Step 1 Review the MPA Requirements:

Master's Degree in Public Administration (MPA)

The degree is innovative in a number of ways. It is an integrated educational experience that balances a prescribed curriculum with choices that reflect personal and professional interests. The strongest integration occurs during the Core Year, which accounts for 14 of the 30 credits and is organized in modules of varying lengths. These modules, which evolve in response to changes in the public service environment, are intended to cover the most important concepts, tools and skills that an individual needs to know to be effective in public service work. Integration also occurs through the capstone, the requirement that must be completed last. It asks that a significant public issue be addressed working in teams, using what has been learned, and in communication with appropriate community organizations and individuals.

Personal and professional interests are pursued most fully in the Individuated Concentration and in the Practicum. In the Concentration (9-credits) the participant defines a theme of special interest, and then takes courses in the Program or elsewhere that satisfy them. In the Practicum (3-credits) the participant spends 240-320 hours with an organization, in Hawai‘i or elsewhere, that responds to specific learning goals she or he has defined.

A person working while attending the University can expect to complete the Program in two to three years, while a full-time participant normally could finish in two years. The Program is designed for people with public service experience, as well as individuals who wish to enter public service. There is an option that allows the Master’s degree to be completed in 18 months. The emphasis on the development of meaningful relationships among participants dictates that once the core year begins in the fall there are no new admissions to the Program until the following fall semester.

The degree program consists of 30 credits organized into four interrelated segments:

1. Core Year
2. Individuated Concentration
3. Practicum
4. Capstone
The core year must be taken first and consists of a common, prescribed curriculum. Once it is completed (or simultaneously in the case of full-time participants) students undertake the individuated concentration. The concentration encourages the pursuit of individual interests. The practicum may be done any time after the core year. The capstone consists of a planning seminar taken the semester preceding that in which graduation is expected, and the seminar itself, which is taken in the last semester in the Program.

A. Core Year (14 credit hours)

The first year of the MPA consists of a prescribed core year that emphasizes, among other things, self-understanding, learning to work effectively in groups on problems of common concern, increasing abilities to integrate knowledge and analyze complex issues, and developing individual skills in a cooperative, collaborative environment. It is based on an integrated, team-taught curriculum presented in a format that utilizes seminar and discussion sessions. The core year is organized on the following topics that are linked to one another and are taken in this order:

**Fall Semester**

**Political & Economic System Processes - PUBA 600** (7 credit hours): This course consists of six modules that cover the broad context within which public organizations operate, and a set of communication, organizing, and thinking skills. Certificate and Master's Degree students are required to complete all modules. *The Modules are:*

- **Managing Ideas, Writing, Time and Thinking Critically:** Writing for yourself - to learn what you think and why; writing for others - to communicate your position and argument; reading analytically; time management; an orientation to critical thinking and to specific tools for thinking about complex issues.
- **Interpersonal & Group Communication Processes:** Interpersonal communication styles; group processes and group development; verbal and nonverbal communication in organizational settings; meeting facilitation; making formal presentations.
- **Economic Perspectives:** The nature of economic thinking and economic analysis; dynamics of Hawai‘i’s economy; economic perspectives on government and public actions; state and local economic issues and economic policy.
- **Political Perspectives:** Foundations and evolution of the liberal state and public institutions in the United States; stresses and conflicts in the American political economy and in American political myths; history of Hawai‘i’s political economy and development of its public institutions; internationalization of economic relations and their implications for local public sector concerns.
- **The Legislative Processes:** Functions of legislatures; the relationship between formal rules and informal dynamics.
B. Spring Semester

**Policy & Organizational Processes - PUBA 601** (7 credit hours): This course consists of six modules that cover the organizational settings in which public service work is done, and a set of skills useful for information systems, budgets and data analysis. Certificate and Master's Degree students are required to complete all modules. Pre: 600. *The Modules are:*

- **Understanding, Diagnosing & Improving Organizations**: The characteristics of bureaucracies and the issues that they present; multiple - political, cultural, structural, gender - frameworks for understanding and diagnosing organizations.
- **The Budgetary Processes**: Federal, state, and local budget issues; budget analysis and budgetary process.
- **Issues in Public Policy, Admin. Law & Rule-Making**: Policy analysis as a tool; issues in administrative law, rule-making and bureaucratic discretion.
- **Research Design and Methods**: Asking and answering relevant questions; obtaining and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information; evaluating public programs and policies.
- **Ethics & the Public Interest**: Exploring the idea of “public interest,” and of public service ethics.
- **Hawai‘i’s Futures**: Implications and Consequences: Alternative futures in Hawai‘i and their implications for public problems and public agencies; futures analysis as a tool for public decision-makers.

