



evergreen

Master of Public Administration Program

Student Handbook and Program Policies

2026-2027

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Land Acknowledgement

The Squaxin Island Tribe's habitation of the land on and around the inlets of the Southern Salish Sea, including what is now the City of Olympia and here at The Evergreen State College spans thousands of years. The ancestral families who lived and thrived here: They named Budd Inlet Steh-Chass, and they named Eld Inlet where the campus is located Squi' Aitle. Today, the Squaxin Island Tribe continues to live on and steward the lands and waters of the Southern Salish Sea.

We acknowledge the Squaxin Island Tribe as it continues to live on and steward these lands and waters.

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional homelands of the Puyallup Tribe. The Puyallup people have lived on and stewarded these lands since the beginning of time, and continue to do so today. We recognize that this acknowledgement is one small step toward true allyship and we commit to uplifting the voices, experiences and histories of the Indigenous people of this land and beyond.

We respect and acknowledge the Squaxin Island and Puyallup Tribes, and other Tribes across the Americas, and their many contributions to The Evergreen State College (in support of education, Tribal sovereignty, environmental stewardship). This acknowledgement is one small step toward respect and collaboration with the aim of uplifting the voices, cultures and histories of the Tribes of these lands and waters.

Mission and Philosophy

Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We *think* critically and creatively; *communicate* effectively; work *collaboratively*; embrace *diversity*; value *fairness* and *equity*; *advocate* powerfully on

behalf of the public; and *imagine* new possibilities in order to accomplish positive change in our workplace and in our communities.

Evergreen's MPA program provides an intellectual, collaborative and engaged learning environment in which students learn to act as facilitators in defining and pursuing the public interest. Key ideas and concepts are presented within the historical, political, social, cultural and economic context of public administration.

Students develop expertise in both oral and written communication. Much of the work takes place in seminars, small group discussions where participants discover the meaning or significance of assigned readings. Students experience teamwork while working to complete various learning projects. They learn to reason critically, to analyze important dimensions of public service and to understand and take coherent positions on key public administration and policy issues. In addition, students have opportunities to discuss contemporary public issues with practitioners and faculty and use their own experiences to integrate theory and practice.

Program Contacts

DIRECTOR Dr. Meghan Doughty	(360) 867-6578	Doughtym@evergreen.edu
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR for the Olympia cohort JC Core	(360) 867-6554	Justin.Core@evergreen.edu
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR for the Tacoma and Tribal Governance cohorts John “Stormy” Glover	(360) 584-5768	John.Glover@evergreen.edu
OFFICE ASSISTANT Lacey Chen	(360) 867-5939	Lacey.Chen@evergreen.edu
DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES Dr. Doreen Swetkis	360-867-5320	Swetkisd@evergreen.edu

Communication

Students are given a “MyEvergreen” account at my.evergreen.edu when they are admitted. This site, as well as your evergreen.edu email, is the official mode of communication between students and the college. MyEvergreen includes:

- Course registration (including individual study contracts and internship contracts)
- Schedule Evergreen (see your class schedules and locations)
- Academic progress and credits earned
- Transcript orders
- Evaluation creation for self-evaluations and faculty evaluations
- Evaluations of you by faculty
- Financial aid information
- Greener Commons (Evergreen's online resource for campus announcements)
- Student account information and web payments
- Student jobs database (Handshake)

Email

Students must use their [evergreen email](#) to receive information from the college and MPA faculty and staff. This email account is used for official college communications to students, including registration and student account information, announcements of official college policies, general announcements and information. You are responsible for checking this email account and responding in a timely manner. Email forwarding is no longer supported.

Students have access to Macintosh and Windows computers, with Internet access and a variety of up-to-date software, in the campus computer lab. There are also Chromebooks for rent from the Daniel Evans library.

Contact Information

Students need to keep their residential mailing address and phone listings up-to-date with the [Office of Registration and Records](#) or through my.evergreen.edu, so that the program and the college can communicate with them.

Social Contract and Student Code of Conduct

When you make the decision to come to Evergreen, you are also making the decision to become closely associated with its values. A central focus of those values is freedom - freedom to explore ideas and to discuss those ideas in both speech and print; freedom from reprisal for voicing concerns and beliefs, no matter how unpopular. Such freedom is necessary in a vibrant, dynamic learning community.

As members of the Evergreen community, we acknowledge our mutual responsibility for openness, honesty, civility, and fairness to ensure a productive learning environment for everyone. These conditions carry with them certain rights expressed in [Evergreen's Social](#)

[Contract](#), a document that has defined and guided the college's values since its very beginning. The Social Contract is an agreement about civility and tolerance toward others that provides our framework for teaching and learning.

In addition to the Social Contract, most courses may have a community or program agreement that describes specific expectations and responsibilities of faculty and students. Students must also adhere to the [Student Conduct Code](#), which articulates specific procedures and standards for upholding the values and aspirations expressed in the Social Contract. Specifically, the code strives to afford opportunities for informal resolution and to support students to be accountable for their decisions and actions. The code has been crafted in the spirit of education and compassion, with the aim of healing individuals, preserving our common interests, and protecting each other from harm.

Degree Requirements

Students may complete the program on a full-time or part-time basis. The curriculum follows a cohort model, allowing students to progress through the core sequence with a group of peers while building professional networks and collaborative skills. Classes are typically offered during evenings and weekends to accommodate working professionals.

Credit Requirements

Students must complete **60 credits** within 5 years to earn the Master of Public Administration degree. Students must complete a sequence of 6 consecutive Core courses to graduate from the program. Students will complete these courses with their cohort. Each course is 6 credits and by the end of the Core course sequence students will have earned 36 credits. Students are also required to take Path to Sovereignty, a 4 credit class at some point before graduation.

