PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION, PHD

School of Public Administration, College of Public Affairs &
Community Service

Vision Statement
The PhD in public administration program creates a supportive,
collaborative, and rigorous environment for students to develop their
intellectual identities and a comprehensive understanding of the field and
a range of research traditions. Our students and alumni make significant
contributions to theory, policy, research, and practice towards enhancing a
democratic society. We value intellectual openness, collaboration, diversity,
and excellence.

The PhD program in public administration is a research degree with a focus
on public and nonprofit administration and management in a democratic
and diverse society. It is the terminal degree for research and theory
development.

Program Contact Information
Dr. Yu-Che Chen, PhD, Graduate Program Chair (GPC)
111 College of Public Affairs & Community Service (CPACS)
402.554.2058
ychen@unomaha.edu

Program Website (https://www.unomaha.edu/
college-of-public-affairs-and-community-service/
public-administration/academics/phd.php)

Admissions
General Application Requirements and Admission Criteria (http://
catalog.unomaha.edu/graduate/admission/)

Program-Specific Requirements
Application Deadlines (Fall 2024)
• For applicants seeking a funded graduate assistantship: January 15
• For all other applicants: March 15

Other Requirements
• An earned master’s degree in public administration or related field from
an accredited institution.
• Generally, the target master’s degree level GPA is above 3.20 (on a 4.0
scale).
• English Language Proficiency: Applicants are required to have a
command of oral and written English. Those who do not hold a
baccalaureate or other advanced degree from the United States, OR a
baccalaureate or other advanced degree from a predetermined country
on the waiver list, must meet the minimum language proficiency score
requirement in order to be considered for admission.
  • Internet-based TOEFL 90, IELTS: 7, PTE: 64, Duolingo: 120
  • Applicants are expected to demonstrate the ability to communicate
orally and in writing in a manner sufficient to compete effectively at
the doctoral level.
• Statement of Purpose: A five-page statement of intent describing the
applicant’s goals in pursuing a PhD and plans after completion of the
PhD, research interests and desired area of specialization offered in
the PhD program, discussion of school faculty with whom the applicant
would like to work related to research interests, and an explanation of
academic and professional backgrounds preparing the applicant to
pursue a PhD.
• Writing Sample: An academic or professional writing sample is
required. This can be, for example, a term paper, thesis, conference
paper, evaluation report, or published work.
  • Include a separate 1-page abstract that summarizes the contents of
the writing sample. If applicable, please include an explanation of
your contribution if the work submitted is multi-authored.
• Resume: The resume or CV will be examined to assess an applicant’s
professional work experience and/or extracurricular activities while
attending school. Additionally, resumes are examined to assess an
applicant’s potential ability to understand and do research on the
context and practice of contemporary public administration.
• Letters of Recommendation: Three letters are required. At least
two recommendations must be from academics such as current or
former professors. The Office of Graduate Studies will contact each
recommender via email to obtain the letters.
• Applicants who have completed any undergraduate or graduate
coursework at international higher education institution(s), for the
purpose of having your application reviewed by the School of Public
Administration, you may submit a copy of your unofficial transcripts,
in addition to all other application materials. Should the department
wish to make a recommendation for admission, you will be required to
have a course-by-course transcript evaluation completed by WES, ECE,
SpanTran or Educational Perspectives prior to your admission being
formally reviewed and processed by the Office of Graduate Studies.
• Students are responsible for additional information found on the PhD in
Public Administration website.
• The doctoral program committee reviews student academic
preparation, specifying appropriate courses that must be taken as
prerequisites to doctoral study. Except for those who have completed an
MPA degree, new doctoral students may be required to first complete
MPA course prerequisites or reading prior to enrolling in 9000-level core
or research courses.

