



**William Howard Taft**  
— U n i v e r s i t y —

*School of Government and Law*

## **Master of Public Administration (MPA)**

*A Non-Resident Independent Study Degree Program*

*This catalog is for students who enrolled in the MPA program prior to October 26, 2021.*

This catalog supplement should be carefully reviewed in conjunction with the University's *General Catalog* by individuals considering application to the *MPA* program. Additional catalog supplements are available for other University degree programs.

Any questions on the information contained in this catalog supplement should be directed to the Admissions Office at the address or telephone numbers below:

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*William  
Howard Taft  
University  
has served  
students for  
over three  
decades.*

## Message from the Dean

The University believes it is crucial for students to understand the underlying principles of changes occurring in today's world, and has designed courses and curricula reflecting these changes. Exponentially increasing technologies, industry convergence, and the resulting impact on governing bodies and decision makers unleash a new and very dynamic era of education and laws attached to the process.

Our society will need visionary and pace setting leaders moving teams and organizations toward a shared vision of goals while at the same time setting high standards marked by achievable and realistic goals. Policy makers will need to recognize the impact of climate migration, levels of displacement among populations, and the cost of dollars and human suffering attached to this, as well as urban relocation.



In 2016 the Brookings Institute looked at some of the largest metro economies in the world and found if there are more people, there will be more productivity. Density apparently drives innovation. A 2018 McKinsey study showed that greenhouse gases could be reduced by a significant amount if we would build smart cities. These are topics and issues that urban planners and lawmakers will need to understand and incorporate in future decision-making processes.

With a globally changing labour force, a renewed understanding of compositions of cities will become a crucial component, as will the understanding of data analytics and big data. Data is power and as Francis Hutcheson back in 1725 said, "That action is best, which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers" – a statement that is applicable to our changing global environment.

**Anita Cassard, MPA, PhD**  
*Dean*

*Dr. Anita Cassard believes in being affiliative - emphasizing the importance of teamwork; a trait she applied in helping develop various programs for multiple government and nonprofit organizations such as (for example) the Maryland Transportation Authority in Baltimore, the NYS Office for the Aging, and the implementation and acceptance of Hospice training classes into the curriculum for Medical Schools during her years of consultations on a local, national, and international level. Her board experience covers areas ranging from Education to Health Care, Business and Public Policy.*

*Dr. Cassard received her PhD in Applied Management and Decision Sciences with a specialization in Leadership and Organizational Change from Walden University, Minnesota and her MPS from Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy in NY/NY.*



## Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program

### OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

A recognized leader in the field of education, the University now offers a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree. This is an intensive, 18 to 24-month professional graduate degree program that provides students with the skills, knowledge, and network they will need to be successful professionals and engaged citizens serving the public good across local, national and international government, nonprofit, and private sectors.

Our MPA program is designed to meet the growing need to advance public policy, enhance public management, and bridge the private and public sectors. Its curricular focus is grounded in a comprehensive view of public service education that equips students with the skills needed to implement effective policy; manage organizations with diverse stakeholders; and apply rigorous, evidence-based analysis to inform decision-making. Our students move on to successful careers, making an impact by serving the public good, finding jobs in national, state, local, and international government, nonprofit organizations, and for-profit companies throughout the US and around the world.

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the *Master of Public Administration (MPA)* program are as follows:

1. Prepare students with skills and knowledge for effectively leading and managing organizations that ultimately serve the global public good.
2. Maintain an applied and professionally oriented curriculum.
3. Develop advanced professional practices and analytical skills in our students through classroom instruction and experiential learning activities.
4. Prepare students to work fluidly across the public, nonprofit, and business sectors.
5. Create new research that advances knowledge in the governance and management of public and nonprofit organizations.

Successful graduates of the program will:

- Have an advanced understanding and appreciation of the theoretical and historical foundations of the field of professional public administration, thereby enabling students to critically think and to link theory with practice as they address current issues in the public and nonprofit sector.

