

Master of Public Policy
REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS
 (August 2026)

The Public Policy program trains students to become professional policy analysts and program evaluators for government agencies, non-profit advocacy and research groups, and private firms. An interdisciplinary curriculum introduces students to policy and research fundamentals that stress the identification, evaluation and implementation of policy initiatives. Participation in the Policy and Evaluation Lab gives students hands-on experience, and an ongoing Policy Seminar provides a forum for student collaboration, integration with the local policy community, and the inculcation of professional values and norms.

I. STRUCTURE

The MPP program is an interdisciplinary program jointly offered by the Economics, Political Science and Sociology departments and the School of Public Administration, hereafter referred to as the **Participating Units**.

The **MPP Program Committee** develops policies and procedures for the program, conducts the admission process, and advises MPP students. The Program Committee consists of one representative from each of the Participating Units. Current Program Committee members are:

	Title	Phone	email
Dr. Mike Rocca	Professor of Political Science, Director of MPP	(505)277-0016	msrocca@unm.edu
Dr. Assata Zerai	Professor of Sociology	Email only	zerai@unm.edu
Dr. Xiaoxue Li	Associate Professor of Economics	Email only	lix@unm.edu
Dr. Agustín León-Moreta	Associate Professor of Public Administration	Email only	apleonmoreta@unm.edu

The **MPP Director** oversees the program and makes decisions on routine matters. The current Director is

	Title	Phone	email
Dr. Mike Rocca	Professor of Political Science, Director of MPP	(505)277-0016	msrocca@unm.edu

The MPP director reports to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The **MPP Graduate Coordinator** helps students comply with MPP program and University rules. The current MPP Graduate Coordinator is

	Title	Phone	email
Carol Anda	MPP Unit Administrator	505-277-1546	canda@unm.edu

The **MPP Advisory Board** is made up of local policy stakeholders whose feedback helps keep the program aligned with employer needs. Current Advisory Board members are:

Paul Mondragon	President, Bank of America NM
M. Alejandra Grijalva-Becerra	Deputy Director, Partnership for Community Action (MPP Alum)
Scott Darnell	President, Arrowhead Strategies
Leon Howard	Executive Director, ACLU of New Mexico
Rhiannon Samuel	Executive Director, NAIOP NM
Emily Howard	Executive Director, Economic Forum of Albuquerque
Jon Courtney	Deputy Director, Legislative Finance Committee
Marshall Martinez	Chief Liberation Officer, Equality New Mexico
Regis Pecos	Co-Director, Leadership Institute at Santa Fe Indian School
Rodney Prunty	President & CEO, United Way of North Central New Mexico
Marisa Magallanez	President and CEO, Albuquerque Community Foundation
Hallie Brown	Deputy Director, Infrastructure Planning and Development Division, NM Department of Finance and Administration (MPP Alum)

II. ADVISING, MENTORSHIP & THE MASTER’S EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

The MPP Director serves as the faculty advisor to all MPP students regarding their degree progress. Students must meet with the MPP Director at least once a semester to prepare an **MPP**

Advisement Sheet, which is due on November 15 (for Spring semester course selections) and April 15 (for Summer and Fall semester course selections). Students should seek out advisement by requesting meetings or stopping by during office hours.

The MPP Director also serves as the chair of each student's Master's Examination committee (Exam committee). Students are responsible for recruiting 2 additional Exam committee members who will also serve as mentors throughout the program. The 2 additional Exam committee members must be (1) a tenure-track faculty member, and (2) a community member with policy experience. The community member may not be the student's employer or coworker. The tenure-track faculty member is typically an instructor for a class that the student took to fulfill an MPP requirement. Please be aware that not all instructors are tenure-track faculty. The community member is typically a member of the Community Advisory Board and must be approved by the MPP director.

Students are strongly encouraged to identify a community mentor by midterm of the first semester of enrollment. Students should meet with their community mentors at least once per semester; the expectation is that students will meet with their mentors 3-4 times per year.

Students should identify a faculty mentor no later than mid-term of the second semester of enrollment for those attending full time, and no later than mid-term of the third semester for those attending part time. Students should meet with their faculty mentor at least once per semester.

III. UNM GRADUATE STUDIES REGULATIONS

Graduate Studies is a UNM unit that oversees all graduate degrees. Graduate Studies enforces all of the university-wide regulations for graduate students. Graduate Studies also provides support services for graduate students. See the Graduate Studies website <http://grad.unm.edu/home/>.

Each graduate student is responsible for complying with all regulations and meeting all deadlines required by Graduate Studies.

Every student should read the Graduate Program section of the UNM Catalog. The catalog is available on-line at <https://catalog.unm.edu/24-25/#/courses>

Students should give careful attention to the sections in the UNM Catalog on General Academic Regulations and Master's Degrees and, in particular, the following items from those sections.

- Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in all courses offered for graduate credit at UNM. Failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA will result in a student being placed on Academic Probation, and may lead to dismissal from UNM by Graduate Studies.
- UNM requires that all work applied to a Master's degree, including transfer work from another institution or work taken as a UNM non-degree student, must be completed within a seven-year period.
- Incomplete ("I") grades must be resolved within one year from the published end date of the semester in which the grade was assigned. An unresolved "I" grade reverts to an "F".
- Students must be registered for at least one credit of graduate course work at UNM during the semester in which they complete their degree requirements.

