

Public Policy

Graduate Program

Master of Arts in Public Policy

The master of arts in public policy (MPP) is a two-year multidisciplinary degree that equips students with the analytical skills required to understand public problems and develop policy responses. The program is small by design, affording students extensive opportunities to interact with faculty in classes, seminars, research and teaching assistantships, student thesis research, and academic and career advice. Distinctive elements of the program include:

- A program that is small by design, affording close contact with core faculty;
- Location within a university-based research institute, providing opportunities to work on public policy research and technical assistance projects;
- A balance of quantitative and non-quantitative courses, both of which emphasize analytic thinking; and
- Enrichment through the involvement of scholars and practitioners from overseas.

The Faculty

David M. Altschuler, Principal Research Scientist; Adjunct Associate Professor (Sociology and Mental Hygiene): juvenile crime and the justice system, juvenile aftercare and parole, drug control policy.

Burt S. Barnow, Associate Director for Research; Principal Research Scientist; Adjunct Professor (Economics): labor economics, employment and training programs, applied microeconomics and econometrics, program evaluation, child support programs, welfare programs.

Hon. Benjamin Cardin, Distinguished Lecturer, U.S. Representative, Third Congressional District, Maryland: the legislative process, domestic social.

Amy Crews Cutts, Senior Lecturer: economics.

Joseph Harkness, Associate Research Scientist: housing policy, urban and regional development, and social policy.

Ori Lev, Lecturer: values and ethics.

Tama Leventhal, Associate Research Scientist: social policy, children, youth, and families, low-income families with children.

Barbara Morgan, Senior Lecturer: applied econometrics, human resource policy, labor market outcomes.

Sandra J. Newman, Director; Professor of Public Policy (Sociology and Health Policy and Management): housing policy, policy analysis, urban and social welfare policy.

Demetra Nightingale, Principal Research Scientist: social policy, employment, welfare, and poverty.

Marion W. Pines, Senior Fellow; Director of Sar Levitan Center for Social Policy Studies: program design and implementation, at-risk youth strategies, social welfare policy, education reform, employment strategies, service integration model for families.

Paul Posner, Senior Lecturer; Director of Federal Budget Issues, GAO: policy process, federal budget process, tax policy.

Lester M. Salamon, Principal Research Scientist; Founding Director, IPS; Director Center for Civil Society Studies; Professor (Political Science): alternative instruments of government action, social welfare policy, nonprofit sector U.S. and overseas, human capital investment policy.

Marsha Schachtel, Senior Fellow: urban studies and urban planning.

Joseph Sterne, Senior Fellow: media and public policy, civil rights.

Lisa Towne, Lecturer, Study Director and Senior Program Officer in the Center for Education and the National Research Council (NRC). Former Assistant Director for Social Behavioral Sciences in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy: quantitative methods, education research and its implications for evidence-based education policy, child health.

Joint Appointments

John J. Boland, Professor Emeritus and Lecturer (Geography and Environmental Engineering): environment and public utility economics, water resource management, and environmental policy.

Andrew J. Cherlin, Professor (Sociology): family sociology, urban sociology, demography.

Matthew A. Crenson, Professor (Political Science): urban government and politics, political origins of American welfare policy.

Ruth Faden, Professor (Health Policy and Management) Director of Law, Ethics, and Health program: ethics and health policy management.

Bernard Guyer, Professor and Chair (Maternal and Child Health Policy): maternal and child health policy, childhood injury prevention, child development, childhood immunization.

Robert Moffitt, Professor (Economics, Population and Family Health Sciences): labor economics, public finance, and population economics.

Vicente Navarro, Professor (Health Policy and Management): welfare state, globalization, social policy.

Requirements for Admission

Applicants must have the equivalent of an American B.A. degree and typically must score 600 or higher on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). In addition to college and GRE scores, the Admissions Committee considers relevant work and community experience, career goals, a personal statement, and letters of recommendation, especially those from former professors. Students should consult the Graduate Admissions section of the Johns Hopkins School of Arts & Sciences catalog for additional information. International students whose native language is not English must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and have the results submitted directly to the University. Hopkins requires a minimum score of 560 on the test, and a score of 600 or better is preferred.

Requirements for the M.A. Degree

Degree requirements consist of a set of core analytical courses, a set of substantive policy courses in an area of specialization, and a policy practicum, consisting of an internship and the opportunity to write a thesis.

Core Courses

Each student is required to take the following core courses:

- 195.603 Applied Microeconomics for Policymaking
- 195.605-606 Statistical and Data Analysis for Policymaking
- 195.607 The Policy Process
- 195.608 Policy Tools
- 195.609 Policy Analysis for the Real World
- 195.611 Introduction to Program Evaluation (Various) Research Design and Methods
- 195.610 Values, Ethics, and Public Policy

These courses, taken primarily during the first year, emphasize the acquisition of a set of core analytical skills, an appreciation of the ethical dimensions of policy choice embodied in the concept of “citizenship,” an awareness of the role of private as well as public institutions in public problem-solving, and a recognition of the lessons of foreign experience in dealing with policy decisions. MPP students choose among several courses in research design and methods.

