

Master of Public Affairs

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2020-2021



Welcome to the one-year Master of Public Affairs Program at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. We are delighted to have you with us!

This may be one of the most challenging educational experiences of your life, but we expect it to be one of the most rewarding as well. During the course of the Program, you will work with some of Brown's top social scientists in the classroom, apply your skills in an intensive consultancy, and build a professional network to advance your career.

Brown is a remarkable university, and I encourage you to take advantage of its educational offerings, as well as its many extracurricular programs and support services. The MPA Program staff and I look forward to working with you this year.

Shankar Prasad
Interim Director
Master of Public Affairs Program



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One-Year MPA Program Requirements

In general MPA students take a total of thirteen courses (10 credits). Ten are required core courses and the remaining three are electives. The core courses are designed to equip students with the analytical tools, professional skills, and theoretical foundations needed to understand and address policy issues. To complete the Program successfully, students must meet specific academic and professionalism standards outlined in this guide.

Schedule and Required Courses

SUMMER

- Orientation

Summer Sequence 1

- Economics for Public Policy
- Statistics for Public Policy

Summer Sequence 2

- Economics of Government Intervention
- Statistics for Program Evaluation

FALL

Fall Semester Sequence

- The Politics of Policymaking in Comparative Perspective
- Policy Analysis and Problem Solving
- Specialization Elective 1
- Specialization Elective 2

SPRING

Spring Sequence 1

- Policy-In-Action Consultancy

Spring Sequence 2

- Management and Implementation in Public and Non-Profit Organizations
- Systems Dynamics: Policy Analysis for a Complex World
- Policy Problems of the 21st Century
- Specialization Elective 3

MPA Learning Goals and Outcomes

The MPA curriculum provides students with the analytical skills and management tools they need to tackle the policy problems of today. The Program prepares students for careers spanning public service, all levels of government, NGOs, IGOs, foundations, philanthropy, and the private sector, both in the United States and abroad. The key skills and knowledge learned in the MPA Program are:

- Problem solving
- Policy analysis
- Understanding the policy making and implementation process
- Statistical skills
- Application of economic concepts
- Policy memo writing
- Public presentation skills
- Utilization of policy evaluation
- Financial management
- Awareness of global policy making

Additionally, students in the Data-Driven Policy Track have opportunity to gain skills in the analysis of large administrative data sets and the application of behavioral science.

Academic Advising

Academic and program-related advising is handled by the Academic Program Manager and the directors of the MPA Program.

Melissa Nicholaus

Academic Program Manager

melissa_nicholaus@brown.edu

Answers questions about course offerings and scheduling. Processes course exemption requests and for international students: Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Curricular Practical Training (CPT) letters.

Olivia Whalen

Associate Director

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As the senior program administrator, Olivia manages the MPA Program. She oversees academic and student affairs, including student-run events, consultancy stipend requests, course evaluations, fifth-year course verification, and advising. She also leads MPA admissions and recruitment initiatives.

Shankar Prasad

Interim Director

Director of Graduate Studies

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As Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) he approves elective coursework, special non-policy advanced courses, changes to academic status, and leaves of absence. Also serves as a faculty advisor.

Faculty Advisors

Designated Watson faculty are mentors to MPA students, offering advice on topics such as how academic work at Brown fits with a student's career path, research interests, and professional goals.

Data-Driven Policy Track

The Data-Driven Policy Track prepares MPA students to do data analytic work in government, nonprofit, and for-profit organizations. Students are introduced to a variety of programming languages used to manipulate and analyze data including Stata, SQL, and Python, and gain the tools to turn large data sets and behavioral science into improved policy. Students also acquire hands-on, practical experience with data cleaning, analysis, visualization, and designing and implementing policy evaluations.

For the Policy-In-Action Consultancy, students work at the policy lab at Brown or elsewhere to integrate data-driven research with experiential learning. Students also write a term paper that demonstrates their ability to use programming, data visualization, and empirical tools to provide systematic evidence of a public policy problem or rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of various policy solutions. Students will also create a poster highlighting their consultancy work and present it at the MPA poster session at the beginning of Spring Sequence 2. All Data-Driven Policy Track consultancies must be pre-approved by the faculty lead of the track.

Application Process

After Summer Sequence 1, an application will be sent via email to be completed by interested students. Students will be selected by the faculty lead of the track, the MPA Director, and the Associate Director based on the student's application and academic progress in Summer Sequence 1.

