

## Master of Public Administration Program

### MPA Student Orientation

Fall 2025  
Handout

## Outline

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## Agenda

- Why CSUF?
- Mission, Vision, Values
- Public Admin Student Assoc. (PASA)
- Faculty Profiles
- Curriculum
- Milestones
- Scholarships and Awards
- Success and Support
- Campus Resources
- Contact Information

## Program by the Numbers

- **1968:** Year the program began awarding degrees
- **1:** The only public MPA program in Orange County
- **93:** Current students enrolled Fall 2025
- **~30:** Graduates each year
- **4:** Concentrations offered
- **3 years:** Typical time to degree

- #1: Most selective public MPA program in Southern California
- 6.4:1 student-faculty ratio (lowest among SoCal public MPAs)
- 1,200+ alumni leading in government, nonprofit, and private sectors
- **NASPAA accredited** continuously since the 1980s
  - Reaccredited for 6 years (2025)
  - Recognized for excellence and commitment to public service

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**Mission**

We prepare leaders to address complex social issues, uphold democratic values, and foster ethical, equitable, and inclusive public service in Orange County and beyond.

**Vision**

To be recognized for excellence in value-driven public service and community engagement.

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**Our Values****Values**

**Accountability** Promoting democratic transparency, responsiveness, and evidence-informed decision-making to uphold public trust and integrity.

**Ethics** Advancing integrity, fairness, and service to the public good by fostering ethical reasoning and critical awareness in public administration.

**Collaboration** Cultivating collaborative skills for cross-sector partnerships, networked governance, and inclusive stakeholder engagement.

**Lifelong Learning** Instilling habits of continuous learning, reflective practice, and professional development to support adaptive leaders and long-term impact.

**Public Administration Student Association (PASA)**

# Join PASA

the Public Administration Student Association

- Open to undergrad and graduate PA students
- No GPA or unit requirements
- Opportunities for networking, professional development, public service and building community

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# Faculty

### Core Faculty

- Eight full-time faculty members
- Diverse research and strong professional experience
- Active in scholarship and community engagement



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### David P. Adams, Ph.D.

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Associate Professor & MPA Director

At CSUF since 2016 | Ph.D., Auburn University

#### Research

- Public policy outcomes
- Collaboration
- Environmental & energy policy
- Environmental justice



#### Courses

- Foundations of PA
- Capstone Seminar
- Collaborative Governance

### Shelly Arsneault, Ph.D.

#### Shelly Arsneault, Ph.D.

Professor; Vice Chair of PAJ

At CSUF since 2002 | Ph.D., Michigan State University

#### Research

- Nonprofit management
- Education policy

#### Courses

- Foundations of PA
- Nonprofit Management
- Education Policy



### Sean Angst, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

At CSUF since 2024 | Ph.D., USC Price

#### Research

- Housing policy
- Community development
- Racial justice



#### Courses

- Administrative Research & Analysis
- Policy Analysis

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### Meriem Doucette, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

At CSUF since 2015 | Ph.D., University of Georgia

#### Research

- Organizational theory
- Change management



#### Courses

- Organizational Theory
- Ethics
- Organizational Development
- Leadership

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### Elaine Frey, Ph.D.

Professor

Ph.D., George Washington University



#### Research

- Environmental economics
- Energy economics
- Applied microeconomics

#### Courses

- Environmental Policy
- Administrative Research & Analysis

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### Sarah A. Hill, Ph.D.

Professor

At CSUF since 2007 | Ph.D., Caltech



#### Research

- Elections administration
- Education policy

#### Courses

- State & Local Government
- Public Policy
- Diversity in Public Management

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## Myung-Jung “MJ” Kwon, Ph.D.

Professor; MPA Advisor

At CSUF since 2009 | Ph.D., Florida State University

### Research

- Public sector innovation
- E-government



### Courses

- Human Resources Management
- Public Personnel Administration
- Diversity in Public Management

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## Samuel B. Stone, Ph.D.

Professor

At CSUF since 2011 | Ph.D., Indiana University

### Research

- Financial analysis
- Fiscal policy
- Local government management



### Courses

- Public Finance
- Public Budgeting
- Local Government Management

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## Scott Spitzer, Ph.D.

Affiliated Faculty; Professor

At CSUF since 2006 | Ph.D., Columbia University

### Research

- Urban politics
- Racial politics
- Social welfare



### Courses

- Urban Politics
- Metropolitan Politics & Policy

- **Total Units: 36** (12 courses)
- Prerequisites
- Core courses
- One concentration
- Electives
- Internship (required if no public sector experience)
- Comprehensive Exam (embedded in Capstone)

Choose one concentration:

- Human Resource Management
- Local Government Management
- Public Finance
- Public Policy

*Tip:* Choose a concentration that complements your role and goals.

