



Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Concentration Areas: Foci and Job Market Possibilities

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Administration of Justice

Focuses on:

- Administration of justice
- Conflict analysis and resolution
- Policing
- Justice organizations and processes
- Program planning and implementation for justice
- Evaluation of justice programs
- Effective crime prevention and intervention
- Community participation in the justice process
- Civil liability of justice practitioners
- Legal issues in the justice agency management
- Crime victims and victimization
- Technological innovations in justice and security
- Leadership skills
- Justice and Security
- Emerging issues in justice administration

Job market possibilities:

- Conflict analysis and resolution centers (Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County, Mediation Center of Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia Mediation Service, etc.)
- Justice agencies and policing (Police/Sheriff's Departments, Police/Sheriff's Associations, U.S. Department of Justice, State/Local Departments of Justice, FBI, etc.)
- Criminal justice associations (American Association for Justice, National Criminal Justice Association, Virginia Community Criminal Justice Association, Citizens Justice Association, Maryland Criminal Justice Association, etc.)
- Crime prevention associations (National Crime Prevention Association, Maryland Crime Prevention Association, Virginia Crime Prevention Association, International Society of Crime Prevention Practitioners, etc.)
- Crime victims associations (National Center for Victims of Crime, National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards, National Organization for Victim Assistance, Virginia Victim Assistance Network, D.C. Crime Victims' Resource Center, etc.)
- Legal issues in justice agency management (Federal Bureau of Prisons, Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Corrections, National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement, National Police Accountability Project, local civilian oversight commissions of police, etc.)

Emergency Management and Homeland Security

Focuses on:

- Contemporary U.S. security concerns (homegrown and foreign inspired terrorism, immigration issues, transnational trends, etc.)
- Emergency planning and preparedness
- Disaster response and recovery
- Coordination of emergency response between federal, state, and local governments
- Terrorism, counterterrorism and counterinsurgency
- Structure of military, defense, intelligence and homeland security apparatuses
- National security law and U.S. Constitutional authorities
- Hazard mitigation
- The role of the media and public opinion in homeland security policy and decision-making
- Border security
- Cybersecurity
- Emerging issues in homeland security (such as the role of the military in homeland security, tensions between privacy and security and between transparency and secrecy in a democracy)

Job market possibilities:

- U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and Defense (numerous agencies)
- U.S. intelligence agencies (CIA, FBI, NSA, DIA, GIA)
- Local, state, and regional governments (first responders, law enforcement, etc.)
- Non-profit institutions focusing on defense and homeland security, ranging from the Center for National Security Studies to Electronic Privacy Information Center to Amnesty International
- Consulting firms and private contractors like Booz Allen Hamilton (Intelligence and Operations Analysis and Cyber Security), the Rand Corporation, CACI, and Applied Research Associates
- Congressional Research Service
- Congressional committees focusing on homeland security, defense and intelligence
- Aerospace and defense industry (policy and lobbying units), including Raytheon, Boeing, BAE Systems, Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics
- International cooperative agencies and organizations like INTERPOL, the Forest Stewardship Council

Environmental Science and Public Policy

Focuses on:

- Environmental Policy & science
- Resource economics
- Ecology
- Corporate Environmental Management
- Environmental Law
- Environmental policy analysis
- Program evaluation
- Emerging topics in environmental policy

Job market possibilities:

- Environmental policy (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, D.C. Government Department of Energy & Environment, etc.)
- Environmental law (Environmental Law Institute, Southern Environmental Law Center, Center for International Environmental Law, etc.)
- Environmental resources and sustainability (Environmental Defense Fund, Foundation for Sustainable Development, Greenpeace, Heifer International, ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, Oxfam, Sierra Club, World Resources Institute, etc.)
- Environmental trade associations (Energy Technology and Environmental Business Association, National Association of Environmental Professionals, National Waste & Recycling Association, Environmental Markets Association, American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists, etc.)

