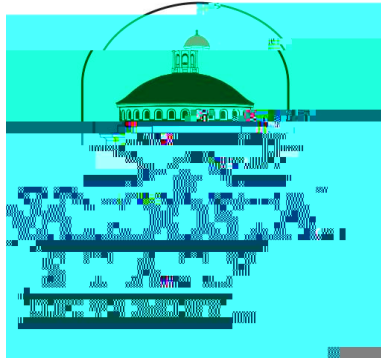# DPA Student Handbook

Doctor of Public Administration Program
Department of Political Science
Valdosta State University

Updated July 1, 2021

Contents

General Information

Program Mission

The Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) program seeks to promote and to maintain a research and service program consistent with the role of a regional university within the University System of Georgia. As stated by the Board of Regents, this says, in part:

The mission will differ from that of comprehensive universities in the following areas: (1) the focus of all activities instruction, research and service at the regional university will be sectional in nature, not statewide; (2) academic programming at the graduate level will be generally limited to professional areas of high demand; (3) organized research will focus on needs indigenous to the section of the state served and will be practical in nature.

Approach

The DPA program blends theoretical learning with practitioner-oriented training to provide students with a well-rounded understanding of the public sector. Students in the program develop the leadership, management, communication, and problem-solving abilities necessary

instruction broadens skills, while offering practical forums for the application of those skills. Faculty are devoted to the notion that learning is a life-long endeavor that challenges students to grow and develop into well-rounded individuals.

The DPA degree is designed to provide students with the analytical and research skills that may be used in a variety of professional careers. Students can utilize this type of instruction in a myriad of professional settings. The public and the not-for-profit sectors have traditionally offered the greatest employment opportunities for DPA graduates. However, given its analytical and research-oriented focus, the degree is also highly marketable in the private sector.

Accreditation

The Doctor of Public Administration program secured approval from the Board of Regents in the University System of Georgia in 2007. The Public Administration program has been in operation

Admission and Registration

Admission Requirements

Students may enter a program of study leading to the DPA degree from the Department of Political Science only after they have been admitted by the Graduate School. Students

statement, acceptable scores on the admissions exam, and involvement in the community. After identifying which students meet the above criteria, the committee will then make its recommendations to the Coordinator of the Public Administration program. Students will only be admitted for the Fall semester of each academic year, and each matriculating class will be limited to approximately 30 new

Concentration Coursework (15 credits)

Each student is to identify an area of concentration before the completion of 18 hours of coursework. Once an area of concentration has been identified, the student will work with her/his major advisor to develop a program of study, which will govern the remainder of the

must be on file in an approved format in the DPA   office prior to graduation. For
additional information see   Portfolio   at https://www.valdosta.edu/pa/student-
information.php.

Capstone Project/Dissertation

topic and writing a capstone project or dissertation. Students will petition to have a committee of three members oversee their projects. Of this number, at least one must be a full-time faculty member in the DPA program, with the option of having a third full-time faculty member or members from another department at VSU (with the approval of the Coordinator of the DPA

be approved by the Coordinator of the DPA program, including any changes in members later in the project.

The purpose of the dissertation or final capstone project is to demonstrate the research and analytical abilities gained through study in the DPA program while applying critical thinking and methodological skills to a topic of practical interest similar to what the student would find in a professional environment. Each student must develop a prospectus as part of her/his work in

members and the DPA Coordinator for approval before work on the actual project commences.

instructor in advance. In case of emergency, a stu
arrange for make-up work for missed sessions as
take a course in a semester in which they know th

APPENDIX A

DOCTOR OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DEGREE
PROGRAM OF STUDY

Name:	**Student #**
Address:	**Phone #**

Status: Regular   Irregular   Probationary

APPENDIX B

Student Statement:

I have read the policy on Academic Integrity which prohibits cheating and plagiarism. I understand that any work submitted by me in the DPA program may be submitted to an electronic data base to check for plagiarism, and that any work so submitted will be added to that data base. I understand that the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a failing grade on the assignment. I further understand that cheating or plagiarism may result in me receiving a failing grade for the course involved or in termination from the program. I affirm that all work submitted by me to be original work, except where clearly documented. I further understand that work prepared for one course for credit in another or to submit the same work for credit in two or more courses, without permission from the responsible faculty is not permitted and may also result in a failing grade or termination from the program. When incorporating past research or assignments into current projects the previous work must be cited.

_____
Name (printed)

_____
Signature

_____
Date

Sign and return to the DPA program coordinator.