Track Requirements

Students on the Data-Driven Policy Track are required to take the following courses:

- MPA 2605, How do you conduct research that changes Public Policy? (Fall Semester)
- MPA 2065, Introduction to Data Science and Programming (Fall Semester)
- MPA 2066, Introduction to Statistical Machine Learning (Spring Sequence 2)

Faculty Contact

David Yokum, Director of The Policy Lab, is the faculty lead of the Data-Driven Policy Track. He can be reached at David_Yokum@brown.edu

Design Your Own Specialization

In the spirit of Brown's Open Curriculum, students may work with a faculty advisor to design their own specialization. Students choose electives to pursue deeper knowledge and gain proficiency in the methods, skills, and substance of particular policy areas. MPA graduates have focused on areas as diverse as cybersecurity, health policy, environmental advocacy, national intelligence, and early-childhood education.

Elective Courses

Courses throughout the University may be taken for elective credit. Outside of the offerings through the MPA Program, students will most often take classes in departments such as: Political Science, Urban Studies, Sociology, Economics, Education, Environmental Studies, Public Health, and International Relations. When registering, look for graduate courses in the 2000 level. In some cases, at the discretion of the MPA Director of Graduate Study, a student may take an upper-level undergraduate seminar at the 1700 level and above.

Open Enrollment at Harvard

The University has open enrollment with Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences. MPA

students can elect to take one course at Harvard. Transportation costs to/from Boston are to be paid for by the student. There is paperwork to be completed to register for a Harvard course. Students only complete the paperwork once they have sat in on the course and determined they will enroll in it.

The MPA Associate Director approves (with signature on necessary paperwork) any Harvard course.

Policy-In-Action Consultancy

Beginning in January and ending in late March, students participate in a three-month consultancy with a public policy organization for academic credit. Students are expected to gain experience in:

- Working with clients
- Stakeholder identification and analysis
- Systems and strategic thinking
- Project and time management
- Effective presentation of data

The Consultancy is part of coursework that begins in the summer and continues through completion of final deliverables the following spring. Students receive academic credit upon successful completion of the Consultancy. Here is an overview of Consultancy sequence:

Summer: Career planning sessions and site preferences discussion.

Fall: Attendance at workshops on Consultancy best practices and the selection and preparation process. Finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Consultancy organization supervisor. If applicable, apply for a Consultancy stipend awarded by the MPA Program.

Winter (simultaneous with Consultancy): Individual project management, analytical support meetings, and professional development coaching sessions.

Spring: Final deliverables:
1) Comprehensive Consultancy project research/analysis report including recommendations for the organization.
2) Post-Consultancy poster presentation.

Consultancy Objectives

- Provide a springboard for each student’s future career through a practical immersion with a client in a domestic or global institutional or community-based setting.
- Focus on experiential learning and creative problem solving. Students address real-world, complex contemporary problems, explore policy and practice-based solutions, and identify strategies and recommend future approaches.
- Develop policy and practice-related solutions to address policy issues and/or enhance an organization’s capacity.
- Accelerate each student’s proficiency in project management, stakeholder identification and needs analysis, systems and strategic thinking, and effective presentation of data.
- Deliver value for both community partners and students, and prepare students to secure and successfully transition into professional positions.
- Develop expertise in a specific problem area while understanding context, leverage points, and constraints (e.g. economic, legal, social, diversity, and cultural conditions).

Consultancy Offers

Students are not permitted to apply to or entertain other Consultancy options once they have accepted an offer. The verbal acceptance of a Consultancy offer is a commitment to the host organization and is a professional relationship that should be treated as such. MPA students will not rescind an initial acceptance to an organization unless it has been approved by the MPA Associate Director of Career Services.

Consultancy Requirements

Attendance is mandatory at the Consultancy site. Students are expected to be at their organization for 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week for the duration of the Consultancy. Hours worked will be confirmed with the Consultancy supervisor. If a different working arrangement (e.g., working off site) is offered as an option, it must be approved by the Consultancy supervisor and MPA Associate Director. MPA staff overseeing consultancies and the MPA Associate Director will be in regular communication with students.

The MPA Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) provides oversight of the appeals process in any disputes, including the number of hours worked.

Students are required to produce a deliverable for their clients at the conclusion of the Consultancy and provide a copy of the deliverable to the faculty directing the course. The specifics of the deliverable are approved by a MPA Program committee that includes the Associate Director of Career Services, the MPA Associate Director, and MPA Director of Graduate Study.. The Consultancy grade is S/NC. In addition, all students will participate in a public poster presentation either on campus or virtually at the conclusion of the Consultancy, usually at the beginning of Spring Sequence 2.

