

MPA – JD Joint Degree Program

The Master of Public Administration program (MPA) in the Department of Public Administration and Policy at The University of Georgia (UGA) collaborates with the UGA Law School to offer the MPA/JD joint degree program. This program allows a student to earn both degrees in four years, eliminating approximately one year of academic work.

Applicants must be considered for and receive admission to each program separately. Applicants must take both the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) to be considered for admission to these programs. Admissions decisions are made by faculty committees in each program (and approved by the Graduate School in the case of the MPA).

MPA/JD students choose between two academic sequences.

1. MPA-JD-JD-Split: Students spend their first year in the MPA program, their second and third years in the Law School, and their fourth and final year finishing up requirements in both academic units. While a student may matriculate to this Dual Degree program after a year of graduate work, pursuant to ABA standard 311(d), the coursework for the first MPA year will count towards the Masters degree and not the JD.
2. JD-JD-MPA-Split: Students complete their first two years in the Law School, their third year in the MPA program, and their fourth and final year finishing up requirements in both academic units.

Students are only eligible for an assistantship during their full academic year in the MPA program, namely, their first or third year, respectively. MPA/JD students must take their first and second years of Law School consecutively.

During the first year of MPA coursework, the student enrolls in 20 hours of required courses in the public administration and policy core. This includes six courses plus the two-credit, three-day Orientation held every August. The first year of Law coursework consists of 31 enrolled credit hours.

Those earning the MPA/JD degrees complete 32 hours of coursework in public administration and policy (a total of 10 courses and an Orientation/Socialization) and 74 credit hours in the Law School. Three electives usually required for the MPA degree are waived. When completing your MPA program of study in your final semester, three JURI classes replace three of the six required electives.

The MPA program requires an internship for students who have not had significant public management experience. The internship must be completed at a public sector government agency or nonprofit organization with a minimum duration of 300 hours at the same agency. Students will not receive course credit for completing an internship and cannot count as an internship any experience for which they received course credit.

MPA/JD students may specialize in health policy and administration, higher education administration, local government administration, nonprofit administration, public budgeting and finance administration, public management/organizational theory, or public policy. There is no specialization in public law. In order to fulfill a specialization, the joint degree program student must take three courses (nine credit hours) in that area.

If a MPA/JD student is on assistantship with the Department of Public Administration and Policy, s/he is eligible to receive the tuition waiver benefit **only** for the academic year in which s/he is

enrolled solely in MPA coursework. A MPA/JD student may not receive a tuition waiver for terms in which s/he is enrolled in “JD” or “Split” years.

The joint MPA/JD degree program allows UGA to combine two of its very best degrees in a creative way that is attractive to the very best students whose interests lie in both fields. Future careers may include working for the US Department of Justice, clerking for a federal or state court judge, or serving as a lawyer or counsel for a public agency or nonprofit.

For more information, please contact:

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