Students usually take four courses in each of four semesters, plus an internship in the summer between their first and second years, for a total of 17 courses. The program consists of 9 core courses, 5 electives, the internship, and a master’s thesis or its equivalent.

Substantive Courses

In addition to the required core courses, students are required to select either a substantive field of policy or a particular analytic area for special focus. A minimum of five courses is required in this concentration. Courses are drawn from the extraordinary array available through MPP and its associated professional schools and departments within the University. Students may choose course offerings from the Graduate School of Public Health, the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), the Whiting School of Engineering, and the School of Professional Studies in Business and Education. Please note that MPP students are limited to a maximum of four SAIS courses during their course of study at the Johns Hopkins University.

Policy Practicum

All students are required to intern in a public or private agency for a minimum of 300 hours. The purpose of the internships is to give students real-world experience in the policy arena of their chosen area of concentration. Students work with faculty to develop a placement consistent with their own career objectives and, throughout the internships, students remain in touch with their faculty advisers.

The B.A./M.A. Program

Each year the MPP program accepts a limited number of Hopkins undergraduate students into its B.A./M.A. program in public policy. Students take core policy courses on the Homewood campus in their senior year and fulfill an area of concentration requirement in a fifth year at Hopkins. The program is rigorous and requires a GPA of at least 3.0, strong writing skills and a demonstrated interest in public policy issues. Because of the demands of the program, students must complete virtually all requirements for their undergraduate major before beginning their senior year.

Financial Aid

The Institute for Policy Studies awards partial tuition scholarships to entering master’s students based on merit. Awards are generally renewed for the second year of study if academic performance is satisfactory.

Research and teaching assistantships are available for qualified students to work for research faculty in the Institute for Policy Studies. Assistantship assignments are decided after the student has accepted the offer to study at The Johns Hopkins University and after interviews have been conducted with selected faculty members. Pay averages \$13-15 an hour; students usually work 15-20 hours a week, depending on their schedule and the needs

of the project. Students who are interested in being considered for an assistantship are urged to apply for the federal work-study program through the Financial Aid Office.

Various loan programs for graduate students are also available. Information and application materials may be obtained from the Financial Aid Office.

Courses

190.610 Values, Ethics and Public Policy

Including the philosophical bases of public action, notions of responsibility of individuals to society, and alternative forms of citizen action, from political participation to voluntary service.

Lev

195.477-478 Introduction to Urban Policy: Seminar and Internship

This is a 6-credit, one-semester undergraduate course on urban problems and policy in the U.S. The weekly seminar considers the major challenges and opportunities facing cities, and the effectiveness of urban and related policies. Students also work at part-time internships in the city council, a government agency, or community organization in Baltimore. Course requirements include two term papers—one for the seminar portion of the program, the other for the internship. Admission is by permission of the instructor. Undergraduates must take the seminar and internship concurrently. Graduate students may take the seminar only.

Newman, Schachtel

195.603 Applied Microeconomics for Policymaking

The goal of this course is to communicate the basic principles of microeconomics by emphasizing applications to the solution of public problems. Students examine how markets operate and how they fail. This includes an analysis of the reasons for government intervention. Public vs. private goods, the problem of externalities, the pricing of public goods, and related issues will be addressed. The course provides the student with elements of a theoretical framework useful in addressing policy problems.

Crews Cutts

195.605-606 Statistical Analysis for Policymaking

This course sequence over two semesters teaches the application of statistical techniques commonly used in policy analysis and decision analysis including measures of central tendency, correlation, analysis of variance, and multivariate analysis. The course uses actual policy problems to demonstrate applications of techniques.

Staff

Policy Research Seminar (5)

Students take one of several courses offered in research design and methods. These courses provide an introduction to basic methods to undertaking research and teaches students to select and design a research project.

195.607 The Policy Process

This course examines the influence of political and organizational factors on the various stages of the policy process including problem identification, developing alternative responses, assessing the political feasibility of alternative responses, generating political support, budgeting and resource allocation, and implementing policy decisions through both public and private institutions.

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195.608 Tools of Government

The course focuses on the instruments available to government to achieve its policy and program objectives (e.g., regulation, grants-in-aid, purchase of service contracting, loan guarantees, direct payments, procurement, vouchers). Students learn that the choice of instrument affects the operation of programs and the success with which they meet their objectives. Attention focuses on the challenges of managing the complex public-private collaborations from either direction.

Salamon

195.609 Policy Analysis for the Real World

This course teaches students to think analytically and to apply analytic thinking to policy problems. Students work through several real-world problems primarily in social, urban and health policy, to master the essential steps of any policy analysis: identifying the problem, assessing the available evidence, specifying goals and constraints, and examining policy alternatives. Course goals also include understanding some of the major policy debates of the day, and communicating in a simple, clear, and direct way.

Newman

195.611 Introduction to Program Evaluation

This course provides the student with an introduction to the use of qualitative and quantitative evaluations for social programs. The course reviews rationale for evaluation and its use in budgeting, policy assessments,

research and development, and program improvement. The course addresses cost-benefit analysis, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, selection bias, and methods of overcoming problems. The course includes an introduction to use of cost-benefit analysis. Students undertake a critical review and reanalyze data from existing evaluations.

