

Bachelor of Liberal Arts/Master of Public Administration Shared-Credit Degree Program

The School of Public Administration (SPA) and the University College now offer an accelerated way to complete both the Bachelor of Liberal Arts (BLA) degree and the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree. Qualifying students can earn graduate credit towards an MPA degree during their senior academic year in the Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree program.

The BLA requires a minimum of 120 undergraduate credit hours and the MPA requires 42 graduate credit hours. Traditionally, students are not able to begin the MPA program until an undergraduate degree is completed. In this Shared-Credit program, 18 of the MPA graduate credits (6 courses) are taken during the senior year of a student's BLA degree program and are applied to both the BLA and MPA degree requirements. This reduces the time needed to complete the two degrees by a full academic year, compared to the traditional model, and results in significant savings!

Steps in the BLA/MPA Shared-Credit Program

Step #1

Qualifying students are invited to apply to the School of Public Administration. Students who apply and are accepted then enter the BLA/MPA Shared-Credit Degree Program. Typically, students should apply to the Shared-Credit program at the beginning of their junior year.

Invitation Criteria: Invitees must have earned approximately 90 credit hours with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 or higher. Students will NOT be considered for the BLA/MPA Shared-Credit program until the criteria is met.

Step #2

Six MPA 500-level courses are added to the student's BLA requirements. The University College Liberal Arts & Integrative Studies (UCLAIS) department monitors completion of the BLA degree requirements.

Undergraduate Progression: Students complete 300- and 400-level BLA required and elective courses during the junior and senior academic years. In addition, the following MPA courses must be completed in the senior year, as part of the BLA requirements:

- PADM 500 Public Management and Policy
- PADM 521 Institutional Development and Behavior
- PADM 522 Program Evaluation
- PADM 525 Human Resource Management in the Public Sector
- PADM 544 Public Budgeting and Finance
- PADM 596 Research Methods for Public Managers

Step #3

When the student completes all the undergraduate requirements, including the MPA courses, the student receives the BLA degree.

Admission to the MPA is provisional until all BLA requirements have been met. Students must maintain a 3.0 (“B”) grade point average for all MPA course work. All 500-level MPA courses completed during the senior academic year will appear on both the student’s undergraduate and graduate records. Students who choose not to complete the graduate portion of the program are still awarded the BLA degree when all undergraduate requirements are met.

Step #4

The student and MPA Coordinator prepare an MPA Study Plan Worksheet, which documents the remaining courses to be completed in the MPA program (a minimum of 24 credits or 8 courses). The worksheet is updated at the end of each semester that the student is enrolled in the MPA program.

Step #5

All graduate degree requirements must be fulfilled, including all UNM Graduate Studies requirements (e.g. time to degree, minimum GPA, approved Program of Studies) and successful completion of an MPA capstone option (Plan I Thesis or Plan II Paper).

To learn more about MPA courses, concentrations, and capstone options, please visit the program’s website: <http://spa.unm.edu>. Graduate Studies information is available at: <http://grad.unm.edu>.

Step #6

The student graduates with the Master of Public Administration degree.

Suggested Timeline

Year 1: Senior Year

- Complete BLA requirements
- Complete the following MPA core courses:

Fall Semester:

PADM 500
PADM 521
PADM 596

Spring Semester:

PADM 522
PADM 525
PADM 544

Year 2: Graduate Year

- Complete six MPA approved courses and the two-course capstone (PADM 552 and 553)

Fall Semester:

PADM Elective
PADM 552 or 599
PADM Concentration
PADM Concentration

Spring Semester:

PADM 553 or 599
PADM Concentration
PADM Concentration
PADM Concentration

Have any questions or comments?

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