Students must complete **40 required credits** as part of the Master of Public Administration degree. These credits include:

- **First-Year Core Curriculum:** 18 credits
- **Second-Year Core Curriculum:** 18 credits
- **Paths to Sovereignty:** 4 credits

In addition to the required core curriculum, students must complete any concentration-specific coursework and elective credits required by their chosen MPA cohort. Students admitted with less than one year of relevant and substantive professional experience may also be required to complete a 2-credit internship as part of their program requirements.

Credit Policies at a Glance

Requirement	Credits
First-Year Core Curriculum	18
Second-Year Core Curriculum	18
Paths to Sovereignty	4
Electives	20
Total Required Core Credits	60

Students should work closely with the MPA Director to ensure all degree, concentration, elective, and graduation requirements are met prior to completing the program.

MPA Cohorts

All students admitted to the MPA Program are admitted to one of our three (3) learning communities: Tribal Governance cohort, Tacoma cohort, or Olympia cohort. Being admitted into a particular cohort is a choice the MPA applicant makes as part of the admissions process. **It is important to note that once admitted to one of the three learning communities or cohorts, applicants will not be able to switch from one cohort to another, unless under exceptional circumstances.**

- Olympia Cohort
 - Based in Olympia
 - Focuses on core public administration theory and practice, public management, leadership, policy analysis, and governance
 - Admits a new cohort every fall
- Tacoma Cohort
 - Cohort serving students in the Tacoma region
 - Follows the same MPA core curriculum while providing a learning community closer to Pierce County and surrounding areas
 - Begins every other year in odd-numbered years
- Tribal Governance Cohort
 - A specialized MPA cohort focused on Tribal governance, Indigenous public administration, sovereignty, and leadership in Tribal governments and organizations
 - Begins every other year in even-numbered years.
 - Students complete the MPA core along with coursework emphasizing Tribal governance

Core Classes Policy

Students are expected to complete the entire first year of Core before beginning the second year of Core coursework. The courses are:

- First Year
 - Context of Public Administration, Fall quarter
 - Doing Democratic Public Administration, Winter quarter
 - Public Policy, Budgeting and Financial Management, Spring quarter
- Second Year
 - Analytical Techniques for Public Servants I, Fall quarter
 - Analytical Techniques for Public Servants II, Winter quarter
 - Capstone, Spring quarter.

The student is expected to finish the second year Core sequence before moving on to Capstone. Students are expected to complete any missed quarter of first year Core before progressing to Capstone.

Path to Sovereignty

Paths to Sovereignty is a required 4-credit course that all students starting the program during or after the 2026-2027 academic year must complete before graduation. The course Paths to Sovereignty examines the historical, legal, political, and cultural foundations of Tribal sovereignty in the United States. Students explore how Indigenous nations exercise self-governance, interact with federal, state, and local governments, and address contemporary policy and administrative challenges. The course emphasizes the diverse paths Native nations have taken to strengthen sovereignty, protect treaty rights, and support community well-being.

The course aligns with the Evergreen MPA's broader focus on democratic governance, public service, social justice, and Tribal governance, helping students understand sovereignty as both a legal framework and a practical approach to administration and leadership.

Capstone

The second year of Core culminates in the Capstone course in the Spring quarter. In Capstone, students reflect on their work in the program, integrate experiences by looking at their work holistically and demonstrate what they have learned in the program through a demonstration project (usually with an applied focus, working with an agency, tribe, nonprofit organization or other organization doing public work). The Capstone course is only offered in the Spring term. Students must complete a minimum of 40 credits before taking Capstone. For those students wishing to finish the program in two years, Capstone is taken in the Spring quarter immediately following successful completion of the Winter quarter of Analytical Techniques for Public

Service II. Students taking more than two years to finish the MPA program should wait to complete Capstone until the Spring quarter before they plan to graduate.

Under exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the MPA Director, Capstone may be completed as an individual learning contract during fall quarter.

Elective Courses

Elective course options for MPA students include: 2 credit MPA electives, 4 credit MPA electives, concentration courses for Public Policy and Tribal Governance (subject to space availability and instructor permission as applicable), 4 credit MES electives, graduate individual learning contracts and graduate internship contracts. Students are encouraged to take full advantage of the variety of elective options.

Students may select from the wide range of MPA electives offered each term. Every attempt is made to rotate MPA elective offerings so students have an opportunity to take a wide variety of courses and to build their own specialties. For current elective course offerings, check the [MPA Catalog](#) for the current academic year – under "Related Links" on the left navigation on any MPA webpage -- and look under the heading for the quarter that interests you.

MPA students may take a maximum of six of the 2 credit MPA elective courses – a total of twelve (12) credits – toward their MPA degree. These 2 credit courses are ideally suited to intensive, workshop-type learning experiences, which while valuable are only one component of the well-rounded, “robust” set of learning experiences essential for the MPA degree.

Students may **not** receive credit for taking the same course -- a course with the same name, an equivalent name and/or subject matter -- more than once. This issue may arise because MPA elective courses with the same name may be taught by different faculty and for varying credit amounts. For example, Education Policy has been taught as both a 2 credit and a 4 credit course in different years and with different faculty. However, only **one** of these can count towards the MPA degree.

MPA Concentrations

The MPA program offers three pathways of study. One, students may take a generalist track, offering the most elective freedom. Two, students may apply directly to the Tribal Governance option, which requires a formal admission process specific to that track. Alternatively, students may pursue a concentration in Public Policy. The latter area of emphasis is not designated at the point of admission; rather, it is shaped through the selection of elective coursework, allowing students to tailor their studies to their professional interests and goals.