For additional information regarding campus services, grievance procedures and other UNM policies, students should refer to *The Pathfinder – the UNM Student Handbook* (<http://pathfinder.unm.edu/>).

THE PROGRAM OF STUDIES FORM

Every student is responsible for filing a **Program of Studies** form for the Master's Degree.

The Program of Studies form must be completed no later than the semester before planned graduation. **Please note that you cannot graduate unless you completed the Program of Studies form during the previous semester.**

Here are the guidelines for the Program of Studies form, copied from the Graduate Studies webpage on the Program of Studies <https://grad.unm.edu/graduate-students/gs-forms/pos-masters.html>

Deadlines: You can submit your completed Program of Studies after you have completed a minimum of 12 hours of graduate courses in graduate status. The Program of Studies is an online form and can be found at <https://gradforms.unm.edu/home>

However, you **must submit** it to Graduate Studies by the following deadlines:

- March 1 for Summer graduation
- July 1 for Fall graduation
- October 1 for Spring graduation.

Failure to submit this form on time will delay your graduation. After you submit the form, it must be reviewed by the MPP director, and there are often revisions needed. It is therefore recommended that you submit the form well in advance of the Graduate Studies deadline.

The MPP Graduate Coordinator can assist in clarifying the rules and regulations for this document but *the student must fill out and submit the form electronically*. The MPP program director should also review it prior to submission to ensure that any projected courses are appropriate and the timeline for completion is realistic.

Please notify the Graduate Coordinator once you have submitted the Program of Studies form.

Full-time students completing the MPP in two years need to complete the Program of Studies form by October 1 in the Fall semester of the second year.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS & DEADLINES

All graduation requirements, including the presentation of the Master's Exam, and except for completion of courses in progress, must be completed by:

- November 15 for Fall graduation
- April 15 for Spring graduation
- July 15 for Summer graduation.

Students should plan to have the written Master's Exam requirement completed one month in advance of these deadlines, in order to have ample time for coordinating a presentation before

the Exam committee, and for the committee to review the Exam. See section II for information about the composition of the Exam committee.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXAM FORM

Students must submit an **Announcement of Exam** electronic form at least 2 weeks prior to the Exam presentation.

A student can schedule the Exam presentation after these dates, however the degree date will be pushed to the following semester. For example, a student who presents her Exam after April 15 would receive the degree in August (the end of the summer semester).

A student must be registered for at least one credit of graduate course work during the semester in which graduation occurs, although this requirement is waived for students who have completed all degree requirements in the previous semester, but after the deadline for graduation in that semester.

IV. MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree are spelled out on the [MPP curriculum website](#). Students may follow the requirements of the Catalog under which they entered, even if later editions vary, or they can choose to follow the requirements detailed in a later edition of the Catalog.

COURSEWORK

MPP students must complete 43 credits in the following courses:

Curriculum Requirement	Approved Courses	Credits
Quantitative and Empirical Methods I	ECON 508 or POLS 581 or SOC 581	3-4
Quantitative and Empirical II	ECON 509 or POLS 681 or SOC 582	3
Economic Analysis of Public Policy	ECON *350	3
Organizational Behavior	PADM 521	3
The Political Context	POLS 510 or POLS 570	3
Public Policy and Diversity	POLS 511 (when relevant) or PADM 526 or SOC 520 or SOC 528 or SOC 595 (with permission of faculty advisor)	3
Financial Management	PADM 544	3
Policy Seminar	PUBP 501	7
Policy and Evaluation Lab	PUBP 502	6
Complementary Policy Area	3 courses in consultation with faculty advisor	9

Any substitutions or waivers must be approved by the MPP director. Students should request written confirmation of substitutions and waivers.

MASTER’S EXAMINATION

The MPP is a Plan II degree as defined in the Catalog, which means that students must pass a Master’s Examination. The MPP Master’s Examination consists of a written Policy Report or Portfolio of Work and an oral presentation of the Report or Portfolio. Students will receive guidance in preparing the Policy Report or Portfolio and the Exam presentation in the Policy Seminar (PUBP 501). Students should take one of the required PUBP 501 credits during the semester in which they plan to complete the Master’s Exam.

The Master’s Examination will be evaluated by the student’s Exam committee. See Section II for information on the composition of this committee. Students must name a committee at least one semester prior to the semester in which they plan to complete the Master’s Exam. All committee members must sign off on the Master’s Examination Committee Form <https://mpp.unm.edu/current-students/masters-exam-committee-updated.pdf>, which is due to the Graduate Coordinator *before* the start of the semester in which the student plans to complete the Exam.

APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF REQUIRED PAPERWORK

Year	Semester	UNM requirement	Deadline	MPP program requirement	Deadline
1	FALL	The Admissions Office requires a final transcript for students who had a B.A. pending upon admission	Before enrolling	MPP Advisement Sheet	November 15
	SPRING			MPP Advisement Sheet	April 15
2	FALL (or semester before graduation)	Graduate Studies Program of Studies form	October 1	Master’s Examination Committee form	December 15
				MPP Advisement Sheet	November 15
	SPRING (or last semester)	Graduate Studies Announcement of Exam	2 weeks prior to Master’s Exam presentation		