



## SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

### **PADM 655: MHA Practicum** **Spring 2025, Fall 2025**

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#### **Course Description**

The School of Public Administration has established its MHA practicum program to place graduate students in organizational settings to afford the student an experiential learning opportunity. The goal of the program is to allow students to integrate their academic background with practical, real world experiences. Such an experience is vital to producing the future leaders of the government and nonprofit sectors.

The benefits of the practicum program are three-fold: (1) the program aids in shaping and defining a student's career goals through exposure to healthcare management while still in school, (2) the combination of academic studies and professional experience synergistically improves learning, and (3) it affords an opportunity for students to return to school and share their experiences with fellow students.

Exposure to a healthcare related practicum with hours equivalent to that of a 3-credit hour course offers the student some advantages usually associated with 12-18 month post-graduate fellowships. The influences and experiences gained from the practicum will help guide the student in their final semesters of studies into an area of management most suitable for the individual and the prospective organization. Students returning from their practicum are also able to apply their practice knowledge and experience to subsequent coursework. The insights and knowledge gained by the students have a tremendous impact on their ability to grasp and negotiate the more advanced academic material characteristic of the program's later course load.

#### **Course Objectives**

At the end of the practicum, students should be able to:

1. Assess the operational, and managerial aspects of the practicum organization.
2. List and explain the tasks assigned and projects accomplished during the practicum and how they contribute to the student's career goals.

3. Identify and effectively use appropriate communication methods depending on audience characteristics and communication goals.
4. Describe ways in which the practicum has strengthened problem-solving, communication, and presentation skills.
5. Identify key environmental factors affecting the practicum organization.
6. Understand and assess sources of power and authority and how they are distributed within the practicum organization.
7. Describe and evaluate the nature of staff relations in the practicum organization.
8. Explain how the practicum contributed to the establishment of a network of professional relationships.
9. Conduct oneself in a professional manner that cultivates confidence and trust.

### **Course Requirements and Grading Policy**

The final course grade is based on feedback provided by your preceptor, completion of written reports, and a culminating presentation.

Reports: Throughout the practicum experience, students are required to submit written periodic reports to their instructor and/or Practicum Preceptor. The purposes of the reports are to:

1. Provide the instructor with information describing the progress of the practicum experience;
2. Provide a guide to direct the experiential learning;
3. Allow the student to reflect and link to classroom experiences; and
4. Assist the student in preparation of a final presentation.

#### *Presentations:*

At the conclusion of the Practicum, all students are required to give a presentation to MHA and other interested faculty and students. Students will prepare and present an oral presentation of their internship experience supported by PowerPoint or other appropriate presentation media. The presentation should include a description of the practicum host site/organization and the student's specific role/department/assignment within the organization. The preceptor should be identified and described. The student will present a summary of their practicum experiences and activities and provide a summary of their major learning experiences. Students will have the opportunity to hear what is involved with a practicum and all students will have their education enriched by hearing about the experiences of other students in different settings. This is an excellent opportunity for all students to work on improving their presentation and public speaking skills.

#### *Grading Scale:*

The practicum instructor will award a grade of either an "C" or a "NC" for credit or no credit based on satisfactory completion of the requirements outlined above and any additional requirements outlined in SPA policy.