

# Admissions Procedure

Admission to the MPA program is competitive. *All* materials in the admission packet will carry weight: undergraduate courses and grades, any graduate work, graduate record exam scores, references, your ability to write well and your career goals, the appropriateness of the MPA degree for your career goals, previous experience in the public sector, and comments from the faculty or alumnus interview. Admission decisions are made by a committee comprised of the department chair, two or three faculty members, the administrative director and a student representative.

Questions should be directed to:

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## Application Requirements

A complete application to the Edwin O. Stene Graduate Program in Public Administration includes the following:

- **Completed Graduate School application.** Write at the top of the form which option you are applying for (Career or Internship). You may also submit your application online: [www.kupublicadministration.org](http://www.kupublicadministration.org).
- **Two Official transcripts** from all colleges and universities listed on the application. You must have at least a B average undergraduate GPA for regular admission to graduate school at KU. Provisional admission is possible with less than a 3.0 average.
- **A three to five page essay** describing your background, career goals and, most importantly, how the MPA degree fits into your goals. You may also include information about circumstances which you think may have negatively affected your undergraduate academic performance or test scores.

- **Official TOEFL scores** for international applicants. International applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit TOEFL scores. All international students must register with the Applied English Center upon arrival at the University and pass an English proficiency test. International students may request a waiver of this exam if their TOEFL scores are exceptional.

- **Official Graduate Record Exam score report.** LSAT scores taken within the past five years are an acceptable substitute. The GRE requirement may be waived by the department chair if you already hold a graduate degree from an accredited college or university or if you have substantial work experience. The Admissions Committee may require other academic evidence of your scholastic ability if they have questions about your academic preparation.

- **Three recommendations** from persons who can provide academic and/or professional references. Please sign and use the forms included in this packet or available online at: [www.kubpublicadministration.org](http://www.kubpublicadministration.org).

- **Non-refundable application fee.** Make checks payable to “The University of Kansas.” For persons living outside the United States, the check must be drawn on a U.S.-based bank in your country.

	Paper	Online
Domestic	\$55	\$45
International	\$60	\$55

*An alumnus or faculty member will be asked to interview you. That person’s comments will be considered part of your application packet.*

Submit your application & fee online ([www.graduate.ku.edu](http://www.graduate.ku.edu)) or mail to KU Graduate School.

Submit all other materials to the Public Administration department.

# What to Consider Before Filling Out the Application

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## There Are Two Ways to Earn the MPA Degree

**1.** The **INTERNSHIP-OPTION** is designed for students with little or no public administration experience. These students pursue the degree either immediately following college graduation or when making a mid-career change in order to obtain the skills and knowledge necessary to *enter* the field of public administration. Part of the internship-option student's education includes a professional development program aimed at socializing the student to the norms of the profession, and a paid full-time internship during the second year to provide hands-on experience. Internship-option students **must pursue the degree full-time** and start with the summer semester.

More than ninety percent of the internship-option students prepare for local government careers, that is, city or county management or locally-based non-profit organizations. Others prepare for careers in state government. This is a two year program of study; and students complete their formal course work in the first twelve months, followed by a nine to twelve-month full-time paid internship in locations nationwide while enrolled in professional development seminars. During their first year on campus, students have a part-time, paid internship. A final written examination completes requirements for the degree.

Write ~ **Internship Option** ~ at the top of the application form if this most closely describes your level of work experience and career goals.

The **application deadline is February 1\***, and classes begin with the *summer semester*. Admission is competitive with about a dozen students admitted to each class. Approximately 25-30 applications are received.

\*The University of Kansas Graduate School offers fellowships such the Honors Fellowship and the Graduate Minority Fellowship which require departmental nomination by February 1st. Applicants interested in competing for those fellowships should have their applications *complete* by January 15th. Other scholarships, fellowships and part-time internships are awarded after the February 1st deadline.

**2.** The **CAREER-OPTION** is designed for students who are usually already employed in the field of their choice, who have some public administration experience and are pursuing the degree mainly for career advancement. The vast majority of these students take their courses part-time. Some students however attend full-time. *International students are considered career-option.*

Career-option students bring considerable experience into the classroom from state offices, police and fire departments, health and human services departments, budget offices, nonprofit agencies, and foreign countries.

This is a program of study which can last from three *semesters* to seven years. Upon completion of the course work, career-option students may complete the degree in one of two ways:

- **Field Project Report**

Students may apply classroom theory to some aspect of their workplace by doing a field project report. They work with a faculty advisor to gather data, research and write the field project report, a thesis equivalent.

**OR**

- **Two Additional Courses**

Students may enroll in two additional graduate courses within the department to further explore areas of particular interest.

A final written examination completes the requirements for the degree.

Write ~ **Career Option** ~ at the top of the application form if this most closely describes your level of work experience and career goals.

### Application deadlines:

- **Full-time, internship-option students**  
**February 1 for the summer semester**
- **Part-time, career-option students**  
**November 15 for the spring semester**  
**July 1 for the fall semester**
- **International students**  
**July 1 for the spring semester**  
**April 15 for the fall semester**