Human Resource Management

Focuses on:

- Laws, policies, and systems through which individuals are hired, evaluated, and managed within the public and non-profit sectors
- Emerging issues in HR management (like privatization, selection and oversight of HR contractors, and employee performance evaluation)
- Employment law and hiring processes
- Public employee labor relations at the federal, state, and local levels
- Organizational psychology
- Personnel testing and evaluation
- Group dynamics and team learning
- Measuring and maintaining employee morale
- Public and private governance
- Policy analysis

Job market possibilities:

- U.S. Office of Personnel Management
- Most departments of the U.S. Government
- State and local government agencies (50 states plus D.C., 3,141 counties and county equivalents, about 88,000 local governments)
- Thousands of non-profit organizations of all sizes and scope
- Federal government contractors and consulting firms like PricewaterhouseCoopers (Public Sector Practice), Accenture, Deloitte (U.S. Federal Government and U.S. State Government), Ernst & Young (U.S. Government and Public Sector), and IBM Global Business Services (Public Sector)
- US Government Accountability Office
- Congressional Research Service
- Lobbying groups and trade associations (thousands of possibilities, depending on your interests and aptitudes)
- Civil society and social change organizations like the Center for Responsive Politics, the Food Research Action Center, and the National Wildlife Federation

International Management

Focuses on:

- Operations/ impact of established institutions (e.g., United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and others)
- Operations of International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs), such as Non-profit humanitarian institutions, Think-tanks, Contracting Firms, Intl. Social Movements
- Comparative governance, including rules and institutions (from constitutions and treaties to informal agreements)
- Comparative public administration (comparing nations' policies and national institutions)
- International and cooperative public policies (in public health and security, for example)
- Public finance
- Strategies and challenges of international development and foreign assistance
- Impact of regional groupings across nations, with a special focus on the European Union
- International social entrepreneurship.
- Democratization and human rights
- Failed states, transnational crime and corruption
- International cooperation and conflict in environmental and climate issues

Job market possibilities:

- International NGOs engaged in development, relief, foreign assistance, and sustainability.
- International institutions like the United Nations and the World Bank (fluency in a second language usually required)
- U.S. Departments of State and Defense, U.S. Agency for International Development, Import-Export Bank and the Asian Development Bank
- Many U.S. departments with international offices, including Commerce, Agriculture, Justice, Energy, and Education
- A large number of for-profit institutions and contractors focusing on disaster relief, development or aid U.S. Peace Corps
- Congressional Research Service
- Businesses with international elements
- Social change organizations and hubs within citizens' activists networks like Global Witness and Friends of the Earth

Nonprofit Management (Toepler)*Focuses on:*

- Managements of nonprofits
- Nonprofit law
- Nonprofit governance
- Nonprofit ethics
- Nonprofit financial management
- NGO policy management
- Advocacy and lobbying
- Public relations
- Performance measurement
- Nonprofit leadership and change
- Skills students receive through this concentration
- Philanthropy and fundraising
- Association management
- Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise
- Public and nonprofit accounting
- Nonprofit finance and information systems

Job market possibilities:

- Foundations and philanthropies (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Ford Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, United Nations Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, etc.)
- Fundraising and grants (Foundation Center, Chronicle of Philanthropy, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, Grants.gov, Local Grantmakers' Organizations, etc.)
- Trade associations and professional associations (National Council of Nonprofits, Alliance for Nonprofit Management, Society for Nonprofits, BoardSource, various trade associations by sector, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, etc.)
- Local nonprofits (Idealist.org, United Way of the National Capital Area, GuideStar Directory of Charities and Nonprofit Organizations, etc.)
- Association management companies (Association & Society Management International, Inc., Association Management Strategies, Inc., Custom Management Group, Drohan Management Group, Management Solutions Plus, Inc., Stringfellow Management Group, Inc., etc.)
- Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise (Global Social Entrepreneurship Network, Ashoka, Acumen Fund, Better the World, Changents, EDA CapitalConnect, Ethipedia, Grameen Bank, MicroPlace, Skoll Foundation, United Prosperity, Unreasonable Institute, etc.)