- Apply the knowledge and skills necessary to make a practical difference in the quality of operations in public organizations and communities.
- Effectively summarize, appraise, and communicate technical and professional information through both oral and written media.
- Develop core competencies necessary for helping to shape the organizational environment (broadly defined) in which they operate and for managing individuals, groups, clients, and programs.
- Develop an ethical perspective based on the public service values of personal integrity, accountability, the public's interest, and equity and fairness.

### PRESENTATION

The Program is presented on a semester basis. Students are generally enrolled in 3 courses per semester with the exception of the capstone, which is taken separately at the end of the program. Each semester consists of a minimum time period of 16 weeks from the date study commences. Students not completing all semester coursework in the 16-week period will be granted an automatic two-month extension of time to complete the semester. Students may take a break between semesters; however, except in special circumstances, the entire program must be completed within five years.

Coursework is submitted and graded via the University's online learning platform, *Moodle*<sup>™</sup>. This gives students and faculty one central place to log on and interact through discussion forums, submit and retrieve feedback on lesson assignments, and access any ancillary electronically available course materials.

The Program is available to enrolled students from anywhere there is an internet connection.

Each course in the Program contains a series of lesson assignments, generally consisting of reading assignments supplemented occasionally by various multimedia. Students are evaluated through examinations and/or research assignments, which are submitted for faculty evaluation. Students conclude the Program with the preparation of a capstone project.



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### DIRECTED INDEPENDENT STUDY

The advantages to independent study are obvious – flexibility in the study schedule, the ability to complete coursework from almost anywhere in the world, and the ability to interact with instructors and students with common interests from all regions of the United States and many foreign countries. However, independent study education is not the best alternative for all students.

While there are exceptions and every individual is different, experience has shown certain personal attributes are often helpful or detrimental in the successful completion of distance learning courses. Students who have been successful in independent study programs often have many of the following attributes:

- Are good at prioritizing tasks and often get things done ahead of time without being reminded and, as a result, are excellent time managers;
- Are highly motivated;
- Recognize independent study is an alternative means to achieve educational goals – not an “easy way” to achieve such goals;
- Have a strong desire to complete their educational goals.

Because students won’t be sitting in a classroom on a regular basis and won’t have an instructor or classmates nearby to remind them of assignments, a student must be self-directed and conscientious about completing assignments to succeed in the program. As with all things in life, the greater the motivation to do something, the greater the chance of success.

Individuals who possess the following attributes *may not* be a good candidate for an independent study program:

- Students who strongly prefer face-to-face interaction with instructors and classmates;
- Students who find classroom discussion is almost always helpful;
- Students who need feedback from their instructor immediately and often;
- Students with poor self-discipline and planning skills.

The first three points are not possible in our directed independent study modality. The flexibility that makes this type of program attractive to many students requires greater self-discipline and planning than in a traditional

classroom program where the timing of the course is predetermined. While the University will assist the student in preparing a study plan, a student must exercise self-discipline in the completion of the degree requirements.

*Commitment and self-discipline are the keys to success.* No applicant will be admitted to the program unless the University believes they have the academic ability to succeed. However, the degree of commitment and self-discipline cannot always be accurately assessed at the time of admission.

### ADMISSION POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Applicants who have earned a Bachelor’s degree from a college or university accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education are considered regular applicants to the Program. The majority of applicants to this program are adults working in a variety of professional settings.

An individual not qualifying as a regular applicant may apply as a special applicant. Special applicants are evaluated on a case-by-case basis but must have an academic background equivalent to a Bachelor’s degree earned in the United States. This could be a degree earned outside the United States or a combination of academic units earned and professional employment experience.

An applicant may be conditionally admitted into the program based on a completed Application for Admission form, and student copies of transcripts reflecting the applicant’s highest relevant degree.

The vast majority of the program’s applicants are mature adults working in a variety of professional settings. Many have not attended college for several years. Consequently, prior class rank and grade point average are not significant factors in the admission process.

### FOREIGN APPLICANTS

Applicants whose native language is not English and who have not earned a degree from an appropriately accredited institution where English is the principal language of instruction must receive a minimum score of 530 on the paper-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or 71 on the iBT, or its equivalent. For more information on TOEFL visit [their website](#).

