

Public Administration

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VSU offers both the Master of Public Administration and the Doctor of Public Administration Programs, and both can be completed on-line.

The MPA programs are fully accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (<http://www.naspaa.org/>) (only MPA programs are reviewed for accreditation by NASPAA). The MPA is recognized as the "industry standard" for those seeking careers in the public and non-profit sectors. MPA coursework seeks to improve the knowledge base, develop critical thinking skills, and promote understanding of the policy implementation process in a democratic society. Courses are offered in a range of political, social, legal, management, and financial areas.

The DPA allows mid-career students the opportunity to advance their level of knowledge in the field of public and nonprofit administration. As a practitioner-oriented degree, the DPA provides the essential leadership, management, communication, and problem-solving skills needed in today's professional and global environment.

- Master of Public Administration Degree (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/archive/2025-2026/graduate/graduate-degree-programs/humanities-social-sciences/public-administration/master-public-administration/>)
- Doctor of Public Administration Degree (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/archive/2025-2026/graduate/graduate-degree-programs/humanities-social-sciences/public-administration/doctor-public-administration/>)
- Certificate in Public Management (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/archive/2025-2026/graduate/graduate-degree-programs/humanities-social-sciences/public-administration/certificate-public-management/>)
- Certificate in Non-profit Management (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/archive/2025-2026/graduate/graduate-degree-programs/humanities-social-sciences/public-administration/certificate-non-profit-management/>)
- Certificate in Public Sector Human Resources Management (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/archive/2025-2026/graduate/graduate-degree-programs/humanities-social-sciences/public-administration/certificate-public-sector-human-resources-management/>)

Certificate Programs in Public Administration

The Public Administration Program offers three certificate programs: Public Management, Non-profit Management, and Public Sector Human Resources Management. Each program consists of 12 credit hours: two required courses and two elective courses from a set list of courses applicable to the certificate subject area. A final portfolio is required and will be evaluated by a Public Administration Faculty Committee appointed by the Program Chair. Students must complete their certificate program within 3 years.

In order to enroll in a certificate program, students must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited university and must be admitted to the Graduate School. Students who successfully complete a certificate program and who are formally accepted into the Public Administration Program may apply all courses in which they earned a grade of "B" or higher toward their Master of Public Administration degree.

PADM 7000. Human Resource Management. 3 Hours.

A study of Human Resource Management. This course examines the processes of personnel administration and relates them to the human resource needs of organizations.

PADM 7010. Public Sector Labor Relations. 3 Hours.

An analysis of labor relations in public organizations. Topics include dispute resolution, management of benefit packages, and other current issues of labor relations.

PADM 7020. Public Sector Planning. 3 Hours.

An exploration of the elements of public sector planning, including data validation, forecasting and projection techniques, and decision-making.

PADM 7040. Non-Profit Management. 3 Hours.

A survey of the types, methods, and techniques of management of organizations outside the dualistic public and private sector model. Emphasis is on revenue strategies, structure and control.

PADM 7050. Administrative Law and Government. 3 Hours.

An overview of the administrative legal processes, focusing on the formation and execution of public policy. Special emphasis is placed upon protecting the rights of all parties in the complex processes of administrative law, policy formation, and implementation.

PADM 7060. Quantitative Methods for Public Administration. 3 Hours.

The application of quantitative methods to problems faced by public administration practitioners. Topics include regression analysis and the use of probability theory as they apply to decision making in public management.

PADM 7090. Policy Analysis. 3 Hours.

A systematic survey of the theories, basic concepts and approaches associated with empirical analysis of public policies. Topics include problems and uses of analysis, with reliance on case studies.

PADM 7110. Information Management. 3 Hours.

A survey of the issues and problems of information management. Emphasis is on modern developments in the generation, storage, classification and transmission of information vital to the management of public organizations.

PADM 7140. Governmental Budgeting and Finance. 3 Hours.

An analysis of financial management and budgeting procedures as applied to federal, state and local governments.

PADM 7170. Organizational Theory and Behavior. 3 Hours.

An introduction to major theories concerning management in the public sector, including analysis of individual behavior in an organizational context. Emphasis is on the politicized environment.

PADM 7180. Labor Law. 3 Hours.