C. Individuated Concentration (9 credit hours)

The individuated concentration consists of work in courses, directed reading or directed research. In consultation with an advisor, participants choose a theme of interest that becomes the focus of their studies during this part of the Program. The theme may relate to anything of personal or professional interest as long as it has relevance to public issues and public service work. Students may use courses from other departments and programs, as well as the Program in the individuated concentration.

The Program accepts for graduate credit work completed in the state of Hawai‘i Management Certification Program and the federal Pacific Leadership Academy. In both cases the work may count as six credits toward completion of the nine-credit Individuated Concentration in the MPA. Please check with an advisor for specifics.
D. Practicum - PUBA 690 (3 Credit Hours)

The practicum places individuals in settings where they can compare organizational structures and policy processes. Participants may choose public, nonprofit or private organizations as practicum sites. The faculty advisor works closely with each person to make arrangements, based on the participants' interests and learning goals. Sites are not restricted to Hawai`i or the U.S. The practicum is a minimum of 240 hours. Most people find it convenient to undertake the practicum in the summer months, but there is flexibility on timing and scheduling.

E. Capstone (4 credit hours)

The capstone completes the Program experience by integrating knowledge and skills gained through course work and the practicum into an examination of a public issue of importance to Hawai`i or the Asia-Pacific Region. The focus is on pooling individual members’ resources in a collaborative analysis of the selected public issue.

Capstone Planning - PUBA 709 (1 credit hour): The capstone planning seminar is taken during the semester preceding that in which graduation is expected. Students use the planning seminar to define a topic or issue, decide upon the focus and methods to analyze that topic, locate informational resources, identify public organizations or officials as recipients of the work, and establish working relationships within the group.

Capstone Seminar - PUBA 710 (3 credit hours): The capstone seminar is taken during the last semester in the Program. Participants undertake and complete group work based upon what was decided in the Capstone Planning seminar. The completed analysis is shared with the individuals or organizations identified in the planning seminar.

F. Thesis Option - PUBA 700 (variable credit hours)

The thesis is an individualized project selected, with an advisor's approval, by participants wishing to pursue in-depth research in a specific area. The thesis option involves six or nine credits of thesis research on an agreed-upon topic. A thesis research committee oversees and evaluates thesis work. If nine credits are taken in thesis work, no course work is taken in the individuated concentration. If only six credits are used for the thesis, three credits are taken in the individuated concentration. These credits must be consistent with a theme agreed to by the participant and a faculty advisor.
Step 2: Complete the Application

Admission and Application

A. Admission Requirements

Admission to both the MPA and Certificate Programs takes place only once a year in the Fall. Each admission cycle deliberately seeks to create a cohort group in which the members benefit from a diversity of backgrounds, professional experience, social and political perspectives and career goals.

All applicants need to meet the PUBA as well as Graduate Division admissions standard and documentation requirements to be considered for admission.

- To be eligible to apply, an applicant needs to possess a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university, or an equivalent degree from a recognized non-U.S. institution of higher education. Previous major field of study is not a consideration. At minimum, the applicant needs to demonstrate above average academic performance (B average, 3.0 GPA or its equivalent) for undergraduate course work and for any post-baccalaureate or graduate course work.
- TOEFL or IELTS scores are required for international students coming from countries where English is not the first language. The minimum score requirement for the TOEFL is 540 (Paper Based), 207 (Computer Based), or 76 (Internet Based). The minimum score requirement for the IELTS is a 6 (combined).
- PUBA does NOT require the GRE test scores to be considered for admission.
- For more information on University admission requirements and policies, please visit the UHM Graduate Division websites:
  - [http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/prospective-students](http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/prospective-students)
  - [http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/public-administration](http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/public-administration)

B. Application Procedures:

The Graduate Division admission application is required for both the Master’s and Certificate Program. It can be obtained online at the UHM Graduate Division website:
[http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/how-apply](http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/how-apply)
Letter of Reference forms are included in the Program application packet, and can also be obtained online at: http://www.puba.hawaii.edu

1. To be sent to the Graduate Division:

   1. Completed UH Graduate School application form:
      submit online application or download
   2. Application fee; $100.
   3. Official transcript of all post-secondary work directly from each institution attended. Faxed, hand delivered or student copy transcripts will not be accepted. Transcripts within the UH system do not need to be requested.
   4. TOEFL or IELTS score, for international students only.