If a student has not met professional expectations during the Consultancy, the student may be dismissed from the Program by the MPA DGS.

Consultancy Stipend

Students who participate in an approved Consultancy that requires lodging and travel outside of the geographic regions of Rhode

Island and Boston are eligible to apply for a stipend. Stipends will not exceed \$3,000 for U.S. placements. Stipends will not exceed \$5,000 for placements outside the U.S. For students studying remotely, their current geographic location will determine if their Consultancy site is international or domestic.

Once students have secured a Consultancy offer, they can submit a formal proposal for financial support via a form provided by the MPA Program. Students are required to include a budget in their proposal in order to be considered for a stipend. The proposal must include a brief description of the Consultancy, a summary of the funding request, and an itemization of how the funds will be used (e.g., three months rent @\$800/month, \$500 roundtrip airfare to Chicago etc.). Students should indicate if they have secured other funding sources. The proposal should be submitted as soon as a consultancy is confirmed and MOU signed.

Consultancies structured around working remotely that require a specific number of visits to the organization (e.g., travel to New York from Providence four times during the Consultancy period) will be eligible to receive 50% of approved funds prior to travel. The remaining 50% will be provided after travel is complete and receipts confirming travel to/from destination are provided.

Actual amounts awarded are at the Program’s discretion; there is no guarantee that all requests will be met at the amounts specified in proposals.

A host organization may offer additional resources to MPA students at its own discretion; the MPA Program has no authority or control to determine what, if any, resources are offered by an organization to a student.

Consultancy Stipend Process for International Students

International students should be aware that taxes will be deducted from their stipend payment, which will decrease the overall amount. The amount may vary depending on the country of residency.

In order to receive a Consultancy stipend, **all international students are required to visit Brown’s Payroll Office again** to confirm residency status in the Foreign National Information System. FNIS registration is required prior to the Consultancy.

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) **mandates** U.S. withholding and reporting rules consistent with the nonimmigrant employed person’s U.S. tax status (resident alien or nonresident alien). As a result, the Consultancy stipend for international students is taxed in accordance with IRS regulations. The MPA Program has no discretion over this matter. Please note that by filing your U.S. taxes it may be possible for you to recoup some or all of the taxes withheld, but the actual amount you receive back (if any) will depend on your particular situation. Brown and the MPA Program are unable to provide tax advice. Please follow-up with a tax specialist if you require assistance.

MPA-MPH joint degree students are eligible for Consultancy stipend (e.g., maximum of \$3,000 for domestic or \$5,000 for international Consultancy) based on a submitted budget. For joint degree students, the Consultancy may take the form of a summer internship. Stipend amounts are not guaranteed until the Associate Director has reviewed and approved a budget. Joint degree students are required to apply for the Consultancy using the information sent out to all students. Students will prepare a poster with a summary of their project and outcome and are required to participate in a poster presentation event with MPA students (see page 7).

MPA Program Policies

Professionalism Policy

The Professionalism Policy applies to MPA students during all parts and locations of the Program, including classrooms, the Policy-In-Action Consultancy, workshops, and any other elements of the Program.

- Any student found to be in violation of Brown University’s Academic Code is subject to penalty, including dismissal from the Program.
- Students who demonstrate unprofessional behavior during the MPA Program may, at the discretion of the Program, be dismissed. Example of unprofessional behaviors include, but are not limited to, incivility (whether it is directed toward faculty, professional staff, advisors, or fellow students), excessive absences, disruptive behavior, sleeping in class, chronic tardiness, reading non-course material during class, playing games online, watching television or movies during class, excessive phone use (text messaging, email, and social media) and regularly leaving class without making arrangements with the instructor.

MPA Program Academic Policies

Attendance Policy

Students should consult with their professors regarding individual class attendance policies. The Program expects that students will be in attendance in class unless there is an emergency. During the Policy-In-Action Consultancy, students should attend all work sessions unless cleared by their on-site supervisor.

Failure to comply with these standards could directly impact a student’s grade or ability to receive academic credit. This policy supports the number of contact hours that must be filled for our accreditation. If a student should need to miss class due to an emergency, they should reach out to the Associate Dean for Student Support at the Graduate School.