Policy Studies (Jim Conant)

Focuses on:

- Administrative law
- Policy planning and implementation
- Policy analysis
- Program evaluation
- Advocacy and lobbying
- Social entrepreneurship
- Nonprofit enterprise
- Public budgeting systems
- State and local budgeting
- National budgeting systems
- Managing information resources
- At risk decision making
- Federalism and a changing government
- Congress and the presidency
- Emerging issues in public policy

Job market possibilities:

- Congress and the presidency (U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate, U.S. Presidency, Congressional and Senate Committees, etc.)
- Federal, state and local budgeting (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, U.S. Government Accountability Office, state and local budgeting offices, government watchdog groups, lobbying groups, trade associations, public interest groups, etc.)
- Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise (Global Social Entrepreneurship Network, Ashoka, Acumen Fund, Better the World, Changents, EDA CapitalConnect, Ethipedia, Grameen Bank, MicroPlace, Skoll Foundation, United Prosperity, Unreasonable Institute, etc.)
- National/State/Local/Public budgeting systems (Federal, State and Local government budgeting, such as Congressional Budget Office, Office of Management and Budget, Virginia Office of Planning and Budget, Maryland Department of Budget and Management, DC Office of Budget and Planning, Arlington County Department of Management and Finance, City of Alexandria Office of Management & Budget, etc.)
- Managing information resources (Information resources management policies and procedures within government, such as U.S. Presidency, U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate, Congressional and Senate Committees, Office of Personnel Management, Social Security Administration, U.S. Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Internal Revenue Service, state and local government similar offices, etc.)
- Federalism and a changing government/Congress and the presidency (Think tanks such as Brookings, Cato and Heritage among others, governmental watchdog groups, university research centers, etc.)

Public Management (*Burroughs*)

Focuses on:

- Administrative law
- Managing government contracting
- Public program planning and implementation
- Public program evaluation
- Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise
- Public and nonprofit accounting and finance
- Public budget systems
- National budgeting
- State and local budgeting
- Financial management
- Human resource management in the public sector

- Human resources reforms for public administration
- Leadership skills
- Managing information resources: Technology and policy
- Performance measurement
- Homeland security: Transportation security administration
- Federalism and intergovernmental relations
- Emerging topics in public management

Job market possibilities:

- Administrative law (Federal agencies Office of Inspector General, similar offices in state and local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and lobbying or advocacy organizations, etc.)
- Managing government contracting (Federal agencies with federal contracts/consulting, including U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. General Services Administration, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Social Security Administration, similar offices in state and local governments, contracting and consulting firms, etc.)
- Public program planning and implementation/Public program evaluation (Federal/state/local governmental agencies, public-private partnerships/enterprises, consultant firms, non-profits providing state/local run services, etc.)
- Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise (Global Social Entrepreneurship Network, Ashoka, Acumen Fund, Better the World, Changents, EDA CapitalConnect, Ethipedia, Grameen Bank, MicroPlace, Skoll Foundation, United Prosperity, Unreasonable Institute, etc.)
- National/State/Local/Public budgeting systems (Federal, State and Local government budgeting, such as Congressional Budget Office, Office of Management and Budget, Virginia Office of Planning and Budget, Maryland Department of Budget and Management, DC Office of Budget and Planning, Arlington County Department of Management and Finance, City of Alexandria Office of Management & Budget, etc.)
- Human resources management/reforms in the public sector (Federal, State and Local governments, including U.S. Office of Personnel Management and similar on state and local level, government contracting and consulting firms, and professional associations related to human resources, such as the International Public Management Association for Human Resources and Society for Human Resources Management)
- Managing information resources (Information resources management policies and procedures within government, such as U.S. Presidency, U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate, Congressional and Senate Committees, Office of Personnel Management, Social Security Administration, U.S. Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Internal Revenue Service, state and local government similar offices, etc.)
- Performance measurement (Federal, State and Local government programs in all agencies, consultant firms, think tanks, and governmental watchdog groups, etc.)

Public and Nonprofit Finance (Posner)

Focuses on:

- Social entrepreneurship
- Nonprofit enterprise
- Public and nonprofit accounting
- Public and nonprofit finance
- Public budgeting systems
- National budgeting
- State and local budgeting
- Nonprofit financial management
- Emerging issues in public financial management

Job market possibilities:

- Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise (Global Social Entrepreneurship Network, Ashoka, Acumen Fund, Better the World, Changents, EDA CapitalConnect, Ethipedia, Grameen Bank, MicroPlace, Skoll Foundation, United Prosperity, Unreasonable Institute, etc.)
- Public and nonprofit accounting/finance/budgeting (Federal, State and Local government, such as Congressional Budget Office, Office of Management and Budget, Virginia Office of Planning and Budget, Maryland Department of Budget and Management, DC Office of Budget and Planning, Arlington County Department of Management and Finance, City of Alexandria Office of Management & Budget, etc.)
- Nonprofit financial management (Professional associations focused on nonprofit financial management, such as National Council of Nonprofits, consultant firms for nonprofit finances, such as Fiscal Management Associates, and think tanks, etc.)

