



# **Master of Public Administration (MPA) Policy Handbook**

**August 2024**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>PREFACE</u></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b><u>SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION</u></b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b><u>MPA PROGRAM</u></b> .....	<b>5</b>
<u>REQUIREMENTS FOR MPA APPLICANTS</u> .....	7
<u>ADDITIONAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENT FOR EMPA APPLICANTS</u> .....	7
<u>ADDITIONAL ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS</u> .....	7
<u>APPLICATION DEADLINE</u> .....	7
<u>NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION</u> .....	7
<u>MPA CURRICULUM (ON-CAMPUS/ 100% ONLINE)</u> .....	8
<u>CORE COURSES</u> .....	8
<u>AREAS OF CONCENTRATIONS/ ELECTIVES</u> .....	8
<u>CAPSTONE PROJECT</u> .....	8
<u>INDEPENDENT STUDY</u> .....	9
<u>INTERNSHIP</u> .....	9
<u>MPA COURSE SCHEDULES/ SYLLABUSES</u> .....	10
<u>EXECUTIVE MPA CURRICULUM</u> .....	11
<u>EMPA COURSE SCHEDULES/ SYLLABUSES</u> .....	12
<u>CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS</u> .....	13
<u>DUAL DEGREES</u> .....	15
<b><u>ACADEMIC POLICIES</u></b> .....	<b>17</b>
<u>REGISTRATION</u> .....	17
<u>FIRST SEMESTER REQUIREMENT (INTRO TO PA) POLICY</u> .....	17
<u>FULL-TIME VS. PART-TIME/ CREDIT OVERLOAD</u> .....	17
<u>ADD/ DROP</u> .....	17
<u>ON-CAMPUS STUDENTS TAKING ONLINE CLASSES</u> .....	17
<u>SPECIAL PERMISSION NUMBERS (SPN)</u> .....	17
<u>DEREGISTRATION/ REINSTATEMENT</u> .....	18
<u>LATE REGISTRATIONS</u> .....	18
<u>LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND TIME LIMITS ON COMPLETION OF THE DEGREE</u> .....	18
<u>WITHDRAWAL/ DISMISSAL</u> .....	19
<u>TRANSFERRING GRADUATE CREDITS FROM AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE</u> .....	19
<u>TRANSFERRING GRADUATE CREDITS</u> .....	19
<u>CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT) POLICY</u> .....	20
<u>GRADING SYSTEM</u> .....	20
<u>INCOMPLETE GRADES</u> .....	20
<u>GRADE APPEALS</u> .....	20
<u>FAILING GRADES</u> .....	22
<u>ACADEMIC STANDING AND ANNUAL ASSESSMENT</u> .....	23
<u>FINANCIAL AID</u> .....	23
<u>TUITION REMISSION</u> .....	23
<u>ACADEMIC INTEGRITY</u> .....	23
<u>SCHOLARSHIPS</u> .....	24
<u>PI ALPHA ALPHA HONOR SOCIETY</u> .....	25
<u>GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS</u> .....	26
<b><u>STUDENT SERVICES</u></b> .....	<b>27</b>
<u>GRADUATE WRITING CENTER</u> .....	27
<u>COACHING SESSIONS</u> .....	27
<u>PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION GRADUATE ASSOCIATION (PAGA)</u> .....	27
<u>COMPUTER LABS</u> .....	27
<u>ACADEMIC ADVISING</u> .....	27
<u>HOUSING</u> .....	27
<u>PARKING</u> .....	28
<u>ID CARDS</u> .....	28
<u>COUNSELING AND HEALTH SERVICES</u> .....	28
<u>OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES</u> .....	28
<u>ADDITIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES</u> .....	28

## PREFACE

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This handbook serves as a reference for all Master of Public Administration students whether on-campus, 100% online, executive. It provides essential information on a variety of policies and procedures relevant to graduate students at Rutgers University-Newark's School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA). The content ranges from admission and matriculation to graduation.

Every student must be aware of the policies, procedures, deadlines, and regulations provided in this handbook. This handbook will be revised from time to time. Please ensure you are using the most current version, which will always be provided on the SPAA website.

If a student has a concern or question that is not covered here, they should seek advice from their academic unit. The following list will help identify appropriate contacts.

Aaron Gibbs  
Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services  
[algibbs@rutgers.edu](mailto:algibbs@rutgers.edu)  
*Policy Appeals, Advising, General Questions*

Suzanne Piotrowski  
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MPA Program Director  
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*MPA Curriculum, Approvals for Internships and Independent Studies, Exceptions to MPA Policies, Grade Appeals, Transfer Credit Requests*

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Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs  
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*Admissions, Withdrawals, and Graduation, Advising for MPA students*

## **SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION**

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The School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) at Rutgers University–Newark (RU-N) is consistently ranked as a top school for public management and leadership as well as nonprofit management and urban policy by U.S. News & World Report. It is further recognized as one of the world’s leading research institutions in public administration in the Global Ranking of Academic Subjects (GRAS) compiled by the ShanghaiRanking Consultancy. Rutgers SPAA is also accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA).

Guided by the principles of Knowledge, Competence, Diversity, Service, and Ethics – and with an emphasis on evidence-based approaches to the effective and equitable implementation of public policy – Rutgers SPAA promotes accountability, transparency, and performance in the public and nonprofit sectors.

### **History**

SPAA was founded in 2006. The school was established after providing doctoral and master’s public administration education to pre-service, in-service, and executive students for over 30 years. The program served students through the Rutgers–Newark Graduate School’s Department of Public Administration.

### **Academics**

SPAA offers a variety of innovative, world-class degree programs: Public and Nonprofit Administration (BA), Master of Public Administration (MPA), Executive MPA (EMPA), and Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration (PhD). It also offers a complement of professional and graduate certificate programs.

### **Research**

SPAA’s cutting-edge research, projects, and initiatives help serve the community, the nation, and the world by addressing pressing social issues.

### **Community Engagement**

SPAA maintains close relationships with New Jersey’s local and state government agencies and nonprofit organizations. It offers assistance and resources to community organizations while providing students with learning and career opportunities.