Course Load and Enrollment Status

The course load for full-time students is four courses per semester. Alterations to that plan must be approved by the MPA Director of Graduate Study (DGS) and the Graduate School. There are implications for student loans and other university fees for those enrolled less than full time.

Part-time students may enroll for one or two courses per semester and will not be eligible for departmental funding. All part-time students are required to meet with the MPA DGS to ensure proper registration and course sequencing. Any student who needs to request a change in enrollment status should file a request with the MPA DGS as soon as possible. Students will be notified in writing if the request has been approved.

Dismissal from the Program

If a student is dismissed from the MPA, the student will not be permitted to continue in the Program (e.g., sit in on classes, participate in Program activities). The terms of their dismissal will be sent in a written letter sent by the Associate Director.

Course Materials

The Program will not provide financial assistance for the cost of textbooks, case studies, or other required course materials.

Grading Policy and Academic Standing

The MPA Program follows the University's policy in regards to the grading scale of A, B, C, No Credit, or S/NC. Professors may offer to evaluate students using a +/- system. This is at the sole discretion of the professor and will not be reflected in a student's official transcript.

Although not encouraged in graduate school, Brown offers the option to take courses on a "pass/fail" grading status. At Brown this is known as taking a course S/NC, meaning a student earns a "satisfactory" or "no credit." The grade is recorded on the student transcript as S or NC. MPA students are **not** permitted to take the following core courses S/NC: Economics for Public Policy, Statistics for Public Policy, Economics of Government Intervention, Statistics for Program Evaluation, Policy Analysis and Problem Solving, Politics of Policymaking in Comparative Perspective, Management and Implementation in Public and Non-Profit Organizations, and Policy Problems of the 21st Century. A student may elect to take **one** elective course as "S/NC."

Graduate students' academic standing can be classified in four ways: good, satisfactory, warning, or termination.

Students in Good Academic Standing are making both good and timely academic progress. No more than one incomplete can be carried on a student record in good standing.

Satisfactory Academic Standing indicates that a student has encountered difficulties of some kind — inadequate performance or slow progress in coursework, research, writing, etc. Two or more incompletes will, at minimum, result in a shift from good to satisfactory standing. This status level has no immediate impact on funding. If the concerns impacting a student's status are not resolved, the student will move on to warning status.

Warning Status signals chronic or severe problems. Students on warning must be given a written notice of their deficiencies and the consequences of those deficiencies. Students must also receive clear, written instructions of the steps to be taken to regain good or satisfactory standing, and date-specific deadlines (typically one semester) for recovery. Such notice must come at the end of every semester that a student is on warning status. If the deficiencies are not resolved by the specified deadline, the student on warning moves to termination. Although warning could lead to an immediate removal of funding depending on the severity of the problem, the student will typically continue to receive funding on probationary terms during the specified time period.

Termination Status signals severe and irrevocable problems. Termination indicates an immediate removal of matriculant/enrollment status, as well as all forms of financial support.

MPA Grading Policy

MPA students are required to maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average in order to remain in Good Academic Standing and graduate from the

Program. The 3.0 minimum grade point average (GPA) must be maintained across the 13 courses that students receive academic credit for during the Program. Brown University fifth-year students who take fewer than 13 courses are subject to the 3.0 minimum GPA requirement across all the courses taken.

Each student will be assessed for academic progress by the MPA Program four times during the course of the year: at the end of Summer Sequence 1 and 2, after Fall Semester, and after Spring Sequence 2.

Students will be dismissed from the Program for the following reasons: failing three or more courses; failing to pass the Consultancy; failing to meet professional standards of the Consultancy.

Students who have a GPA below 3.0 at any review period will be placed on academic probation. The Associate Director will notify the student of this status and explain the student's options to restore good standing by fulfilling the terms attached to the student's unique case. In most cases, failure to do so will result in enforced withdrawal from the Program.

If a student does not maintain a 3.0 GPA, the student must retake course(s) in a plan approved by the MPA Director of Graduate Study (DGS). The student will be offered no more than one additional opportunity to meet the 3.0 GPA requirement. If the student again fails to meet expectations, the student will be dismissed from the Program.

If a student fails one or two courses due to poor academic performance, the student can appeal to the MPA DGS to retake the course(s) the next time

it is offered. A student will not graduate until the student passes the previously failed course. If a student fails more than two courses, the student will be dismissed from the Program.

Students are subject to tuition costs for repeat courses.

Students may not carry more than one incomplete into the start of Fall or Spring, without the written approval of the MPA DGS.

