

SECTION B:
MPA DEGREE COMPLETION

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Course Scheduling for Advanced Programs Students

We understand the need for quick degree completion and strive to offer courses in a sequence at each site that assures all requirements can be met in 18-24 months. We usually schedule three courses per semester at each Advanced Program site. There are three semesters per year: Fall, Spring, and an eight-week Summer semester. Even if you have to miss one or two courses, you can usually satisfy your course requirements within 2 years.

As a last resort, you might have to take some personal leave time and go to another site to take a course. For a listing of sites go to the Advanced Programs web page at <http://www.occe.ou.edu/ap/>. We will do all that we can to assist you to complete your degree within the time constraints mentioned above. If a problem develops, don't wait. Call us immediately and we will work with you.

Advisory Review Requests

The Graduate College requires that an annual review of all graduate students' academic progress be conducted. In this review, the MPA Program Administrator confirms your progress in the program. We usually complete the review during the summer months. You will receive a copy of the evaluation each year, but we do not automatically perform detailed progress reviews of all students. We encourage you to track your own progress, using the annual review and the MPA Student Advisory Worksheet below. If you have specific concerns about your progress, please consult the Norman MPA Program Office.

MPA Student Advisory Worksheet

Required Courses Completed 12 hrs.

PSC 5143	Program Evaluation	_____
PSC 5183	Public Budgeting & Finance	_____
PSC 5913	Introduction to Analysis of Political & Administrative Data	_____
PSC 5950	Research Problems	_____

Area Requirements Completed 12 cr. hrs.

Organizations _____

Management _____

Policy _____

American Political Process _____

Elective Courses Completed 12 hrs.

36 credit hours required

Comprehensive Exam/Prospectus

The Graduate College requires that all graduate students successfully pass a comprehensive exam. Students are allowed only two attempts to pass this requirement. As of Fall 2000, the MPA program has implemented the Comprehensive Exam/Prospectus Format, which is explained in detail in Section C of the SSAG. Students should familiarize themselves with this information so that, as they take classes, they will recognize various aspects of the courses that will help them prepare for their research. While it is premature to formulate a specific research topic when beginning the MPA program, an awareness of the research requirement and an open mind during class discussions should help students generate ideas for a research project. We encourage students to discuss those ideas with professors as they develop.

The Graduate College requires that all master's students be enrolled in at least two credit hours during the semester in which they complete the comprehensive exam/prospectus. (and also during the semester of any subsequent retake). The Graduate College will not waive the 2-Credit-Hour Rule. All MPA students, regardless of campus, should reserve their PSC 5950 enrollment for their final semester to complete their comprehensive exam/prospectus using this course to offset the 2-Credit-Hour Rule.

Research Paper

To complete the MPA program, you must prepare a research paper based upon the research plan proposed in your comprehensive exam/prospectus. While some MPA students feel overwhelmed by the research process itself, you should be assured that our curriculum is designed to prepare you for this step in the program. And though filing requirements and forms are not complex, they must be completed on schedule and sent to the appropriate personnel. To save yourself time and anxiety as you approach these final requirements, please read the following information carefully.

The research paper is usually the final step. PSC 5950 requires an enrollment of three or four credit hours. If you enroll in four credit hours to meet the required 36 credit hours for graduation, the scope and content of the research paper should reflect an effort beyond a paper prepared for three credit hours. The comprehensive exam/prospectus and the research paper are interrelated; therefore PSC 5950 enrollment is for the comprehensive exam/prospectus. Upon completion of an approved comprehensive exam/prospectus by the semester deadline, you will have one full calendar year from the end of that semester to complete the research paper and graduate.

