The Northern Virginia Public Service Fellows Program is a unique opportunity for mid-career professionals employed by local governments in Northern Virginia to strengthen their skills and further their careers. Each cohort of Fellows consists of a carefully screened group of public managers who are sponsored by their government employers.

As a student in the program, you will earn your Master of Public Administration (MPA) from George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government.

**OUR SPONSORS**
- The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government
- Northern Virginia Regional Commission
- Participating local jurisdictions

**ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

**PROGRAM FORMAT**
As an evening cohort program designed for working professionals, the Northern Virginia Public Service Fellows Program follows a set course structure:

- Participants complete two courses during the fall and spring semesters, and one course in the summer.
- Classes are held on a single day of the week, but may require additional time outside of class as necessary.
- Classes are offered on the Fairfax campus from 4:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., with a half-hour dinner break and two shorter breaks.
- Summer classes begin in mid-May and conclude in mid-July, allowing a six-week break before fall classes begin.
- Participants will have field experiences – PUAD 502 includes a weekday local government night, and PUAD 540 includes a Friday on Capitol Hill.

**COURSE OF STUDY**
Students complete two courses during the fall and spring semesters, and one course in the summer. The standard course of study includes the following sequence:

**YEAR 1** (Three semesters)
- PUAD 502: Administration in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
- PUAD 520: Organizational Theory and Management Behavior
- PUAD 511: Problem Solving and Data Analysis I (Statistics screening exam required)
- PUAD 663: State and Local Budgeting
- PUAD 540: Public Policy Process

**YEAR 2** (Three semesters)
- PUAD 646: Program Evaluation
- PUAD 615: Administrative Law
- PUAD 670: Human Resources Management in the Public Sector
- PUAD 651: Virginia Politics, Policy, and Administration
- PUAD 759: Capstone – Issues in Local Government Administration

**YEAR 3** (One semester)
- PUAD 703: Third Party Governance
- PUAD 700: Ethics and Public Administration

Graduation Ceremony: Students who enroll in the fall graduate in December, and students who enroll in the spring graduate in May.

**ADMISSIONS INFORMATION**

**WHO MAY PARTICIPATE?**
Any full-time employee of a local government in Northern Virginia, if selected by their employer, may apply to the program. Applicants must hold a bachelor’s degree. Each jurisdiction will nominate individuals in their own selection process, centered on the Schar School’s graduate application and admission requirements. The Schar School will review and approve all final applicants.

**APPLICATION PROCESS & ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS**
Faculty from the Schar School’s MPA program are available to visit your jurisdictions for employee information sessions, provide application materials to interested employees, and support the selection during your internal nomination process.

Each jurisdiction, in conjunction with the Schar School, will determine the number of participants to sponsor for the cohort program.

The application process is as follows:

1. Submit your completed application to your local jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction maintains a different deadline — be sure to check with your local jurisdiction.
2. If selected by your jurisdiction, submit your completed application to the Schar School of Policy and Government.
3. Final candidates are selected.

Please note that deadlines vary by semester of entry and by jurisdiction. Visit schar.gmu.edu/mpacohort for more information.

**THE JURISDICTION & MPA PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP**
Each participating jurisdiction will:
- Determine how many students they wish to sponsor.
- Conduct an internal application and review to nominate candidates.
- Submit completed applications for nominated candidates to the Schar School of Policy and Government by the application deadline.

The Schar School’s MPA program will:
- Work in partnership with the local jurisdictions to ensure each student’s academic success in the MPA program.
- Admit to the MPA program those individuals nominated by local jurisdictions and accepted by the Schar School’s admissions process.
- Limit enrollment in Fellows class sections to participants in the Fellows program.

**PROGRAM COSTS**
- Each application submitted to the Schar School of Policy and Government requires a $75 application fee (generally paid by the applicant).
- Division of the tuition between the employer and the student depends on the local jurisdictions.
- If students participate in the statistics preparation workshop, additional costs will be required.

**A DEGREE DESIGNED FOR TOMORROW’S LEADERS**

**WHY EARN A MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION?**
The purpose of a graduate program in public administration is to prepare individuals for positions of leadership in the public sector. Public administration draws on a wide variety of disciplines, such as political science, economics, business, administration, and law. Public administration is a unifying field of study that effectively merges the specialties of others while still offering its own unique set of competencies and areas of expertise, as it applies the disciplines of other fields to the public and nonprofit sectors.

**ABOUT THE SCHAR SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GOVERNMENT**
The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government is nationally ranked in the top 20 percent of all MPA programs, earning a coveted spot in the top 50 of U.S. News & World Report’s top Public Affairs list. It is also the only fully-accredited public service program headquartered in Northern Virginia. As one of the largest MPA programs in the country, students have the advantage of a robust program and a large alumni network.

The Schar School’s MPA program is designed to build the knowledge base and skills of people who strive to play a leadership role in organizations that develop or implement public policy. Emphasis is placed on the development of knowledge about politics, public policy, and management, integrated with analytic thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. The core of the MPA program consists of courses that emphasize these skills.

MBA | NORTHERN VIRGINIA PUBLIC SERVICE FELLOWS PROGRAM

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