

CLAYTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Social Sciences

Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Graduate Handbook

2026-2027

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Program Information

About

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at Clayton State University is a fully online program preparing students for a career in public service or the non-profit sector. The degree focuses on helping students understand and connect with their local community so they can become a force for change. Courses focus on ethical decision making, leadership, policy, budgeting, and organizational theory. Students can also gain practical experience through a supervised field experience in a governmental or non-profit agency.

Mission and Goals

The mission of the MPA program is to prepare students to be ethical and effective leaders in public, governmental, and non-profit agencies. Students will develop skills in human resource management, ethical decision making, local government administration and finance, and organizational management. Students can choose electives that focus on general administration and policy to develop additional skills like policy analysis, program evaluation and leadership. Alternatively, students can choose the criminal justice electives to develop skills applicable to the administration of justice in law enforcement, correctional, or judicial agencies.

Learning Outcomes

All graduates of the program will be able to:

- Explain the issues that face public administrators using knowledge of the practice of public administration
- Evaluate the ethical implications of decisions made by public administrators in the public interest
- Analyze public policy, public programs, and/or public services using critical thinking skills
- Apply financial knowledge to make economically sound and ethical decisions in the public interest
- Demonstrate the decision-making skills necessary for leadership in the public sector

Key Contact Information

MPA Program Director

Dr. Leah Pieper, Assistant Professor of Political Science and Public Administration

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Important Links:

MPA Program website
<https://clayton.edu/graduate/programs/mpa/index>

MPA Program in the Academic Catalog
<https://catalog.clayton.edu/academic-catalog/graduate-studies/public-administration-mpa/>

School of Graduate Studies website
<https://clayton.edu/graduate/>

MPA Program Faculty

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Degree Requirements and Curriculum

Overview

In order to earn a MPA degree, students must complete a minimum of 36 semester hours of coursework with a minimum grade point average of 3.0. At least 30 of these credits must be taken at Clayton State University. Students must earn at least a C or higher in each course to count towards degree requirements.

Credits are earned through courses taken in the following areas:

- 18 credits: Required public administration core courses
- 15 credits: Elective graduate courses
- 3 credits: Capstone experience.

MPA Degree Map

Public Administration Required Courses		18
POLS 5010	Public Administration	
POLS 5050	Research Methods & App Stats	
POLS 5210	Ethics in Public Admin	
POLS 6060	Public Admin HR Management	
POLS 6230	Local Govt Admin & Finance	
POLS 6250	Org. Theory and Management	
Electives		15
Choose 5 graduate level (5000 or 6000 numbered) courses from POLS or other approved graduate courses		
Capstone Experience		3
Choose one of the following:		
POLS 6940	Internship in Public Admin	
POLS 6980	Project in Public Admin	
Total Credit Hours		36

Capstone Experience

All students in the MPA program will complete a capstone experience through either an internship or project by enrolling in the appropriate course.

Students should complete an internship (POLS 6940) unless they currently have full-time employment in the public or non-profit sector. Students employed full-time in the field may choose to complete POLS 6980 Project in Public Admin in place of the internship. Students

should consult with the MPA program director or course instructor to obtain approval prior to the semester the course is taken. More details on each option are provided below.

POLS 6940: Internship in Public Admin

Typically offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Catalog description: Supervised field experience in a governmental or not-for-profit agency. Students will be required to complete a project that uses scholarly research to illuminate experience gained during their internship.

Course requirements:

Students are responsible for finding and applying for internships on their own, prior to the semester enrolled in the course.

Students must receive approval for the internship from the course instructor or MPA program director prior to enrolling to ensure the internship will allow them to fulfill program requirements.

POLS 6980: Project in Public Admin

Typically offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Catalog description: Using knowledge obtained from coursework, and input from a faculty advisor, students will produce a research paper analyzing an element of public administration and/or policy.

Course requirements: Students must consult with the course instructor prior to enrolling to discuss the topic for their project.

Public Administration Required Courses – Descriptions

POLS 5010: Public Administration

Typically offered: Fall, Summer

This course is an introduction to the fundamental concepts and practices relevant to the role of the non-elected, career administrator in a democratic system.

POLS 5050: Research Methods & App Stats

Typically offered: Fall, Spring

An overview of research design and research methodology as it applies to social sciences, and a review of descriptive and inferential statistics as they apply to the field of social sciences.