Incomplete Coursework

Grades of "Incomplete" are given at the sole discretion of the faculty member teaching the course. Any student receiving a grade of "Incomplete" must work with the faculty member to resolve the incomplete coursework within one semester's time and update the MPA DGS on the plan to ameliorate the grade.

Students may not take more than one semester to have the grade changed permanently by the faculty member. Those unable to fulfill the requirements of the coursework will receive an N/C for the course and may face a loss of their "good" academic standing. Carrying more than one incomplete at a time will affect academic standing and may result in serious consequences. Students cannot graduate if they have an incomplete in any of their coursework.

Withdrawal from the Program

Students electing to withdraw from the MPA Program having made good academic progress may petition the MPA DGS to be readmitted into the Program within one year. A student with these circumstances may lose any promised merit-based scholarship and should discuss their intentions with the MPA DGS.

Brown University Academic Code

MPA policies follow the University and Graduate School policy articulated below regarding the academic code. All Brown students are responsible for understanding and following Brown’s academic code, which is described below. As a graduate student at Brown University, and in addition to Program-related policies, you are expected to abide by the Academic and Student Conduct Codes.

Academic achievement is ordinarily evaluated on the basis of work that a student produces independently. Students who submit academic work that uses others’ ideas, words, research, or images without proper attribution and documentation are in violation of the academic code. Infringement of the academic code entails penalties ranging from reprimand to suspension, dismissal, or expulsion from the University.

Brown students are expected to tell the truth. Misrepresentations of facts, significant omissions, or falsifications in any connection with the academic process (including change of course permits, the academic transcript, or applications for graduate training or employment) violate the code, and students are penalized accordingly. This policy also applies to Brown alumni, insofar as it relates to Brown transcripts and other records of work at Brown.

Misunderstanding the Code is not an excuse for dishonest work. Students that are unsure about any point of Brown’s Academic Code should consult their course instructors or an academic dean, who will be happy to explain the policy.

The following Academic Code is from the Graduate School’s policy. Additional details can be found in the supplemental handbook provided at orientation, “Academic Code, Graduate Student edition.”

Procedures

All cases of suspected academic dishonesty in the Graduate School shall be referred to the Dean of the Graduate School. Faculty and students are urged to report their suspicions, so that all members of the University community will feel equally responsible for academic honesty, and so that multiple offenders may be identified.

The person alleging a violation of the Code shall provide copies of the work in question and indicate clearly the nature of the alleged violation in an accompanying narrative. In cases of plagiarism, the person making the charge shall provide copies of original sources, if available, marking plagiarized phrases, sentences, and/or paragraphs, and shall indicate borrowings in the accused’s text and in original sources. In the case of an examination, the person making the charge shall provide copies of the examination in question, indicate specifically the grounds for the charge, and explain his or her process of discovery. Other alleged offenses against the Academic Code

should be documented with equal thoroughness and in equal detail.

All cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be screened by the designated Associate Dean of the Graduate School in consultation with concerned faculty and expert witnesses if needed. The Associate Dean of the Graduate School will make a decision as to whether a case requires a formal hearing. Such decisions are not considered final or binding and may be changed on the basis of new information or a shift in judgment. Since the Academic Code Standing Committee (see next section for information on “The Standing Committee”) relies on precedent, pertinent materials in a case dismissed for insufficient evidence or deemed not to require a formal hearing will remain in the Committee’s confidential Academic Code files.

Note: this paragraph was amended following a vote of the May 2013 Graduate Council.

If, after screening, the Associate Dean decides that a formal hearing is warranted, he or she shall, as soon as possible, notify the accused student in writing of specific charges of dishonesty, the nature of the evidence which would be presented against him or her, the time and place of the hearing, and the range of penalties which may be imposed if academic dishonesty is found.

The accused student will be permitted to have an advisor who should give the student advice on matters of preparation for the hearing, hearing procedures, and possible outcomes. The Associate Dean will provide each accused student with a list of persons from within the University community who, by prior experience and interest, can provide knowledgeable advice. The accused student should be informed that he or she has the right to dispute the evidence against him or her and the right to present evidence and witnesses of his or her own to support his or her case, to examine any witnesses

against him or her, and to avoid self-incrimination by declining to answer questions or declining to participate in the proceedings in whole or in part. However, the fact that the accused student declines to participate does not affect the validity of these deliberations, nor does it affect the authority of the University or its representatives to impose penalties if dishonesty is found. The advisor is not permitted to attend the hearing except as a possible witness.