Applicants with degrees earned at institutions located outside the United States must have their academic



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transcripts evaluated and certified by a National Association of Credential Evaluation Services, Inc. (NACES) member organization.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for admission to the program, an applicant must complete the University's [Application Form](#) and pay the associated \$75 Application Fee. **In addition, we require the following documents to complete an application:**

- Resume
- Bachelor's degree transcript
- Copy of ID

It is not necessary to submit official transcripts of the highest relevant degree at the time of application; *however, official transcripts will need to be received directly from the institution of origin within 30 days of enrollment.*

An admissions representative will contact the applicant if further documents are required, such as a degree evaluation. Once all necessary documents are received, the applicant will be sent for review and should hear back about acceptance within two business days.

### TRANSFER CREDIT AND CREDIT BASED UPON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The acceptance of transfer credits between academic institutions lies within the discretion of the receiving college or university. Therefore, the University cannot guarantee that any course or degree completed at another educational institution will be accepted by the University nor can the University guarantee that any course or degree program completed at the University will be accepted as credit by any other educational institution.

Students may apply to have prior coursework and/or college-level learning reviewed by the University for academic credit.

**Transfer Credit:** Transfer credit toward a degree may be awarded for postsecondary courses completed by the student at other appropriately accredited institutions if such courses are found to be academically comparable and meet the standards and requirements of the specific program. Courses must have been completed in the last seven years to qualify as transfer credits toward the MPA program.

**Portfolio Credit:** Academic credit may be given for adequately documented and validated experiential equivalent learning of a postsecondary nature. Examples include credit for achievement of certifications, college level equivalent tests, or other postsecondary level equivalent experience. Students with prior military experience may also apply to have military coursework evaluated for possible equivalent college credit.

The awarding of transfer credit or portfolio credit is considered on a case-by-case basis and awarded at the sole discretion of the University.

### HOW TO ENROLL

Once an applicant is conditionally accepted for admission to the program, an admissions representative will inquire about the applicant's desired start date (within six months of acceptance). After confirmation of the desired start date, a formal *Enrollment Agreement* will be prepared and sent to the applicant for review and signature via DocuSign. Enrollment may begin on the 15<sup>th</sup> of any month.

Applicants are encouraged to contact Admissions with any questions regarding enrollment procedures.

### DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

To earn the *Master of Public Administration (MPA)* degree a student must complete the courses listed in the curriculum section of this *Catalog Supplement* in good academic standing and pass all examinations.

The requirements may be completed in as little as 12 months. All requirements must be completed within five years from the date of initial enrollment.

### FACULTY

The University employs faculty qualified to undertake the level of instruction or course development that they are assigned. They possess degrees or credentials appropriate to the degree program and level they teach. A complete listing of faculty and their qualifications is set forth in the *Faculty Catalog Supplement* available on the website.

### INCOME TAX CREDITS AND DEDUCTIONS

Many students may qualify for the Lifetime Learning Credit (equal to 20% of their qualified education expenses) on their federal income tax return. Additional information on the Lifetime Learning Credit can be found on the University's website. Some education expenses may also





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qualify as a business deduction for work-related education pursuant to Section 162 of the Internal Revenue Code.

It is recommended that applicants consult with their tax advisor or read IRS Publication 970 (Tax Benefits for Education) to determine how these credits or deductions might benefit them individually.

### FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition for the *MPA* program is \$395 per unit. Current information on financial aid can be found on the University's website.

Upon acceptance into the program, students may choose between paying each semester's tuition upfront or paying 30% of tuition upon enrollment in a new semester, followed by 5 monthly payments. Those who choose the University's interest-free payment plan will have to pay each semester's tuition in full before moving on to their next semester.

Enrollment in the Program will generally qualify students for payment deferrals on existing federally insured student loans. Applicants seeking deferrals on existing student loans should check with their lenders prior to enrollment.