POLS 5210: Ethics in Public Admin

Typically offered: Fall, *tentatively Spring 2027*

This course examines basic issues of morality and ethics associated with public service roles in a democratic society. Topics covered in this course include the foundations of public service ethics, individual-centered approaches to ethics, institutional approaches to ethics, and issues in public service ethics.

POLS 6060: Public Admin HR Management

Typically offered: Spring, *tentatively Summer 2027*

This course is a study in human resource management in public and non-profit agencies. It will address current complex human resource issues, by introducing the student to best practices for impacting long-term workforce needs, recruiting and maintaining high-performance teams, and creating a culture of excellence within governmental agencies.

POLS 6230: Local Govt Admin & Finance

Typically offered: Spring, Summer

An introduction to local governmental organization and its various agencies. Particular attention will explore the management of revenue-raising and expenditure activities, including financial management, budgeting, grants and contracts, expenditure monitoring, procurement and purchasing policies, and financial auditing procedures.

POLS 6250: Org. Theory and Management

Typically offered: Spring, *tentatively Fall 2027*

This course is an introduction to major theories concerning organizational behavior and management in the public sector, including analysis of individual behavior in an organizational context. Contemporary trends in organization theory and public management are emphasized.

POLS Electives – Descriptions

Offerings will vary by semester based on student interest and instructor availability

POLS 5030: Public Policy

Typically offered: Fall

This course will explore the process of public-sector policy-making by examining selected policy issues and outcomes. Special attention will be given to the role of policy analysis and politics in the process.

POLS 5230: Public Management & Leadership

Typically offered: Spring

This course examines the fundamentals of management and leadership within public organizations, including skills needed to become an effective public administrator. The course also provides an evaluation of current and evolving challenges faced by public administrators and strategies to respond and adapt.

POLS 5250: Non-profit Administration

Typically offered: Fall

This course is designed to provide a theoretical and practical understanding of the non-profit sector, an introduction to skills essential for effectively managing non-profit organizations (NPOs), and exposure to contemporary issues and strategic opportunities. Students will increase their understanding of how non-profit organizations can be managed to effectively and efficiently deliver services and products to their constituents, clients, customers, and the public.

POLS 5260: Non-profit Budgeting

Typically offered: Fall

This course provides a framework for planning, budgeting and financial management in non-profit settings by offering both theoretical and practical applications for everyday use. The course examines the mission of non-profits and identifies resources for fiscal growth and development.

POLS 6040: Policy Analysis

Typically offered: Summer

This course will teach students to analyze complex public-policy issues and develop concise reports with recommendations on how to address these issues.

POLS 6051: Program Evaluation

Typically offered: Spring

Designed to familiarize students with techniques that are utilized in evaluating the effectiveness and impact of public policies and programs. It offers an analysis of program development with emphasis on procedure and design.

POLS 6210: Law for Public Administrators

Typically offered: Varies based on instructor availability

Using case law and real-world examples, students in this class will examine constitutional, administrative, and civil laws that regulate the actions of public servants.

POLS 6240: Urban Politics and Policy

Typically offered: Varies based on instructor availability

This course will introduce students to the concepts of urban governance, including the process of designing, implementing, and managing public policy in an urban environment. Students will develop and apply the analytical and leadership skills necessary to navigate the political and economic structures characteristic of urban politics.

POLS 6260: Environmental Policy

Typically offered: Fall

The aim of this course is to expose students to the broad themes in environmental policy and the major concepts and debates influencing decision-making processes in this area. The course will discuss the development of key environmental policies in the U.S. from the local to national level and use case studies on a range of environmental problems to prepare students for work in the field.

POLS 6270: Environmental Management

Typically offered: Spring

This course examines the structure, function, and outcomes of environmental and natural resource management in the US with special attention to the role of markets and maximization of social benefit. Topics may include pollution control, water management, land use policy, endangered species, fishery management, forestry policy, and sustainable development.

Certifications

Overview

Students have the option of earning a certification within the MPA program by taking certain electives. Two certifications are currently offered: Public Policy and Nonprofit Management. The requirements for each are listed later in this section.

Students must be enrolled in the MPA program to be eligible for a certificate, which will be awarded upon completion of the MPA program via a notation on the transcript.