Public Policy

Students in this concentration are preparing for, or advancing in, positions as policy analysts, budget analysts, or public affairs specialists. Students complete the two Public Policy concentration courses. Electives are offered in such areas as housing policy, poverty policy, and social equity policy, among others. Students with an interest in other policy areas may study them through individual learning contracts with MPA faculty. Students in other concentrations may enroll in Public Policy concentration courses as electives on a space-available basis. Public Policy concentration students are required to take Foundations of Public Policy and Applied Research Methods and Statistics (ARMS) to fulfill their concentration requirement.

1 st and 2 nd Year Core	36 credits
Foundations of Public Policy	4 credits
Applied Research Methods and Statistics (ARMS)	4 credits
Path to Sovereignty	4 credits
Electives	12 credits
Total Credits	60 credits

Tribal Governance

Students in this concentration are preparing for, or advancing in, careers as administrators who can assist tribal governments and nonprofits, as well as public agencies with which the tribes interact. Students in the Tribal Concentration go through the entire program as a cohort and finish in two years. Students take a Core course and two Concentration courses. Courses are taught in an intensive format, meeting 4 weekend sessions each quarter (2 sessions for the Core course and 2 sessions for the Concentration course). Each session is 20 hours long and meets Fridays and all day on Saturday and Sunday.

Students in this concentration complete a series of two 4-credit courses focusing on issues of critical importance to tribes. Other MPA students may enroll in these Tribal Concentration courses as electives on a space-available basis.

1 st and 2 nd Year Tribal Governance Core	36 credits
2 Concentration Courses (Tribal Organizations, Tribal Economics, Intergovernmental Relations, Tribal Policy)	8 credits
Path to Sovereignty	4 credits
Electives	12 credits
Total Credits	60 credits

Academic Advising

The MPA Director will serve as students' academic advisor throughout the program. Students are advised to come to the Director for advice on their selection of courses, career plans, internships, choosing a concentration, difficulties they may be having in the program, or other concerns. Students are also encouraged to talk with MPA program faculty or the Assistant Directors.

In addition, there are other resources on campus that may be helpful, including the [Writing Center](#), [Access Services for Students with Disabilities](#), the [Math and Science Center](#), [BLISS: BIPOC & LGBTQ+ Intersectional Support Services](#), and [Student Wellness Services](#).

Student Degree Planning Worksheets

[Degree Planning Worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

[Public Policy Concentration Planning Worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

[Tribal Governance Concentration Planning Worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

Admission: Provisions and Conditions

Admission to the Master of Public Administration program (MPA) is based upon demonstration of a sound academic and/or professional history, coupled with community involvement and the Admission Committee's belief in the candidate's potential for academic success. Candidates may be admitted provisionally or conditionally if they have not met all of the admission requirements. Students are accountable for satisfying those requirements, as specified in their letter of admission and within the specified time limits.

Provisional Admission

Students are admitted provisionally if they have not been awarded an undergraduate degree before admission. Before beginning graduate coursework at Evergreen, students must provide evidence that the degree was awarded from the degree-granting institution. **At a minimum, the Graduate Admissions Office must receive written confirmation of the degree from an official at the awarding institution by September 10 before the student may begin MPA coursework in the Fall.** Official transcripts, due no later than November 1st (September 10th for financial aid funds to be released for Fall Quarter), should be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office.

Conditional Admission

Students who are admitted without demonstrating completion of full-time work, for a year or more, with significant responsibility in public or nonprofit administration or in a public policy area, will be required to complete an internship **before graduating from the program**. This internship is minimally one (1) quarter for two (2) credit hours and involves part-time work (10 hours per week) with an agency or organization in the public or non-profit sector for one quarter. Read the Internship section of this handbook for more information.

Financial Aid

For the most up to date information visit the MPA [Cost and Aid](#) page and the MPA Blog for [Scholarships and Internships](#).

Satisfactory Progress

Students must maintain satisfactory progress toward the degree to continue to receive financial aid. To maintain satisfactory progress for financial aid purposes, MPA students must take eight credits to be considered full-time. Seven credits or below is considered part-time. Satisfactory progress will be reviewed at the end of each summer. Should a student not maintain satisfactory progress as defined above, their future financial aid eligibility will be suspended.

Financial aid is administered through the Financial Aid Office rather than the MPA program. Assistant Directors can provide guidance and support in connecting students with the appropriate resources.

MPA Sponsored Aid

MPA Sponsored Aid may include tuition assistance, scholarships, grants, fellowships, stipends, or other program-funded awards. Eligibility is determined by the MPA program and may consider factors such as enrollment status, academic performance, professional experience, commitment to public service, financial need, and available funding. Most sponsored aid requires the submission of The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), even if the student does not intend to use federal student aid.

Awards are made on a competitive basis and are subject to annual funding availability. Students receiving MPA Sponsored Aid must maintain good academic standing, comply with all program requirements, and meet any conditions outlined in their award agreement. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the modification or termination of the award.

MPA sponsored aid is available to students accepted during the first application deadline and continuing students.

Credit Policies

Full time MPA students need to take 8 or more graduate credits per quarter. Students may register for no more than 12 graduate credits per quarter. Exceptions to this limit must be approved by the MPA Director.

Core Credit Policy

Under exceptional circumstances, a student may fail to complete one quarter of first year Core: by being on a leave of absence, withdrawing before completion, receiving an incomplete or not receiving credit (NCR). Students must complete first year Core before entering second year Core. To complete the “missed” quarter the student must retake the missing quarter in any cohort. This may be done concurrently by completing the missed quarter in a different cohort. Only under exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the MPA Director, may a Core course be completed as an Individual Learning Contract. These circumstances include but are not limited to personal hardship, illness, and death in the family.

