

Troy University
Master of Public Administration Program
L. PA 6694 Internship
(Approved April 2005; Updated April 2006, September 2009)

Frequently Asked Questions for Students

- Q1. Why is an internship required?
A1. Internships greatly improve your employment prospects by giving you hands-on practical experience—not to mention valuable professional contacts and networks. Interns often end up working at the agency they intern with. Moreover, an internship is a critical component to your MPA education because it will help you see how the theories you have learned in your courses work in practice.
- Q2. Do I need to take PA 6694, the internship class?
A2. Yes, if you do not have one year of experience in a paraprofessional, professional, technical, or supervisory position that involves relevant service to the profession and/or public service. Students will enroll in the course either in the term the 300-hour internship requirement hours have been met or at the conclusion of the internship experience.
- Q3. Will it take me longer to get out of the program?
A3. Yes. The internship is an additional required course above and beyond the twelve required courses. The internship will only add one course (3 semester hours) to your MPA program.
- Q4. I have a year's worth of professional experience, but I need to make a big career change. Can I take the internship anyway?
A4. Yes. It will count as an elective course and cannot be used to satisfy a core course or concentration course requirement. In other words, you will receive credit for the course and the invaluable experience of the internship, but it will not count towards the degree requirements.
- Q5. What are the internship requirements?
A5. The internship requires 300 hours of work with the sponsoring organization, as well as completion of the PA 6694 course. Your course instructor may have other requirements, such as a term paper or presentation.
- Q6. How do I waive out of the Internship?
A6. You can waive out of the internship if you have one-year experience in a paraprofessional, professional, technical, or supervisory position that involves relevant service to the MPA profession and/or public service. If you are gaining your work experience during your tenure in the program, an internship waiver may be submitted up until two terms prior to graduation. Please fill out the

internship waiver form and return it to your MPA faculty advisor.

Q7. How do I find an internship?

A7. There are several routes of finding an internship. One is to identify a promising agency you would like to work for, doing an informational interview to see if they have a need for an intern, and then asking for the internship. Many agencies welcome unpaid interns. If you need more tips and pointers, you can also contact the career center at the Troy campus. Your faculty advisor and peers may also have leads on internships or promising agencies. Keep in mind it may take you a term or two to find an appropriate internship.

Q8. Paid or unpaid?

A8. The internship can be paid or unpaid. That is up to you and the agency you do your internship with. However, it is often easier to find an unpaid internship, as agencies often lack financial resources.

Q9. When do I take it?

A9. We recommend that you begin the Internship process as soon as possible. However, for some students, it makes sense to do this at the end of the program; but keep in mind that it usually takes about a term or two to find an internship. See your advisor for more information.

Q10. Where can I take PA 6694?

A10. Consult with your faculty advisor, MPA Regional Coordinator, or MPA Director for the locations where PA6694 is offered. PA6694 is usually available at eTROY.

Q11. What do I need to do before I take the internship class?

A11. You will need two things before you register for PA 6694: 1) Develop the internship at the agency, and 2) sign a completed M.O.U. with the agency.

Q12. What if I work full-time? How do I do an internship?

A12. You can spread your internship hours out over a few terms if you need to, and then register for PA 6694 the term you anticipate completing your 300 hours. However, do not begin your internship before you have a signed M.O.U. with your advisor and the organization. Also, keep in mind that certain agencies, such as food banks and emergency centers, may have a need for evening or weekend assistance.

Q13. What if I need more information?

A13. Refer to the internship policies provided by your MPA faculty advisor.