Each certificate is a total of 9 credits, which may also be counted as part of the 15 credits of electives required for the MPA degree. Students do not need to take more than the 36 total credits required for the MPA degree in order to receive both the MPA and a certificate.

Declaring a certification

The certifications do not need to be officially declared with the Registrar. All students who successfully complete the required courses for a certification will have the certification noted on their transcript upon graduation. Instead, students should fill out the following form to notify their advisor to ensure the certification fits into the student's progression in the MPA program: https://claytonstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eycVzDu87BqwkLk.

Public Policy Certification

The Public Policy Certification allows students to gain a more in-depth understanding of public policy, including the policy process and evaluation and analysis of implemented policies and programs.

Requirements:

Complete the following three courses:

POLS 5030	Public Policy	3
POLS 6040	Policy Analysis	3
POLS 6051	Program Evaluation	3
Total Credit Hours		9

Nonprofit Management Certification

The Nonprofit Management Certification will allow students to gain in-depth knowledge of the nonprofit sector, including administration of nonprofit organizations, budgeting, leadership, and evaluating the success and effectiveness of implemented programs.

Requirements:

Complete the following two courses:

POLS 5250	Nonprofit Administration	3
POLS 5260	Nonprofit Budgeting	3

Choose ONE of the following two courses:

POLS 5230	Public Management & Leadership	
POLS 6051	Program Evaluation	
		3

Total Credit Hours	9
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Advising and Registration

Academic Advising

Students will be assigned an advisor from program faculty upon acceptance to the program and will remain with this advisor until completion of the program. This information will be communicated in the initial welcome documents and can also be viewed in the DUCK. Advisors will serve as a resource when deciding which courses to register for each semester as well as assisting with course substitutions, transfer credit, and academic standing requirements.

Current advisors, unless discussed otherwise with the program director:

All MPA students as of **Fall 2022**: Dr. Leah Pieper, leahpieper@clayton.edu

Career Advising

All graduate students have access to the services provided by the Career and Professional Development office, including workshops, resume review, job fairs, internship information, and more: <https://clayton.edu/career/>. Students also have access to Laker CareerZone, which includes job listings for CSU students and alumni, including full-time and part-time positions, internships, and on-campus opportunities.

Registration

Students will register themselves for courses once registration opens prior to the semester. The course schedule can be accessed here: <https://apps.clayton.edu/courses/schedule>. To register, log into the DUCK from the LochNet and complete the Registration Agreement. More instructions, important dates, and FAQs can be found from the Registrar: <https://www.clayton.edu/registrar/registration-information>. If you need assistance registering, please contact your advisor or the registrar at registrar@clayton.edu.

Taking 5 courses per semester:

The MPA program is an accelerated program, meaning students may exceed the normal maximum credit hour requirement of 12 hours and register for up to 15 credits per semester. Students must contact their advisor to change their maximum credit hours to 15 each semester prior to enrolling in a 5th course.

Course Loads (Degree Maps)

The MPA program can be completed at a flexible pace to meet student needs. There are 3 main options: accelerated, full-time, and part-time. Examples of schedules for each of these options can be found here: <https://clayton.edu/graduate/programs/mpa/course-maps>.

Accelerated course load

Students intending to complete the MPA program in the accelerated 12-month format will need to take 5 courses (15 credits) in both the Fall and Spring semesters and 2 courses (6 credits) in the Summer. Most MPA program courses in Fall and Spring semesters are short-term 8-week sessions. Students may not exceed 3 courses (9 credits) in a short-term 8-week session without special permission from the MPA program director.

Full-time course load

Students who wish to work on their degree at a slower pace may take fewer courses each semester, but should be aware of the following university policies regarding course loads:

To be certified as full-time students, graduate students must carry a minimum of nine (9) semester hours in fall and spring and a minimum of six (6) hours in summer. A student who is enrolled in less than a full-time course of study at Clayton State University may be in jeopardy of:

- losing insurance coverage under his or her parent/ guardian's or personal insurance policy;
- being out of compliance with the Department of Homeland Security if enrolled at Clayton State University on a student visa;
- being placed on a loan repayment schedule by a lender or guarantor if the student is the recipient of federal financial aid; and/or
- losing a scholarship if the guidelines for receiving the scholarship require full-time enrollment.