An examination of modern labor movements in the United States, with special attention to the National Labor Relations Act and other fair employment practices acts. Attention will also be focused on the laws of unionization, collective bargaining, strikes and picketing.

PADM 7190. Special Topics in Public Administration. 3 Hours.

Study in areas which are not ordinarily covered in the MPA Program, but which may be of contemporary or special interest to MPA students at the time.

PADM 7200. Directed Study in Public Administration. 1-3 Hours.

Directed readings in selected areas of public administration with regular conferences between the student and the faculty member.

PADM 7210. Internship in Public Administration. 3 Hours.

Grading is on a satisfactory - unsatisfactory basis. A one-semester internship in a public or not-for-profit agency. The internship is designed to provide the student with practical experience in the field of public administration. A written report or a portfolio development is required.

PADM 7220. Managing Diversity in the Public Workforce. 3 Hours.

An overview of diversity issues in public management from a human resource manager's perspective. Topics include differences in age, disability, gender, race/ethnicity, and cultural differences and their impact on human resource management.

PADM 7230. Public Marketing and Branding for the Public Sector. 3 Hours.

An overview of public marketing and branding practices that exist in the public sector setting.

PADM 7240. Public Administration and Community-Based Organizations. 3 Hours.

An examination of the relationships between urban public administrators and their environment. Topics include but are not limited to the role community organizations, interest groups, and demographic diversity upon the management function.

PADM 7250. Managing Small Cities and Counties. 3 Hours.

An overview of local government operations for small and mid-sized communities. Topics include legal issues, the clerk's office, emergency management, planning, economic development, public works, leisure and human services, police and fire services, budgeting and financial management personnel, communication, and intergovernmental relations.

PADM 7260. Democracy and Public Administration. 3 Hours.

An examination of the role of the career administrator in a democratic system. Topics include the nature of the American democratic system and the ethical implications of non-elected administrators playing a key role in that system.

PADM 7270. Innovation and Creative Problem Solving in the Public Sector. 3 Hours.

An exploration of innovation, problem solving, and creativity as applied in the public sector. The course seeks to expand class participants' understanding and abilities in, each of these areas.

PADM 7300. Foundations Seminar in Public Administration. 3 Hours.

Graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory. A survey of the field of public administration, including the research and writing skills needed for successful study in the field. The course is to be taken during the student's first semester of coursework. Students must demonstrate basic computer proficiency as part of this course.

PADM 7350. Intergovernmental Management. 3 Hours.

A study of federal, state, and local government interactions including interactions with the not-for-profit sector, from perspective of a public administrator.

PADM 7360. Planning and Implementing Electronic Government. 3 Hours.

An introduction to the methods and processes for planning and implementing a website for a governmental entity or a nonprofit organization. Students will learn how public and nonprofit organizations utilize the web to meet the needs of their constituents.

PADM 7370. Comparative Public Policy. 3 Hours.

An examination of how public policies differ cross-nationally, why they differ, and what impact they have on their respective societies.

PADM 7380. Politics of Managing Urban Areas. 3 Hours.

A survey of urban history and governmental functions in areas, with particular attention on infrastructures. Focus is placed on urban politics from a public administration approach, along with pertinent policies such as economic development, transportation, education, criminal justice, and health policy. Emphasis is placed on management in a political context.

PADM 7400. Ethics and Public Administration. 3 Hours.

Examination of the role of ethics in public administration with an emphasis on ethical obligations, practices, and decision making. Students will analyze the principal philosophical approaches that inform ethical behavior and apply moral reasoning to a variety of specific cases that highlight ethical dilemmas faced by public administrators.

PADM 7410. Performance Analysis for Government and Non-Government Organizations. 3 Hours.

An overview of performance measurement and analysis in public and non-profit organizations.

PADM 7420. Homeland Security. 3 Hours.

An overview of homeland security, focusing on conventional and unconventional threats. Special emphasis is placed on civil defense, emergency management, and policy making.

PADM 7500. Environmental Policy. 3 Hours.

An examination of environmental politics and policy in the U.S. and U.S. involvement in global environmental issues. Using historical and current case topics, students will gain a greater understanding of challenges facing public administrators in managing environmental concerns.

PADM 7510. Health Policy. 3 Hours.

