

PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

Department website: <https://www.sps.northwestern.edu/masters/public-policy/>

The Master's in Public Policy and Administration requires the successful completion of 13 courses to obtain a degree. Students complete ten core courses, including a capstone or thesis, and three elective courses. There are five specializations: Data Analytics (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-data-analytics-specialization/>), Global Health (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-global-health-specialization/>), Global Policy (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-global-specialization/>), Public Administration (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-public-administration-specialization/>), and Public Policy (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-public-policy-specialization/>).

Build the analytical, administrative, and leadership skills needed to make an impact. Northwestern's MPPA curriculum (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma/>) offers a unique and comprehensive opportunity to delve into both the administrative and analytical sides of policy. This holistic approach is grounded in the perspective that policy challenges are fluid, interconnected and global. This perspective gives graduates the tools needed to rise in the field and drive change at the local, national and international levels.

Degrees Offered

- Public Policy and Administration, MA (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma/>)
- Public Policy and Administration, MA Data Analytics for Public Policy Specialization (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-data-analytics-specialization/>)
- Public Policy and Administration, MA Global Health Specialization (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-global-health-specialization/>)
- Public Policy and Administration, MA Global Policy Specialization (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-global-specialization/>)
- Public Policy and Administration, MA Public Administration Specialization (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-public-administration-specialization/>)
- Public Policy and Administration, MA Public Policy Specialization (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/graduate/public-policy-administration/public-policy-administration-ma-public-policy-specialization/>)

Public Policy and Administration Courses

MPPA 401-0 Research Methods (1 Unit)

Provides students with an understanding of research design and qualitative and quantitative research methodologies frequently used in social science and policy research. Explores the methods and tools essential to writing graduate-level policy papers within the framework of current topics in public policy and administration. Includes research design, research question formation, observation and interview based research methods, survey development and research writing. Students will have the opportunity to apply methods to pursue a policy-relevant research topic of their own design. An overview of publicly available quantitative data will be provided, and comparative policy research will be discussed. Students should expect a rigorous workload.

MPPA 401-DL Research Methods (1 Unit)

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MPPA 402-0 Elements of Public Finance and Budgeting (1 Unit)

Understand the complexities of the budget process and its central role in both democratic institutions and the profession of public administration. The budget structure and process will be reviewed as well as the role of the public administrator and other participants in the process. Examines politics in the budget process and the role of interest groups in decision-making; more specifically, the role of politics in both establishing public spending priorities and in distributing the burden of taxes and fees. Students also learn about concepts and methodologies relating to program cost analysis and how the budget may be used as a management tool.

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MPPA 403-0 Fundamentals of Public Administration (1 Unit)

Introduces graduate students to the discipline and profession of public administration, focusing on techniques of traditional management anchored in a highly complex legal/political environment. Various theoretical constructs are evaluated in the context of real cases using principles of management, politics, and law. Public administrators, policy analysts, and those new to the discipline will find the course useful whether they are currently employed in government, nonprofit organizations, or new to the profession and seeking a career in government. The principles, theories, and concepts covered are applicable to federal, state, and local government administration.

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MPPA 404-0 Microeconomics for Public Policy Administration (1 Unit)

Economics is about choice, and microeconomics is the study of resource allocation choices, beginning with how consumers and producers make choices. This course is aimed at developing student understanding of microeconomic theory, especially as it concerns the relationship between the market economy and public policy. Topics include consumer behavior and the theory of demand; production, cost, supply functions; choices under uncertainty, insurance; competitive equilibrium; subsidies, taxes, price controls; monopoly and monopsony; price discrimination and public utility pricing; monopolistic competition; general equilibrium theory and welfare economics; information theory; and public goods, externalities and market failure.

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MPPA 405-0 Statistics for Research (1 Unit)

This course introduces students to basic statistical concepts and methods that are relevant to public policy research and development. Emphasis is on the identification, use, and interpretation of statistical results rather than the theoretical development of statistical concepts and procedures. Topics include descriptive statistics (central tendency, dispersion, and data display); probability; probability distributions; inference (confidence intervals and hypothesis testing); correlation; bivariate regression; contingency tables and the chi-square test; statistical computing. Students will do homework using the R language and RStudio.

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MPPA 406-0 Program Evaluation and Policy Analysis (1 Unit)

This course will present a comprehensive overview of program evaluation and policy analysis methods that are important for policy researchers and administrators. These methods help public policy and program

analysts systematically value decisions, improve the decision-making process (and hopefully the resultant decisions), value inputs and outcomes, handle uncertainty, and compare aspects of public policy and systems that might not otherwise appear to be comparable. Specific topics covered in this course will include overall evaluation (qualitative and quantitative) design, logic models, implementation and outcome evaluation, decision and cost-benefit analysis.

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MPPA 407-0 Scope and Dynamics of Public Policy (1 Unit)

Introduction to public policy concepts and the public policy process in the United States. It focuses on developing an understanding of what civic decision-making and public policy mean and how public policy is made. Course is designed to give MPPA students a basic understanding of the dynamics, political processes, and theoretical frameworks of the public policy-making milieu in the United States, serving as a graduate level survey of the field of public policy. The course considers key theories and concepts including agenda setting, decision-making theory, and methods of analyzing policy outcomes. Examines policy-making primarily at the national level.