### **Faculty**

SPAA’s award-winning faculty generate knowledge and best practices in public and nonprofit administration. They collaborate with organizations and professional networks regionally, nationally and internationally.

### **Service to the Field**

SPAA’s diverse students, alumni, faculty, and staff inspire pride through their local, national, and international academic and professional achievements and research contributions.

## MPA PROGRAM

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The mission of the MPA program is to promote and maintain an inclusive pedagogical environment that is conducive to the advancement of public values in the pursuit of the study and practice of public affairs as they apply to public and nonprofit administration. The program supports the mission of the School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA). SPAA fulfills its commitment to public values by nurturing in students the ability to lead and manage in the fields of public affairs. The programs engender competence; respect for diversity, equity, and inclusion; as well as ethical practices in the advancement of academic knowledge while serving the public interest.

The MPA program is designed to instill a set of core public service values in our students. These values play a crucial role in shaping the curriculum, faculty hiring, and the overall student learning experience, ensuring that graduates are well-equipped to serve the public and nonprofit sectors. Our public service values include competence, diversity, service, ethics, and knowledge. These values set the context for the goals presented in our logic model (see Appendix 1) and are operationalized through teaching, mentoring, and through faculty and student interactions with practitioners.

**Competence:** Our competence value is rooted in the belief that communities and their residents deserve highly skilled professionals capable of competently addressing complex public challenges. By prioritizing competence, the program ensures that our graduates are prepared to provide the public with services based on foundational proficiency.

**Diversity:** Our diversity value recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of all individuals and the richness that diverse perspectives bring to public service. This value is reflected in the program's commitment to incorporating a wide range of racial, ethnic, gender, religious, sexual orientation, political, and national backgrounds and perspectives in the student body and faculty as well as in the curriculum.

**Service:** Our service value is rooted in the belief that public service professionals must prioritize the needs of the community and work responsively to improve the lives of the people they serve. By emphasizing service throughout the program, we instill in our students a deep commitment to the public good and prepare them to make a positive impact through their work in the public and nonprofit sectors.

**Ethics:** Our ethics value underpins the MPA program's pedagogical approach to theory and practice. This value is rooted in the belief that public service professionals have an obligation to uphold public trust and act in the best interests of the people they serve. By emphasizing ethics, the program is designed to instill in students a strong principled framework to guide their decision-making and actions and ensuring that they uphold the highest standards of integrity and accountability.

**Knowledge:** Our knowledge value is rooted in the belief that the public deserves professionals who can effectively address public challenges through evidence-based decision-making and a deep understanding of complex problems. The importance of the acquisition of knowledge is reflected in the program's commitment to empowering students to identify relevant theories, collaborate with their communities, and participate in applied research projects. By valuing knowledge, the program equips students with the intellectual tools and critical thinking skills necessary to tackle the complex challenges facing the public and nonprofit sectors.

The MPA program educates students about public service values, contexts, organizations, decisions, and performance. Faculty work with students to develop their skills for effective leadership, management, policy assessment, critical thinking, and culturally competent communication. The success of SPAA's MPA program leads to graduates seeing themselves, and being perceived by their professional peers, as competent contributors to successful organizations in ways that serve to advance and sustain public values and public affairs institutions.

## ADMISSION

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### Admission Requirements for MPA Applicants

To be considered for admission to the MPA program, applicants must:

- Hold a bachelor's degree from a recognized institution of higher education

All applications are completed online at <http://gradstudy.rutgers.edu> and require the following materials:

- Online application
- Detailed resume
- Application fee of \$70 – payable to Rutgers University
- Official transcripts showing all undergraduate and graduate work from each post-high school institution attended
- Three letters of recommendation
- Personal statement (explaining the reason for choosing Rutgers SPAA, how you plan to use the MPA to advance your career goals, and why you believe you will be successful in the program)
- TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo Scores (if applicable)

### Additional Admission Requirement for EMPA Applicants

Applicants must have 5+ years of relevant professional experience or 2+ years of relevant supervisory experience in the field of public service.

### Additional Admission Requirement for International Applicants

English language proficiency is required if your undergraduate education was completed in a non-English speaking country.

- TOEFL: The minimum IBT-internet based TOEFL is Writing 22, Speaking 23, Reading 21, Listening 17 (i.e. a TOEFL score of 83). The minimum paper-based TOEFL score is 550. The minimum computer-based TOEFL score is 213.
- IELTS: An acceptable IELTS score is bandwidth 7.
- Duolingo: The minimum Duolingo score is 115.

*For More Information on Graduate Admissions*

SPAA Student and Academic Services

[spaa.sas@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:spaa.sas@newark.rutgers.edu)

973-353-3709

### Application Deadline

The deadline for priority consideration for fall admission is July 1<sup>st</sup>; the deadline for priority consideration for spring is December 1<sup>st</sup>. After these dates, applications will continue to be considered on a rolling basis. Students are not admitted for summer and winter sessions.

### New Student Orientation

Orientation occurs approximately one week before the fall/ spring semester starts. All new students are required to attend orientation activities. After being accepted for admission, the student will be notified by SPAA to attend the appropriate orientation sessions.

## **MPA CURRICULUM (On-Campus, 100% Online)**

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The MPA curriculum at SPAA provides a solid foundation in the field's core knowledge and skills while allowing students a wide range of flexibility to shape the degree to their interests and career goals. The curriculum consists of 42 credits of coursework (14 courses).

### **Required Core Courses (7 courses / 21 credits)**

MPA students complete seven (7) required core courses (21 credits) with the option to follow either a public management track or a nonprofit management track.

- Principles of Public Administration & Democratic Governance (3)
- Human Resources Management (3)
- Ethical Challenges in Public Affairs (3)
- Economics for Public Administration (3)
- Data Analysis for Decision-Making (3)

#### **Public Management Track:**

- Managing Public Organizations (3)
- Government Budgeting (3)

#### **Nonprofit Management Track:**

- Principles of Nonprofit Leadership and Management (3)
- Nonprofit Budgeting and Financial Management (3)

### **Electives (6 courses / 18 credits)**

The MPA program allows for six (6) elective courses (18 credits) that students can use to pursue their individual interests and career goals. A variety of elective courses, including special topics courses, are available each semester from SPAA.