No partial credit will be given for Core courses.

An incomplete in a Core course may be granted by the course's Faculty team only under exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the MPA Director. The incomplete must be accompanied by a detailed plan/contract for the student to complete Core in order to continue with the Core sequence. Failure to complete the plan/contract within one (1) academic quarter will result in a no credit (NCR) and academic probation.

Depending on how much work the student must complete, an incomplete in any quarter of Core may delay the completion of the Core sequence and therefore delay the completion of the MPA degree.

Incompletes

An incomplete is given when students have done most of the required work for a course and need more time to complete it. The term of an incomplete is defined by the faculty: the maximum term for an incomplete in a non-Core course is one year. **Incompletes not removed by the end of the defined term will be reported to the Registration Office as "No Credit" (NCR).**

The circumstances under which MPA course faculty may give an incomplete varies depending on the type of course being taught, as follows:

- For Core courses, see the Core Credit Policy above.
- For concentration courses, incompletes are given at the discretion of the faculty or faculty team as applicable.

- For four (4) and two (2) credit MPA elective courses, incompletes are given at the discretion of the faculty or faculty team as applicable.

Partial Credit

Faculty may offer partial credit for elective courses at their discretion. No partial credit will be given for Core courses.

No Credit (NCR)

No credit (NCR) may be given when a student has not met the expectations of the course. An NCR means that the student will receive no (zero) credit for the course. An NCR is given at the discretion of the faculty or faculty team as applicable.

Evaluations

Faculty Evaluation of Student Work

At Evergreen, a student's learning and progress are assessed through narrative evaluations rather than grades. Typically, at the end of a course, students discuss their academic progress one-on-one with faculty and receive written evaluations of their work. The final narrative evaluation for a course, independent learning contract, or internship becomes part of a student's transcript.

Student Evaluation of Faculty Work

At the end of a course, students evaluate their faculty's work, describing what the faculty has done well and offering constructive criticism. Evergreen encourages direct communication and feedback whenever possible. Unlike most higher education institutions, student narrative evaluations of faculty are not anonymous. However, students can select an option to have these evaluations hidden from faculty view until after the faculty evaluation of student work has been posted.

Student Self-Evaluations

Students prepare self-evaluations in which they discuss their accomplishments, learning environment, new understanding, and goals for the future. All students must write a self-evaluation for each program, course, or contract and share with faculty on the my.evergreen portal by selecting the "Turn In" button when they have completed it. Students may continue editing their self-evaluation after they have shared it with faculty. Students may submit their self-evaluation to the transcript by selecting the "Submit to Transcript" button, but they are not required to do so. Students may not modify their self-evaluation once it has been submitted to the transcript. Students are encouraged to consult with their faculty about whether and when to submit their self-evaluation to the transcript.

Students can access and write self-evaluations and evaluations of course faculty through their my.evergreen account. They may also view the faculty evaluation of their work once the faculty has shared it. Students can access all evaluation forms through my.evergreen and save draft copies of evaluations. Login to My.Evergreen.edu and click on “Evaluations” on the left-hand side. Click on the type of evaluation then click on the applicable course title.

For more information about evaluations—definitions, forms, examples, processes, and policies—visit the [Evaluations webpage](#) at Evergreen. Another web resource for writing evaluations is the college’s [Writing Center](#) page, which provides guidelines for writing evaluations, as well as assistance through workshops and one-on-one consulting.

[Student Self Evaluation](#) - guidelines in writing and evaluation resource

[Student Evaluations of Faculty](#) guidelines in writing and evaluation resource

Transfer Credit

The MPA program may accept up to 12 graduate credit hours earned at accredited institutions as follows:

- From other accredited institutions: For courses to be considered for transfer, credit must have been earned within the past 10 years with a grade of “B” or better. Credit is accepted as elective credit only.
 - Students wishing to transfer credits earned for course work completed prior to their MPA enrollment should notify the MPA Director before the first quarter of graduate studies at Evergreen. Students must submit, to the MPA Director, paper or electronic copies of transcripts and syllabi from courses for which transfer credit is requested. Transfer credit will be granted based on a number of factors, including the correspondence between courses completed elsewhere and MPA coursework offered at Evergreen.
- Students wishing to transfer credit earned elsewhere while enrolled in the MPA program should consult with the MPA Director before enrolling in such courses. The MPA Director awards transfer credit, following review of appropriate materials, including transcripts and course syllabi.
- From Evergreen, prior to admission: up to 12 graduate elective credits may be earned prior to beginning graduate coursework as an admitted MPA student.
- This applies to non-admitted “graduate special student” and students enrolled in specific PACE certificates

Official transcripts must be submitted to the Admissions Office before any transfer credit can be awarded.

Credit will not be granted for life and/or work experience, nor for graduate credit earned through extension, correspondence work, or continuing education.

PACE Undergraduate Certificate Credits

Undergraduate or special students who successfully complete one of the approved PACE undergraduate certificates listed below may receive graduate elective transfer credit equal to one-half of the undergraduate credits earned in the certificate program, up to a maximum of 12 graduate elective transfer credits. Credits are awarded only after admission to MPA program.

To have certificate coursework applied toward a graduate degree, students must submit a formal request through the MPA transfer credit process and provide all required documentation. Transfer credit is not awarded automatically and is subject to all applicable graduate academic policies and approval requirements.