An examination of politics and policy making in health care in the United States. Topics will include providers, payers, and regulators; policy evaluation; and the challenges facing public administrators who manage or access the health care system.

PADM 7600. Public Policy Formation. 3 Hours.

An examination of the making of public policy in the United States. Using case studies and applied analysis, students will develop a deeper understanding of the institutions, people, and environmental conditions that influence the formation of public policies.

PADM 7670. Quality Management in Public Administration. 3 Hours.

A survey of the history, practice, and theory of quality management, as specifically related to public sector and nonprofit organizations.

PADM 7860. Grant Writing and Management. 3 Hours.

An examination of process for acquiring and managing grants in the public sector. Emphasis is on demonstrating knowledge of grant strategies and procedures gained through course material and completion of a case study.

PADM 7900. Capstone in Public Administration. 3 Hours.

Grading is on a satisfactory - unsatisfactory basis. To be taken during the student's final semester of course work. Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the material presented in their program of study through case analyses and/or applied projects. This course serves as the exit requirement for the MPA program.

PADM 9000. Administration and Government. 3 Hours.

A survey of the history and development of public administration and the institutions of government. This course is designed to introduce students to the social, political, and institutional context of public administration. Topics include democracy, federalism, and administrative theory.

PADM 9010. Financial Management for Public and Non-Governmental Organizations. 3 Hours.

A review and assessment of current practices and theory in public finance administration. The applicability of key public theories is analyzed in terms of their use within governmental and not-for-profit (NPO) settings. Specific attention is paid to applying theory as a standard of judgment in assessing the quality of governmental and NPO financial and budgetary structures and activities.

PADM 9020. Managing Human Resources in Public and Non-Governmental Organizations. 3 Hours.

A focus on human resource management in public and non-governmental organizations, including the standards that government bureaucracies have set for personnel practices in areas of diversity, equal opportunity, merit, and fair labor compensation that have been adopted in the private and non-governmental sectors.

PADM 9030. Logic of Inquiry in Administration. 3 Hours.

An in-depth examination of various epistemological approaches used in the systematic study of public administration.

PADM 9040. Research and Methods for Public Administration. 3 Hours.

Prerequisite: PADM 9030. An in-depth examination of the research methods used in the study of public administration. The course will expose students to the research methodologies available to modern public administrators and academics and to the software packages available to analyze data concerning various questions important to political scientists. The course will help students acquire the capability to critically examine empirical research and facilitate their ability to develop and carry out a complete empirical research project.

PADM 9050. Program Evaluation. 3 Hours.

Prerequisite: PADM 9040. Also offered as PSYC 9050. Theories, research, and practice related to program evaluation in government and nonprofit organizations.

PADM 9060. Information and Data Management. 3 Hours.

An examination of technology and information management, including hardware, software, and systems development. Particular emphasis will be placed on the management of information resources within the public sector and the role of E-Government.

PADM 9070. Culture of Formal Work Organizations. 3 Hours.

Also offered as SOCI 9070. The study of organizational culture and methods of changing culture in public and nonprofit organizations. The impact of culture on organizational behavior will be discussed.

PADM 9090. Educational Policy Analysis. 3 Hours.

Prerequisites: Doctoral standing or approval of instructor. A systematic survey of the theory, concepts and approaches associated with empirical analysis of public educational policies in a multi-cultural environment. Topics include quantitative and qualitative tools and methods of analysis. The case study approach is utilized.

PADM 9670. Quality Management in Public Administration. 3 Hours.

A survey of the history, practice, and theory of quality management, as specifically related to public sector and nonprofit organizations, with particular emphasis on data collection and analysis.

PADM 9990. Capstone Seminar. 3 Hours.

Prerequisites: Completion of all Core and Methods course. Graded "satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory". The concluding seminar in the DPA program, to be taken during the student's final semester. Students will demonstrate mastery of the material presented in their programs of study through a variety of methods and will present a professional portfolio. Students will develop and defend the proposal for their final project or organizational analysis.

PADM 9999. Dissertation Hours. 1-3 Hours.

Prerequisites: Completion of required coursework. Graded "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory". Required for all students as they develop and defend their dissertation. May be repeated for credit. Students must take a minimum of 6 credit hours to satisfy degree requirements.