The Standing Committee

Hearings, deliberations, and decisions on penalties, culpability, or innocence shall be made by a Standing Committee, consisting of an Associate Dean of the Graduate School, plus two faculty members to be chosen from a standing pool of eight. Faculty members on the Academic Code Standing Committee should serve staggered terms of four years, with two being elected through the Faculty’s regular procedures every year on a rotating basis. Faculty members eligible to serve on the Academic Code Standing Committee shall include all voting members of the Faculty and all Emeritus faculty. In the event that two faculty members are not available at the scheduled time for the Standing Committee hearing, the place of one or more of the faculty members may be filled by an academic dean. No person serving as a student’s advisor can also serve as a member of the Academic Code Standing Committee for that hearing. This Committee’s procedures are administrative in nature and concern internal University affairs; accordingly, the deliberations of the Standing Committee need not be subject to formal rules of civil procedure or evidence. The meetings/hearings need not be open to the public, the accused does not have a right to legal counsel at the meetings/ hearings, nor shall legal counsel be part of the appeal process.

Decisions and Appeals

If a graduate student is determined to be in violation by the Standing Committee, a penalty shall be assessed to the offender by the Standing Committee and that decision will be conveyed to the student in a letter from the Committee. The student will be informed in the letter that he or she has the right to appeal any decisions to the Dean of the Graduate School. The appeal must be in writing and include all materials the appellant considers relevant, including a narrative clearly outlining the grounds of appeal. Appeals will normally be considered only when new information which was not reasonably available at the time of the hearing becomes available or when an allegation of substantial procedural error on the part of the University or the Standing Committee is made. The decision of the Dean in response to this appeal will prevail whether or not the student found in violation has participated in deliberations and hearings, but non-participation after proper notice will not be grounds for overturning a decision, nor will it be grounds for a rehearing. The appellant has five business days in which to appeal the Standing Committee's decision; the five-day period for an appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School will begin to run on the first business day following receipt of the letter from the Standing Committee. Cases that arise after the suspected offender has graduated shall be handled in the same way as cases involving current students, except that the time intervals for notification shall be extended to allow for response from an accused person who is not on campus.

When the Standing Committee determines that the accused did not commit a violation, materials considered in the case, except the original exam or other work, shall be destroyed, and no record of the accusation or the investigation shall appear in the student's file. If the judgment is "insufficient evidence to determine guilt or innocence," no

record of the charge or investigation will remain in the student's folder, but some will be kept in the confidential files of the Standing Committee.

A University official or officer alleging a violation of the Code will be sent copies of all written notices mentioned in these procedures, and has the right to appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School, in writing, including all materials he or she considers relevant, within five business days of being informed of the final dispositive action by the Standing Committee.

Community Values and Benefits

The interests and long-range welfare of the University community are best served if all its members, faculty, students, and staff, feel a commitment to principles upon which the Academic Code is based. Faculty are urged to review the procedures by which they evaluate student work, and to avoid situations and processes that may make it easy for a student to cut corners or obtain unauthorized assistance. Students are urged to consider that the public value of their education depends on the integrity of the grading system, and that academic dishonesty in any form dilutes the value of those grades. If they know of fellow students that are cheating or taking unfair advantage of policies or procedures, they should bring that to the attention of the Standing Committee, anonymously, if they wish.

The Academic Code is not intended to diminish collegiality at Brown. All of us learn from our colleagues; and education is, necessarily, not only a competitive, but also a cooperative enterprise. Simple justice requires, however, that students receive the quantity and quality of academic credit they have earned. Justice of this sort is by no means incompatible with the

community values and shared experiences on which a liberal education is based.

Penalties for Violating the Academic Code

The Standing Committee is authorized to enact any penalty it judges to be appropriate. The following are the most common penalties:

I. Reprimand

In some cases, in which a first offense has been judged to merit a minor penalty, the student will be allowed to repeat the exercise or complete an alternative assignment, as determined jointly by the instructor of the course and the Dean of the Graduate School a letter of reprimand will be written to the student. A copy of the letter will be placed in the student's Academic folder. In exceptional cases, the Standing Committee may vote to remove the letter of reprimand from a student's folder after a specified time pending good behavior.

Responsibility for evaluation of the student's work in the course continues to belong to the instructor of the course. The following will normally accompany a reprimand:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder.
2. If the student later requests an institutional letter of support for admission to another graduate or professional school (including within Brown), it will be provided but may refer to the incident.

