

Dalhousie University's Master of Public Administration (Management) Degree

*by Peggy Johnson, Barbara Maynard, and Fazley Siddiq
Centre for Advanced Management Education (CFAME), Faculty of Management*

The public service as a whole is grappling with succession issues as current demographics see more and more of the most experienced public servants retiring. In the forefront are questions regarding how best to retain valuable human resources, how to facilitate their growth and development, and how to ensure effective leadership in future. Dalhousie's distance MPA (M) was developed in response to a stated need in the public arena for a graduate level program that would allow participants to advance their skills and knowledge while still working in a full time capacity. The program embodies Dalhousie's values regarding academic excellence and adds the components of cutting-edge technology and a dedicated administrative group (CFAME) to provide a learning experience that is streamlined and effective for mature learners with high level public commitments. The MPA (M) is described as innovative, responsive, and flexible and is perceived as such by both government units who support individual participation in the program and by the alumni and current students who have direct experience with this educational vehicle.

Innovative:

- Utilizes an advanced online platform known as "Blackboard Learning Systems" (BLS) to facilitate distance learning
- Adds an in-classroom component to solidify learning and facilitate the building of networks amongst learners who hail from every corner of Canada's public sector

Responsive:

- Educational and administrative support is provided beyond regular business hours in recognition of the mature learner's schedule
- The skills of experienced academics and public sector employees/educators are combined in the program's curriculum development in order to ensure that the program constantly considers and meets the needs of learners

Flexible:

- As dictated by each individual's changing professional commitments, it is possible to either take a number of courses per term or to skip a term completely without penalty
- Curriculum updates occur each term as the result of on-going feedback from our learners and based on needs identified in the public sector



Centre for Learning and Teaching

Dalhousie University
Halifax, N.S. B3H 4H8