Half-time course load

Half-time enrollment is a minimum of five (5) semester hours for graduate students.

Course Format

All courses in the MPA program are offered in an online, asynchronous format with no required in-person or virtual meeting times.

Except for the Capstone, all Fall and Spring semester courses in the MPA program are offered in a 7.5-week short session format. There are two short sessions per full 15-week Fall/Spring semester, with a short final exam period in between the sessions and following the second session. Summer courses are all 9 weeks. Dates for all sessions and semesters can be found in the Academic Calendar: <https://clayton.edu/calendars/academic-calendars>.

Withdrawals

Students who are unable to complete a course in the MPA program and wish to leave the course should consult their advisor or the program director as soon as possible to discuss options for remaining in the course or withdrawing.

Students receiving financial aid should also contact the Financial Aid office to discuss how a withdrawal could impact current and future financial aid.

Official withdrawal forms must be submitted to the Registrar to complete a withdrawal under any circumstances. Students who complete the process before the withdrawal deadline will receive a grade of W which will not be included in GPA calculations. Withdrawals after the deadline will receive a grade of WF which will count toward GPA calculations as a failing grade. Hardship withdrawals may also be available for students in serious circumstances. Policies with more information on all types of withdrawals can be found in the course catalog:

<https://catalog.clayton.edu/rules-regulations/withdrawal-courses/> and official dates, deadlines, and instructions for requesting a withdrawal can be found on the Registrar's main page and withdrawal page: <https://clayton.edu/registrar/withdrawal>.

Course Repeat Policy

A graduate student can repeat a course and earn a satisfactory grade. All course attempts are recorded on the transcript, but only the most recent attempt for credit will count toward fulfillment of the graduate degree program and be included in the institutional GPA. This policy provides an opportunity for a student to raise their GPA by re-taking a course and earning a higher grade, but students must be aware that the most recent grade will count even if it is lower.

Graduation Requirements

Eligibility for Graduation

Graduate students must meet several requirements and submit an application for graduation in order to graduate with their MPA Degree. Graduation requirements for the MPA Degree include:

- Earn a total of 36 credit hours
- Complete all Public Administration required core courses
- Complete the Capstone Experience
- Be in good academic standing (cumulative institutional GPA of 3.00 or higher)

Once these requirements have been satisfied, a student may apply for graduation. See the Academic Catalog for more detail on graduation requirements for graduate students (<https://catalog.clayton.edu/graduation-requirements/graduate-graduation-requirements/>).

Application for Graduation

Students must submit an application for graduation at least a semester in advance of their planned graduation term, according to the deadlines from the Registrar's Office.

Graduation Term	Application Deadline
Fall	June 1
Spring	September 15
Summer	January 30

Students should first meet with their advisor to ensure they are on track to graduate, and then submit a graduation application through the Registrar's website along with a fee of \$35. The link to the graduate application and more information about graduation policies, including appealing after missing the deadline, evaluation of applications, and changing graduation dates can be found on the Registrar's website: <https://clayton.edu/registrar/graduation-application-policy>.

Commencement

For graduate students, commencement is marked by a hooding ceremony, a symbol of academic achievement for students who have completed their master's degrees. Students will be hooded upon receiving their degree at the commencement ceremonies in the fall and spring. Summer graduates may participate in the fall ceremony. More information about commencement can be found here: <https://clayton.edu/registrar/graduation-faqs>.

Dual Degrees

The MPA Program is included in two dual degree programs:

- [Dual Master of Business Administration and Master of Public Administration \(MBA/MPA\)](#)
- [Dual Master of Strategic Leadership Development and Master of Public Administration \(MSLD/MPA\)](#)

More information on each of these programs, including curriculum and suggested degree maps, can be found in the Academic Catalog at the links above.

Admission to dual degree programs

Applicants must submit an application to a dual degree program, including submitting the required materials for each program, in order to be reviewed for admission. Applicants must meet the minimum admission requirements for both programs to be considered.

Students admitted to one program who decide they wish to pursue a dual degree instead must reapply to the dual degree program and submit all required materials. Materials used for the previous applications may be reused as appropriate. Admittance to one program does not automatically imply admittance to the other or to a dual degree program. Contact the Admissions office for assistance with changing or resubmitting your application.