Barnow

195.640 Policy Implementation

There is an “art” to leading and a “science” to managing systems. This course explores principles for managing the implementation of policies in public or nonprofit organizational settings as well as principles for evaluating the management/implementation of proposed or ongoing operations. Students examine policy implementation at the federal, state, or local level.

Pines

195.650 Quantitative Approaches to Public Policy

This course will be of interest to graduates and advanced undergraduates who wish to advance their quantitative skills. Topics covered will include simple and multiple regression models, different functional forms, the use of dummy, interactive, quadratic, and lagged terms in regression analysis, simple time series models, models that employ panel data sets, limited dependent variable models, and instrumental variables estimation. We will be concerned with the practical application of these models, rather than with formal proofs of the assumptions behind them. Understanding will be reinforced by the use of statistical software to analyze policy problems. To further reinforce this methodology, students will also research and formally present an empirical paper.

Staff

195.654 Social Policy

This course provides an historic, theoretical, and programmatic overview of U.S. Social Policy. The primary objectives are to understand current social policy with the broader historic context of policy evolution since 1900; provide an overview of the key theoretical, philosophic, and ideological principles on which US social policy is based; examine key dimensions of major current policies, including welfare, employment, child welfare, public housing, and social services; and explore methodological and analytic methods used to determine the effectiveness of selected policies and programs. An interdisciplinary approach is used: economics, political science, history, sociology, public administration, and law.

Nightingale

195.652 Social Policy: Special Topics Seminar

Nightingale

195.683 Applied Evaluation Seminar

Barnow, Nightingale

195.621 Internship

The internship usually takes place during the summer between the two years of the program. It involves placement in a public or private agency in the U.S. or another

country, and preparation of a paper that takes a critical look at the relationship between on-the-job experience and concepts learned in class.

Arndt

195.630 The Nonprofit Sector: Size, Scope, and Dynamics

General introduction to the private nonprofit sector, including theories of nonprofits in economics, political science, and sociology, a focus on legal regulation, and major contemporary challenges such as tax treatment, advocacy, and accountability.

Flynn

195.631 Partnering for Results

Partnership and collaboration have become the watchwords of progress in widely divergent fields in recent years, but nowhere are they more important than in the solution of public problems. While the why of partnership has come to be recognized by businesses, governments, multilateral agencies, and nonprofits, however, the how of partnerships remains elusive. Partnering for Results is designed to overcome this problem. Drawing on a substantial body of literature and experience with multi-sectoral partnerships, students will learn the theories associated with partnerships and collaborative movements, the benefits that each partner-business, government, nonprofit organizations-brings to a partnership; the steps involved in forming effective partnerships; how to decide when such partnerships are appropriate and who the most appropriate partners are; what structures and mechanisms are most effective; and how to measure results and share the credit.

Fuller

195.632 Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector

Students will explore concepts of leadership and organizational behavior as critical factors that come together to influence and impact people, processes, and systems in nonprofit organizations. More specifically, this course consists of three distinct parts: general introduction to concepts of leadership; leadership and its relationship to teamwork, group behavior, and organization culture; and leadership and its challenges in an increasingly interconnected and technology-driven world.

Calvin

195.633 Ethics and Accountability in the Nonprofit Sector

Nonprofit organizations operate in an environment that calls for strong ethics and high ideals as the cornerstone for the many benefits and privileges these organizations receive. This course will focus on ethics and accountability efforts in nonprofit organizations around the country. Students will explore watchdog groups, self-regulatory efforts of nonprofits, and public perceptions of the nonprofit sector.

Berns

195.637 Managing the Nonprofit Organization

This course focuses on management issues facing American nonprofit organizations entering the tumultuous world of the 21st century. While course sessions are arranged by topic, the intent is to integrate subject areas so that students gain an appreciation of the interdependencies involved in managing today's complex nonprofit organization. Students will examine the best business management practices from all sectors to learn how to more effectively manage a nonprofit organization for the ultimate benefit of the organization's customers and clients.

Hall

195.680 Seminar on the Press and Public Policy

This seminar brings in prominent journalists and other members of the media to discuss how the media influences government decisions, big and small.

Staff

195.682 Writing for the Op-Ed Page

The object of this one-credit course is to learn how to use policy skills in ways instructive not only to fellow experts but to a general audience. Good writing opens paths to excellence and influence. You will be required to write 600-800 word pieces due at every class session.

Sterne

195.695 Special Topics

Special topics courses may be offered in such areas as state and local finance, the macroeconomic context of policy, issues in comparative urban policy, citizen action in community development, and other areas.

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195.800-801 Master's Thesis

Each student has the opportunity to prepare a thesis applying the analytical tools of policy studies to some facet of their policy area of concentration. Theses will be expected to reach a quality level that could pass peer review for publication in leading policy studies journals.

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195.825-826 Independent Study

Special readings course for master's students in policy studies only. This course may also be taken in conjunction with an undergraduate course in another department to enhance or supplement existing courses in a student's field of concentration. This course requires the consent of the student's adviser.

Staff