

Cornell Institute for Public Affairs

Cornell University/Panama MPA Partnership Program

Through a unique partnership between the Government of Panama and Cornell University, Panamanian students can earn their Master in Public Administration (MPA) degree in three semesters of study in the US, followed by a fourth semester of independent study in Panama.

How does a Cornell MPA align with your goals?

Perhaps you want to prepare for a new career in one of the many fields of public affairs. Or perhaps you already work in an area of public policy but wish to develop specific expertise and credentials that will advance your career. A Cornell MPA will help you meet either goal. Along with gaining new knowledge and skills, you will benefit from attaining a degree at one of the largest and most diverse of the US Ivy League universities.



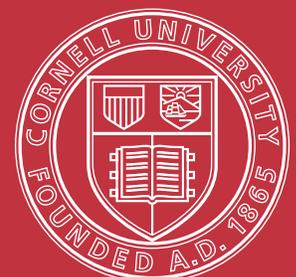
President Martinelli meets with members of the CIPA-run Cornell Latin America Student Society (CLASS) during an official state visit to the University in 2013.

Facts about Cornell University

- 21,000 students and 245,000 living alumni
- powerful, worldwide network of loyal Cornellians
- highly distinguished faculty, including many world leaders in their field
- more than 4,000 courses
- library system with over 7 million volumes, 65,000 journals and state-of-the-art online facilities

Facts about CIPA

- dynamic interdisciplinary Master of Public Administration (MPA) program
- broad range of concentration options built on a solid core
- strong platform for career advancement
- access to distinguished Cornell faculty and cutting-edge research
- class consulting assignments on real-world policy challenges for domestic and international clients



CIPA offers breadth & depth of training, and a rich

About CIPA

The MPA degree is offered through the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (also known as CIPA). The curriculum includes a foundation of coursework essential for all aspects of public affairs. You are able to personalize the degree by choosing a concentration with a program of courses and experiences designed to be most meaningful to you.

You will soon discover that, at CIPA, diversity is valued. Faculty and students come from around the globe and represent widely varied fields of interests. This eclectic mix of cultures, experiences and perspectives translates into a rich environment for collaborative learning.

Community is a vital part of the CIPA experience. There are approximately 240 students in the program with about 120 first-years and 120 second-years. Opportunities for forging lifelong friendships are abundant at CIPA with picnics, international parties, impromptu debates in the CIPA Lounge, professional development conferences in Washington, DC and New York City, late-night group-project meetings, and many more similar activities.

The Cornell MPA: Academics

MPA students gain a solid foundation in the fundamentals of public policy by taking courses in three foundation areas:

- Administrative, Political and Policy Processes—how public affairs are conducted
- Economic Analysis and Public Finance—how public affairs are financed
- Quantitative Analysis—how options and results in public affairs are evaluated

Students take additional courses in their chosen area of concentration. You have eight, broad concentration options from which to choose:

- Economics and Financial Policy
- Environmental Policy
- Government, Politics, and Policy Studies
- Human Rights and Social Justice
- International Development Studies
- Public and Nonprofit Management
- Science, Technology and Infrastructure Policy
- Social Policy

The MPA curriculum calls for students to take 16 courses over the span of their 2-year program (4 per semester). However, Panamanian students who are funded by MEF-IFARHU are only required to spend three semesters in residence on the Cornell campus before returning to Panama to complete a fourth-semester professional report. For these students, the



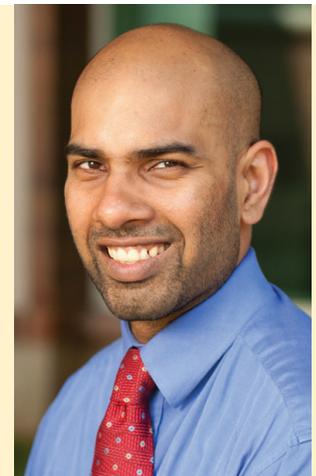
Najibah Abdullah, MPA 2013

Concentration: International Development

Internship: Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies, Brunei Darussalam

Current Job: Research Officer, Prime Minister's Office, Brunei Darussalam

"In both the CIPA domestic Capstone course and the Consulting for Nonprofit and Governmental Organizations course, I gained valuable hands-on experience. Among the most important skills taught were working on a team, interpersonal communication and project management— all of which will be extremely helpful in my career."



Jonathan

Concentration: International Development
Internship: (D-CA), F
Employment: Exchange
Fellowship: Fellowship

"A flexible
I needed
advanced
security
and a br
skills req

environment for collaborative, hands-on learning.

course requirement will be reduced from 16 courses to 12 courses (4 courses for each of the three semesters); the reduction of courses in each of your curriculum areas will be determined on a case by case basis.

