

# Executive MPA Online Program Handbook

2024-2025



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# Professional Master's Study at the Maxwell School

Welcome to Maxwell! As a professional master's student at the [Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs](#), you are part of a community of about 200 faculty, over a third of whom teach in public administration and international affairs; and 3,000 students—all involved in research, teaching, and learning about public administration, international relations, and the social sciences in global societies.

## **Administration**

[David Van Slyke](#), Dean

[Carol Falkner](#), Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

[Shana Kushner Gadarian](#), Associate Dean for Research

[Steve Lux](#), Director of Executive Education Program

## **Executive MPA Online Program**

[Nell S. Bartkowiak](#), Director, EMPA Online Program

## **Other Important Documents**

[Syracuse University Graduate Course Catalog](#)

[Syracuse University Academic Rules and Regulations](#)

[Syracuse University Student Conduct System Handbook](#)

[Bursar Cost and Fees Bulletin](#)



# Communications

## Email & NetID

Syracuse University has established [email](#) as a primary vehicle for official communication with students. The University expects that students will receive and read email in a timely manner. Maxwell will not be held responsible for messages missed due to students not checking their SU email account.

TIP: Set up your @syr.edu e-mail account to forward to your personal account so as not to miss any important university information.

Each graduate student at Maxwell is assigned a [NetID](#) from [Information Technology Services](#) (ITS) at the time they are admitted. The NetID is used as a login as well as an email address. It will be listed in the University's online directory. Please read the [official email policy](#) and review eligibility and expiration (you'll need to log in using your NetID and password to access this second link). For more information, refer to your intent-to-enroll packet.

## Student Directory Information

Go to MySlice to update all of your contact information. Additional details, including FERPA policies, are outlined on the [Office of the Registrar's](#) website.

## Social Media

The Maxwell School maintains [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#) accounts and a [Facebook](#) page. These methods are meant to facilitate communication among prospective students, current students, and alumni. None are meant to replace official email notifications.

## SUID Card

Once students matriculate and register for courses, and the term has begun, they are eligible to obtain a Syracuse University Identification Card. To have your ID card produced follow the instructions outlined on the ID Card Services webpage. This will involve uploading a photo to this page in .jpg format, no more than 2MB. You will need to browse your computer for the image. The photo must meet the requirements outlined on the [ID Card Services](#) web page. There is no charge for the first issue of a card. Email [studentsupport@onlinempa.syr.edu](mailto:studentsupport@onlinempa.syr.edu) to confirm you have requested the card, and we will pick this up and mail it to you once it is ready.

## Tuition and Fees

In the Executive MPA program students are charged tuition on a per-credit-hour basis. You are required to complete 30 credits to earn your degree through the Executive MPA program. The current rate of tuition can be found in the [Tuition and Fees and Related Policies Bulletin](#) posted on the Syracuse University Bursar Website. A moderate tuition increase can be expected for each academic year.

Additional details can be found on the Syracuse University [Office of the Bursar](#) website.

## Financial Aid

Need-based aid is managed by the University's Office of Financial Aid. The graduate financial aid counselor is Lisa Folsom, and she can be reached at <http://financialaid.syr.edu/emailus/>.

The only form of need-based aid at the graduate level is federal government loans. To be considered you must file a FAFSA form and the applicable SU applications for financial aid via the [MySlice](#) Financial Aid To-Do List.

## Forms

All paperwork relating to your academic record must go through the [Office of the Registrar](#).

All graduate students are responsible for getting faculty, advisor, and department chair signatures on these forms. After these signatures are obtained, students must return the form to the registrar's office for review and signature. Your academic advisor can assist with this process.

The following forms are available online: <https://registrar.syr.edu/students/student-forms/>

**Petition to the Faculty:** Used to request any deviation from curriculum, such as waiving or replacing requirements.

**Request for Incomplete Grade:** Used when a student is unable to complete a course's requirements in the term for which the student is registered. The student and professor come to an agreement, whereby the student will be allowed to complete the course requirements at a later date. The form is used to put this agreement in writing.

**Leave of Absence/Withdrawal:** Used when a student elects to take a leave of absence or when a student is withdrawn for not making satisfactory progress in his/her degree program. Please contact the student support team at [studentsupport@onlinempa.syr.edu](mailto:studentsupport@onlinempa.syr.edu) for information about using this form.