Advising for dual degree programs

Students will be jointly advised by the MPA Program Director and the College of Business graduate programs advisor. The current College of Business Graduate Programs Director and Graduate Programs Advisor can be found under Graduate Programs here:

<https://www.clayton.edu/business/about/leadership-team.php>.

The individual program websites also provide helpful information and answers to common questions.

MBA website: <https://www.clayton.edu/business/programs/online-master-of-business-administration/index.php>

MSLD website: <https://www.clayton.edu/business/programs/online-master-of-strategic-leadership-development.php>

Academic Policies

Information in this section is also found in the Academic Catalog: <https://catalog.clayton.edu/>.

Satisfactory Progress

Graduate students are expected to maintain Good Academic Standing throughout their matriculation in their graduate program. Good Academic Standing at Clayton State University is defined as a minimum institutional graduate GPA of 3.0.

Academic Probation

Graduate students whose institutional GPA falls below the minimum acceptable GPA of 3.0 are placed on Academic Probation. Students on Probation must contact their Graduate Program Director to receive information and assistance on their continuation in graduate study. In addition, students on probation, especially those on probation for the first time, may be required to develop a remediation plan for continuing in graduate school.

Students who are on Academic Probation who earn a term GPA of 3.0 or higher and raise their institutional GPA to a 3.0 or higher will return to Good Academic Standing.

Students who are on Academic Probation whose term GPA is 3.0 or higher, but whose institutional GPA remains below 3.0, will remain on Academic Probation.

Students who are on Academic Probation who earn a term GPA below 3.0 while on Academic Probation, regardless of the institutional GPA, will be excluded for one term (Academic Suspension, see below).

Academic Suspension

Graduate students who are on Academic Probation and earn a term and institutional GPA that is below 3.0 are placed on Academic Suspension. Academic Suspension bars students from enrolling for one semester. Students who are suspended are required to develop a concrete plan for academic success in consultation with their Graduate Program Director/Coordinator. Reinstatement is not automatic.

To be considered for reinstatement a student must submit a remediation plan for future academic success to Graduate Enrollment Services. The Graduate Program Director/Coordinator of the program in which the student is seeking readmission and the School of Graduate Studies will evaluate the remediation plan to make a decision on reinstatement. All information should be submitted by the admission deadline for the semester in which the student seeks to resume coursework.

Students who are reinstated will be on Academic Probation and must continue to maintain a minimum term GPA of 3.0 until they achieve Good Academic Standing. For those reinstated, in consultation with their Graduate Program Director/Coordinator, the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies may impose additional restrictions such as, students may be required to enroll in specific courses, and/or participate in structured academic support programs.

Graduate students who are on Academic Suspension who seek to apply to a different program must first regain Good Academic Standing (i.e., by retaking and replacing unsatisfactory grades in prior courses) before submitting a new Graduate Admissions Application to Graduate Enrollment Services.

Academic Dismissal

Graduate students will be dismissed from graduate study at Clayton State University when they have been suspended previously and in any subsequent term, their term and institutional GPAs are both below 3.0.

To seek readmission following academic dismissal, following a minimum of one full calendar year, a student must submit (1) a Readmission Appeal Form; and (2) a letter of appeal, to Graduate Enrollment Services. Applicants should include any supporting documentation they may have to support their appeal. Attach all documentation with your appeal letter.

Once students have submitted all required documentation, the appeal packet will be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. All the information provided as well as the academic history from graduate education at Clayton State University and any other graduate programs the applicant has attended will be examined. If the applicant is currently enrolled at another school, they must submit a transcript delineating their academic performance at that institution before a decision can be determined. The decision on readmission will be communicated to the applicant via email and is considered final.

Students who are readmitted will be on Academic Probation and must continue to maintain a minimum term GPA of 3.0 until they achieve Good Academic Standing. For those readmitted, in consultation with their Graduate Program Director/Coordinator, the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies may impose additional restrictions such as, students may be required to enroll in specific courses, and/or participate in structured academic support programs.

