



EMORY  
LANEY  
GRADUATE  
SCHOOL

MASTER'S IN  
DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

# STUDENT HANDBOOK 2021-2022

Laney Graduate School  
Emory University

**Master's in Development Practice**

**2021 – 2022 Student Handbook**

Handbook URL: <https://web.gs.emory.edu/mdp/academics/index.html>

The Handbook is the authoritative document of Master's in Development Practice (MDP) policies for students, faculty, and staff. It covers topics such as degree program requirements, standards of academic performance and conduct, grievance procedures, guidelines for graduation and various Emory University policies and regulations. In addition to the MDP policies contained in the Handbook, students, faculty, and staff are subject to applicable university-wide policies included in the Laney Graduate School (LGS) Handbook and additional university documents.

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## A. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

### A.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MDP DEGREE

Academic courses build student expertise across disciplines and topic areas while fulfilling MDP credit hour requirements. The MDP curriculum—and corresponding credit hour requirement—combines six required competency areas and a seventh component consisting of a set of student-selected courses. This structure ensures that all students graduate from Emory MDP with a well-integrated interdisciplinary foundation while also developing their own areas of interest.

Two competency areas—*Social Science and Integrative Analysis* and *Research and Applied Methods*—are fulfilled by completing mandatory MDP Core Courses. Of these, MDP 500 (Introductory Field Seminar), 506 (Research Methods I), 507 (Interdisciplinary Field Seminar I), 511 (Interdisciplinary Field Seminar II), and 517 (Research Methods II) must be taken in specific semesters; MDP 505 (Monitoring & Evaluation), 510 (Gender and Development), and 514 (Applied Development Practice) can be taken during the first or second year.

The other four competency areas (*Diversity and Social Justice; Environmental Science; Health Science; and Management Science*) are fulfilled through approved selections of courses that are taught across different Emory University units.

The final curriculum component—Student-Selected Courses—allows students to further their expertise in specific sectors and/or skills by selecting additional electives of interest to them. These can include courses that are taught across Emory University (and, occasionally, at partner institutions) as well as academic-year internship credits.

MDP maintains a list of Emory University courses that have been offered in previous years and have been taken by previous cohorts. Students are also encouraged to consult with the Academic and Student Affairs Coordinator if they have questions about specific courses.

*Table A.1 MDP Course Requirements: Competency Areas, Electives, and Credit Hours*

<b>MDP Curriculum</b>	<b>Courses to Fulfill</b>	<b>Required Credit Hours</b>
<b>Competency Areas</b>		
Social Science and Integrative Analysis	MDP 500, 507, 510 and 511	12
Research and Applied Methods	MDP 505, 506, 514 and 517	12
Diversity and Social Justice	Approved Course Selection	4
Environmental Science	Approved Course Selection	4
Health Science	Approved Course Selection	4
Management Science	Approved Course Selection	4
<b>Electives</b>		
Student-Selected Courses	Graduate courses at 500 level or above; Academic-Year Internship Credit	10
<b>TOTAL COURSE CREDITS TO GRADUATE</b>		<b>50</b>

### A.1.1 Course Exemptions

MDP students who demonstrate prior knowledge of the same subjects covered by core courses through previous coursework and/or work experience may be exempted from core courses. Students must submit the Course Exemption form, located in the MDP Student Hub in OneDrive, including supporting documentation to the MDP staff. The latter may consist of evidence of prior work experience or the syllabus and transcript from previous coursework. Note that undergraduate courses cannot serve as the basis for a graduate-level course exemption. Each request is reviewed by the instructor of the course the student wants to opt out of; the instructor then makes a recommendation for approval or denial to the MDP Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). If the MDP DGS agrees with the recommendation, the request is submitted to the Dean of LGS for review. The MDP office notifies the student of the Dean's decision for each request.

### A.1.2 Course Substitutions

MDP students may substitute a core course with an alternate course of similar pedagogical goals. Students must submit the Course Substitution form located in the MDP Student Hub in OneDrive and a summary explaining the desired substitution, including any pertinent personal academic and professional history and goals. Each request is reviewed by the MDP DGS. If the request is appropriate, the DGS submits the request to the Dean of LGS for review. The MDP office notifies students of the Dean's decision for each request.

### A.1.3 Concentrations (Optional)

MDP is an interdisciplinary program and offers concentrations to enable students to customize their studies to fit their intended professional trajectories. Students may pursue up to two concentrations.

