Virginia Tech School of Public and International Affairs

Center for Public Policy & Administration

Ph.D. in Public Administration and Public Affairs (PAPA) FAQs

Application Matters:
What are the program application deadlines?
Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. In order to be considered for financial assistance, the application deadline for Fall admission is May 1. The application deadline for Spring admission is November 1.

What does the application timeline look like?
All applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. Review of Fall admission applications begins on February 1. Review of Spring admission applications begins September 1. All supporting documents, including all three letters of recommendation must be submitted for the application to reviewed.

What is the minimum GPA for admission?
For admission to the Ph.D. program, applicants must have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA. Students that do not have a 3.0GPA in previous studies should enroll in the Virginia Commonwealth Campus program in order to boost their GPA and demonstrate graduate study potential.

What are the applicant testing requirements?
CPAP requires Ph.D. applicants to submit scores from a commonly accepted graduate-level standardized aptitude test, such as the GRE, GMA, MAT, etc.

What additional tests do international students need to take?
All non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. permanent residents demonstrate English proficiency to ensure they enter the university with sufficient English skills necessary to function in a graduate program. A TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test score is the most common way international applicants demonstrate English proficiency. English proficiency can also be demonstrated through a conferred bachelor's degree from an accredited university where English is the medium of instruction. If this applies to you, The Virginia Tech Graduate School will code a waiver of the English proficiency requirement into your application once they receive and review your transcript showing degree conferral and medium of instruction as English.

For information regarding TOEFL and IELTS score minimums, as well as the score submission procedure, please visit the [Graduate School's website.](#)

What are the program prerequisites?
The prerequisite for the Ph.D. program are a C+ or better in U.S. Government, Microeconomics, and Introductory Statistics courses.

Financial Assistance:

What types of financial assistance does CPAP offer?

CPAP offers a limited number of graduate assistantships on a competitive basis. Applicants should indicate their interest in financial assistance via the online application. In addition, applicants and students may also apply for assistantships outside of CPAP. A list of available assistantships across the University can be found on the VT Graduate School website. The Graduate school also has additional information about other types of assistance available to graduate students.

Program Locations:

Where are your programs located?

The Ph.D. program is located in Blacksburg, VA and Arlington, VA.

Program Format:

What are the attendance requirements?

The Ph.D. program requires in-person participation for core coursework. Electives taken outside of the program, may be offered virtually depending on the course. Some courses are available via Zoom or other tele-conference methods.

Can I participate part-time?

Yes, you can participate the PhD program as a part-time student.

Can I transfer courses from another institution/degree?

A maximum of one half of the coursework, or 30 of the 60 credit hours of coursework required for the CPAP Ph.D., may be transferred from an accredited university other than Virginia Tech upon approval by two core faculty evaluating the student's plan of study.

For graduate courses taken at Virginia Tech, students can appeal to the CPAP Chair to have additional coursework transferred.

For more information:

Who should I contact for more information?

For more information about CPAP programs in Blacksburg, please contact Kelly Crist at kcrist@vt.edu. For more information about CPAP programs in the Arlington, VA please contact Myriam Lechuga at mlechuga@vt.edu