Grading and Appeals

Grading System

Grades in the MPA program and in all graduate courses at Clayton State are assigned and calculated into the GPA based on the following:

Grade Symbol	GPA Numerical Equivalent
A: Excellent	4.00
B: Good	3.00
C: Satisfactory	2.00
D: Minimum passing	1.00
F: Failure	0.00
WF: Withdrew, failing	0.00

Graduate Academic Appeals Process

As learners within a university community, students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to model appropriate, effective, and respectful interpersonal communication. If issues arise, the parties involved should make a genuine effort to resolve them. When efforts to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution are unsuccessful, students are advised to proceed as quickly as possible to initiate an appeal. The following section outlines the types of appeals that are reviewed by the School of Graduate Studies and the procedures to follow to submit an appeal.

Students filing an appeal about an academic concern should follow the procedures outlined below prior to filing an appeal:

1. The student should first attempt an informal resolution of concerns by interacting directly with the individual(s) involved (e.g., faculty member, program director, etc.).
2. If resolution is not achieved through informal interaction, the student may direct the complaint, verbally or in writing, to the MPA Program Director, who will attempt to facilitate resolution between the parties. The MPA Program Director will consult with the Social Sciences Department Chair as necessary.
3. If resolution is not achieved through the initial intervention of the MPA Program Director and Social Sciences Department Chair, the matter can be directed as follows:
 - a. The student must present a formal written complaint using the student complaint form, with any relevant documentation to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (or designee) and any other documentation as required by the college (<https://www.clayton.edu/about/administration/student-affairs/student-complaints>).
 - b. The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (or designee) will provide a resolution to the issue in writing to the student.

School of Graduate Studies Academic Appeals

If the student is not satisfied with the resolution of the issue, they have the right to appeal the decision to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies or designee within the Office of the Provost. All appeals must be initiated within 30 days from the date of the last appeal denial. Appeals and supporting documents can be sent electronically to: schoolofgradstudies@clayton.edu or it can be hand delivered to: The School of Graduate Studies/Provost Office, James M. Baker University Center (UC Building), Suite 215.

Graduate student academic appeals may be submitted for the following categories:

- Grade appeals
- Transfer of graduate credit appeals
- Hardship withdrawal appeals
- Academic dismissal appeals
- Reinstatement/readmission following academic dismissal appeals

Please see the Academic Catalog for more details on submitting appeals for each of these processes (<https://catalog.clayton.edu/rules-regulations/graduate-specific-rules-regulations/graduate-student-appeals/>).

Academic Honesty

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The university assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for fairness require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable or unethical conduct related to their academic work. The policy represents a core value of the university, and all members of the university community are responsible for abiding by its tenets. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. All members of the academic community — students, faculty, and staff — are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. The procedures for such reporting are on file in the offices of the deans of each college, the office of the Dean of Students, and the Office of the Provost. In an effort to foster an environment of academic integrity and to prevent academic dishonesty, students are expected to discuss with faculty the expectations regarding course assignments and standards of conduct.

AI Usage Policy

The use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) programs and services such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, and others in MPA program courses is at the discretion of individual instructors as specified in the course syllabus. Violations of course policies are subject to university Academic Conduct Regulations as described in the Academic Catalog. Please consult the course syllabus and direct any questions to the instructor.

Communication Policy

MPA students are expected to communicate with program faculty, staff, and all university employees in a professional and respectful manner. A Clayton State email address is provided to all students upon admission, and students are expected to use this email for all university related communications. Students having issues with access to CSU email should contact the HUB immediately through the information on their website: <https://clayton.edu/hub/>.

Online courses utilize the Desire2Learn (D2L) platform, and students are expected to regularly check their course sites and engage with instructors and students through D2L. Information on how to access and navigate D2L can be found here: <https://mediaspace.clayton.edu/home>.

Transfer Credit

Transfer of credit may be approved under the following conditions:

- The course, if completed at an institution in the United States, must have been completed at an institution recognized by a regional accrediting body as degree granting for higher education at the time the course was taken.
- The course must have been restricted to graduate students only.
- A grade of B or higher must have been received in the course.
- The content of the course must correspond to that of a Clayton State University course required or permitted in the student's program.
- Degree credit completed before enrollment in the current Clayton State program will be considered if it will not be more than six years old at the time the student is admitted to the current Clayton State degree program. Any previously approved transfer degree credit will be reconsidered upon a student's readmission to a degree program in which they were previously enrolled or admission to a new degree program.
- Credit completed elsewhere after enrollment in the current Clayton State program may be considered for transfer credit if it is within the time limit allowed for completion of the current program.
- Transfer credit will be limited to a maximum of six (6) semester hours in degree programs requiring less than 39 total credit hours of coursework. Programs requiring more than 39 hours of course work may allow up to nine (9) credits to transfer.

