

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

SUBJECT: Program modification in Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval to modify the Master of Public Affairs (MPA) degree to offer an Online MPA as a non-Rackham Graduate School program

EFFECTIVE DATE: Winter 2026

Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy proposes a program modification to the Master of Public Affairs (MPA) degree to offer an Online MPA. By modifying the MPA degree to include an online modality, the Ford School can educate more and different types of policy leaders who may not be able to relocate to Ann Arbor for an in-person, full-time program.

The Online MPA curriculum is similar to the residential MPA program, but has been modified to better meet the needs of working professionals who have at least five years of full-time policy-related work experience. The core requirements are almost identical, with the residential MPA program offering more elective options due to the breadth of residential courses the Ford School currently offers. With the proposed degree modification, the Online MPA would be offered through the Ford School as a non-Rackham Graduate School program. The residential MPA program will continue to be offered through Rackham Graduate School.

The curriculum is designed to include two required 1.5 credit hour residential experiences held over a long weekend. These experiences will provide opportunities for cohort building and networking with Ford School faculty and staff, deepen students' leadership skills, and apply their knowledge outside of the traditional classroom with hands-on projects.

The proposed degree modification received approval by the Master's Program Committee in April 2024, and the Executive Committee and Ford School's governing faculty members in May 2024. We request that the Regents approve the program modification to the Masters of Public Affairs (MPA) degree, offering an Online MPA. The program will be implemented upon approval from the Michigan Association of State Universities, pending Board of Regents approval. The first cohort would start January 2026.

RECOMMENDED BY:



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