Sections C and D of this SSAG explain the steps to prepare the comprehensive exam/prospectus and research paper. Section D offers detailed descriptions, outlines, and sample excerpts for each of the three major types of papers: policy analysis, program evaluation, and the administrative analysis

On-Site Resource Materials

All Advanced Programs sites, the Norman MPA office, and the OU-Tulsa office have the following resource materials to support your research efforts:

Student Self-Advisement Guide (SSAG), Sections C and D

Public Administration Reference Books

Writing style/format book

Suggested Reading List, also in SSAG Section C, **Resources**

If, after reviewing these materials, you are still having difficulty in completing your comprehensive exam/prospectus, **please consult the Norman MPA Program Office**. Faculty members are available to help you with this process, and our office can often provide additional information to help you move forward with this important requirement.

Degree Completion Cycle

Typically, MPA degree completion progresses as follows:

1. When 15 or more credit hours are completed, you should begin to develop a plan for their comprehensive exam/prospectus and degree completion. When 15 or more credit hours are completed, you should begin to develop a plan for your comprehensive exam/prospectus and degree completion. The Admission to Candidacy Form is available on line at <http://gradweb.ou.edu/current/masters/index.asp>, however, the **Application for Graduation Card**, the **Diploma and Alumni Record Cards**, and the **Declaration of Comprehensive Exam Semester Form** are not online, but can be obtained by your Site Manager.
2. When you know the course numbers for all 36 credit hours that will fulfill your degree requirements, you should submit your **Admission to Candidacy Form** and **Declaration of Comprehensive Exam Semester Form** to the Norman MPA Program Office and sign up to complete the comprehensive exam/prospectus the next semester. You must be enrolled in PSC 5950 to complete the comprehensive exam/prospectus during that following semester.
3. Early in your last semester of coursework prior to enrolling in PSC 5950 (see Degree Completion Deadlines Table, below for specific semester deadlines) turn in your **Identification of Interest Form** to the MPA Program Office. The form is located in section C of the SSAG and will ensure you are assigned a faculty advisor to guide and advise you through the comprehensive exam/prospectus and research paper stage of your degree program.
4. Enroll in PSC 5950 for the following semester. This course will accommodate the Graduate College's 2-Credit-Hour Rule.

5. During the comprehensive exam semester, turn in your prospectus for faculty approval (see section C, SSAG). You may submit a draft of the comprehensive exam/prospectus to your faculty advisor before enrolling in PSC 5950 for credit.
6. After your comprehensive exam/prospectus is approved and within one year of completing the comprehensive exam semester, you should conduct your research, write the findings and conclusions sections of your paper, then turn in the research paper to your faculty advisor for approval. (see section D, SSAG)
7. In order to graduate in any semester, your research paper (with no corrections needed) must be submitted to your faculty advisor by the final day of classes for that semester. Use the **Degree Completion Deadlines Table** below to ensure you submit all your paperwork on schedule. **To verify the date of the final day of classes of a specific semester, see the University of Oklahoma Calendar at Admissions, Records, and Registration: <http://admissions.ou.edu/calendar.html>**

If you plan to submit your comprehensive exam/prospectus and research paper by email, please send a CC to the MPA Program Administrator (ddeering@ou.edu) to ensure the date of submission is recorded in the MPA Program Office.

If you plan to mail your comprehensive exam/prospectus and research paper, send it to the following address. The MPA Program Administrator will record the arrival date, then forward it to your faculty advisor for evaluation.

**Programs in Public Administration
University of Oklahoma
Department of Political Science
455 W. Lindsey Street, Room 305
Norman, Oklahoma 73019-2003**

Degree Completion Deadlines

<u>Comprehensive Exam/ Prospectus Semester</u>	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>	
Identification of Interest Form	May 1	September 1	December 1	
Admission to Candidacy Form	March 1	September 1	February 1	
Declaration of Comp Exam Semester Form	March 1	September 1	February 1	
Draft Comprehensive Exam/Prospectus Submitted to Faculty Advisor	September 1	February 1	May 15	
Revised Comprehensive Exam/Prospectus Submitted to Faculty Advisor	Final Day of Class in December	Final Day of Class in May	Final Day of Class in July	<u>To verify the date of the Final Day of Class, go to</u> http://www.ou.edu/admrec/calendar.html
<p>To graduate on schedule, the <u>Research Paper</u> must be <u>received</u> in the MPA Program Office by the Final Day of Classes the following year. For example, if you complete your Comprehensive Exam/Prospectus by the Final Day of Class in May 2007, then your Research Paper is due by the Final Day of Class in May 2008.</p>				

Selecting an Exam Cycle

Choose the exam cycle that best fits your goals for completing the program and file your paperwork no later than the stated deadlines. Please note that you can submit your draft comprehensive exam/prospectus to our office and most paperwork **earlier** than these deadlines. If you have personal goals that cannot be met using the stated deadlines and cycles, please contact our office.