## Student Records and Registration

### Degree-Bearing Transcript

According to Academic Rules and Regulations, [all graduate students must submit](#) acceptable documentation of all degrees earned prior to matriculation in their graduate program at Syracuse University by the end of their first semester of study. If you do not meet this requirement, you may be prohibited from further registration. The hold will only be released when this requirement has been met. The University must have proof that you hold a bachelor's degree before your master's degree is awarded.

### ALEKS Assessment

Given the importance of mathematics in the curriculum, incoming students are strongly encouraged to review key algebraic and geometric principles through the ALEKS course. Students should demonstrate proficiency in these key concepts prior to starting PAI 897: Fundamentals of Policy Analysis.

ALEKS starts with a diagnostic test to determine which topics you need to review. You will then be taken to a personalized mini-course to work through each topic using online instruction, practice problems, and worksheets.

Students will pay \$35 to access the customized math preparatory course for six weeks. Details on the specific topics covered can be found in module 5.1 of the student success course. For more information, please contact your student support advisor at [studentsupport@onlinempa.syr.edu](mailto:studentsupport@onlinempa.syr.edu).

To register for an ALEKS account, please follow the instructions in the reference guide provided by Student Support. For technical assistance during registration, please contact ALEKS customer support at <http://support.aleks.com>.

## **The Writing Center**

The [Writing Center](#) provides services for students with various types of written assignments. There are services specifically for graduate students, such as editing of longer papers. Students should review the site in advance to better understand what services are offered and necessary time frames.

## **Registration Information**

You will register for classes using [MySlice](#). The [Registrar's](#) web site contains a registration tutorial. A fee is charged for late registration. You should follow your most recent and approved term-by-term advising sheet for your program of study.

Where choices of courses are allowed, your advisor will help you make appropriate decisions. However, even though you consult with an advisor, remember that the fulfillment of degree requirements is your responsibility as a graduate student.

Do not register for a course numbered below 500. It cannot be counted toward your master's requirements. Also, at least half of your coursework must be at the 600-level or above.

Deadlines for adding, dropping, and withdrawing from courses are absolute. The Registrar's Office will not honor adds, drops, or withdrawals received after the published deadlines. If you withdraw (this deadline is later than the drop deadline) from a course, the course will appear on your transcript with a "WD" (for withdraw) rather than a grade, and the tuition will not be refunded.

## **Attendance Policy**

The synchronous sessions are a crucial component of every class in the online program. Consequently, attendance is mandatory. You will not receive credit for a course unless you regularly participate in these sessions for the entire class period. You are expected to be in attendance every live session, on time, for the full amount of time the class is scheduled. Your participation grade will suffer if you show up late for the live sessions or leave the platform early.

Students are generally permitted one excused absence per course. Although this is ultimately at the discretion of the instructor, please refer to your course syllabus attendance policy set by each faculty member. Any absence must be arranged in advance with the section instructor, and the absence can be made up by viewing the recording of the synchronous session that was missed, pending instructor approval of the reason for the absence. A student should present his or her explanation for any





absences in writing to the instructor in advance if the reason for the absence can be foreseen, such as for a religious observance, or as soon as possible thereafter if the reason for the absence could not be foreseen. Any emergency absence (e.g., illness or personal or family emergency) that has not been arranged in advance will only be excused if a note from a physician or a comparable qualified authority who can verify the reason for the absence has been provided.

### **Request for Incomplete Grade**

Incomplete grades can be granted only when exceptional circumstances prevent a student from completing a course within the usual time limits. To be considered for an incomplete grade, you must complete the Request for Incomplete Grade form. The form represents a contract between the student and the professor and specifies the reason for granting an incomplete and the conditions and time limit for removing it. All requests for an incomplete must be submitted prior to the completion of the semester. An incomplete is calculated immediately as an F in the GPA.

You must keep in mind that the granting of an incomplete is a special favor awarded by a professor, and evaluating work submitted to satisfy an incomplete often conflicts with the professor's obligations to his or her subsequent students, which, of course, must take precedence. Thus, you should not expect work submitted in completion of an incomplete to be graded with the same promptness as work submitted on time in regularly scheduled classes.

## **Transfer Credit**

Decisions to assess and accept transfer credit are made at the sole discretion of the school and department and are, among other considerations, assessed based on the relevance to the degree program.