Graduate Division Admissions Office
University of Hawai‘i at Manoa
2540 Maile Way, Spalding Hall 354
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96822
Telephone: (808) 956-8544
Fax: (808) 956-4261
E-mail: gradadm@hawaii.edu
http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/

2. To be sent to the Public Administration Program Office:

   1. Official transcript of all post-secondary work directly from each institution attended must be submitted to both the UH grad division and the PUBA office. Faxed, hand-delivered, or student copy transcripts will not be accepted. Transcripts within the UH system do not need to be requested.
   2. Two letters of reference from people with whom you have worked and who can comment on your experience and personal qualities. One letter should be from a supervisor or someone who has held a supervisory position to you. All letters of reference need to be submitted on the Public Administration letter of reference form available online at: http://www.puba.hawaii.edu
   3. Resume
   4. Personal statement indicating why you want to participate in the Public Administration Program, and what you expect to gain from such participation. Summarize what you see as your professional future at this time. Also, describe any community service work that you have done on a voluntary basis.
5. Writing sample describing a public problem that concerns you. Speculate briefly on its causes and summarize what you think would be an optimum way of dealing with it. (Please limit this to two, typed, double-spaced pages)

Public Administration Program
2424 Maile Way, Saunders Hall 631
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96822
Telephone: (808) 956-8260
Fax: (808) 956-9571
E-mail: pubadmin@hawaii.edu
http://www.puba.hawaii.edu

Certificate participants wishing to enter the MPA Program must complete the Certificate before applying.

C. Application Deadline

We will begin reviewing applications on MARCH 1. Applications received after that date will be considered on a space-available basis. Eligible applicants may be interviewed by a member of the Program’s Admissions Board. Admissions decisions will be made after the submission deadline.

D. Program Fees

Application fee to the University is $100 (as mentioned above). Tuition charges and Program fees do not cover the cost of books and materials or on-campus evening parking, neither of which is substantial.

The cost of the MPA Program is based upon University tuition charges. The tuition for the 2014-2015 academic year is $552.00 per credit hour for residents, and $1,334.00 per credit hour for non-residents. The University also charges an additional student activity fee (based on credit hours) per semester for each student.

Please note that all tuition and fee charges at University of Hawai‘i campuses are subject to change in accordance with requirements of state law and/or action by the Board of Regents or University administration.

Last Revised: January 21, 2014
Step 3: Supply 2 Letters of Reference

A. To the Writer:

The person who has given this form to you is applying for admission to the University of Hawai‘i Public Administration Program. The Program is intended for individuals who can make a contribution to the quality of public service in Hawai‘i and the Pacific, and are expected to continue to do so in the future. The Program is organized to accommodate individuals holding full-time jobs. The Master’s Degree takes two to three years to complete and the Certificate one year. Each can be expected to be a challenging experience for the participants.

Your assessment of the applicant’s ability to benefit from this experience as well as his/her potential to contribute to the capabilities of public institutions is important to the Admissions Board. Please be as specific as you can in commenting on the applicant’s relevant strengths and weaknesses. Your evaluation will be held in confidence if the waiver form has been signed.

Your willingness to give your time to this task is appreciated.

Mail this form directly to the Public Administration Program:

University of Hawaii at Manoa
2424 Maile Way, Saunders Hall 631
Honolulu, HI 96822
Telephone: 808-956-8260
Facsimile: 808-956-9571

To meet our review deadlines, please forward your letter to us by March 1.
Thank you.

Applicants Name: ______________________________________________________

☐ Master’s

☐ Certificate

B. To the Applicant:
If you agree to waive your rights of access to this letter of reference and any accompanying statements, please sign the statement below.

In accordance with Section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act (title IV P.L. 90-247, as amended), the undersigned hereby request to waive “right to access” to confidential letters and statements submitted to the University of Hawai‘i respecting application for the Public Administration Program.

It is understood that the yield of this “right of access” is a voluntary action on my part, and I will not be permitted to view or otherwise obtain the information I have noted above.

**Person Requesting Waiver:** ______________________________

**Date:** ______________________________