State and Local Government (Travis)*Focuses on:*

- Management of nonprofits
- Administrative law
- Managing government contracting
- Emergency planning and preparedness
- Virginia politics and policy
- Public and nonprofit accounting
- Public and nonprofit finance
- Public budgeting systems
- National budgeting
- State and local budgeting
- Leadership skills
- Managing information systems and resources
- Emerging issues in state and local government

Job market possibilities:

- Association management companies (Association & Society Management International, Inc., Association Management Strategies, Inc., Custom Management Group, Drohan Management Group, Management Solutions Plus, Inc., Stringfellow Management Group, Inc., etc.)
- Administrative law (Virginia Office of the State Inspector General, State of Maryland Office of Inspector General, DC Office of the Inspector General, state and local government agencies OIG offices, nongovernmental organizations, and lobbying or advocacy organizations, etc.)
- Managing government contracting (Virginia Department of General Services, Maryland Department of Budget and Management – Office of Procurement & Contracts, DC Office of Contracting and Procurement, similar offices in local governments, such as Arlington County Department of Budget & Finance – Office of Purchasing and City of Alexandria General Services Office, contracting and consulting firms, etc.)
- Emergency planning and preparedness (Local, state, and regional governments, such as first responders, law enforcement and Offices of Emergency Management, etc.)
- Virginia politics and policy (political parties, think tanks, governmental watchdog groups, university research centers, print/broadcast/electronic media, etc.)
- Public and nonprofit accounting/finance/budgeting (Federal, State and Local government, such as Congressional Budget Office, Office of Management and Budget, Virginia Office of Planning and Budget, Maryland Department of Budget and Management, DC Office of Budget and Planning, Arlington County Department of Management and Finance, City of Alexandria Office of Management & Budget, etc.)
- Managing information systems and resources (Policies and procedures within state and local governments, such as Virginia Governor's Office, Virginia General Assembly, Virginia Information Technologies Agency, additional state agencies with information management systems, local government similar offices, etc.)

- Managing government programs (Federal/state/local governmental agencies, contracting and consulting firms, public-private partnerships/enterprises, non-profits providing state/local run services, etc.)

Third Party Governance

Focuses on:

- Understanding of the roles of the different sectors (government, nonprofit, for-profit) in addressing public problems and implementing government programs.
- Knowledge of the different "tools" like grants, contracts, regulation, direct loans, loan guarantees, tax expenditures, that government uses to implement programs.
- Understanding of the importance of inter-organizational collaborations and partnerships, and the skills of negotiation, communications, and trust-building, that are critical in third-party governance
- Understanding of the role of "networks" of organizations and individuals in implementing public programs
- Economic analysis for public administration
- Program planning and implementation
- Emergency preparedness
- Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise
- Nonprofit Law, governance, and ethics
- Federalism

Job market possibilities:

- Public program planning and implementation (Federal/state/local governmental agencies, public-private partnerships/enterprises, consultant firms, non-profits providing state/local run services, etc.)
- Economic analysis for public administration
- Program planning and implementation (Federal/state/local governmental agencies, public-private partnerships/enterprises, consultant firms, non-profits providing state/local run services, etc.)
- Emergency preparedness (Local, state, and regional governments, such as first responders, law enforcement and Offices of Emergency Management, U.S. Red Cross and similar organizations, etc.)
- Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise Social entrepreneurship and nonprofit enterprise (Global Social Entrepreneurship Network, Ashoka, Acumen Fund, Better the World, Changents, EDA CapitalConnect, Ethipedia, Grameen Bank, MicroPlace, Skoll Foundation, United Prosperity, Unreasonable Institute, etc.)
- Nonprofit Law, governance, and ethics (Think tanks, nonprofit management companies, nonprofit professional associations such as National Council of Nonprofits, university research centers, law firms specializing in nonprofit law, etc.)
- Federalism (Think tanks, governmental watchdog groups, university research centers, etc.)