II. Loss of credit in the exercise

For most offenses the least severe penalty will be loss of credit in the exercise. The student may be required to repeat the exercise or complete an

alternative assignment, although credit will not be given. The student will be allowed to continue in the course. The following will normally accompany this penalty:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder.
2. If the student later requests an institutional letter of support, it will be provided but may refer to the incident.

III. Directed No Credit in the course

When the offense is sufficiently serious to merit failure in the course, the student will be withdrawn from the course immediately following adjudication. The following will normally accompany this penalty:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder.
2. Transcript notation of No Credit in the course and of violation of the Academic Code.
3. Withholding of an institutional letter of support for admission to another graduate or professional school (including within Brown), postdoctoral appointment or employment, or discussion of the offense in the letter. (If the offense occurs after such a letter has already been written, the letter may be withdrawn or supplemented, with appropriate explanation.).

IV. Suspension

A serious offense may result in the student's suspension from the University for a period of one semester or longer. The following will normally accompany suspension:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder.
2. Withholding of an institutional letter of support for admission to another graduate or professional school (including within Brown), postdoctoral appointment or employment, or discussion of the offense in the letter. (If the offense occurs after such a letter has already been written, the letter may be withdrawn or supplemented, with appropriate explanation.)
3. Transcript notation of Directed No Credit in the course and of violation of the Academic Code.

V. Dismissal

A student who has been dismissed must earn readmission, by work and /or study away from Brown for at least six months and usually a year or more. The following will normally accompany dismissal:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder.
2. Withholding of an institutional letter of support for admission to another graduate or professional school (including within Brown), postdoctoral appointment or employment, or discussion of the offense in the letter. (If the offense occurs after such a letter has already been written, the letter may be withdrawn or supplemented, with appropriate explanation.)
3. Transcript notation of Directed No Credit in the course and of violation of the Academic Code.

VI. Expulsion

A very serious offense or multiple offenses may warrant permanent expulsion from the University. The following will normally accompany expulsion:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder.
2. Withholding of an institutional letter of support for admission to another graduate or professional school (including within Brown), postdoctoral appointment or employment, or discussion of the offense in the letter. (If the offense occurs after such a letter has already been written, the letter may be withdrawn by the University with appropriate explanation.)
3. Transcript notation of Directed No Credit in the course(s) and of violation(s) of the Academic Code.

VII. Revocation of Degree

An offense that is discovered after the awarding of a degree may warrant the revocation of that degree. The following will normally accompany revocation:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder.
2. The withdrawal of any institutional letters of support for admission to another graduate or professional school (including within Brown), postdoctoral appointment or employment.
3. Notification of concerned faculty, including the chair of the student's department and thesis advisor, if any.

4. Notification of external parties who had been informed of the original awarding of the degree.
5. Directed no credit in the course(s).
6. Transcript notation that the degree was revoked for violation of the Academic Code.

Other University Policies

Health Insurance Requirement

The Graduate School mandates that all students show proof of health insurance while enrolled at the University. Students are automatically enrolled in the University's Student Health Insurance Plan, but may elect to waive coverage. Be sure to check with your insurance carrier to make sure the policy has national coverage.

Grievance Procedure

The MPA Program follows the grievance procedures as articulated by the Graduate School. The text from the Graduate School reads:

Our expectation is that you will have the best possible relationship with colleagues and faculty during the course of your graduate work at Brown. It is possible, however, that difficulties will arise. Should you have a grievance, it is important to know how it can best be handled. It is University policy that each and every graduate student is entitled to a fair and prompt hearing of grievances. It is also policy that all other avenues of resolution are to be exhausted before a formal grievance procedure can begin. According to Section 10 of the official Faculty Rules and Regulations, the student must attempt to resolve the issue directly with the person or persons involved.

In the event that the attempt is unsuccessful, the next step is to take the issue to the MPA Director of Graduate Study (DGS). It is the responsibility of the MPA DGS to have an informal discussion with all involved parties, to the end of achieving resolution via mediation. It is also the obligation of the MPA DGS to prepare a memorandum outlining the problem, steps taken, and the proposed

solution; copies of this memorandum are given to all concerned parties.