Students must complete nine (9) credits directly relevant to the concentration. Students may count up to three (3) credits of relevant MDP courses and up to three (3) credits earned through a U.S.-based internship or a summer field practicum abroad (for a total of six of the nine credits). The same course cannot be used for more than one concentration. Courses that are counted toward a concentration cannot be audited or taken pass/fail (field practicums and U.S. Based Internships are the exception). Students must earn at least a B- or PS in concentration courses. The concentration form, located in the MDP Student Hub in OneDrive, must be submitted before the deadline which will be specified in the student's final Spring semester. An Approved list of concentration titles is provided in Table A.2. Customized titles must be approved in writing by the MDP DGS.

Table A.2

APPROVED CONCENTRATIONS	
<i>Concentration Title</i>	<i>Sample of Relevant Courses</i>
Gender Justice	MDP 510: Gender & Development
	SOC 533: Gender and Global Health
	SOC 585: Gender Based Violence
	WGS 586R: Race, Class & Justice
Global Health and Wellbeing	GH 500: Critical Issues in Global Health
	GH 526: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Human Rights
	GH 545: Nutrition Assessment
	GH 563: AIDS: Global Public Health Implications
Sustainable Environments and Livelihoods	EH 582: Global Climate Change: Health Impacts and Response
	ENVS 521: Natural Resource Management
	ENVS 524: Environmental Economics
	LAW 843: International Environmental Law and Vulnerability
Corporate Social Responsibility	FIN 503: Global Macroeconomic Perspective
	MDP 522: Leadership Development
	OAM 532: Business & Society
	OAM 535: Catalyzing Social Impact
Monitoring and Evaluation	BIOS 544: Introduction to R-Programming
	BSHE 524: Community Assessment
	GH 525: Qualitative Data Analysis
	MDP 505: Monitoring & Evaluation
WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) <sup>1</sup>	EH 548: Research Methods for Studies of Water and Health
	GH 529: Water & Sanitation in Developing Countries
	INFO 530: Geographic Information Systems
	MDP 505: Monitoring & Evaluation

<sup>1</sup> WASH is an LGS approved subplan which, when completed successfully, will show up on your transcript. The other concentrations are awarded by MDP, but do not appear on your transcript. MDP issues printed certificates for each concentration that a student completes.

#### A.1.4 International Field Practicum

Students participate in two international field practicums (MDP 595R), one during each summer of their first and second academic years. Students enroll in nine (9) credits of MDP 595R, for a total of 18 credits (these credits do not count toward the 50 course credits required for graduation). These practicums provide students the opportunity to gain experience with development approaches and practice in real-life settings. For their summer field practicums, students work with partner organizations on projects in the Global South (Low- and Middle-Income Countries) for eight (8) to ten (10) consecutive weeks. Exceptions to location and duration of the summer field

practicum may be granted in exceptional circumstances by the MDP Director. The specific dates for each international field practicum are determined in consultation with host organizations.

Students may apply for an exemption from their second international field practicum. In lieu of a field practicum abroad, students may complete a 400-hour internship with an approved partner organization in the United States (henceforth “U.S.-based internship”). This requirement may be completed either during the academic year (fall and/or spring), which could potentially allow for early graduation, or during the second summer of the program.

To graduate, MDP students must complete the international field practicum (or equivalent U.S.-based internship) requirement. To participate in the field practicums, students must also be in good academic standing and maintain appropriate professional conduct. Students who are on academic probation and/or received negative reports from instructors/supervisors may be limited in terms of international field practicum options or be required to enroll in a U.S.-based internship.

#### A.1.5 U.S.-Based Academic Year Internships (Optional)

During their two years at Emory, students may engage in a wide range of paid or unpaid practical learning opportunities in the Atlanta area. These include a) research, teaching, or graduate assistantships on the Emory campus; b) internships with Community-Based Organizations working with underserved communities (e.g., refugees, low-income families, human trafficking survivors, etc.); and c) internships with International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) that focus on development-related topics. To receive credit, students enroll in MDP 596R (U.S.-Based Internship) for two (2) to four (4) credits. All internship arrangements must be finalized and approved by the designated MDP personnel. Academic year internship credits can count toward elective credit hour requirements. These credits cannot count toward meeting a competency area credit hour requirement.

## A.2 COURSE ENROLLMENTS

### A.2.1 Signing up for Courses

The MDP office is responsible for enrolling all students in most courses. The processes for enrollment differ by Emory unit; information about the requirements for different schools and departments can be found in the MDP Student Hub on OneDrive. Students are responsible for verifying that their course schedules remain accurate throughout each semester. Prior to enrolling for each semester, students may consult with the designated MDP staff for academic advising regarding curriculum requirements, desired concentrations, and elective options. This is not required, but highly encouraged to ensure that students fulfill all requirements for graduation and desired concentrations.