Students can also fashion their own specialization by choosing from elective courses on topics such as labor relations, leadership and diversity, government technology, administrative law, performance measurement and evaluation and the policy process. In addition, students can choose to take specialized courses from other units across Rutgers.

Elective courses can be applied toward one or more graduate certificates offered in Budgeting and Financial Management, Healthcare Administration, Leadership of Public Organizations, Nonprofit Management, and other areas of professional specialization.

### **Capstone Project (1 course / 3 credits)**

The capstone project provides students with an opportunity to apply their learning from coursework to real-world issues and their career ambitions. It serves as a culminating experience in the MPA program. Students develop either a research paper (thesis) on a topic of interest or a professional portfolio (often in the form of a website) showcasing their academic work, community engagement, and professional competencies from across the MPA curriculum.



## **Independent Study**

Independent study is available on a very limited basis for MPA students to perform an in-depth investigation of a specific topic or issue. Independent study occurs under the direct supervision of a SPAA full-time faculty member. Independent study requires permission from the supervising faculty member and MPA Director approval before students may register. Independent study is limited to 3 credits during the course of the MPA program. Independent study counts as an elective and cannot substitute a core course.

Requirements to receive credits for independent study:

- Students must have satisfactorily completed the MPA core courses before they are eligible for an independent study.
- Permission must be granted from a SPAA full-time faculty member to supervise the independent study.
- Prepare the MPA Independent Study Request Form with a detailed description of the proposed topic and the deliverables to be assessed (form available online: <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/academic-policies-procedures-forms>).
  - The typical minimum deliverable for Independent Study consists of a substantial research paper which includes literature review, collection of data, and analysis.
  - The supervising faculty may require additional assignments. The form must be signed by the student and the faculty supervisor followed by the MPA Director.
- Submit the signed form to the Academic Advisor no later than the first day of the semester.
- At the end of the semester, the faculty supervisor grades all submitted work and sends the final grade to the MPA Director. The MPA Director submits the final grade to the University.

## **Internship**

The MPA Program at Rutgers SPAA does not require an internship, but it encourages internships for pre-career and career-changing students. Rutgers SPAA assists MPA students in locating internship opportunities with an expanding network of partners in the Newark urban area in local, county, and state government organizations as well as among dozens of nonprofit organizations in the surrounding areas. Additionally, the school makes available internship opportunities nationally and internationally via messages sent to students through their student email account. Approval from the MPA Director is required before any internship taken for academic credit begins. Students are limited to one 3-credit internship during the MPA program. An internship can only count for an elective course and cannot replace a core course.

Internship Conditions:

- Students may not receive internship credit for normal duties performed in pre-existing employment. SPAA requires a written contract from the agency describing the intern's duties and responsibilities. These duties are expected to involve the application of knowledge and skills that students have acquired in their formal academic studies at SPAA.
- Students must identify a SPAA full-time faculty member to serve as faculty supervisor.

- An internship may be paid or unpaid, but they must involve at least a 150 hours of internship experience within one semester in order to earn three academic credits. Academic credit is awarded on a letter grade basis and will count as an elective course.

Requirements to receive credits for internship:

- Secure a SPAA full-time faculty member to supervise the internship.
- Submit a completed internship contract to the MPA Director for approval (form available online: <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/academic-policies-procedures-forms>).
- Submit an approved internship contract to Academic Advisor to register for credit.
- Complete 150 hours of work within one semester.
- Submit final evaluations (by the student and the internship supervisor).
- Submit a 10 to 20-page research paper relating the internship to the faculty supervisor at the end of the semester.

### **Course Schedules**

MPA core courses are typically offered every fall and spring semester. Some additional MPA courses may be offered in the summer and winter sessions. Elective courses may be offered once per year and, therefore, must be taken when they are offered. If there are any questions, students should consult with their academic advisor.

Course schedules can be found from University Schedule of Classes at <https://sis.rutgers.edu/soc/#home>. All MPA course listings and course descriptions can be found at <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/courses?program=1404>.

## **MPA CURRICULUM (Executive)**

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The Executive MPA (EMPA) curriculum consists of 10 courses (30 credits) of online coursework that build public management and leadership skills for advancing students' careers in government and the nonprofit sector. Students accepted into the program receive 12 professional credits, reducing the total number of credits necessary to earn the MPA degree from 42 to 30. Students join a cohort of people from diverse professional backgrounds who will complete all 10 courses together over a two-year period. A mandatory, in-person residency at Rutgers University–Newark, held annually every summer, provides academic and networking opportunities.

### **Required Courses**

#### Semester 1 (Fall)

- Principles of Public Administration & Democratic Governance (3)
- Managing Public Organizations (3)

#### Semester 2 (Spring)

- Economics for Public Administration (3)
- The Public Policy Process (3)

#### Semester 3 (Summer)

- Data Analysis for Decision-Making (3)
- In-person, two-day residency (no credit)

#### Semester 4 (Fall)

- Government Budgeting (3)
- Technology and Public Administration (3)

#### Semester 5 (Spring)

- Human Resources Management (3)
- Ethical Challenges in Public Affairs (3)

#### Semester 6 (Summer)

- Capstone Project (3)
- In-person, two-day residency (no credit)

### **Capstone Project**

The capstone project provides students with an opportunity to apply their learning from coursework to real-world issues and their career ambitions. It serves as a culminating experience in the MPA program. Students develop either a research paper (thesis) on a topic of interest or a professional portfolio (often in the form of a website) showcasing their academic work, community engagement, and professional competencies from across the EMPA curriculum.

### **In-person Residency**

At the annual in-person residency, held over two days each summer, students participate in academic symposia, workshops, community-based events, and networking opportunities.

## **Course Schedules**

Course schedules can be found from University Schedule of Classes at <https://sis.rutgers.edu/soc/#home>. All EMPA course listings and course descriptions can be found at <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/courses?program=1419>. If there are any questions, students should consult with their academic advisor.