Specific credit earned at another accredited graduate school must carry at least a grade of B, must have been taken within seven years, must not have been used toward an undergraduate degree or its equivalent, must form an integral part of the degree program, and must be evaluated and approved by the academic department and the school. Details can be found in Academic Rules and Regulations under “Credit.” You must fill out a petition form and submit a syllabus and an official transcript. Petitions for transfer credit should be completed during your first semester of study.

## **Good Academic Standing**

The school has set a minimum grade point average for students to continue graduate work of 2.8 out of 4.0 in the first 30 credits of graduate study. If you do not achieve this average, the school may cancel your matriculated status.

Furthermore, to be awarded a master’s degree, *you must have a 3.0 average overall* in your official program of study and at least a 2.8 in all graduate courses taken at Syracuse University. You will be notified and put on “warning” at the end of each term if the cumulative GPA has fallen below a 3.0.

Students may retake courses that they fail, with permission from the director and associate dean. The policy is outlined in [Academic Rules and Regulations, Retaking Courses](#).

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

Please note that the Office of Financial Aid also requires graduate students to maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) in order to be eligible for federal/private financial aid. The standards to maintain SAP go beyond those defined by the department for good academic standing. Specifically, in addition to maintaining a minimum 2.8 cumulative GPA, graduate students must receive a passing grade in 75% of total credits taken, including attempted credits (e.g. earned, repeated, withdrawn, failing or those credits in which an incomplete grade was requested). Graduate students will be reviewed on a per term basis and will be notified at the conclusion of each term if he/she fails to meet SAP requirements. If a student fails to achieve

satisfactory academic progress at that time, the student will be placed on Warning status and may receive financial aid for one term only to provide an opportunity to regain eligibility. Should the student continue to fail satisfactory academic progress after this one term on Warning status, SU may not award and disburse future federal/private loan funds to the student. More details on the SAP policy can be found [online](#).

### **Leave of Absence and Withdrawal**

If it is necessary for you to withdraw or take a leave of absence from the University, you should file an official Leave of Absence form. Even if you do plan to return, it is important that the proper paperwork be processed so that you will remain in good standing with the school.

Master's students who do not enroll in classes for a particular term must complete a leave of absence form and then petition the faculty to be reinstated to resume their studies. Please contact the student support team at [studentsupport@onlinempa.syr.edu](mailto:studentsupport@onlinempa.syr.edu) for information on next steps if you need to take a leave of absence.

Master's students not making satisfactory progress toward their degrees may be withdrawn from the program on the decision of the program director and the associate dean. Readmission is dependent upon space availability in the program. You may also be withdrawn on the basis of academic or disciplinary reasons. Readmission for these students is subject not only to space availability, but also to satisfaction of additional requirements specified in the terms of the withdrawal.

**Tip:** If you fail to register for classes or request a leave of absence, your student status will be discontinued for non-attendance and you will have to petition to be reinstated in order to enroll in classes.

A student who is applying to be reinstated to a degree program in which requirements have changed since the time of withdrawal or leave of absence may be required to satisfy the requirements of the program of study as currently defined. The program director and the associate dean will determine which set of requirements apply. No student may be reinstated until all prior Syracuse University financial obligations and disciplinary actions have been satisfied. If the leave or withdrawal from the University was for medical reasons, you must be approved for reinstatement by the office that originally authorized your departure.

Reinstated students are eligible to register for the upcoming semester during the regular registration period in the prior semester or on the registration day for new students at the beginning of the semester, if their reinstatement was processed in time to secure a regular registration appointment. The full details of this policy are outlined in [Academic Rules and Regulations: Leave of Absence](#).

## Student Conduct

Students in the Executive MPA online program are expected to conduct themselves in live class sessions the same as they would in a residential classroom. In order to make the most of your educational experience and be mindful of your impact on others, please adhere to the following:

- Make sure your phone and computer are charged ahead of time, that your webcam is working, and that you are able to access the live session link.
- Arrive early to class and be prepared to start at the scheduled time.
- Be aware of your surroundings during live sessions. Keep distractions to a minimum; try to be in a quiet, well-lit area.
- Please refrain from activities that are disruptive to the live classroom environment, including—but not limited to—eating, drinking alcohol, smoking, having other people or animals on camera, and pausing your camera for long periods of time.
- Treat sessions as you would work: Put your best foot forward, both in your appearance and your attentiveness in class.
- Your professor has the right to remove you from the live session if your behavior is disruptive to the class and requests to cease the disruptive behavior are ignored.