### A.2.2 Course Withdrawals

Each semester, students may drop courses until the [“Schedule Change Ends”](#) (aka add/drop) date that is set by the Office of the Registrar. After that date, students must complete the LGS Withdrawal Signature Form that is available on LGS’ [Withdrawal, Leave of Absence, Parental Accommodation page](#). The withdrawal date is the last day that the student attended class. The instructor for each course must assign a grade of W, WF or WU. A grade of WF/IF/IU will be included in the calculation of the student’s GPA. Students are required to maintain full-time status. To do so, students must ensure that they remain enrolled for at least nine credit hours after withdrawing from a course or courses.

## A.3 STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND STATUS

### A.3.1 Residence Requirements

MDP students enroll full-time for six (6) consecutive semesters (including two summer terms). Full residence in any semester requires satisfactory completion of a minimum of nine (9) credit hours.

### A.3.2 Assessment of Professional Conduct

Assessment of academic performance focuses on course grades, internships and field practicum evaluations, and adherence to standards of professional conduct for the entire duration that students are enrolled in the program.

As professionals-in-training, MDP students are expected to perform satisfactorily in their academic work, and to exhibit conduct becoming of a trained practitioner at all times. The DGS may limit courses, U.S.-based internships, and field practicum opportunities of any student whose conduct or performance is unsatisfactory. Additionally, the MDP Director may recommend to the Dean of LGS the termination of any student whose behavior reflects poorly on Emory University and/or the MDP program and/or is disrespectful toward other students, faculty, staff, partner organizations, or community members. Such conduct is unacceptable and does not meet the professional standards of development practice.

### A.3.3 Assessment of Grades and Grading System

Most courses are taken for letter grades (A, A-, B+, B, etc.) MDP follows the overall LGS grading system, though specific percentage points that constitute each grade may differ by course and by instructor. Below is a table outlining the LGS grading system.

Table A.3

GRADE	MEANING	QUALITY POINTS
A	Superior	4.0
A-		3.7
B+		3.3
B	Satisfactory	3.0
B-		2.7
C	Marginal	2.0
F	Failing	0.0
S	Satisfactory*	
U	Unsatisfactory*	
W	Withdrawal without penalty*	
WF	Withdrawal while failing	0.0
WU	Withdrawal while performing unsatisfactorily*	
IP	In progress*	
I	Incomplete*	
IF/IU	Incomplete failing / Incomplete unsatisfactory	
AUD	Audit*	

\* These grades are not included in the calculation of a student's grade point average; additionally, students must be enrolled in the courses they audit.

#### A.3.4 Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Performance

Students must maintain at least a 2.7 GPA for each semester. For a course to fulfill graduation requirements, students must earn at least a C in that course (or an S for courses in which that is permitted). Unsatisfactory academic performance is as follows:

- A GPA of less than 2.7 in any semester
- Receipt of a grade of F, U, IF, IU, LP, NC, WF or WU in any course
- Receipt of two or more incompletes in a semester
- An incomplete in one 9 credit hour course
- Failure to demonstrate professional behavior

### A.3.5 Academic Probation

Each of the above conditions will result in the student's academic performance being judged to be unsatisfactory and the student being placed on probation for one semester. During the probationary semester, the student must:

- a. Receive no failing grades
- b. Earn at least a C grade in all courses that fulfill competency areas
- c. Eliminate the incompletes within the academic year
- d. Obtain a 2.7 GPA
- e. Maintain professional behavior

During the probation, the student will be restricted in elective enrollments and the number of credit hours they may undertake.

A student who fails to meet the above conditions will be placed on probation for a second semester. A student who fails to meet the above conditions at the end of the second probationary semester will be terminated from the program. Termination will happen automatically, unless the DGS determines that there is valid reason for extending the probationary period and provides written justification for the student's continuation and LGS grants approval.

Second Year students who are on probation need to appeal in writing to the DGS prior to applying for graduation. The appeal should include a description of the conditions that resulted in the student being on probation and the actions the student has taken to be removed from probation. While the LGS Handbook allows graduate students to make an appeal for a third probationary semester, LGS guidelines are designed for PhD programs, and are not suitable for the MDP two-year schedule. The criteria in the MDP Student Handbook supersede those in the LGS Student Handbook.

