Misconduct, including cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, interference, or facilitating academic dishonesty, is prohibited because it undermines the bonds of trust and cooperation among members of this community and between us and those who may depend on our knowledge and integrity. Complete details are contained in the Indiana University Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct at www.iun.edu/bulletin/policies/student-rights.shtml.

ACADEMIC APPEALS

Students may appeal academic decisions made by SPEA faculty members. Attempts to resolve such issues should be made first at the class/instructor level. If necessary, written appeals should be submitted to relevant program directors. Appeals must be submitted before the last day of classes in the semester following the point at which the events in question occurred.