### FEE SCHEDULE

Application Fee*	\$75
Transfer Credit Evaluation Fee*	\$55
Portfolio Credit Evaluation Fee*	\$100
Registration Fee (per semester)	\$50
Computer Library Fee (per semester)	\$45
Diploma Fee*	\$75
Transcript Fee (Two Provided at No Cost)	\$10
Late Payment Fee (Declined Credit Card, Per Item)	\$25

*Students may pay any of the above fees Visa®, MasterCard®, Discover® or American Express®.*

The cost of books and materials, other than each course syllabus, is not included in the tuition. Most books and materials may be purchased at local colleges, retail bookstores, directly from publishers, or on the internet. The cost is estimated to average approximately \$150 per course, but many sources offer great discounts.

### EMPLOYER TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

The University will provide reasonable documentation to students seeking tuition reimbursement from their employer. However, if employer acceptance or tuition reimbursement is a material consideration, the University recommends applicants ascertain the policy of their employer prior to enrollment.

### FINANCIAL AID

Advancing your professional education is an investment in your personal and professional development. The University makes every effort to make a post-graduate education an achievable goal for all qualified applicants.

The University participates in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Armed Forces Tuition Assistance (TA) education programs designed specifically for military active duty, reserve, veterans, or spouse and family.

### LOAN DEFERRALS & GRANTS

Current information on financial aid is set forth on the University's website. Enrollment in the program will generally qualify students for payment deferrals on existing federally insured student loans. Applicants seeking deferrals on existing student loans should check with their lenders prior to enrollment.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q. How long does it take to complete the program?**

**A.** The University's commitment to the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) precludes any student graduating from a university degree program in less than one year. Students may take as long as five years to complete the program.

### **Q. Will you accept transfer credits?**

**A.** Yes, students may apply to transfer up to a total of 18 semester units from comparable coursework completed at approved institutions. Applicants seeking transfer credit must pay the \$55 Transfer Credit Evaluation Fee and include full transcripts and course descriptions with their application to the program.

### **Q. I don't have a lot of computer knowledge. Will I have difficulty completing the assignments?**

**A.** Computer requirements are detailed in the *General Catalog*. Basic knowledge of a program such as Word® is required to complete lesson assignments. Internet access is necessary to utilize Moodle™ and the electronic library. An email address is necessary to effectively communicate with university personnel and fellow students – *a University email is not provided to students*.

### **Q. I'm not sure I want to complete the entire program. Can I take just one course rather than enroll in the entire program?**

**A.** No. Students are enrolled in an average of 11 units each semester with the exception of the final capstone project; however, a student who elects not to complete the program or enroll in additional semesters has no financial obligation to the university beyond the current semester.

### **Q. Is this program approved for federal student aid?**

**A.** No. We do not currently accept Title IV loans for the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program.

### **Q. Are there any other financial aid options available to students not eligible for Title IV?**

**A.** Yes. Many students are eligible for financial aid through employer tuition reimbursement programs and/or Taft University's *Partners in Professional Education (PIPE)* program. Additionally, the university offers a no-interest payment plan, which permits students to pay 30% of the semester's tuition at the time of enrollment and the remaining balance over a five-month period. Other financing sources or scholarship opportunities may also be available via the website's [Scholarships & Grants](#) page.

### **Q. Is there ever a need to attend a physical class?**

**A.** No. Academic and administrative procedures are carefully designed so that students can complete all requirements for graduation entirely online without unreasonably disrupting their professional or family lives.

### **Q. Will I need to complete courses pursuant to a rigid timetable?**

**A.** No. Each semester consists of a minimum time period of 16 weeks from the date study commences. Students not completing all semester coursework in the 16-week period will be granted an automatic 2-month extension. There are no assignments that must be submitted on a weekly or monthly schedule and students may take time off between semesters. However, except in special circumstances, the entire program must be completed within five years from the date of matriculation.

### **Q. How are examinations handled?**

**A.** Students are required to pass one proctored examination each semester, totaling three examinations for the entire program. The exams can be proctored online by ProctorU under the supervision of a web camera and microphone – or students can select a member of the Consortium of College Testing Centers (CCTC). CCTC offers proctoring services at over 250 locations throughout the United States.

