Applications Process

The MPA Program accepts applications for admission to the Fall, Winter, and Spring/Summer terms. For a decision on regular admission, the application deadlines are:

- Fall term - July 1
- Winter term - November 1
- Spring-Summer term - March 1

Review of completed application packets will begin approximately a month prior to the deadline. Applications completed after the deadline will be considered if space is available; if there is no space available, applicants who meet our qualifications will be admitted for the next available semester.

Persons applying for admission to the MPA program, even when transferring from another graduate program at Wayne State University, must apply through the online application system maintained by the Office of Graduate Admissions. Instructions are available at:

http://www.gradadmissions.wayne.edu/apply.php

Application Materials

The following documents must be submitted before applications are considered for admission. Materials can be completed or uploaded via the Graduate Admissions website:

- Online application
- Certified copies of transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, both undergraduate and graduate
- A Personal Statement, a 2-3 page essay describing your educational and professional goals as they relate to the MPA program
- Optional: Scores from the Graduate Record Examination (see GRE Scores, below)
- Optional: Letters of recommendation from instructors and/or employers (see Letters of Recommendation, below)
- For International Students: TOEFL test scores (see International Students, below)

Admissions Decisions

Admission to the MPA program at Wayne State is selective. The program is the oldest MPA program in the State of Michigan, it holds NASPAA accreditation, and it has a long list of graduates who have gone on to successful and distinguished careers in public and nonprofit management. A few of our more research-minded MPA graduates are admitted to prestigious Ph.D. programs.

The MPA program evaluates application dossiers with one question in mind: Will the applicant successfully complete the degree program? Since the program is academically rigorous and requires a significant commitment on the part of the student and the program, we rely upon...
multiple sources of information for admissions decisions. In particular, we examine the previous academic record of the applicant, as gauged by the grade point average in undergraduate or previous graduate course work. We also examine the strength and relevance of the curriculum. The personal statement provides an opportunity for applicants to demonstrate that they can write competently, but perhaps more important, that they are committed to public service. Finally, scores on the Graduate Record Examination may help in cases where the GPA of the applicants may not adequately reflect the likelihood of success.

The decision for applicants (regular, qualified, deny) is based upon a review of all of the application materials by MPA faculty. Applicants admitted "qualified" must demonstrate satisfactory academic performance during a probationary period (e.g. earn a grade of B or higher in the first three MPA courses) to qualify for regular admission.

**GRE Scores**

Applicants with cumulative GPAs below 3.30 (undergraduate or graduate) must submit GRE scores in order to be considered for admission. Undergraduate and graduate applicants with a high overall GPA (3.30 or higher) are not required to submit GRE scores, although they may wish to do so, especially if they are applying for a teaching or research assistantship or a fellowship. All applicants applying for a teaching or research assistantship or a fellowship, regardless of their GPA must submit GRE scores in order to be considered.

The MPA program does not have minimum GRE scores, but scores above the 50th percentile on each aspect of the general test – verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and analytic writing – are considered to be evidence that an applicant with a cumulative GPA below 3.30 can succeed in the coursework. Currently, those scores are approximately 150 on the verbal and quantitative sections (under the new scoring system) and 4.0 on the analytic writing. GRE scores below the 50th percentile still may be helpful in cases of qualified admission.

Information on the testing procedure is available from the Educational Testing Service [http://www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre). There are a number of locations in Michigan where the test can be taken and many available dates on which to take the test.

**Letters of Recommendation**

Letters of recommendation are always welcome, but never required. Applicants who do not exactly meet the GPA and/or GRE requirements are highly recommended to submit letters of recommendation (see Qualified Admission, below). Letters from instructors, particularly those who understand challenging graduate programs, are preferred over those from employers, family friends, etc. The primary purpose of the letters should be to provide further evidence that the applicant can succeed in a rigorous graduate public service program.
Wayne State University  
Master of Public Administration Program  
Admissions Criteria – Reviewed / Revised 5 June 2017  

Qualified Admission  

Applicants admitted qualified are admitted for a semester and achieve regular admission status if they satisfy certain requirements during that first semester (e.g., prerequisite courses without MPA program credit; a grade of B or better in at least two core courses taken during the term). If the requirements are not achieved, the applicant may not be allowed to continue in the program.

Applicants who do not qualify for regular admission may wish to submit letters of recommendation in support of qualified admission, in addition to GRE scores. The purpose of letters is to assess the applicant's potential for succeeding in this academically challenging program.

International Students  

TOEFL scores are required for those applicants whose native language is not English. The minimum TOEFL scores are 79 on the internet-based test (iBT) or 550 on the paper-based test (PBT). Other tests accepted are MELAB and IELTS. For more information on proficiency, please see the Graduate School Admissions policies available in the “International Student Admission Requirement” section at https://wayne.edu/admissions/graduate/international/.

International students are encouraged to contact the Office of International Students and Scholars (http://oiss.wayne.edu/) and Graduate Admissions (https://wayne.edu/admissions/graduate/international/) early in the process.