### A.3.6 Leave of Absence

A leave of absence of up to one calendar year may be granted because of medical necessity, full-time employment, receipt of an external award, or other acceptable reasons. [A request for a leave of absence](#) must originate with the student, be endorsed by the DGS, and submitted to the LGS Dean for consideration prior to the beginning of the semester for which the leave is requested. To be eligible, the student must be in good academic standing and resolved all incompletes. A student is eligible to request a leave of absence only after having completed at least one semester in the program. Students returning from a leave of absence should request readmission at least 30 days prior to the start of the semester. Students must consult with the MDP DGS regarding their plans for a Leave of Absence to determine how this may impact the timing of required courses.

### A.3.7 Time to Complete the Degree

Students must complete all requirements for the MDP Master's degree within five years of admission. Extensions beyond this period will be granted only in extraordinary circumstances. No

requests for additional time will be considered except by application to the Dean of the Laney Graduate School with strong support of the program.

#### A.3.8 Degree Completion

Students must complete the Degree Application, Exit Survey, and other degree completion documents, as required by the LGS. For more information, visit the Graduation folder in the MDP Student Hub in OneDrive.

Additionally, MDP provides students an opportunity to participate in an MDP Exit Interview. Students may use this one-on-one session to provide confidential feedback on their experience in the MDP program.

In compliance with Emory policy, all outstanding balances must be paid before graduation.

## **B. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

The cost of attending Emory University includes tuition and academic fees, living expenses, health insurance, parking fees, and incidentals such as the purchase of textbooks and supplies. All tuition and fees are determined by the Board of Trustees and are subject to change without notice.

### B.1 TUITION AND FEES

#### B.1.1 Paying Bills

After a student's schedule is entered into OPUS, [Student Financial Services](#) (SFS) generates an electronic bill that is posted in OPUS. A student is notified of this posting via email to the student's Emory email address. The Office of Student Financial Services does not mail paper statements. Student Accounts detail charges, provide anticipated aid, and track account activity. Bills are payable upon receipt. Students should follow instructions provided by SFS on their website.

Students who pay their bills after the published deadlines must pay a late registration fee of \$150. Those who do not pay their bills and/or enroll in courses by the end of add/drop will have their registration and their financial award (tuition and/or stipend) canceled.

Students who carry a balance in any given semester are at risk of not being able to enroll in the subsequent semester. Therefore, it is essential that students communicate with MDP regarding any financial difficulties they encounter.

#### B.1.2 Tuition

For information on current tuition and fees, visit the MDP's [Program Costs](#) page. Be aware that MDP offers only full-time enrollment. To maintain full-time status, students must enroll for a minimum of nine credit hours. Tuition remains the same if students enroll in courses that add up to more than the nine-credit minimum.

### B.1.3 Audit Course Tuition

Full-time students may audit courses without incurring additional tuition fees. Audited courses may not be established for credit by examination, nor may they be changed to credit courses after the end of the drop/add period. Audited course credits may be counted toward tuition-paid status, but do not count toward candidacy. Audited credits do not count toward eligibility for federal financial aid.

### B.1.4 Enrollment Fee

All LGS students will be assessed an Enrollment Fee each semester.

### B.1.5 Mental Health and Counseling Fee

All Emory students will be assessed a Mental Health and Counseling Fee each semester. This fee supports counseling, psychiatry, health, wellness, and crisis intervention support services. For more information, visit [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#).

### B.1.6 Computing Fee

All LGS students will be assessed a Computing Fee each semester. This fee supports information technology and computing services, including student email, web access, and other computer-supported services. For more information, visit [Student Digital Life](#).

### B.1.7 Activity Fee

All Emory students will be assessed an Activity Fee in the Fall and Spring semesters only. This fee supports student government and organizations, other organized student activities, and campus events. For more information, visit [Laney Graduate Student Council \(LGSC\)](#).

### B.1.8 Athletics and Recreation Fee

All Emory students will be assessed an Athletics and Recreation Fee each semester. This fee supports recreational and athletic programs. For more information, visit the [Recreation & Wellness website](#).