### Your Path to Success

This timeline represents typical progression. Your path may vary; meet with the MPA advisor to build your sequence.

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## Program Orientation

### Prior to First Semester

- Attend orientation
- Review student handbook ([https://csuf-mpa.github.io/mpa\\_handbook/](https://csuf-mpa.github.io/mpa_handbook/))
- Complete required paperwork

### Resources

- Academic calendar (<https://apps.fullerton.edu/AcademicCalendar/>)
- Campus map (<https://www.fullerton.edu/campusmap/>)

## First Semester Foundations

### Semester One

- Complete POSC 509: Foundations of Public Administration
- Take one additional core
- **Important:** Take POSC 509 in your first (or second) term.
- **Tip:** Use this semester to build foundational knowledge and skills.
- **Recommendation:** Join PASA, the Public Administration Student Association.

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### Semester Two

- Meet with the MPA advisor
- Declare concentration
- Complete two core courses
- Map your timeline to completion

### At 18 Units

- Maintain 3.0+ GPA
- Consider *Pi Alpha Alpha* (3.7+ GPA)
- Progress review with advisor

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### Advanced Phases

#### Years 2–3

- Finish three concentration courses
- Complete remaining core

#### Capstone Prep (Penultimate Semester)

- Verify prerequisites
- Enroll in POSC 521 (Capstone) for final semester
- Begin comprehensive exam prep

### Final Steps

#### Final Semester

- File graduation check
  - Spring deadline: early February
  - Fall deadline: early September
- Complete Capstone and comprehensive exam
- Submit required documentation
- Register for commencement

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- Lawson Internship in Public Service Award
  - \$2,000 for MPA student in 497
  - Fall & Spring; Spring deadline: Feb 1
- Alan Saltzstein Excellence Award
  - \$1,000 (6–12 units)
  - Fall & Spring
- MPA Alumni Scholarship
  - \$1,000 for first-semester students
  - Fall only (awarded in Spring)

- Sidney Baldwin Award (MPA Outstanding Student)
  - Based on GPA & Comprehensive Exam
- Outstanding Public Administration Undergraduate
- Spirit of Public Service Award
- Irving Stone Best Paper Award

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## Keys to Graduate School Success

### Academic

- Start assignments early
- Study groups
- Keep detailed cross-course notes
- Use office hours
- Protect work-life-school balance

### Professional

- Network with classmates
- Join associations
- Consider Pi Alpha Alpha (3.7+)
- Build faculty relationships
- Start career planning now

### Time Management

- Plan ≈ 3 hours of study per course hour
- Track deadlines
- Break big projects into small, dated tasks

## Campus Resources Overview

- Academic Support
- Student Services
- Health & Wellness
- Campus Facilities
- Administrative Services

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### Library & Research

- Pollak Library (<https://library.fullerton.edu>)
- Computer Labs ([https://www.fullerton.edu/STS/computer\\_labs](https://www.fullerton.edu/STS/computer_labs))

### Graduate Support

- Graduate Studies (<https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate>)
- Graduate Studies Center (GSC) (<https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/gsc>)

### Administrative

- TitanCard (<https://www.fullerton.edu/IT/services/TitanCard>)
- Financial Aid (<https://www.fullerton.edu/financialaid>)
- Titan Shops (<https://www.titanbookstore.com>)

### Support Centers

- Career Center (<https://www.fullerton.edu/career>)
- Veterans Resource Center (<https://www.fullerton.edu/veterans>)

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## Health & Wellness

### Wellness Services

- Student Wellness (<https://www.fullerton.edu/studentwellness>)
- WoMen's Center (<https://www.fullerton.edu/womenscenter>)

### Support

- Disability Support Services (<https://www.fullerton.edu/DSS>)
- Tuffy's Basic Needs  
([https://www.fullerton.edu/deanofstudents/tuffys\\_basic\\_needs](https://www.fullerton.edu/deanofstudents/tuffys_basic_needs))

## Campus Life

### Family Support

- Children's Center (<https://asi.fullerton.edu/childrens-center>)
- Titan Dreamers Resource Center (<https://www.fullerton.edu/tdrc>)

### Parking

- Parking & Transportation (<https://parking.fullerton.edu>)

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## Contact Information

### **MPA Support Staff**

- Email: mpaprogram@fullerton.edu
- Phone: 657-278-3521

### **MPA Advisor – Myung-Jung Kwon**

- Email: mpaadvisor@fullerton.edu

### **MPA Director – David P. Adams**

- Email: dpadams@fullerton.edu
- Make appointments: <https://dadams.io/appointments>