## **CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**

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Rutgers SPAA offers a series of three course (nine-credit) certificate programs for MPA students and non-degree seeking students. Each certificate provides specialized training for pre-career and in-career students in a variety of policy areas:

- Budgeting and Financial Management
- Healthcare Administration
- Leadership of Public Organizations
- Nonprofit Management

Courses can be taken either online or in person during the fall, spring, or summer terms. All three courses should be completed within two academic years and with a grade of B or better for students to receive a certificate. After successfully completing a certificate, if students apply and are accepted into the traditional MPA program at SPAA, the nine credits can be applied to the degree. More information on the certificate programs can be found at <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/certificates>.

### **Budgeting and Financial Management Certificate**

Students seeking the Budgeting and Financial Management Certificate complete three (3) courses for a total of nine (9) credits from the following SPAA graduate courses:

- Government Budgeting (3)\*
- Government Revenue Theory and Administration (3)
- Public Finance and Public Policy (3)
- Public Financial Management (3)
- Health Care Finance (3)
- Special Topics in Budgeting (3)

*\* For students in the MPA program pursuing the Public Management track, Government Budgeting cannot be used toward the certificate.*

### **Healthcare Administration Certificate**

Students seeking the Healthcare Administration Certificate complete three (3) courses for a total of nine (9) credits from the following SPAA graduate courses:

- Health Systems and Policy (3)
- Healthcare Finance (3)
- Healthcare Management (3)
- Special Topics in Healthcare (3)

### **Leadership of Public Organizations Certificate**

Students seeking the Leadership of Public Organizations Certificate complete three (3) required courses for a total of nine (9) credits from the following SPAA graduate courses:

- Collaborative Governance (3)
- Human Resources Management (3)\*
- Labor-Management Relations in the Public Sector (3)
- Leadership and Diversity (3)

- Managing Public Organizations (3)\*
- Performance Measurement and Management (3)
- Unlocking Open Government (3)
- Technology and Public Administration (3)
- Public Policy Process (3)
- Special Topics in Leadership (3)

*\* For students in the MPA program, Human Resources Management cannot be used toward the certificate. For students in the MPA program pursuing the Public Management track, Managing Public Organizations cannot be used toward the certificate.*

### **Nonprofit Management Certificate**

Students seeking the Nonprofit Management Certificate complete three (3) courses for a total of nine (9) credits from the following SPAA graduate courses:

- Collaborative Governance (3)
- Grant Writing and Grants Management (3)
- Nonprofit Budgeting and Financial Management (3)\*
- Principles of Nonprofit Leadership and Management (3)\*
- Program Evaluation (3)
- Resource Development for Nonprofit Organizations (3)
- Special Topics in Nonprofit Leadership (3)

*\* For students in the MPA program pursuing the Nonprofit Management track, Nonprofit Budgeting and Financial Management and Principles of Nonprofit Leadership and Management cannot be used toward the certificate.*

## DUAL DEGREES

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### JD/MPA

The dual Juris Doctor/ Master of Public Administration (JD/MPA) degree program is offered jointly by Rutgers SPAA and Rutgers School of Law. It benefits Master of Public Administration (MPA) students by underscoring government's foundation in the law. It serves law (JD) students by deepening their understanding of the implementation of law by government agencies.

The joint program allows a full-time student to complete the requirements for both the JD and MPA degree in four years (eight full-time semesters), rather than the 10 semesters that would be required if the two degrees were earned separately. It could take more than eight years on a part-time basis. Students who wish to pursue the dual degree must apply for and gain admission to the JD program and the MPA program separately.

The student will normally spend the first full-time academic year (fall, spring, summer) completing the required curriculum for the JD degree and the second full-time year completing the core curriculum for the MPA. During the third and fourth years of full-time study, the student will take elective courses from either the JD or MPA curriculum in order to meet the requirements for both degrees. Each program will accept up to 12 credits earned at the other toward satisfaction of the JD or MPA degree requirements. Students must complete a total of 30 credits at Rutgers SPAA and a total of 72 credits at Rutgers Law School. For more information, see the SPAA website: <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/jd-mpa>. Please contact:

MPA at Rutgers SPAA:  
Reena Patel  
Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs  
[reepatel@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:reepatel@newark.rutgers.edu)  
973-353-2578

JD at Rutgers Law School:  
Anita T. Walton  
Assistant Dean for Admissions  
[awalton@rutgers.edu](mailto:awalton@rutgers.edu)  
973-353-3077

### MPA/ MACCY

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) / Master of Accountancy in Governmental Accounting (MAccy) dual degree program is designed for pre-career and in-career students. It enables them to acquire professional competencies in public administration and governmental accounting within the context of public administration and public financial management.

Governments are increasingly seeking qualified senior-level management staff who are conversant in accounting, auditing budget, and public finance. This unique dual degree program, the first of its kind in the nation, will be of great interest to those who want to broaden their skills in both fields. The program familiarizes students with public administration and nonprofit organizations wherein increased accountability, transparency, and effectiveness require higher mastery of specific skills.

The program is offered jointly. Rutgers School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). Rutgers Business School is an Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited institution. Students need to apply separately to the two programs and must identify

their interest in the dual degree program on both applications. Students in the dual degree program will need to complete a total of 51 credits, 21 from the Rutgers Business School and 30 from the Rutgers SPAA. For more information, see the SPAA website:

<https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/mpa-maccy>. Please contact:

MPA at Rutgers SPAA:

Reena Patel

Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs

[reepatel@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:reepatel@newark.rutgers.edu)

973-353-2578

MAccy at Rutgers Business School:

Irfan Bora

Program Director

[ibora@business.rutgers.edu](mailto:ibora@business.rutgers.edu)

848-445-5311



## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

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### **Registration**

Students register for courses online using **Rutgers WebReg**. This service is available to all students at the University. Students with prerequisites, time conflicts, and maximum credit override problems must add courses in person at the Registrar's Office.

Students login to WebReg using their 9-digit Rutgers ID. The Personal Access Code (PAC) is the first four digits of a student's birthday (ex. September 5th birthday = 0905 PAC code). Most students can utilize the WEBREG system. However, if a student's access is blocked, they must obtain a signature from the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services.

### **First Semester Requirement**

All incoming MPA students must enroll in the Introduction to Public Administration (20:834:501) course during their first term in the program.