If this step does not result in a mutually satisfactory outcome, the next step is to ask the MPA DGS to determine whether or not the question at issue is departmental in nature. If it is, a written request for a review with the Chair of the department should be filed. If it is not determined to be a departmental issue, no further action can be taken at the departmental level. Instead, the issue must be taken to the Dean of the Graduate School, where the aggrieved can seek advice and direction in the matter. If there is disagreement with the determination of whether the issues are departmental in nature, an appeal concerning that decision may be made to the Dean of the Graduate School, whose decision is final.

If the issue at hand is indeed programmatic in nature, a written appeal must be filed with the MPA DGS. This appeal must ask for a review of the question and must specify the injury alleged, the reasons for the student's belief that he or she is aggrieved, and the remedy sought. The MPA DGS may either refer the appeal to a committee of review or to the departmental faculty. For more on the difference between these two bodies and the procedures regarding disputes please refer to the Faculty Rules.

As expeditiously as possible the committee of review will hear the student, consider the evidence, confer with other persons concerned, and prepare a comprehensive report of findings and a response to the appeal. Committee decisions are made by a simple majority vote of the members. It is the duty of the MPA DGS to carry out the directions of the committee. Once a decision has been made, a memorandum of what was done is prepared and a copy is given to the student.

Other MPA Policies

Communications

We are a “high touch” program, and maintain close contact with, and support for, all of our MPA students. All of the MPA team — faculty and staff — are invested in your success and want you to enjoy your time here. To help us make your experience the best it can be, we ask that you join us in sustaining good, regular communication throughout your time as an MPA student.

Email Responsiveness

While we try to reduce email traffic where we can, there are many occasions on which we need to communicate with you via email on program-related matters. It’s important that you read emails from MPA faculty and staff carefully and respond in a timely fashion.

Staying in Touch Through the MPA on Canvas

We have created the PolicyHub on Canvas to provide orientation for the MPA Program.

Communicating with Advisors and Faculty

Our faculty, our advising team, and the MPA staff are here to help you. It is important that you stay in good contact with your advisors and professors, especially if you are experiencing difficulty with any of the course material or assignments. The sooner we are aware of a problem or difficulty, the faster we can work with you to address it. We view asking for help as a strength — recognizing and responding to the need for assistance and guidance being a crucial part of professional life in academia, public affairs, and beyond.

Watson Institute Buildings

If the University is open and students are on campus, swipe card access is available to MPA students after Orientation Week. Faculty, staff, and MPA students have 24-hour access to 111 Thayer Street and 280 Brook Street by using their Brown identification cards at the card readers.

280 Brook Street includes teaching space and study areas for students, as well as staff and faculty offices. The building is fully accessible.

111 Thayer Street This main Watson building includes a second-floor student study space, South Common Room.

University Services and Resources

Graduate School

[Information For Graduate Students | Graduate School](#)

This page on the Graduate School website contains myriad links to resources and information about navigating life as a graduate student at Brown University. Find information on educational policies, campus resources, and important contact information. Other Graduate School pages to point you to information:

- **Who to ask contact page**
[Who to Ask: Graduate School and Other Contacts for Students | Graduate School](#)
- **Links for specific questions**
[Graduate Student Resources | Graduate School](#)

Computing and Information Services (CIS)

[Computing & Information Services: CIS, IT](#)

Get help in person, by phone or email, or by submitting a ticket online. For a fee, CIS Service and Repair repairs personal computers, laptops, and phones.

Bursar's office

[Bursar Office - Student Financial Services | Bursar Office](#)

The Bursar's Office manages the billing and collection of student accounts, provides customer service, and offers financial guidance to students. Review and manage bursar accounts at [Billing Center Login](#)

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

401-863-3476, Page-Robinson Hall, 69 Brown Street, Room 512

[Home | Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)

Provides a range of mental health services to the Brown community, including individual counseling, medication management, skills workshops, referral services, mental health assessment, crisis stabilization, after hours assessment and urgent care, outreach programming, and support groups.

Department of Public Safety

[Home | Department of Public Safety](#)

In an emergency in a university building or on university property, contact Brown Public Safety at 401-863-4111 (from a campus phone, call 3-4111). Emergencies off campus: call 911.

Disability and Medical Accommodations

[SAS Home | Student and Employee Accessibility Services](#)

Students with a need for accommodations should submit a Disability and Medical Accommodation Form to the Brown University Student and Employee Accessibility Services (SEAS).

Brown Health Services

[Health Services at Your Service](#)

Brown Health Services provides on-site and campus-wide primary medical care and health educational services. Health Services is located in the Andrews House at 13 Brown Street.

Don't see the resource you're looking for on this list? Check the Graduate School links listed previously.