### **Q. What research tools are available to students?**

**A.** The university provides all students with independent online research tools to assist in performing coursework through the *Library & Information Resources Network (LIRN) Virtual Library Collection*. LIRN is an extensive collection of scholarly information, sources, and reference titles from a variety of databases. Students pay a \$45 Computer Library Fee each semester.

### **Q. How soon can I get started?**

**A.** The program utilizes an open enrollment policy. Students may commence study on the 15<sup>th</sup> of any month. Approved applicants may delay enrollment for a maximum of six months. If an approved applicant has not enrolled within six months of acceptance, a new application, including fees and documents, will be required.



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### CURRICULUM

The following courses are required in the *Master of Public Administration (MPA)* program:

	Unit Value
<b>First Semester</b>	
MPA500 Public Administration	3
MPA501 Administrative Law	4
MPA508 Understanding Public Policy	4
<b>Second Semester</b>	
MPA504 State and Local Politics	4
MPA513 Challenging Global Issues	4
MPA515 Policy Analysis	3
<b>Third Semester Electives (Choose 10 Credits)</b>	
MPA502 Public Budgeting	4
MPA503 Program Planning & Evaluation	3
MPA507 Economics in Public Administration	4
MPA511 Leadership in Public Organizations	3
MPA512 Global Business	3
MPA516 Public Administration & Technology	3
MPA517 Contemporary Topics in Government	2-4
<b>Capstone</b>	
MPA600 Capstone Project	4
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>36</b>

### COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

#### First Semester

##### MPA500 – Public Administration (3 units)

This is the gateway course to the field of public administration. It examines the major intellectual and constitutional foundations of American government and public administration as well as current trends. The course includes theoretical and practical aspects of key governmental processes, the historical development of the field, contributions of social science to understanding organizations, and ethical issues in contemporary government activities.

##### MPA501 – Administrative Law (4 units)

This course explores the study of the legal framework of public administration. Basic principles of constitutional law and the institutions of American government are reviewed. The development of administrative agency as a contemporary legal and social phenomenon and its relationship to other branches of government are considered.

##### MPA508 – Understanding Public Policy (4 units)

Covers political and organizational perspectives on the policy-making process: agenda setting, policy design, adoption, implementation, evaluation, modification or termination, policy leadership skills, negotiation, and strategic mapping.

#### Second Semester

##### MPA504 – State and Local Politics (4 units)

This course considers issues related to politics in states and communities using a comparative approach. “Its focus is on conflicts in states and communities and the structures and processes designed to manage conflict” (Dye & MacManus, 2015, Preface). The course considers how conflict is carried on, how leaders act in conflict situations, and decisions are made about who gets what.

##### MPA513 – Challenging Global Issues (4 units)

This course covers the foundations of international relations and provides a comprehensive view of how interdependence and the forces of globalization are creating serious challenges to governments. The political, economic, and cultural forces are discussed in relation to contemporary globalization and world affairs.

##### MPA515 – Policy Analysis (3 units)

This course addresses the conceptual foundations and craft skills required to perform policy analysis. Students in this course will consider core economic principles and learn key research and communication skills, which are needed to construct applied analysis.

#### Electives (Choose 10 Credits)

##### MPA502 – Public Budgeting (3 units)

This course covers the theory and practice of public budget preparation and review, governmental accounting and auditing, and political issues in the budget process. The course includes consideration of capital budgeting, revenue estimation, and the history of budget reform efforts.

##### MPA503 – Program Planning & Evaluation (3 units)

This course is an analysis of the theory and practice of designing, implementing, and evaluating public and nonprofit programs. This course develops skills in outcome management, survey design, and presentation of results.

##### MPA507 – Economics in Public Administration (4 units)

This course covers economics and the role of the government in an economy. Economists are concerned with the distributional aspects of resources and the ramifications of resource use. The primary objective of this course is to familiarize the student with basic economic concepts and theories that have been developed to explain economic issues that are faced, decisions that are made, and policies that are implemented.

##### MPA511 – Leadership in Public Organizations (3 units)

This course addresses the need for a compact but nonetheless complete analysis of leadership for students and practitioners who work in public and nonprofit organizations. The first half addresses the basic issues and theories related to leadership; the second half looks at leadership as a cycle of action requiring an array of competencies.