### **Full-time vs. Part-time/ Credit Overload**

Students complete the program in two to three calendar years depending upon the number of credits taken per semester. A full-time schedule at the graduate level is 9 credits per semester. Most MPA students are working professionals who take 6 credits per semester (part-time), including summers.

Students with a GPA of at least 3.0 can enroll in 12 credits in the fall or spring semesters. If a student has lower than a 3.0, then a credit overload (above 9 credits) must be approved in writing by the MPA Director.

### **Add/Drop**

Students are required to make any necessary changes to their registration before the add/drop period closes each semester. No course can be retroactively dropped or added after the deadline. These dates can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website at <https://www.newark.rutgers.edu/office-registrar/academic-calendar>.

### **On-Campus Students Taking Online Classes**

As part of the application process, students must enroll in one of two modalities to receive the degree: the traditional on-campus program or the fully online program. Students are able to switch between these modalities twice between acceptance and graduation. Students enrolled in the online program are not able to take on-campus classes due to health immunization requirements. Students enrolled in the on-campus program are able to take a maximum of four (4) online classes.

To formally switch between the on-campus and online programs, students must complete and sign the "Change of Program" form, which will be provided by their academic advisor.

### **Special Permission Numbers (SPN)**

For specific courses and circumstances in the MPA program, special permission numbers are required in the following circumstances:

### Capstone

The final class students will take in their MPA program is Capstone. To be eligible for Capstone, students must be in their final semester.

### On-campus student seeking an online course

The MPA program is offered in two formats, on-campus and online. Students enrolled in the on-campus program may register for up to 4 online courses throughout the pursuit of their degree. On-campus students must use an SPN to register for an online class. Only online students are able to register for online courses for the first two weeks of the registration period.

### BA/MPA or BS/MPA students

Students completing the BA/MPA or BS/MPA accelerated program are eligible to take master's level courses as undergraduates with permission from their academic advisors.

### Course is closed

This means the original number of students approved to take this course has been reached. In some limited situations, students may be able to be added to a closed course using an SPN.

To obtain a Special Permission Number, contact your Academic Advisor.

### **Deregistration/ Reinstatement**

If a student is deregistered due to nonpayment, SPAA does not permit students to be reinstated/re-enrolled. If a student is dropped for non-payment, the student is not permitted to attend classes or complete coursework.

### **Late Registrations**

Registering for a course after the regular registration period closes will cause a late registration fee (currently \$125) to be added to your account. This fee cannot be waived. The registration dates can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website:  
<https://www.newark.rutgers.edu/office-registrar/academic-calendar>.

### **Leave of Absence and Time Limits on Completion of the Degree**

Students who are obliged to interrupt their studies may, with approval of the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services, register for matriculation continued. Registering for Matric Continued will keep the student's status active for one semester. A student must register for Matric Continued for each Fall and Spring semester until they resume taking courses. Failure to follow this procedure will result in the student's status changing to inactive, and the student will have to be readmitted to the MPA program in order to take courses again. There is no tuition fee for this registration, although a student fee and a computer fee are charged. Matric Continued only applies to fall or spring semesters. There is no need to register for Matric Continued for the summer or winter semester.

Time limits on Matric Continued: Students can only register for Matric Continued for 4 consecutive semesters (equal to two years). After this time, the student must enroll in courses and finish the program.

Time limits on completion of the degree: From the semester during which the student is admitted, **completion of the MPA program must occur within seven (7) calendar years**. If a student is admitted in fall 2023, for example, that student must finish by summer 2030. This includes any semesters of Matriculation Continued credits. A one-year extension, requested in writing, may be approved by the MPA Director in the event of extraordinary circumstances. Students who fail to complete the degree within these parameters will be subject to dismissal from the program.

### **Withdrawal/ Dismissal**

Courses dropped during the first two weeks of class are deleted from the student's record. Courses dropped from the third to the 11<sup>th</sup> week result in a W (Withdrawal) grade and a drop fee charge. This will not affect the student's GPA.

Students may withdraw from SPAA through the 12<sup>th</sup> week of classes. In such cases, the signature of the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services is required. No withdrawals of any sort are permitted during the last two weeks of classes. Students who leave the University during this period are still considered officially enrolled and will receive final grades for the semester. Depending on when the withdrawal occurs, a student might receive a full, partial or no refund.

To withdraw from the school, the student must complete the withdrawal form, and submit it to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs. Students who are dismissed from the school will be notified via email by the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services.

### **Transferring Graduate Credits from an Undergraduate Degree**

If a student received credits for graduate courses as part of an undergraduate degree, these credits will not be transferred into the MPA program unless the student is in the Accelerated Master of Public Administration program (BA/MPA or BS/MPA). More information about the accelerated program can be found on the SPAA website: <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/accelerated-mpa>.

### **Transferring Graduate Credits**

Students can transfer up to 12 credits (4 courses) toward the MPA degree at SPAA. These 12 credits may include up to 9 credits (3 courses) of elective courses representing your specialization and 3 credits (1 course) toward the required MPA core (provided it aligns with an MPA core course). Prior coursework must have been completed at the graduate (master or doctoral) level from an accredited institution within the last 10 years and with a grade of B or better.

In order to transfer credits, students must complete the Application for Transfer of Academic Credits form. The form is available online at <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/academic-policies-procedures-forms>. Students must submit the completed form to the MPA Director with an official transcript. Students may be asked to provide additional information about the transferred courses, including course descriptions and syllabuses. Courses for transfer credits may not include work for a thesis, independent study, research or non-graded coursework.

## **Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Policy**

*\*Applicable to international students only.* International students at SPAA may take advantage of the Office of International Student Services (OISS) CPT program by registering for an approved internship course for credits. No other MPA courses will be considered for CPT approval. Students must adhere to all requirements for the CPT program as determined by OISS, as well as all credit-bearing SPAA internship requirements and MPA policies.

## **Grading System**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Numerical Equivalent</u>
A	Outstanding	4.0
B+	Very Good	3.5
B	Good	3.0
C+	Intermediate	2.5
C	Satisfactory	2.0
F	Failing	0.0

## **Incomplete Grades**

Incomplete grades (IN) may be assigned at the discretion of an instructor who believes that an extension of time is warranted for a student whose work is incomplete at the end of the semester due to extraordinary circumstances. To be eligible for an incomplete grade, a student must have satisfactorily completed (C or higher) at least 60% of the course requirements as well as be impacted by an extraordinary circumstance.

