

Guidelines for Awarding Academic Credit for Professional Experience

1. Purpose

These guidelines outline the procedure and requirements for awarding academic credit for professional experience in the SHSU Master of Public Administration Program. The intent is to recognize substantial, relevant public service experience that aligned with program learning outcomes.

2. General Procedure

- 2.1. Students seeking academic credit for professional experience will make a written request to the director of the Master of Public Administration Program. The written request must include a cover letter providing a detailed description of their professional experience and how their professional experience relates to student learning outcomes of the program concentrations for which credit is sought. In addition to the cover letter, students must submit a portfolio demonstrating appropriate skills or knowledge when requesting credit for professional experience. Students are solely responsible for producing/obtaining such written materials.
- 2.2. Within 30 calendar days of the final submission deadline, the review committee will review the application materials and recommend the awarding of professional experience credit at its discretion and judgment, documenting decisions by comparison of the submitted professional experience to student learning outcomes (SLOs) for each course in question.
- 2.3. Upon committee recommendation, the program director will review and submit the approved request for awarding credit for work experience to the appropriate administrative units for processing.
- 2.4. The Office of Admissions is responsible for updating the student record. Credit for work experience will be listed as transfer work, with a grade of Credit (CR).

3. Limitations of Credit

- 3.1. The total number of hours awarded under this policy will be considered in conjunction with the total number of transfer hours. The cumulative number of hours (i.e., experiential learning hours and transfer hours) shall not exceed the total transfer hour limits as described in the Graduate Catalog.
- 3.2. Credits awarded under this policy, not to exceed three (3) credit hours, will be applied as an internship course credit.

3.3. Credit for work experience is awarded only once.

4. Eligibility and Timeline

4.1. Experience must predate current graduate enrollment.

4.2. The request for credit for work experience, including the required portfolio, must be submitted after admission and no later than the Q-drop deadline of the student's first regular semester of enrollment.

4.3. Students enrolled in Academic Year 2025–2026 prior to the publication of this policy will be permitted to submit the request for credit for work experience, including the required portfolio, no later than the Q-drop deadline of the first regular semester following the policy's publication.

5. Portfolio Requirements

5.1. The portfolio must be submitted electronically and include

5.1.1. Title page and table of contents

5.1.2. Executive Summary: statement linking experience to educational goals

5.1.3. Resume or CV with detailed work history

5.1.4. Narrative detailing:

5.1.4.1. The professional setting and organizational context

5.1.4.2. Alignment of experience with MPA program objectives:

5.1.4.2.1. To lead and manage in public interest

5.1.4.2.2. To participate in, and contribute to, the policy process

5.1.4.2.3. To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make evidence-informed decisions in a complex and dynamic environment

5.1.4.2.4. To articulate, apply, and advance a public service perspective

5.1.4.2.5. To communicate and interact productively and in culturally responsive ways with a diverse and changing workforce and society at large.

5.1.4.2.6. Practical professional skills (emergency and disaster management, personnel administration, budget administration, etc.)

5.1.5. Index of supporting documents

5.1.6. Evidence of professional learning (certificates, artifacts, etc.)