### **Mandatory Training on Sexual and Relationship Violence Prevention**

On July 7, 2015, New York passed “Enough is Enough” legislation, which requires colleges and universities to adopt comprehensive procedures and guidelines to address sexual assault on college campuses. As a result, all incoming students are required to complete online training focused on sexual and relationship violence prevention. More details can be found online [here](#). The interactive module takes 60 minutes to complete. To access the module, follow the instructions provided in the relevant module of the orientation course. Failure to complete this mandatory training before the middle of your first term in the program will result in a registration hold, preventing you from registering for future terms. Please contact your Student Success Advisor if you have further questions.

# Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity Office at Syracuse University administers the University's academic integrity policy. The Department of Public Administration and International Affairs takes the expectations of academic integrity very seriously. Academic integrity is expected of all Syracuse University community members, and the academic integrity policy applies to all schools and colleges. Please review an overview video on this policy in module 2.3.1 of the student success course. Once you have completed the academic integrity expectations and penalties video, please follow the instructions within your Student Success Course within Digital Campus.

# Academic Probation Sequence

## Academic Warning

- Students with a cumulative GPA under 2.8 after 12 credit hours will be issued an academic warning via email.
- Students must improve their cumulative GPA to a minimum of 2.8 after 18 credits or be placed on academic probation.
- An advising session with the director is encouraged but not required.

## Academic Probation

- The student has already received an Academic Warning.
- The cumulative GPA is at or below 2.8 after 18 credits.
- Students will be advised via email that they are being placed on Academic Probation and must improve their cumulative GPA to 3.0 or better after 24 credit hours or face dismissal. Courses that are dropped after the financial drop deadline, for any reason other than a medical LOA, will be counted toward the credits by which the student needs to raise their GPA to a minimum of 3.0.
- An advising session with the director is required.

## Academic Dismissal

- The student has been on Academic Probation for 6 credits, and the cumulative GPA is below 3.0.
- The student may appeal a dismissal decision to the department chair, and then to the associate dean for academic affairs.



### **GPA Requirement for Capstone Registration**

Any student with a cumulative GPA below 3.0 will not be allowed to register for the Capstone course, PAI 996. These students will be required to retake one or more courses for which they received a C+ or below, in order to raise the cumulative GPA prior to registering for Capstone. Once students have achieved a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA, they may register for PAI 996.

### **Lack of Progress**

Note that PAI 897 and PAI 895 must be completed prior to the final term in which a student will enroll in the Capstone course, PAI 996. For full-time students, this means they must successfully complete PAI 897 and PAI 895 within their first four terms of full-time study (6 credits/term). Successful completion is defined as having earned a grade in the class.

## **Completing Your Degree**

### **Diploma Request**

In order to be awarded a graduate degree by the University, you must file a Diploma Request via [MySlice](#). You need to verify your name as it should appear on your diploma, your diploma mailing address, and the date you expect to graduate. There are four available graduation dates for master's students: in May, June, August, and December. This date is not a reflection of the graduation ceremony, but rather the date by which you will complete all degree requirements. Diplomas will be mailed approximately six weeks after the certification of the master's degree.

### **Graduation**

You are welcome and encouraged to attend the [University Commencement ceremony](#) held in May. Students completing their programs in May, June, and August are eligible to participate, as well as students who finished their programs the previous December.

Information will be sent to you if you have filed your Diploma Request by the appropriate deadline.

Tip: More details on graduation requirements and celebrations can be found in the relevant module in the orientation course.

## Degrees Awarded

You will be awarded an Executive Master of Public Administration degree from Syracuse University. Graduate diplomas display the degree title (for the program, that is “MPA”) and the major or program title (for this program, that is Executive Master of Public Administration). The diploma is signed by the Chancellor and the dean(s) of the Maxwell School. Please note, there are no academic honors or distinctions available for graduate students.

## SU Transcript

To obtain an official transcript from SU, you may submit your request through: [MySlice](#) > Student Services > Academics > Transcript Request.

Requests are processed by the [registrar](#), and official transcripts are issued free of charge. Please note that a transcript fee of \$12 plus shipping and handling will apply 60 days after your degree is posted.