When giving an incomplete, the instructor and the student must agree on requirements and a deadline (up to one academic year after the course has ended). An instructor assigning an incomplete grade should submit an Incomplete Form before assigning the grade. The form is available online at <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/academic-policies-procedures-forms>. The form establishes a set deadline that the student is required to submit missing or incomplete work to receive a letter grade. It is signed by the instructor and the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that an Incomplete Form is completed before the grading period closes for the semester in which they are enrolled.

The incomplete grade will automatically convert to the grade indicated on the form (usually an F) if the agreed upon deadline and requirements are not met. If a graduate student has 6 or more credits of incomplete coursework, future course registration will be denied unless waived in specific cases by the MPA Director.

## **Grade Appeals**

Student complaints about course grades are handled within SPAA. This policy applies only to recorded final course grades, not to grades on individual assignments within a course, which are handled directly with the instructor. SPAA recognizes the unique skills and talents each faculty member brings to the table. Our faculty members are among the foremost experts in their fields. They are the persons who are most familiar with the syllabus they use to teach a class. They are also most familiar with an individual student's performance relative to the expectations developed in the classes they teach. For these reasons, the faculty member of record is also the

most qualified to assess a student's performance in a class. Only in the rarest circumstance will a grade assigned by the instructor of record be reviewed or amended. A student's subjective belief that their work is of higher quality than the instructor's assessment of that work is usually NOT a valid basis for appeal. Typically, a grade will only be changed in the case of mathematical error or accidental entry; however, a student may appeal a grade that they believe strongly may be incorrectly judged. The process for grade appeal is as follows:

1. As a first resort, the student should discuss the contested grade with the instructor of record within 30 business days of the last day of the class in a given semester as scheduled by the Registrar's Office. The student must provide a formal written appeal (deliverable by email) of 1-2 pages that delineates:
  - The student's name, contact information, and RUID number
  - The date the appeal is being submitted
  - The name of the course, its section number, and the instructor's name and email address
  - A description of the error and the specific correction requested
  - A clear description of the basis for appeal, including any factual information or computation necessary to document the error
  - All requests must be addressed to the instructor of record and must also copy the MPA Director and the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services.
  - The request should include the course syllabus as an attachment.

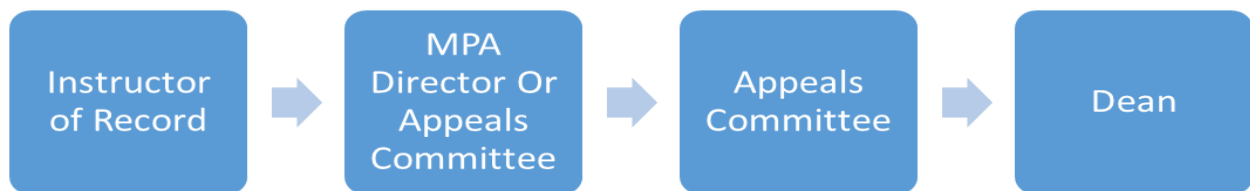
The instructor shall respond within 10 business days of receiving the complaint and shall copy the MPA Director and Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services on the electronic response. The instructor's 1-2-page response should include the appeal decision and the explanation for that decision.

2. The student may appeal the instructor's decision to the MPA Director, following the format of the initial appeal and including any new or additional documentation, including the instructor's formal response. In cases where the MPA Director is the faculty of record for the course, the second round of the appeal shall go to the Appeals Committee. The MPA Director must receive any further appeal (electronically) within 5 business days of the instructor's response. The MPA Director will then assess whether the student has established a valid basis for appeal and if the appeal has been received within the time limits established by this policy. If not, the student will be notified, and the recorded grade will stand. If so, the MPA Director will solicit necessary information from the instructor to make a reasoned judgment on the case within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. As a result of the investigation, the student's grade may i) remain unchanged, ii) be amended to the requested grade, or iii) be amended to the correct grade in the event neither the recorded grade nor the requested grade is accurate.
3. A student may appeal the MPA Director's decision to the SPAA Appeals Committee, following the format of the initial appeal and including any new or additional documentation, including the instructor's formal response as well as that of the MPA Director. The SPAA Appeals Committee must receive any further appeal (electronically) within 5 business days of the MPA Director's response. The Appeals Committee will then assess whether the

student has established a valid basis for appeal and if the appeal has been received within the time limits established by this policy. If not, the student will be notified, and the recorded grade will stand. If so, the Appeals Committee will solicit necessary information from the instructor and the MPA Director to make a reasoned judgment on the case within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. The SPAA Appeals Committee will collect any additional evidence they consider appropriate. As a result of the investigation, the student's grade may i) remain unchanged, ii) be amended to the requested grade, or iii) be amended to the correct grade in the event neither the recorded grade nor the requested grade is accurate.

4. A student may appeal the SPAA Appeals Committee's decision to the Dean of the School of Public Affairs and Administration following the format of the appeal to the MPA Director/ Appeals Committee and including any new or additional documentation, including the instructor's formal response as well as that of the MPA Director and SPAA Appeals Committee. The Dean must receive any further appeal (electronically) within 5 business days of the MPA Director's and Appeals Committee's responses. The Dean will then assess whether the student has established a valid basis for appeal and if the appeal has been received within the time limits established by this policy. If not, the student will be notified, and the recorded grade will stand. If so, the Dean will solicit necessary information from the instructor, MPA Director, and the Appeals Committee to make a reasoned judgment on the case within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. The Dean will collect any additional evidence they consider appropriate. As a result of the investigation, the student's grade may i) remain unchanged, ii) be amended to the requested grade, or iii) be amended to the correct grade in the event neither the recorded grade nor the requested grade is accurate. Appeal to the Dean constitutes the appeal of last resort. Decisions of the Dean of SPAA are final; there are no appeals beyond the Dean of SPAA.
5. All grade appeal requests and decisions will become part of the student's permanent record at SPAA.

