

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the J. Jeffrey and Ann Marie Fox Graduate School application for admission (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply>). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>).

Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.)

Applicants who are still completing their baccalaureate requirements at the time of application may be provisionally admitted (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/provisional-admission>) to the Graduate School conditional on the awarding of the baccalaureate degree.

Admission to the MPA program is based on clear suitability for the program as demonstrated by the application as a whole, including the following:

- a completed application with the nonrefundable application fee;
- official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended (<http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply/new-applicants/requirements-for-graduate-admission/>);
- a statement of career and educational goals;
- a successful undergraduate record with a grade-point average of 3.00 (either as the cumulative GPA or for the last 60 hours of relevant course work);
- satisfactory scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), or Law School Admission Test (LSAT) if the GPA is less than 3.0; and
- recommendations from three references.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Individuals with superior academic records and a strong interest in careers emphasizing research and scholarship are encouraged to apply to the program. The program typically admits a Ph.D. cohort of full-time students to begin each fall semester.

Admission to the Ph.D. program is based on the applicant's undergraduate and graduate academic records, standardized test scores, letters of reference, and the compatibility of their backgrounds and interests with those of the program faculty members, as expressed in the applicant's statement of goals and research interests. All applicants must have completed a master's degree. A completed master of public administration (M.P.A.) degree is preferred, but students with master's degrees in related areas (political science, public policy, economics, sociology, anthropology, social work, business management, and health administration, for example) or Juris Doctorate degrees (law) will also be considered.

Application Deadlines

There are two deadlines for applications for the fall semester of the following academic year: **January 15** and **March 15** of each year. For those applicants seeking research or teaching assistantships, the deadline to submit all application materials is January 15. Late applications may be considered if assistantships are still available. Applicants who wish to finance their education with their own funds or other sources (foreign governments that fund international students for

Ph.D. studies in the United States and other funding agencies, such as Fulbright commissions) must submit all application materials by March 15.

Application Package

A complete application must include:

1. A completed online Graduate School application (<http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply/>)
2. Payment of a non-refundable application fee
3. Official Graduate Record Examination scores (verbal, quantitative, and analytical) taken within the five years prior to the date of application
4. A resume that includes:
 - a. work experience,
 - b. volunteer activities,
 - c. academic and professional honors,
 - d. honorary societies,
 - e. extracurricular activities,
 - f. offices held,
 - g. any publications and
 - h. other significant activities
5. A statement of goals and research interests, including evidence of research aptitude and interest as well as "fit" with the faculty interests in the Ph.D. program at Penn State Harrisburg. The applicant should make the case why this Ph.D. program at Penn State Harrisburg would be a good fit for them
6. A writing sample that reflects the applicant's background in conducting academic research and potential to conduct academic research in the future
7. At least three letters of recommendation, preferably from faculty members who can comment upon the applicant's potential as a doctoral student
8. Official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended. (<http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply/new-applicants/requirements-for-graduate-admission/>)

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants. See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students/>) for more information.