Approved certificates and transfer credit equivalencies are as follows:

- Grant Writing and Grant Management Certificate
 - 12 undergraduate credits completed
 - Eligible for up to 6 graduate transfer credits
- Health Administration: Policy and Organization Certificate
 - 12 undergraduate credits completed
 - Eligible for up to 6 graduate transfer credits
- Nonprofit Administration Certificate
 - 20 undergraduate credits completed
 - Eligible for up to 10 graduate transfer credits

Maximum Time Limit and Maximum Credit Limit for Degree Completion

The MPA degree requires completion of 60 graduate credits within a maximum of 5 years, which includes quarters in which the student had taken an approved leave of absence. Students who expect to need more than 5 years to complete the program must request an extension in writing from the MPA Director. Note that review of requests to extend the length of time allowed for completion of the degree will take the length of officially approved leaves of absence into consideration.

The maximum number of credits that MPA students may attempt in pursuit of the degree is 76 graduate credits. This total includes all credits that were attempted, including those for which credit was not received. This ceiling allows up to 16 additional attempted credits past the 60, or

two quarters of full-time registration (8 credits per quarter). The ceiling is approximately 125% of the number of credits (60) needed to award the MPA, which mirrors the undergraduate attempted credit maximum policy and ensures that Evergreen will be in compliance with federal student loan rules. Without the ceiling, Evergreen is vulnerable to negative audit findings and fines.

Under very exceptional circumstances, students may petition the MPA Director for permission to exceed the maximum of 76 attempted credits. To maintain financial aid eligibility above the 76 attempted credit maximum, students need to appeal to the Financial Aid Office.

Registration

When registration opens for a particular quarter (week 10 of the prior quarter, except in the case of summer and fall quarters, which is week 8 of spring quarter) you may register for courses at my.evergreen.edu. Web registration ends the Friday before the quarter starts and paper registration ends on the fifth day of class each quarter. Late fees apply after that time. Students are encouraged to register as soon as possible after their Registration Time Ticket in my.evergreen.edu indicates. Electives often fill quickly – if this happens, you will be placed on a waitlist. Some faculty may be willing to accept additional students from the waitlist, but it is advised that you contact them ahead of time about this possibility.

MPA students may register for no more than 12 **course or ILC** credits per quarter. With written approval from the Director, students may register for up to 2 additional **course or ILC** or 4 additional **internship** credits per quarter beyond 12 credits. To request approval for registration above 12 credits, students must email the Director the specific courses and internship for which they intend to register no later than the last day of class of the previous quarter.

International Students

In addition to the policies in this handbook, international students on an F-1 student visa must take at least eight credits per quarter and finish in two years in order to maintain their eligibility to be in the country. The only exception is during their final quarter, where they only need to take the number of credits required to graduate. International students should meet with the [International Student Services](#) office on a regular basis.

Graduation

Students must submit an application for graduation along with a required fee to the Office of [Registration and Records](#) and the Cashier's Office to finalize the degree. Students are eligible and are encouraged to participate in the June commencement exercises if they complete degree requirements by the end of the calendar year.

Students are regularly informed of the application procedures and deadlines by Registration and Records. For graduation in a quarter prior to the June ceremony, the application is due before evaluation week of that quarter. The date on the diploma will reflect the final month of the last quarter in which the student was formally enrolled. If you change your graduation date after applying to graduate, please inform Registration and Records as soon as possible to avoid incurring a fee. You will need a minimum of 50 credit hours to be eligible to walk at graduation.

Auditing a Class

An auditor is a class visitor permitted on a space-available basis to attend class without earning credit. Attendance in class beyond three visitations requires official approval from the instructor, enrollment through the office of Registration and Records, and payment of associated tuition and fees. Auditors are generally not allowed in offerings that use laboratory or studio facilities and where any participation requires significant attention from the instructor (e.g., in teaching group process skills). Class participation requirements are set by the instructor.

An auditor may enroll for no more than eight (8) audit hours per quarter. An auditor must receive instructor approval and is only able to enroll on a space available basis as determined by Registration and Records staff at the time of enrollment. No academic credit will be awarded for auditing classes. No transcript record is created for audited programs or courses.

Enrollment as an auditor does not entitle the student to a student ID card or validation sticker. An auditor will be charged 50% of the published resident tuition rate. Any class fees required for students may apply. Charges are refundable until the end of the first week of the quarter, following the college's 100% refund policy.

Contracts (Individual Study)

Contracts (also called "individual study") are a means by which students can meet individual needs not otherwise addressed within the regular curriculum. There are two graduate contract options: graduate individual learning contracts and graduate internship contracts. Some students are required to perform a credit generating internship before they can graduate, while others may choose to perform an internship contract or an individual learning contract to pursue experience and/or knowledge not available through the normal course work.

The maximum credit amount that may be awarded for a MPA graduate contract is 4 credit hours per quarter (except for a Capstone contract). Overall, MPA students may apply a maximum of 12 credit hours of graduate contracts (combination of internships and individual learning contracts) toward their degree.

Individual Learning Contract

When a student's academic program design cannot be satisfactorily completed through the available elective courses and internships, the student may arrange a Graduate Individual Learning Contract with a faculty member. This is a negotiated agreement between the student and faculty for the student to pursue individualized study. In most cases, due to limitations of faculty time, the burden of the academic design and undertaking is on the student, with the faculty primarily assisting as a guide and mentor. It is the faculty's responsibility to ensure that sufficient work is assigned for the number of credit hours desired. Students who believe they will need and benefit from a Graduate Individual Learning Contract should consult their faculty and the MPA Director for advice on the appropriateness of such an undertaking and for suggested faculty sponsors. **MPA students will be required to submit Individual Learning Contracts (ILC) and Internship (INT) contracts with all approvals to the Director by Friday of Week One of the contract quarter.**

The [individual learning contract](#) process is a web driven process. The final contract is approved by the student and the faculty sponsor and must be approved by the MPA Director before the student registers.