### Steps of Grade Appeal



### Failing Grades

Students earning a failing grade (below C) in any core course shall:

1. Immediately be returned to academic probationary status, and
2. Be subject to an administrative review by the Associate Dean of Student and Academic Services. The Associate Dean will then determine an appropriate course of action for the affected student with two options:
  - A. Dismissal from the program, or
  - B. Permission to retake the course in which the failing grade was earned

Students who are permitted to retake a course in which a failing grade was earned may return to regular status when:

1. A passing grade is earned in the relevant course, and
2. The student's GPA returns to the threshold of 3.0.

**Students who earn more than one failing grade in any single course will be dismissed from the program.** Students should be aware that grades, failing or not, will affect their GPAs and that this policy in no way circumvents GPA requirements for program continuation or graduation.

### **Academic Standing and Annual Assessment**

The academic standing evaluations for all MPA students are conducted annually during the summer semester. The Associate Dean of Student and Academic Services will evaluate each transcript and notify the student via letter delivered to their Rutgers email explaining their assessment. If a student's GPA falls below 3.0, it is required that they meet with the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services immediately. To remain in good standing, a student must maintain a 3.0 GPA or better, and continue making progress toward the MPA degree.

### **Financial Aid**

To receive financial aid, an MPA student must register for at least 6 credits and submit a FAFSA form by the deadline. For more information, please visit the Office of Financial Aid at <https://scarlethub.rutgers.edu/financial-services/office-of-financial-aid>. There are no financial loans available for the winter session.

### **Tuition Remission**

In compliance with Rutgers University policy, University staff may use their tuition remission benefits for any academic program that is self-sustaining. Potential students should speak with the SPAA Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services regarding the use of tuition remission for the MPA program.

### **Academic Integrity**

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational, research, and clinical missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community.

The principles of academic integrity require that a student:

- ensure that all work submitted in a course, academic research, or other activity is the student's own and created without the aid of impermissible technologies, materials, or collaborations.
- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, images, or words of others.
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work.
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with the student's interpretation or conclusions.

- treat all other students ethically, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This principle requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress.
- uphold the ethical standards and professional code of conduct in the field for which the student is preparing.

Adherence to these principles is necessary to ensure that:

- proper credit for ideas, words, images, results, and other scholarly work, no matter the form or media, is attributed to the appropriate individual(s).
- all student research and work are fairly evaluated, and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others.
- the academic and ethical development of all students is fostered.
- the reputation of the University for integrity, ethics, scholarship, and professionalism is maintained and enhanced.

The complete Academic Integrity Policy can be found at <https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. The Policy defines violations of academic integrity and outlines the potential penalties for such violations as well as the process for adjudicating alleged violations.

### **Scholarships**

SPAA offers scholarship awards to highly qualified SPAA students. The scholarships listed below are available to students in the BA and MPA programs. Students are notified regarding scholarship applications during the spring semester. If selected, the award will be applied to the student's fall term bill.

The awards are:

- Marcia Lynn Whicker Memorial Endowed Scholarship: Awarded to deserving full-time graduate students enrolled in the MPA program at Rutgers University –Newark.
  - Louis Eckstein Fellowship: Awarded to a deserving graduate student who has shown academic achievement.
  - Annette McIntyre Family Endowed Scholarship: Awarded to full-time MPA students dedicating their careers to public service.
  - GALA Anniversary Scholarship: Awarded to deserving undergraduate students in the Public and Nonprofit Administration program.
  - SPAA Undergraduate Scholarship: Awarded to deserving undergraduate students in Public and Nonprofit Administration.
  - SPAA MPA Scholarship: Awarded to deserving MPA students.
  - SPAA Book Fund: Provides funding at RU-N bookstore to purchase course textbooks.
- \* *Awards are subject to change.*

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must submit a complete application by the due date
- Must have completed at least 9 credits in a SPAA program
- Must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better



- Must be an active student in the spring semester when the scholarship announcements go out and the following fall semester when the aid is awarded. Active student means being registered for at least 3 credits
- Students must be enrolled in the fall semester for any programs corresponding to the award.

#### Award Criteria:

These scholarships are awarded to SPAA students based on the criteria listed below. A strong personal statement should address at least one of these areas:

- **Academic Success** – Academic success can be demonstrated by a GPA of 3.5 or higher, recommendation from a faculty member, rigorous course schedule, paper presented, or research experience.
- **Commitment to Public Service** – Commitment can be measured by a professional or volunteer record of serving the needs of a larger community or pursuing a career path focused on public service.
- **Community Engagement** – Students need to demonstrate a commitment to the greater Newark area by identifying how pursuing their degree will further their dedication to creating positive change within a community.

#### How to Apply:

- Completed application form
- Personal statement referring to at least one of the three criteria above (1,000 word maximum)
- Current resume
- Unofficial copy of transcript (Obtained from [my.rutgers.edu](https://my.rutgers.edu) under the Academics Tab)
- Recommendation by a SPAA course instructor

#### **Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society**

Pi Alpha Alpha (PAA), the National Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration, recognizes outstanding graduate as well as undergraduate students in public administration, public policy, and public affairs. The purpose of Pi Alpha Alpha is to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in public affairs and administration. Its objectives promote the advancement of quality in the study and practice of public affairs and administration. Foundational values include fostering integrity, professionalism, and effective performance. PAA membership identifies those with the highest performance levels in educational programs, preparing them for public service careers. Students who meet these standards will be invited to join Pi Alpha Alpha.

Students who have a cumulative GPA of 3.85 (Masters and PhD) or 3.5 (undergraduate) at the end of the last semester before they graduate will be invited by SPAA to join Pi Alpha Alpha. Students are inducted at the SPAA Award Ceremony, which usually takes place one week before the University's graduation ceremony. Please contact the PAA advisor for more information: <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/paa>.

## **Graduation Requirements**

To be eligible to have the MPA degree conferred, each student must, at the time of graduation, have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and have finished all of the course requirements for the degree.

In order to graduate, a student must apply for graduation at <https://grad.admissions.rutgers.edu/Diploma/>.