Degree Requirements

Required Courses Summary
92 hours of graduate credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree. This
includes 21 hours of core courses, 12 hours of research courses, six hours
of specialization courses, two 1-hour workshops on teaching and research
skills, 15 hours of dissertation coursework, and 36 hours of additional
graduate-level coursework. The 36 hours of additional graduate-level
coursework may be earned from an accredited institution toward a Master
of Public Administration degree or a master’s degree (MA or MS) in a
related academic discipline or field.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Seminar Courses</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Courses</td>
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<td>Research Courses</td>
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<td>Specialization Courses</td>
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<td>Teaching &amp; Research Skills Workshops</td>
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<td>Dissertation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional graduate-level coursework (from master’s degree)</td>
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<td>36</td>
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<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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Required Courses

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<th>Code</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Seminar Courses</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 9000</td>
<td>FOUNDATIONS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<td>PA 9200</td>
<td>THEORIES OF THE POLICY PROCESS</td>
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<td>PA 9300</td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE PROFESSION</td>
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<td>PA 9400</td>
<td>THE ENVIRONMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<td>PA 9500</td>
<td>THEORIES OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY</td>
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<td>PA 9600</td>
<td>SEMINAR IN ADVANCED MANAGEMENT THEORY</td>
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<td>PA 9700</td>
<td>PUBLIC BUDGETING AND FINANCIAL THEORY</td>
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<td><strong>Research Courses</strong></td>
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<td>PA 9800</td>
<td>ADVANCED RESEARCH DESIGN</td>
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<td>PA 9950</td>
<td>QUANTITATIVE METHODS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<td>PA 9960</td>
<td>QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS</td>
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<td>PA 9970</td>
<td>DIRECTED RESEARCH IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<td><strong>Specialization Courses</strong></td>
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<td>Take 2 elective courses related to one of the following -</td>
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<td>Public and Nonprofit: Policy, Theory, Management, Budgeting &amp;</td>
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<td>Finance, Technology &amp; Data Analytics</td>
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<td><strong>Workshops</strong></td>
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<td>PA 9930</td>
<td>PHD RESEARCH &amp; PROFESSIONAL SKILLS WORKSHOP</td>
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<td><strong>Dissertation</strong></td>
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<td>PA 9990</td>
<td>DISSERTATION</td>
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**Progress Review**

The doctoral program committee will conduct a review of student progress each year. The committee will make such recommendations as appropriate to the student’s advisor. As part of the review, students will be required to submit a summary of annual progress and plans.

**Field Examination**

Following completion of coursework, doctoral students take the field examination, which includes two questions: one comprehensive and one related to the student’s specialization. The field exam is given in open-book format over two days, eight-hours each day. The field exam testing period is in August (about one week before the fall semester starts) each year.

**Degree Candidacy**

Students who have successfully passed the required coursework in their program of study and the field examination apply for Admission to Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree. This application requires majority consent of the student’s supervisory committee, the doctoral program committee, and the dean for Graduate Studies.

After admission to degree candidacy, the student must maintain continuous enrollment until they receive the degree. The School monitors this enrollment. Students not in residence must register for a minimum of one semester credit hour of dissertation research. Failure to register during each academic semester will result in termination of the candidacy. Per Graduate College policy, if the term of candidacy is extended beyond three years (excluding summer terms), the candidate must pass another examination.

**Dissertation**

The dissertation represents an original contribution to knowledge development in the field of public administration. Following successful completion of all coursework and field exams, doctoral students apply for candidacy for the degree and then defend a dissertation proposal before their supervisory committee. Following successful defense of the proposal, students work under the guidance of their supervisory committee chair until the project is complete. Two readers from the student’s supervisory committee then review the entire document and may recommend further work or changes. After the committee chair and readers agree that the dissertation is ready for defense, the student schedules a public defense.

The time limit on granting the PhD in public administration degree is eight (8) years from the time of filing the plan of study in the Office of Graduate Studies.

**Quality of Work Standards**

Doctoral students are expected to do work of high caliber. Failure to maintain quality of work standards may result in probation or dismissal from the program. Reasons for probation or dismissal may include:

- Failure to maintain a 3.33 average for all course work
- A grade of C+ or below in one course
- Failure to maintain continuous enrollment
- Failure to pass field exams
- Failure to form a supervisory committee