It is important that students have an opportunity to become oriented to the MPA program before undertaking an individual learning contract. **Students must complete one (1) quarter of MPA first year core coursework** before registering for an individual learning contract, so that typically students must wait until the Winter quarter of their first year to undertake a graduate individual learning contract.

A student registering for a contract and internship in the same quarter with the same instructor must merge the two activities into one graduate internship contract. The Registration Office will not allow one faculty member to sponsor more than one contract per quarter with the same student.

Internships

During the admissions process the MPA Admissions Committee reviews each applicant's professional experience. If the Admissions Committee determines that an applicant has not completed at least a year's worth of full-time work with significant responsibility in public or nonprofit administration or in a public policy area, the applicant will be required to complete an internship before graduating from the program. This internship is a minimum of two (2) credits for one academic quarter, equal to 10 hours of work per week with an agency or organization in the public or non-profit sector. **When an internship is required the applicant is notified in the letter of admission.**

An internship is a learning experience designed to aid students in achieving specific academic and professional objectives. Although some MPA students are required to complete an internship, all students are strongly encouraged to include an internship in their educational plan, especially if they do not have prior professional-level experience in the public administration area of interest to them

It is important that students have an opportunity to become amply oriented to the MPA program before undertaking a credit-generating internship. Students must complete one (1) quarter of MPA first year core coursework before registering for a credit-generating internship, so that typically students must wait until the Winter quarter of their first year to undertake a graduate internship contract.

Internship credit will count toward the MPA degree as part of a student's elective credits. Two internship options are available to MPA students:

- A credit-generating internship is one in which the student, faculty sponsor, and agency/organization supervisor formally agree upon a student's academic objectives for the quarter and develop a plan for achieving those objectives in a workplace setting. It must include new academic learning and not be developed only to obtain work experience or entry-level employment. Occasionally, a student may be allowed to undertake a credit-generating internship with the agency at which s/he is employed. Evergreen has strict policies for these internships: a student who wishes to do an employment-related internship must work with the MPA Director early in the planning process to ensure that the credit being sought is for a project that is not a part of his/her regular work.
- A non-credit generating internship does not include formal academic components or earn academic credit. Many organizations advertise entry-level internships throughout the year. While it is important to discuss such internship opportunities with an advisor, taking an internship that does not include academic credit is ultimately an arrangement between the student and the internship agency or organization and does not require the formal procedures or forms described below. **However, the student needs to inform the MPA Director if they plan on using a non-credit generating internship to fulfil the conditional admission internship requirement.**

All credit-generating internships require a Graduate Internship Learning Contract. The [internship contract process](#) is a web driven process. The contract is a formal document signed by all parties: student, faculty sponsor, and field supervisor, as well as the MPA Director, before the student registers.

Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress

All graduate students are expected to perform at a high academic level and to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom learning community.

The MPA program regularly reviews each student's academic progress to help support their success. Students who are not making satisfactory academic progress will be notified and provided with appropriate guidance by the faculty member. Satisfactory academic progress means successfully earning credit for all courses attempted during each quarter.

Procedure: Evaluation by faculty of student achievement formally occurs at the conclusion of individual learning contracts, internships, and courses. Any student in danger of receiving less than full credit will be notified in writing by faculty prior to evaluation week of the quarter. A student making unsatisfactory academic progress may receive Academic Probation and may be issued a Required Leave of Absence.

Academic Probation

Students will be placed on academic probation for:

- receiving a "No Credit" (NCR) in any Core course;
- receiving 2 or more "No Credit" (NCR) in elective credits taken throughout the academic year.

The student must earn credit for all academic work in the next quarter in which they are enrolled in order to return to good standing. In the event that a student does not meet this requirement, s/he may be required to take a leave of absence or be dismissed from the program, at the discretion of the MPA Director.

Academic probation requires an advising session and a contract with the MPA Director that describes how the student will successfully complete remaining coursework for the MPA degree. The contract terms must be fulfilled prior to graduation. Note that a leave of absence may be required for students on probation.

Leaves of Absence

Unexpected circumstances sometimes arise and a student needs to take a leave of absence from the MPA program. Students may request a leave of absence for up to one year for the Olympia cohort and up to two years for the Tacoma and Tribal Governance cohorts. Leaves of absence must be requested in writing to the MPA Director and are subject to their approval. Under exceptional circumstances, a leave may be extended beyond the allotted time, by approval of the MPA Director.

If you apply for a leave of absence, you have up to one year to return to the program without having to reapply for admission. Within that 1-2 year period, you can simply go on-line, log in and register as soon as your time ticket comes up for the next enrollment period.

Required Leaves of Absence

Students may be required to take a leave of absence from the MPA program for up to one year in case of academic or behavioral issues.

A student required to take a leave of absence will be informed in writing by the MPA Director (for an academic issue) or the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (for a behavioral or student conduct issue). A student placed on a required leave of absence has 20 calendar days from date of letter to appeal to one of the following campus entities in writing:

- For behavioral matters, the student should follow the steps outlined in the [Student Rights & Responsibilities Process Flowchart](#). Contact: Conduct Officer.
- For academic matters, the student may appeal to Academic Deans.
- For satisfactory academic progress issues and if financial aid is impacted, the student may appeal to the Academic Deans and/or the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Petition Review Committee. Contact: Associate Director of Financial Aid.