An Application for Transfer of Graduate Credit must be completed no later than the end of the first semester of attendance at Clayton State University. The request must indicate the specific course(s) for which transfer credit is sought. A copy of the other institution's catalog must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies to verify that the course was limited to graduate students only. If the course(s) was taken after application materials were filed, an official transcript of the coursework must be sent directly from the other institution to the School of Graduate Studies. Requests for transfer of graduate credit cannot be processed until all necessary information has been received.

To request a transfer of graduate credit, please contact the MPA Program Director after being admitted to the program or when enrolling for classes for the first time.

Transfer Credit from other Clayton State Graduate Degrees

Any graduate student wishing to receive a second or subsequent graduate degree from Clayton State University must complete a minimum of 24 additional credit hours for a second degree at

Clayton State University. Students are required to satisfy all of the remaining credit hour requirements for the second degree.

In degree or certificate programs requiring more than 31 total hours of coursework, a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours from a previously earned Clayton State graduate degree or graduate certificate can be used to satisfy the degree requirement of a second or subsequent graduate degree or certificate. A grade of B or higher must have been received in the course.

The content of the course(s) from the previously earned graduate degree or graduate certificate must correspond to the curriculum requirements required or permitted in the second or subsequent degree or graduate certificate program. Degree credit will be considered only if it is no more than six (6) years old at the time the student is admitted to Clayton State in the second or subsequent graduate degree program. Any previously approved degree credit earned from a previous degree earned at Clayton State or transfer degree credit will be reconsidered upon admission into a second/subsequent degree program or new degree program.

Admissions

Requirements

Admission into the program will be based on several factors to ensure a talented and diverse student body, including:

- Completed online application to the School of Graduate Studies and the \$50 application fee
- Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited post-secondary institution with a minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.5 or higher, verified by official transcript(s)
- Statement of purpose of around 250-500 words describing how your current experience or education prepare you for the Master of Public Administration degree, and how this degree will contribute to your future goals or career development
- Two letters of professional or academic reference
- Curriculum Vita/Resume

Only complete applications will be considered.

Questions about the MPA admissions process may be directed to the MPA program director or Graduate Enrollment Services at (678) 466-4113 or graduate@clayton.edu.

Deadlines for Applications

Fall priority: May 1

Fall final: July 15

Spring priority: October 1

Spring final: November 15

Financial Aid and Graduate Assistantships

Financial Aid

Graduate students may be eligible for some federal loan programs to pay for enrollment in a graduate degree program. For more information on eligibility and how to apply, visit the office of Financial Aid: <https://clayton.edu/financial-aid/>.

New students should file a FAFSA form as soon as possible, preferably at the same time as submitting an application for admission: <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>. Once completed and admitted, the student should follow the instructions to complete their file and

abide by the deadlines and freeze dates: <https://clayton.edu/financial-aid/apply-for-aid/new-student>.

Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of Graduate Assistantship (GA) positions may be available through the MPA program, contingent on annual budget availability. These are highly competitive positions offered only to the most qualified applicants to the program and are only offered to students entering in the Fall semester who enroll at least full-time. Applicants must have at least a 3.0 undergraduate GPA to be considered for a GA position, as well as demonstrated excellence in school and professional endeavors.

Applicants must also be willing to meet all the requirements and responsibilities of a GA position to receive the associated benefits. GA positions include a full-tuition waiver and stipend for the duration of the appointment—Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. Responsibilities may include teaching related tasks, assisting the MPA director with program-related work, and/or research assistance for department faculty. GAs will be expected to work for an average of 19 hours a week in addition to their graduate studies.

Interested applicants should apply for admission by the priority deadline. The MPA program director will initiate an application process for eligible students once the number of positions is determined with the most up-to-date job descriptions to ensure a good fit between the GA and current program needs.

Other non-academic departments on campus may also have graduate assistantships available. These may be advertised in the Laker Engage newsletter from Student Affairs, sent to your CSU email address, or on Laker Career Zone (<https://clayton.edu/career/students/laker-careerzone>).

For more information on GA positions, please contact the MPA program director.