**MPA512 – Global Business (3 units)**

This course considers whether globalization benefits or harms national economies. This course takes a close look at how changes in regulations governing international trade and investment, when coupled with changes in political systems and technology, have dramatically altered the competitive playing field confronting many businesses. It discusses the resulting opportunities and threats and reviews the strategies that managers can pursue to exploit the opportunities and counter the threats.

**MPA516 – Public Administration & Technology (3 units)**

Technology management for public managers focuses on what an individual in a managerial position should know about information technology. Social, political, and organizational effects of the technology on individuals, groups, and society are covered. Students gain an appreciation for emerging concerns in the information age.

**MPA517 – Contemporary Topics in Government (2-4 units)**

This is independent study given under the direction of a faculty member. Students engage in specific topic of interest (which is usually not available through regular offerings), or participate in projects for governments and non-profit agencies. A final written report is required.

**MPA600 – Capstone Project (4 units)**

This Capstone course requires preparation of a written project demonstrating scholarship on some aspect of public administration, normally in-depth treatment of an applied management concern; must be approved by a thesis committee (chairperson and two faculty members). Concurrent enrollment in final courses with Dean's approval.



## **Catalog Addendum for California Residents**

### **STUDENT TUITION RECOVERY FUND**

The State of California established the Student Tuition Recovery Fund (STRF) to relieve or mitigate economic loss suffered by a student in an educational program at a qualifying institution, who is or was a California resident while enrolled, or was enrolled in a residency program, if the student enrolled in the institution, prepaid tuition, and suffered an economic loss. Unless relieved of the obligation to do so, you must pay the state-imposed assessment for the STRF, or it must be paid on your behalf, if you are a student in an educational program, who is a California resident, or are enrolled in a residency program, and prepay all or part of your tuition.

You are not eligible for protection from the STRF and you are not required to pay the STRF assessment if you are not a California resident, or are not enrolled in a residency program.

It is important that you keep copies of your enrollment agreement, financial aid documents, receipts, or any other information that documents the amount paid to the school. Questions regarding the STRF may be directed to the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, 2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 400, Sacramento, CA 95833, (916) 431-6959 or (888) 370-7589.

To be eligible for STRF, you must be a California resident or are enrolled in a residency program, prepaid tuition, paid or deemed to have paid the STRF assessment, and suffered an economic loss as a result of any of the following:

1. The institution, a location of the institution, or an educational program offered by the institution was closed or discontinued, and you did not choose to participate in a teach-out plan approved by the Bureau or did not complete a chosen teach-out plan approved by the Bureau.
2. You were enrolled at an institution or a location of the institution within the 120-day period before the closure of the institution or location of the institution or were enrolled in an educational program within the 120-day period before the program was discontinued.
3. You were enrolled at an institution or a location of the institution more than 120 days before the closure of the institution or location of the institution, in an educational program offered by

the institution as to which the Bureau determined there was a significant decline in the quality or value of the program more than 120 days before closure.

4. The institution has been ordered to pay a refund by the Bureau but has failed to do so.
5. The institution has failed to pay or reimburse loan proceeds under a federal student loan program as required by law or has failed to pay or reimburse proceeds received by the institution in excess of tuition and other costs.
6. You have been awarded restitution, a refund, or other monetary award by an arbitrator or court, based on a violation of this chapter by an institution or representative of an institution, but have been unable to collect the award from the institution.
7. You sought legal counsel that resulted in the cancellation of one or more of your student loans and have an invoice for services rendered and evidence of the cancellation of the student loan or loans.

To qualify for STRF reimbursement, the application must be received within four (4) years from the date of the action or event that made the student eligible for recovery from STRF.

A student whose loan is revived by a loan holder or debt collector after a period of non-collection may, at any time, file a written application for recovery from STRF for the debt that would have otherwise been eligible for recovery. If it has been more than four (4) years since the action or event that made the student eligible, the student must have filed a written application for recovery within the original four (4) year period, unless the period has been extended by another act of law.

However, no claim can be paid to any student without a social security number or a taxpayer identification number.