



EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Master of Public Administration

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

emich.edu/mpa

Mentorship & Professional Development Program

Overview

The EMU MPA Mentorship & Professional Development Program is designed to provide public administration students with an opportunity to build a professional relationship with alumni from the EMU Master of Public Administration program. In addition to gaining career advice from their mentors, students have the opportunity to job shadow and attend professional meetings, conferences, or workshops with their mentors.

After the initial matching introduction has been made, the onus is on the current student and alumni to cultivate their mentoring relationship.

The minimum requirement of engagement (October through April) is:

- Three (3) conversations. *The purpose of the first conversation is to get to know each other. The second conversation may take place sometime in the fall semester, and the third conversation may occur in the winter semester.*
- One (1) job shadow experience. *The student is encouraged to observe the mentor in their work environment.*
- One (1) professional meeting or networking experience. *The student is encouraged to attend a professional meeting (i.e., one related to work or a professional association) or conference with the mentor or meet with the mentor's colleagues or other public service professionals.*

Participants can do more if this is agreeable to both parties.

Timeline

1. Prospective mentors complete interest form by August 31.
2. Prospective students complete interest form by September 23. The first fifteen (15) students who complete their application will be considered for the mentoring program.
3. MPA Program matches students to mentors by September 30. MPA Alumni are matched with a current student with every attempt made to match participants who share common areas of interest and/or sector. The number of matches depends on the number of mentors and students who sign up.
4. MPA Program hosts a sign-up session, when students and mentors work together to develop their commitment contract, and shares mentoring guides, resources, and conversation starters.
5. Students meet with mentors throughout the year. Students are to inform the MPA Coordinator of meeting dates.
6. MPA Program follows up with students and mentors each semester.
7. At the end of the academic year, the students and mentors complete the exit evaluations. They may continue the mentoring relationship beyond the academic year if agreeable to both parties.

Benefits to Mentors

Mentoring is a wonderful opportunity for mentors to share their practical knowledge and experiences with future public service leaders. This is not only beneficial for the mentee but also gives mentors a way to support and strengthen the EMU MPA Program by providing students with practical advice as they enter (or re-enter) the workforce or advance their careers in public service.

Experienced employees may choose to become a mentor to develop their interpersonal communication and coaching skills or to include a new challenge in their careers.

Benefits to Students

Students will gain career advice and practical insights, expand their professional networks, learn about paths to advancement, and explore workplace issues and skills that are not typically covered in the classroom. Some topics may include:

- Setting and managing priorities
- Time management
- Burnout
- Balancing work and family life
- Managing paperwork
- Work culture, politics, and norms
- Legal issues of working in the public/nonprofit sector
- Handling difficult situations with customers or co-workers
- Understanding organizational structure
- Creating and managing a team
- Facilitation skills
- Networking skills
- Writing skills

To sign up or for more information, please visit

<https://www.emich.edu/political-science/alumni/newsletters/mpa.php>