Public Service Related Graduate Degrees

Below are some descriptions of options for students interested in a professional degree in the public service sector. While many of the components of the degree programs are similar, each is unique in its own way.

**Master of Public Administration**
The Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree is the professional degree for people who want a public service career in management. These degree programs develop the skills and techniques used by leaders and managers to implement policies, projects, and programs that resolve important societal programs while addressing organizational, human resources, and budgetary challenges. MPA graduates work in a wide variety of public service fields and in all levels of government (federal, state, local, and regional), in nonprofits, in the international arena, and in the private sector.

**Master of Public Health**
The Master of Public Health (MPH) degree is the most widely recognized professional credential for leadership in public health. The program emphasizes active, student-directed learning, problem solving, and the acquisition of skills essential to the practice of public health. The MPH program is mainly geared towards professionals who hold a doctoral degree in medicine (or foreign degree equivalent), dentistry, veterinary medicine, or other fields related to public health (for example, biology, behavioral sciences, or natural and social sciences) or a master's degree in nursing.

**Master of Health Policy and Management**
The Master of Public Administration in Health Policy and Management (HPAM) provides students with the concepts and skills needed to shape the future of health policy and management. This degree prepares individuals to manage a wide array of health care programs and analyze and craft thoughtful, forward-thinking health policy. HPAM graduates can be found playing significant roles in hospitals, nonprofits, consulting firms, managed care organizations, pharmaceutical companies and government health agencies.

**Master of Environmental Policy and Management**
Environmental Policy and Management is a course of study that integrates skill-based courses in public policy, management, and environmental affairs with training in the environmental sciences. The degree demands core coursework in data analysis and modeling, environmental economics and policy, management, environmental resource management and policy, and environmental law. Master degree graduates who concentrate in Environmental Policy and Natural Resource Management assume management positions in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in local and state agencies, federal government, corporations, consulting firms, international and intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental and community-based organizations.

**Master of Social Work**
The Master of Social Work degree provides an individual with an understanding of scientific principles, the practice methods, and the ethical and social values of professional social work. This Master’s program prepares students for entry into advanced social work practice. Students complete courses in human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, research, social work practice and the practicum. Typical MSW programs emphasize promoting social and economic justice, particularly for populations at-risk; practicing with diverse populations; and evaluating practice outcomes. Social workers can be seen in variety of roles within the community.

**Master in Urban Studies/Urban Planning**
This degree program is dedicated to the training of professionals and managers in public agencies, community-based organizations, and other institutions committed to working for the betterment of urban communities and their residents. It provides students with an understanding of the economic, technological, and social forces that shape metropolitan areas at home and abroad; it also equips them with the tools needed to confront the key challenges facing urban communities across the globe. Urban Studies programs use a variety of instructional approaches including actual policy and management problems posed by public officials, case analyses, and computer-based problem sets.
Master of International Affairs
The Master of International Affairs is designed to develop international affairs experts, consultants, and executives who understand the issues that transcend national boundaries. Students may concentrate in a variety of areas such as Economic and Political Development, Environmental Policy Studies, Human Rights and Humanitarian Efforts, International Economics, International Energy Management, Science, or Technology.

Master of Arts in Public Administration
The Master of Arts in Public Administration degree provides training in research methods, an in-depth knowledge of public administration and public policy-making. The focus of this degree is to examine the complex issues surrounding the formation, implementation, & evaluation of public policy; to encourage students to develop specialist theoretical & empirical knowledge of political problems from within a political science perspective; to work in a team of researchers with a common research goal and cultivate research skills which will benefit data collation and analysis for the dissertation component of the degree; and to stimulate intellectual and professional self-awareness.

Master of Public Affairs in Nonprofit Management
The Master of Public Affairs in Nonprofit Management is designed for individuals who have or wish to assume leadership positions in nonprofit organizations. It is an excellent graduate option if an individual works in the nonprofit sector, serves in a government agency that deals extensively with nonprofits, or wishes to be in the philanthropy field. This degree provides a strong management and policy base and addresses the distinctive features and practices of nonprofit organizations and emphasizes management techniques helpful to nonprofit leaders.

Master of Arts in Policy Studies
This degree program provides an opportunity for students to investigate and evaluate the theory and case practice of public and private sector policies within the context of economic and social restructuring. The critical, analytical, and evaluative skills involved in the program as a whole are appropriate to those with an interest in personal development or career enhancement and those who wish to pursue academic research at a more advanced level.

Master of Management in Human Services
The Master of Human Services degree program is designed to meet the needs of professionals in the social, community, and human services sector who have moved, or who wish to move, from direct practice into a managerial role. The program offers a unique focus on exploring the role, function, and responsibilities of the human service organization in rural, regional, and urban environments.

Master of Science in Public Service/Community Leadership
This degree program will enable individuals to collaborate creatively with diverse stakeholder groups, to inspire & lead volunteers, to serve the greater good of the various publics they serve, and to foster growth & development of other leaders. Individuals will learn the skills and perspectives necessary to have the vision of leadership, sensitivity to challenges that arise in communities, & the skills and knowledge to translate the leadership vision into reality.

Master of Business Administration
The Master of Business Administration (MBA) is a degree that is internationally recognized as a business management qualification. It is preparation for careers in business management involving a combination of practical training & theoretical learning. What managers, executives and other types of business professionals are being prepared for are the complex managerial tasks which may sometimes need non-standard solutions for them to succeed in the highly competitive business environment today. The core component of the MBA features courses in finance, economics, accounting, marketing, organizational behavior, operational management (logistics), business law, information management and technology and human recourse management amongst others.

Other degrees relevant to public service careers:
● Juris Doctorate
● MD
● Master of Psychology
● Master of Education

For more information on graduate school programs in the public service sector, visit Idealist.org for their list of academic programs, as well as Naspaa.org.