



# Master of Public Administration

NORTHERN VIRGINIA PUBLIC SERVICE FELLOWS PROGRAM



**The Northern Virginia Public Service Fellows Program is a unique opportunity for mid-career professionals employed by local governments in Northern Virginia to strengthen their skills and further their careers. Each cohort of Fellows consists of a carefully screened group of public managers who are sponsored by their government employers.**

As a student in the program, you will earn your Master of Public Administration (MPA) from George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and

Government. The Fellows curriculum builds on the Schar School's MPA core by adding a **concentration in state and local government.**

All classes are taken with other mid-career local government managers from the Northern Virginia region, providing you the opportunity to network and build relationships with peers. Electives from the program have been designed and selected in conjunction with top executives from Northern Virginia local governments to maximize value for local managers.

**OUR SPONSORS**

- The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government
- Northern Virginia Regional Commission
- Participating local jurisdictions

**ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

**PROGRAM FORMAT**

As an evening cohort program designed for working professionals, the Northern Virginia Public Service Fellows Program follows a set course structure:

- Participants complete two courses during the fall and spring semesters, and one course in the summer.
- Classes are held on a single day of the week, but may require additional time outside of class as necessary.
- Classes are offered on Wednesdays and/or Thursdays (day of week varies by cohort) at 4:30 p.m. on the Fairfax campus.
- Summer classes begin in mid-May and conclude in mid-July, allowing a six-week break before fall classes begin.
- Participants will have field experiences – PUAD 502 includes a weekday local government night, and PUAD 540 includes a Friday on Capitol Hill.

**SAMPLE COURSE OF STUDY\***

Students complete two courses during the fall and spring semesters, and one course in the summer. The standard course of study includes the following sequence:

- YEAR 1 (Three semesters)**
- PUAD 502: Administration in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
  - PUAD 520: Organizational Theory and Management Behavior
  - POGO 511: Introductory Data Analysis for Policy/Government
  - PUAD 663: State and Local Budgeting
  - PUAD 540: Public Policy Process

- YEAR 2 (Three semesters)**
- POGO 646: Policy and Program Evaluation
  - PUAD 615: Administrative Law
  - PUAD 670: Human Resources Management in the Public Sector
  - PUAD 651: Virginia Politics, Policy, and Administration
  - PUAD 759: Capstone – Issues in Local Government Administration

- YEAR 3 (One semester)**
- PUAD 703: Third-Party Governance
  - PUAD 700: Ethics and Public Administration
- Graduation Ceremony:** Students who enroll in the fall graduate in December, and students who enroll in the spring graduate in May.

*\*This course of study is intended to be used as a sample schedule and is subject to change.*

# A DEGREE DESIGNED FOR TOMORROW'S LEADERS

## WHY EARN A MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION?

The purpose of a graduate program in public administration is to prepare individuals for positions of leadership in the public sector. Public administration draws on a wide variety of disciplines, such as political science, economics, business, administration, and law. Public administration is a unifying field of study that effectively merges the specialties of others while still offering its own unique set of competencies and areas of expertise, as it applies the disciplines of other fields to the public and nonprofit sectors.

## ABOUT THE SCHAR SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GOVERNMENT

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government is nationally **ranked in the top 20 percent** of all MPA programs, earning a coveted spot in the top 50 of U.S. News & World Report's top Public Affairs list. It is ranked No. 40 in the world and No. 13 among U.S. colleges



and universities, according to the Academic Ranking of World Universities. It is also the only fully-accredited public service program headquartered in Northern Virginia. As one of the largest MPA programs in the country, students have the advantage of a robust program and a large alumni network.

The Schar School's MPA program is designed to build the knowledge base and skills of people who strive to play a leadership role in organizations that develop or implement public policy. Emphasis is placed on the development of knowledge about politics, public policy, and management, integrated with analytic thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. The core of the MPA program consists of courses that emphasize these skills.

# ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

## WHO MAY PARTICIPATE?

Any full-time employee of a local government in Northern Virginia, if selected by their employer, may apply to the program. Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree. Each jurisdiction will nominate individuals in their own selection process, centered on the Schar School's graduate application and admission requirements. The Schar School will review and approve all final applicants.

## APPLICATION PROCESS & ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Faculty from the Schar School's MPA program are available to visit your jurisdictions for employee information sessions, provide application materials to interested employees, and support the selection during your internal nomination process.

Each jurisdiction, in conjunction with the Schar School, will determine the number of participants to sponsor for the cohort program.

### The application process is as follows:

- 1 **Submit your completed application to your local jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction maintains a different deadline — be sure to check with your local jurisdiction.**
- 2 **Your jurisdiction will notify you if you are able to submit an online application.**
- 3 **If selected by your jurisdiction, submit your completed application to the Schar School of Policy and Government.**
- 4 **Final candidates are selected.**

Please note that deadlines vary by semester of entry and by jurisdiction. Visit [schar.gmu.edu/mpacohort](https://schar.gmu.edu/mpacohort) for more information.

## GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- A goals statement
- A current resume
- Two letters of recommendation
- Unofficial transcripts from all previous institutions attended in the U.S. For international institutions, transcripts may be unofficial but should include cumulative transcripts, degree certificates, individual semester marksheets (if applicable), and diplomas (if applicable)

## THE JURISDICTION & MPA PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP

### Each participating jurisdiction will:

- Determine how many students they wish to sponsor.
- Conduct an internal application and review to nominate candidates.
- Submit completed applications for nominated candidates to the Schar School of Policy and Government by the application deadline.

### The Schar School's MPA program will:

- Work in partnership with the local jurisdictions to ensure each student's academic success in the MPA program.
- Admit to the MPA program those individuals nominated by local jurisdictions and accepted by the Schar School's admissions process.
- Limit enrollment in Fellows class sections to participants in the Fellows program.

## PROGRAM COSTS

- Each application submitted to the Schar School of Policy and Government requires a \$75 application fee (generally paid by the applicant).
- Division of the tuition between the employer and the student is at the option of the employer. There may be cost-sharing, depending on the local jurisdictions.
- If students participate in the statistics preparation workshop, additional costs will be required.



**MPA Northern Virginia Public Service Fellows Program**

C/O Schar School Graduate Admissions

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For more information, visit:

**[SCHAR.GMU.EDU/MPACOHORT](https://schar.gmu.edu/mpacohort)**

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