The deadlines for applying for graduation are:

- August 1 for October degrees
- November 1 for January degrees
- March 1 for May degrees

Even though a student can graduate in October, January, or May, there is only one graduation ceremony, which is scheduled annually in May.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

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### **Graduate Writing Center**

The Graduate Writing Center provides focused help to SPAA graduate students preparing for leadership roles in the public and nonprofit sectors. The center assists in conceptualizing and organizing academic materials, including research papers, presentations, and large projects. Services include coaching as well as small and large seminars. A series of writing seminars will cover writing fundamentals throughout the semester.

### **Coaching Sessions**

The coaching sessions, which are scheduled by appointment, are one-on-one. They are designed to fit the needs of each student. The objective of these 45-60 minute meetings is to provide students with the tools that they need to fully express their ideas to the best of their ability. While grammar and syntax are essential elements of all well-constructed papers, sessions will concentrate on developing structure, organization and contextual relationships to effectively communicate. Students should come to these sessions prepared to discuss their work in detail.

### **Public Administration Graduate Association (PAGA)**

The Public Administration Graduate Student Association (PAGA) is the formal organization of all students enrolled in the School of Public Administration and Affairs (SPAA) at Rutgers-Newark. All graduate students enrolled in SPAA courses are members of PAGA. PAGA works closely with the SPAA Alumni Network to encourage mentorship and career development. For more information, please visit <https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/paga>.

### **Computer Labs**

Rutgers University-Newark offers computer labs across the campus. For more information, please check the Computing Services website at <https://ncs.newark.rutgers.edu/computinglabs>.

For each six-month period (January-June and July-December), every student gets a set amount of money posted to their printing account for black-and-white and color printing. Once a student uses up the balance, they must pay for additional printing through their Raider Card. Students must visit the Raider Card office, Paul Robeson Campus Center, Room 325, to add funds to their Raider Card. Details may be found at the PrintGreen site: <http://printing.rutgers.edu>.

### **Academic Advising**

Each student should meet with their academic advisor during their first semester to map out their schedule of courses for the duration of their time in our program. EMPA courses follow a strict schedule, so the courses will be discussed during the new student orientation. MPA students are assigned to an academic advisor based on the first letter of their last name. Contact Student and Academic Services in the SPAA Student Success Center on the first floor of the Center for Urban Public Service building.

### **Housing**

Rutgers University-Newark Housing is located at Woodward Hall, 91 Bleeker Street, Newark, NJ 07102. They can be reached at 973-353-1037. For housing information, please visit <http://housing.newark.rutgers.edu/>.

## **Parking**

There are different types of parking permits available for students. For more information, please visit <https://nwkparking.rutgers.edu/>, email [info@aps.rutgers.edu](mailto:info@aps.rutgers.edu), or call 973-353-1839.

The Parking office is located at Blumenthal Hall, 249 University Ave., Suite 105, Newark, NJ 07102. A map of parking locations can be found at <https://nwkparking.rutgers.edu/locations>.

## **ID Cards**

After the student registers and pays for their courses, they can receive a photo ID at Blumenthal Hall, 249 University Ave, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor.

Benefits of an ID card:

- Checkout privileges at any of the Rutgers University libraries
- Recreation centers and computer lab facilities
- Entry to football games and other events
- Purchased meal plans and debit account options
- Assigned housing and other buildings
- Parking lots (permit required)
- Identification for transactions with student accounting and registrar
- Attendance verification for classes and exams

For more information, please visit <http://businessoffice.newark.rutgers.edu/photo-id-1>.

## **Counseling and Health Services**

The Rutgers University-Newark Counseling Center is staffed by highly-qualified mental health professionals, who are passionate about providing an array of clinical services to our diverse student body. They are committed to helping students take care of their mental health and work through their challenges while striving toward emotional and academic success. They offer psychological and psychiatric services, as well as a comprehensive Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program to all enrolled and eligible students. The services are FREE and CONFIDENTIAL. For more information, please visit <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/>.

## **Office of Disability Services**

Students in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Students with authorized disability-related accommodations must provide their instructors with a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to ensure that all necessary accommodations are provided. Accommodations cannot be provided retroactively, so please inform the instructor as early as possible. The ODS office is located at Paul Robeson Campus Center, Suite 219. For more information, please visit <http://robeson.rutgers.edu/disability-services/> or email [ODSNewark@Newark.Rutgers.edu](mailto:ODSNewark@Newark.Rutgers.edu).

## **Additional Student Support Services**

Rutgers University-Newark works to provide a first-rate education to an exceptionally diverse community, and this education includes the comprehensive support necessary for student success. Information for many of these support services are provided below:

- Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team
  - o Site: <https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/care-team>
  - o Office: Paul Robeson Campus Center- Room 302
  - o Email: [careteam@rutgers.edu](mailto:careteam@rutgers.edu)
  - o Phone: (973) 353-5063
- Office of International Student and Scholar Services
  - o Site: <http://ncas.rutgers.edu/oiss>
  - o Office: Conklin Hall- Room 216
  - o Email: [oiss@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:oiss@newark.rutgers.edu)
  - o Phone: (973) 353-1427
- LGBTQ and Intercultural Resource Center
  - o Site: <http://lgbt.newark.rutgers.edu/>
  - o Office: Paul Robeson Campus Center- Room 328 and Conklin Hall- Room 232
  - o Email: [interculturalrutgers@gmail.com](mailto:interculturalrutgers@gmail.com)
  - o Phone: (973) 353-3416
- pantryRUN Food Pantry
  - o Site: <https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/node/226>
  - o Office: Paul Robeson Campus Center- Room 236
  - o Email: [pantry\\_run@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:pantry_run@newark.rutgers.edu)
  - o Phone: (973) 353-5231
- Veterans Affairs
  - o Site: <https://www.newark.rutgers.edu/resources-student-veterans>
  - o Office: Paul Robeson Campus Center- Room 316A
  - o Email: [lazaro.paul@rutgers.edu](mailto:lazaro.paul@rutgers.edu)
  - o Phone: (973) 353-5515
- Title IX Coordinator & Director of Title IX and ADA, Scott C. Strother
  - o Site: <http://roberson.rutgers.edu/sex-discrimination-harassment-assault-and-title-ix/>
  - o Office: Paul Robeson Campus Center- Room 316
  - o Email: [scott.strother@rutgers.edu](mailto:scott.strother@rutgers.edu)
  - o Phone: (973) 353-1906