A student on a required leave of absence may return to the MPA program as outlined in their required leave of absence letter. A student returning from a Required Leave of Absence will re-enter on Academic Probation and will be expected to make satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree.

Petition for Release: Students may petition for release (in extreme situations, must provide documentation) regarding the resolution of a satisfactory academic progress problem. This petition goes to the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Petition Review Committee. Students may receive a tuition refund and/or the course may be taken off their transcript.

Dismissal from the MPA Program

All graduate students are expected to perform at a high academic level and to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom learning community. If these expectations are not met, students are subject to dismissal from the MPA program as follows:

Students will be dismissed from the program for receiving a "No Credit" (NCR) or incomplete for any two quarters of Core course work. The courses for which the NCRs were received may be sequential or non-sequential. This includes the repetition of any Core course. Students will also be dismissed from the program for failing to register for credit following the end of a leave of absence.

- In collaboration with faculty required leave of absence or academic probation may occur first.
- Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, **up to and including dismissal from the MPA program.**
- Students may be dismissed from the program under other serious circumstances, such as plagiarism, violations of the Student Contract, or the Student Conduct Code.

Procedure: MPA Director issues a letter to the student via their Evergreen e-mail account stating they are dismissed from the MPA program and outlining the basis for that decision. A student then has 20 calendar days from date of dismissal letter to appeal to one of the following campus entities in writing:

- If a student is dismissed for behavioral matters, the student may appeal to the Student Conduct Appeals Board. Contact: Conduct Officer.
- If a student is dismissed for academic matters, the student may appeal to Academic Deans.
- If a student is dismissed for satisfactory academic progress issues and financial aid is impacted, the student may appeal to the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Petition Review Committee. Contact: Associate Director of Financial Aid.
- A student who is dismissed from the MPA program will not be allowed to register for any MPA course at the college during any subsequent quarter.

Withdrawing from the MPA Program

Students who wish to withdraw from the MPA program should inform the MPA Director in writing. Under extraordinary circumstances following withdrawal, students may be reinstated, subject to the approval of the MPA Director. If reinstatement is approved, the student must follow the procedure described under the “Leave of Absence” section for “Reactivation of Active Student Status following a Leave of Absence”. Students are responsible for withdrawing from the college through the [Records and Registration office](#).

Academic Appeals

All appeals of evaluation wording and credit are governed by the college’s policy on Amending Student Records, which in turn is governed by the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). A copy of the policy can be obtained from the academic deans. Specifically, review by an academic dean is restricted to items of fact, and a student does not have a right to a hearing with an academic dean regarding a disagreement with the faculty member’s judgment about the quality of work or award of credit.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is a necessity in a learning community. It makes coherent discourse possible, and is a necessary condition for all sharing, dialogue and evaluation. Academic dishonesty is a violation of the Evergreen Campus Student Code and the Washington State Student Conduct Code (WAC 174), and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Plagiarism defined as appropriating or incorporating any other person's published or unpublished work in one's own work without full, clear and correct acknowledgment;

- Copying from another person's academic work without proper acknowledgment;
- Using assistance or materials that are expressly forbidden to complete an academic product or assignment;
- The unauthorized collaboration with any other person during the completion of independent academic work;
- Knowingly falsifying or assisting in falsifying or assisting in falsifying in whole, or in part, the contents of one's academic work;
- Permitting any other person to substitute oneself to complete academic work; or
- Engaging in any academic behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course covenant, syllabus, or individual or class discussion. This includes faculty AI policy, which may vary from faculty to faculty.

A proven case of academic dishonesty by a graduate student will result in the loss of credit and possible dismissal from the graduate program.

Procedure: If a first time incident of plagiarism is minor, it may be approached as a teachable moment (Ex. lack of citation for quotes or paraphrasing) by the course faculty. However, if the first or subsequent incident of plagiarism is major or egregious (Ex. copying another student's work or copying any work not originated by the student), the student may be referred to the campus Conduct Officer. Faculty will notify the student if this occurs. Conduct Officer will do an investigation into the evidence of plagiarism and also follow up with the student and faculty. Upon the outcome of the investigation, faculty will determine if there is a loss of credit for the course. If there is a loss of credit, faculty will inform the MPA Director and subsequently student dismissal from the MPA program may occur.

Conflict Resolution and Grievance Procedures

The following procedures are to be used by MPA students, faculty, and staff in accordance with [Evergreen's Social Contract](#) and [Student Conduct code](#) when disagreements arise outside of disputes about the evaluation of work:

The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (the Code) is a document that outlines student behaviors that are not allowed. The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities recognizes two types of prohibited conduct: conduct related to community, and conduct related to persons.

Conduct related to community covers behaviors such as academic dishonesty (such as plagiarism or falsifying data), disorderly conduct and more. **Conduct related to persons** addresses behaviors such as harassment, stalking or cyber-bullying, sexual violence and more.

[Evergreen's Code](#) is set forth in Washington Administrative Codes governed by the Washington State Legislature.

Enforcing the Code

The Code describes the processes that the college uses to hold students accountable for behaviors that violate Evergreen's standards of student conduct. It also outlines the rights of all students moving through these processes – including the rights of due process and representation.

Anyone who is aware of a Code violation can make a report. College officials will conduct a review of the complaint and determine an appropriate remedy if needed. Download the Student Rights and Responsibilities Process Flowchart to learn more about the college's process in response to Code violations. See the Rights and Responsibilities Roles document (PDF) to learn more about the parties involved. This information is available on the [Students Rights and Responsibilities](#) website.