PSC 5950, Research Problems Paper Enrollment

At the end of each semester, Advanced Programs students may now enroll in PSC 5950 for the following semester. Please check with your Site Manager to make sure you enroll at the appropriate time. Students in the Advanced Programs delivery system must submit tuition payment and enrollment cards either to their local Site Manager or directly to Advanced Programs. Please do not send tuition fees or Special Permission cards directly to our office, as this will unnecessarily delay the processing of your enrollment.

Main Campus and Tulsa students must have Special Permission to enroll in this course and must enroll during the normal enrollment period for their campus

Although you may submit drafts of your research paper directly to your faculty advisor for comment and suggestion at any time, the **final draft** of the paper must be submitted no later than one year following the end of your initial enrollment in PSC 5950. Failure to follow this requirement may delay your graduation and/or necessitate re-enrollment in PSC 5950 to complete the MPA degree program.

Graduation and Commencement

Application for Graduation

Your Site Manager will provide you with an **Application for Graduation Card**. This card must be completed and turned in to the Office of Records prior to graduation. For semester deadlines for the **Application for Graduation** card, see Master's Degree Candidate Deadlines at <http://gradweb.ou.edu/Current/deadlines.asp>

When completing your card, please note that you are in the **GRADUATE COLLEGE**, the name of your degree is **MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION** and your major is **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**. In addition to ensuring you graduate on schedule, the address you put on this card will be the one to where your diploma will be mailed. Please mail this to our office so we can make a copy for your file.

There is a \$25 graduation fee for Advanced Programs students that must accompany the **Application for Graduation**. (Main Campus and Tulsa students do not pay this because it is included in their semester fees.) The Application for Graduation fees are non-refundable, but will be valid for three semesters. The deadline dates are on the bottom of the **Application for Graduation** card.

Commencement at the University of Oklahoma

The University of Oklahoma holds only one Commencement ceremony each year in May. There is a university-wide ceremony. Each College also has a ceremony for their students. We are in the College of Arts and Sciences. Information for graduation ceremonies is posted on the OU home page (<http://www.ou.edu>) each April. Diplomas are not given out at this time. They are mailed when degree information is posted to student records, which is about six weeks after the end of the semester.

Students must reserve a Cap & Gown to participate. A Cap & Gown card can be requested through our office. The Cap & Gown fee is NOT refundable once the Commencement exercise is held for a given year. Military dress uniforms may be appropriate, but please check with the Graduate College for specific information.

Letter of Completion

Once you have completed all degree requirements, an official letter of completion may be issued. Please submit your request by mail or e-mail to the Graduate College to the Graduate Programs Representative, Ms. Ginger Dossey, at gdossey@ou.edu.

Diplomas are mailed from the Office of Academic Records three to four months after the semester of graduation.

Requesting Transcripts

You may request a transcript at any time. There is no charge for transcripts. Unofficial transcripts may be obtained online at <http://webapps.ou.edu/student-services/>. Official transcripts may be obtained with a signed request and are usually mailed within 24 hours of receipt of your request. It must indicate the number of copies you desire, and the address to which they are to be mailed.

Advanced Programs

Fax: (405) 325-7273
College of Continuing Education
Transcript Request
1700 Asp Avenue, Room B-1
Norman, OK 73072-6400

Main Campus

Fax: (405) 325-7047
Admissions and Records
Transcript Request
1000 Asp Avenue, Room 330
Norman, OK 73019-4076