

## MPA Practicum Requirement

MPA students who are not yet in the professional workforce (pre-service) must complete a six credit hour practicum to observe public administration as it is practiced in a government or non-profit office. This can be accomplished through agency placements or internships. Students who are in the professional workforce (in service) will complete a project report analyzing public administration as practiced in their place of employment.

Students will register for PSC 676 and may take one other course (evening or online) during the semester that they fulfill this requirement. Students are required to work 270 hours during their internship or practicum. PSC 676 is graded on a credit/no credit basis. Students must fulfill all requirements of the practicum in order to receive credit.

The internship or practicum will be arranged in cooperation with the program director or professor teaching PSC 676. The student, program director and work supervisor will meet before the internship or practicum begins to complete a contract of goals and expectations for the student as well as the work schedule for the semester. During the internship or practicum the program director will meet periodically with the student and work supervisor to ascertain that both are satisfied with the arrangements and to make any necessary adjustments.

The student will keep a learning journal to submit to the professor and work supervisor at the end of the semester. This journal will also be a component of the student's portfolio. The learning journal will contain:

- Analysis of public administration theories as they are applied in the workplace
- Observations of workplace practices and recommendations to improve efficiency, transparency, and/or quality of client service provision.
- Documentation of the work performed and skills gained through the practicum.

Students should make arrangements one full semester in advance of their desire to take the practicum by meeting with the program director and electronically submitting the following documents in a PDF file to be shared with the prospective government or non-profit office:

- Curriculum vitae or resume and transcripts
- A cover letter indicating the skills that the student can bring to an office and the types of work experiences in which the student has an interest. Students who have created data bases, brochures, web sites or other valuable products should include links to those in this letter so that the prospective placement officer can review the work.
- A writing sample demonstrating analytical ability in the public service arena.

The workplace supervisor may require an interview before deciding to allow the practicum to take place.

Students will complete their portfolio for the MPA program during the practicum. Regular meetings with the professor supervising the practicum will be necessary to organize and put together the portfolio.