### B.1.9 Transcript Fee

All new degree and certificate students are required to pay a one-time transcript fee of \$70 at the time they first enroll at Emory. This is a one-time fee that pays for all future transcripts. If you already obtained a degree from Emory, you may have paid this fee already. The fee will be assessed only to students seeking their first degree from Emory. For more information visit the [Office of the University Registrar](#)

## B.2 MANDATORY HEALTH INSURANCE

All new and continuing degree-seeking Emory University students are required to have health insurance, including international students. Students must either purchase the [Emory University Health Insurance Plan \(EUSHIP\)](#) or provide documentation of enrollment in a comparable United States-domiciled plan. New students wishing to waive enrollment in the Emory Student Health Insurance Plan will need to complete the annual waiver process via OPUS prior to the first day of classes of their first semester at Emory. All returning students must also complete the enrollment/waiver process annually prior to the first day of classes of the fall semester.

If a student has not [waived out](#) of the Emory University Student Health Insurance Plan by the date of Emory's pre-term Student Financial Services bill, the student will be billed for the Emory University Student Health Insurance Plan. However, the student will still have until the first day of semester classes to complete a waiver request and have the insurance enrollment and charge reversed. Students must complete the annual insurance enrollment/waiver process each year they are enrolled at Emory. For more information, visit [Student Health Services](#).

## B.3 FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO THE UNIVERSITY

Students are responsible for maintaining good financial standing with the University, including timely payment of tuition, emergency loans and other fees, as well as fines that may be incurred from the libraries or parking office. Penalties for past due accounts include but are not limited to cancellation of registration, refusal to approve continued registration, refusal to release transcripts, and withholding of diplomas. For more information, visit [Student Financial Services](#).

## B.4 MERIT AWARDS AND FINANCIAL AID

### B.4.1 Loans and Office of Financial Aid

Student loans are money that is borrowed to help pay for university tuition, books, and living expenses. These funds must be repaid. Loans are an important way in which U.S. citizens and permanent residents pay for a portion of their educational costs. For more detailed information visit [Graduate School Financial Aid](#).

### B.4.2 MDP Partial Tuition Merit-Based Scholarship

MDP offers partial merit-based tuition scholarships on a competitive basis, upon acceptance into the program. These tuition scholarships are distributed over fall and spring semesters for each student who remains in good academic standing. These merit scholarships are not negotiable once a student is enrolled in the program and remain in place as long as the student maintains good academic standing.

#### B.4.3 MDP Summer Term Scholarship

MDP provides a full tuition and fees scholarship to MDP students in good academic standing who enroll and receive credit for international field practicums (or U.S.-based internships) during the summer term of the first and second year.

#### B.4.4 MDP Field Practicum Funds

MDP provides funding for approved summer field practicums in the Global South (or other approved field locations) in accordance with Emory University and LGS travel expense policies. Students receive funds to cover most expenses directly related to their field practicum prior to their departure. MDP will adjust the field practicum funding it provides if the host-organization covers some or all of the student's expenses and or provides compensation for the work the student does during the field practicum.

### C. HONOR, CONDUCT, AND GRIEVANCE

[The LGS Honor Code](#), as outlined in the LGS Handbook, will apply to cases of academic misconduct by MDP students. Similarly, procedures for reporting and hearing evidence pertaining to cases of honor code violation will follow the written policies of the Graduate School.

#### C.1 GENERAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Students who have a grievance related to some aspect of the program should report it to the DGS. The student must describe the grievance and relevant details in writing through a letter addressed to the DGS, who will try, if possible, to resolve the grievance in conversation with the student and relevant parties. If this is not successful, the MDP Director will appoint a committee of three Emory faculty and staff members or use an existing standing committee, who will review the grievance and propose an appropriate response.

If it is impossible to resolve the grievance within this committee or within the framework of the MDP administrative structure, the MDP Director will forward the grievance to the Office of the Senior Associate Dean of the LGS. From this point forward, the grievance will be handled according to the Grievance Procedure outlined in the LGS Handbook. If the issue is with the MDP Director and/or DGS, the student should go directly to the Senior Associate Dean of the LGS.

### D. BECOMING A DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL

The MDP program is a professional degree and, as such, it offers a variety of professional development resources (workshops, networking events, professional contacts, one-to-one mentorship, and access to development job platforms such as DEVEX) to help students achieve their career goals. MDP students are also encouraged to take advantage of other resources and

opportunities provided by the LGS and other units of Emory University to fine-tune their job search strategy, polish their job application materials, practice networking and interviewing, and discuss other career-relevant issues.

Students' choice of concentrations, their academic record in graduate school, and their field practicum and internship performance are all important factors in securing professionally meaningful employment after graduation. Students should consult with the MDP DGS and/or the MDP Program Director early in their graduate studies for advice on structuring their curriculum and practicum experiences in ways that will help them develop a coherent professional profile and trajectory.