Professional Writing Requirement

A high level of expertise in both analysis and written communication is required of public policy professionals. At CIPA, students have several options for improving and demonstrating their competency in professional writing.

→ **Capstone Project:** Students register for the Capstone Course during their second year of study and undertake a rigorous, semester-long, pro bono consulting project for real-world clients in public agencies or nonprofits, culminating in a written report.

→ **Professional Report:** Students who have completed a summer internship can expand on the experience by enrolling in a semester-long independent study and completing a professional report that is useful for their internship organization.

→ **Thesis:** Students interested in pursuing a PhD often opt to complete a professional thesis that meets the Cornell Graduate School's requirements for a thesis for the MA or MS degree.

If you opt to return to Panama after three semesters of study at Cornell, you will complete your professional

writing requirement through a fourth semester required report.

This report may be developed for your place of employment in Panama (ie: a project that will benefit your employer) or may be based on research suggested by CIPA Professor Rick Geddes (for infrastructure students in particular) or by CIPA Capstone Instructor Laurie Miller.

This report will fulfill the Professional Writing requirement for the MPA. Alternately, with the permission of MEF-IFARHU, you may elect to stay at Cornell for your fourth semester and complete the full four semesters of degree requirements. In this case, you may complete any of the professional writing options available to general MPA students (Capstone, Thesis or Professional Report).

Admissions: How to Apply & What to Expect

CIPA has a rolling admissions program, admitting qualified students throughout the year. Students may apply to begin their studies in either the fall semester (with an August start date) or spring semester (with a January start date).

A faculty committee evaluates individual applications. You are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. For Panamanian applicants, we will continue to review applications for fall semester through the end of April.

Man Abraham, MPA 2013

Concentration: Government, Politics and Policy
Location: Office of Congressman Mark Takano
Riverside, CA
Current Job: Financial Analyst, US Securities and
Exchange Commission, 2013 Presidential Management
Apprenticeship Finalist

"The curriculum allowed me to study what I needed for my professional and personal development. I gained a deep understanding of policy in South Asia, proficiency in Hindi, and a broad toolset of program management skills required for a career as a public official."



Sarah Gardner Evans, MPA 2013

Concentration: Public & Nonprofit Management
Internship: Women's Campaign Fund, Washington, DC
Current Job: Senior Analyst, The Advisory Board Company, Washington, DC

"The breadth of skills and experiences I gained at CIPA—individual and large team projects, domestic and international consulting, quantitative and soft-skill building—has positioned me to move among different spheres within the broad field of public affairs, and to be comfortable transferring my skills and adjusting to diverse environments."

Official Application Material

1 Documents needed to complete your application:

- a Cornell's online Graduate School application.
- b Copies of transcripts from all colleges and universities previously attended.
- c GRE scores: Cornell University Code is: 2098 and the Public Affairs Department Code is: 2204. Please note: CIPA does NOT accept GMAT or LSAT scores in lieu of GRE scores.
- d Two (2) letters of recommendation.
- e Current résumé.
- f TOEFL scores (required ONLY for applicants for whom English is a second language). Cornell's Graduate School requires that applicants achieve the following minimum scores on the new (2005) Internet-based test version of the TOEFL: writing 20, listening 15, reading 20, speaking 22. *Please note: Cornell University does NOT accept the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam in lieu of the TOEFL.*

2 Statement of Purpose (500 words max.) addressing these points:

- a Why you are applying to the program
- b Personal and/or professional experience that have led to your interest in Cornell's MPA program
- c Your future goals--how you would put an MPA graduate education to use
- d Examples of volunteer work, positions of responsibility, and any other life experiences that have contributed to your interest in public affairs

3 Essay (1,000 words maximum) covering the following:

- a Briefly describe an area of public affairs to which you would like to make a contribution.
- b Discuss what you would like to see accomplished in this area.
- c Explain how you would go about initiating, supporting and sustaining changes in this area so as to enhance public well-being and public services.

4 Online Interview

- Once ALL application material has been received, you will be asked to complete an online interview. You will receive an e-mail containing login information and detailed instructions.

Qualifications for Admission

- We offer places in our incoming classes to persons who present clear evidence of ability to succeed in a rigorous graduate program and the most demonstrated ability and/or potential to contribute to the broad domain of public affairs.
- We look for persons with potential for leadership in this domain, as evidenced by professional work experience and by community, extracurricular or other relevant engagement. We appreciate good academic preparation in the social sciences and economics, plus analytical methods; however, applicants with strong background in some area of public affairs and who are prepared to gain such knowledge and skills will be considered.

**Cornell Institute
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Master of Public
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