



Public Administration

Division of Politics, Administration, and Justice

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Master of Public Administration Program

MPA Student Orientation

Fall 2025

Welcome

Agenda

- Welcome and Program Overview
- Introductions
- Program Structure and Requirements
- Faculty Profiles
- Academic Information
- Program Resources and Scholarships
- Campus Resources
- Q&A

Why CSUF

Program by the Numbers

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

The Value of a CSUF MPA

- #1: Most selective public MPA program in Southern California
- **13.3:** lowest student–faculty ratio among public MPAs in SoCal
- **1,200+** alumni across government, nonprofit, and private sectors
- NASPAA accredited continuously since the 1980s

Mission & Values

Our Mission

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.

Values

- Accountability
- Ethics
- Collaboration
- Lifelong Learning

Faculty

Core Faculty

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



David P. Adams, Ph.D.

David P. Adams, Ph.D.

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.

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

Meriem Doucette, Ph.D.

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



Elaine Frey, Ph.D.

Elaine Frey, Ph.D.

Professor

Ph.D., George Washington University

Research

- Environmental economics
- Energy economics
- Applied microeconomics



Courses

- Environmental Policy
- Administrative Research & Analysis

Sarah A. Hill, Ph.D.

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

Myung-Jung “MJ” Kwon, Ph.D.

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

Samuel B. Stone, Ph.D.

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

Scott Spitzer, Ph.D.

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

Curriculum

Academic Information

- Program Structure
- Concentrations
- Program Milestones
- Scholarships & Awards
- Graduation Awards
- Keys to Graduate School Success
- Campus Resources

Program Structure

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

Concentrations

Choose one concentration:

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

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

Milestones

Program Milestones Overview

Your Path to Success

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

Program Orientation

Prior to First Semester

- Attend orientation
- Review student 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/>)

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.

Program Planning

Semester Two

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

Mid-Program Achievement

At 18 Units

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

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

Scholarships & Awards

Scholarships & Awards

- 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)

Graduation Awards

- 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

Success & Support

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

Campus Resources Overview

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

Academic Support Resources

Library & Research

- Pollak Library (<https://library.fullerton.edu>)
- Computer Labs (https://www.fullerton.edu/STS/computer_labs)

Graduate Support

- Graduate Studies (<https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate>)
- Grad Student Success Center (<https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/gssc>)

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>)

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)

Family Support

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

Access

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

Contact

Contact Information

Division of Politics, Administration & Justice

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

MPA Director – David P. Adams

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



MPA Advisor – Myung-Jung Kwon

- Email: mkwon@fullerton.edu

Questions?

Q & A

Thank You for Attending



Division of Politics,
Administration, and Justice

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program
New Student Orientation**