Downloadable Forms

[Student Rights & Responsibilities Process Flowchart \(PDF\)](#)

[Student Rights & Responsibilities Roles \(PDF\)](#)

Reporting Code Violations

If you witness or become aware of Code violations, start a report. Include as much detail as you can about what happened, who was involved, where and when the incident occurred – and anything else you think would be helpful to know. A conduct official will respond to you within three business days to advise you of next steps.

Questions? Email studentconduct@evergreen.edu or call 360-867-6296.

[Report a Violation of the Conduct Code](#)

Safety

Direct communication would not be wise if it would compromise personal safety. Students who believe that their personal safety or the safety of the community is at risk should contact the [Police Services](#) Office (Emergency: 360-867-6140; Non-Emergency: 6830). The office is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In addition to receiving the training necessary to become commissioned police officers, Evergreen's police officers receive additional training in areas such as conflict resolution, assisting survivors of sexual assault, and other topics that will better enable them to serve the college community. Police Services is located in Seminar I, ground floor.

Sexual Assault

Trained advocates are available to survivors of sexual assault. [Police Services](#), the [Campus Grievance](#) officers (360-867-5113), or the [Title IX coordinator](#) can help students get in touch with advocates.

Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Evergreen is committed to creating a discrimination-free environment and has developed policies and practices for addressing allegations of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Students who believe they may have been victims of discrimination or sexual harassment may also use State and Federal systems for pursuing their complaints.

The [Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Office](#) is available to assist students in understanding the options available and can be contacted at 360-867-6368 or in the Library Building 3102. Please see resources on this page for more information about your options to report and resolve discrimination.

[Make an Equal Opportunity Report](#)

The Title IX office also creates a process for you to report harassment or discriminatory behaviors related to sex and/or gender, and seek resolution options if you want to.

[Make a Title IX Report](#)

Support Available from Title IX

If you are going through a Title IX process, you can work with the Title IX Coordinator (titleixcoordinator@evergren.edu) to receive Supportive Measures. A Formal Complaint or a resolution process is not needed in order to receive supportive measures.

Supportive Measures are meant to allow persons access to their educational program or activity or work, minimizing harm and focusing on safety. Supportive Measures can be different for every person based on their own needs, but may include some of the following:

- Adjustments to class or work schedule
- Coordination of schedules for common and shared spaces
- No fault No Contact Orders
- Academic adjustments
- Student housing adjustments
- Safety escorts and patrols

Duty to Report

All faculty and staff are **responsible employees**. We have a duty to report any significant safety concern including notice of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, sexual harassment, or harm to self/suicide attempt to the authorities or appropriate parties.

Non-Discrimination Policy and Procedure

The MPA abides by The Evergreen State College's nondiscrimination policy and procedures. Please find these policies and procedures at this link: [Evergreen Non-Discrimination Policy and Procedures](#).

Bad Weather Class Cancellation Policy

There are three levels of decisions about campus closure/class cancellation for bad weather:

1. **Campus is closed** – The Vice President for Student Affairs determines whether or not to close the campus due to bad weather. Decisions to close campus are made twice, on a weekday: in the early morning and mid-afternoon (for night classes). Weekend decisions are made in the early morning.

If there is power, information on campus closure will be on the main webpage. You can call the switchboard (360-866-6000 option 1) and hear a recorded message.

The [Omnilert](#) emergency communication system notifies Evergreen community members of campus closure, via email or text message. [Sign up](#) to receive free notifications via text message or email of delays, closures or other emergencies. **This is highly recommended.** (Text or data charges from your carrier may apply.)

Note: The Tacoma Program is not covered by Omnilert. It follows the Tacoma school district's closure schedule for snow emergencies. However, if schools start late, The Tacoma Program will still start on time.

2. **Campus is open, but MPA may decide to cancel classes** – in this case, presuming the campus has electricity and the network is up, the MPA Director will send an e-mail to all MPA students. Decisions are made mid-afternoon for night classes and early in the morning for weekend classes.
3. **Campus is open, MPA holds classes but individual faculty members decide to cancel class** – faculty members will get in touch with students by emailing their class.

When the weather is bad, we urge students to evaluate driving conditions carefully, whether or not classes are canceled. If conditions are not safe, students should inform their faculty of their inability to attend class.

Guest in the Classroom

Guests are welcome to visit our learning community during class time and seminar meetings with approval from course faculty in advance of each requested visit. It is the host student's responsibility to contact the faculty with details about the requested guest visit and await approval. Prospective students may visit one class meeting of first year Core without advance faculty approval, but must notify faculty that they are present prior to the beginning of class. All guests must abide by all social contract, conduct code, and nondiscrimination policy guidelines as aforementioned in this handbook. Per faculty discretion, guests may be asked to leave and not permitted to return to class if these guidelines are violated in any way including behavior that disrupts the learning community. All guests are expected to minimize their participation in class and seminar discussions.

Human Subject Review

The Human Subjects Review policy at Evergreen took effect in January, 1979 to protect the rights of humans who are participants in research activities. If you are conducting a study using information from people or if you are recording them in some way for that study, you must complete this application with the collaboration of your faculty sponsor.

All students, staff, and faculty conducting research at the College that involves the participation of humans as subjects of research must ensure that participation is voluntary, that risks are minimal, and that the distribution of your study is limited. All potential physical, psychological, emotional, and social risks should be considered, and explained to the participants in the study. This explanation must be clear, in letter form, and accompanied by a written consent form which the participants sign. Similarly, the researcher must explain to the participant the benefits, the course of study, and purpose of the intellectual inquiry. Participants must not be asked to expose themselves to risk unless the benefits to the participants or society are commensurate. Please note that in most cases, keeping the participants' names confidential significantly minimizes risks.

Refer to Evergreen's [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\) Human Subjects](#) website for an application.