MPPA 407-DL Scope and Theory of Public Policy (1 Unit)

Introduction to public policy concepts and the public policy process in the United States. It focuses on developing an understanding of what civic decision-making and public policy mean and how public policy is made. Course is designed to give MPPA students a basic understanding of the dynamics, political processes, and theoretical frameworks of the public policy-making milieu in the United States, serving as a graduate level survey of the field of public policy. The course considers key theories and concepts including agenda setting, decision-making theory, and methods of analyzing policy outcomes. Examines policy-making primarily at the national level.

MPPA 408-0 Public Organization Theory and Management (1 Unit)

This course focuses on organization theory and management as it applies primarily to public organizations. The unique environment that public organizations face will be emphasized. Students will study a range of theories grounded in the traditional literature over time and leading to contemporary theories and modern application in the public sector. The course requires students to critically examine public organizations and leadership using theories and concepts studied during the class with a particular emphasis on collaborative systems.

MPPA 408-DL Public Organization Theory & Management (1 Unit)

This course focuses on organization theory and management as it applies primarily to public organizations. The unique environment that public organizations face will be emphasized. Students will study a range of theories grounded in the traditional literature over time and leading to contemporary theories and modern application in the public sector. The course requires students to critically examine public organizations and leadership using theories and concepts studied during the class with a particular emphasis on collaborative systems.

MPPA 411-0 The Legislative Process (1 Unit)

Examines the inner workings of Congress and its place in U.S. government. Discussion of how the federal budget is set and the roles of the president and Congress. Studies differences between the House and Senate. Examination of how committees and the legislative process have changed as well as aspects showing continuity. The course will consider the political environment Congressional candidates operate in, and how they decide to run. Explores the significance of legislative and Congressional redistricting. Discussion of the role of lobbying and the importance of recent Supreme Court decisions on campaign finance, and Congress' oversight role and its interactions with the executive branch.

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MPPA 413-0 Foundations of the Nonprofit/NGO Sector (1 Unit)

This course examines theories of nonprofit (NPO) and nongovernmental organization (NGO) development and operation. Broad trends shaping NPOs/NGOs, both nationally and globally, are studied from a variety of perspectives. Also, high level operational issues, such as governance and executive management in the NPO/NGO environment, are discussed.

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MPPA 417-0 Public Human Resources (1 Unit)

Designed to develop students' understanding of public human resource management. It is structured to examine the relationships between contemporary public policy-making processes, legal and ethical standards of public human resource management, and key human resource functions. Students will analyze how strategic human resource management and positive organizational frameworks apply to key public human resource functions, including recruiting and retention, compensation and benefits, and skill development. The course will also provide students with action-oriented learning to value the impact of current public policy issues on public organizations in general.

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MPPA 418-0 Ethics and Leadership (1 Unit)

This course will examine relevant theory and research regarding ethics and leadership in public organizations and provide an opportunity for students to develop a personal foundation for ethical leadership. Students will also look at ethics and leadership from an organizational

and systemic level while applying learning to normative questions and case studies.

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MPPA 419-0 The Strategic Policy Environment (1 Unit)

The purpose of this course is to provide students an opportunity to study public policy in a holistic fashion while at the same time focusing on development, implementation, and the evaluation of public policy. This is accomplished by critically analyzing public policy theory and practice alongside a case-study driven examination of public policy successes and failures. The course maintains an emphasis on strategic public policy development, implementation, and evaluation.

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MPPA 420-0 Disaster Management and Theory (1 Unit)

Despite the saying that disasters strike when you least expect it, the reality is that much can be done to prepare for disasters. A disaster can be localized, or it can extend to the entire planet. Some are slow forming crisis situations, and some are sudden occurrences. Each situation can be met with preparation that includes policy development, organizational management, and leadership. Intergovernmental relationships are essential to meeting the challenges domestically, while international relationships and organizations are essential to meeting global challenges. These relationships and challenges will be studied using an analytical approach grounded in theories that support collaborative engagement and administration. Disaster management history, policy development, organizational management, and leadership will serve as the outline leading students to prepare for future disasters and current crises.

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MPPA 421-DL Administrative Law (1 Unit)

Focuses on public law generally and administrative law particularly. Provides students with a grounding in the functions of public administrative law with special emphasis on procedural due process and rule-making. Students learn the genesis of administrative rules and

their impact on private and public affairs and the reasons why Congress delegates so much authority to administrative bodies. In addition, students will critically examine the various oversight mechanisms designed to monitor and check administrative abuses. Students become familiar with the federal register, the scope and power of administrative law judges, the impact of judicial review on agency decisions, and understand administrative law "in the context of the American political system."

MPPA 430-0 Behavioral Economics (1 Unit)

Why do people not recycle, even when offered monetary incentives? Why has the 'War on Drugs' failed? Why don't people enroll in 401(k) savings plans? Why is the market for knock-off brand-name goods and pirated DVDs/software so large? This class will use behavioral economics to investigate questions related to policy formulation, implementation, framing and failure. With readings from current experts in the field including Ariely, Thaler, Kahneman and Frank, this class will discuss both behavioral economic theory and its application in policy areas such as immigration, the environment, health care, international relations, and (of course) the national economy.

MPPA 430-DL Behavioral Economics (1 Unit)

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MPPA 432-0 Intergovernmental Relations (1 Unit)

Designed to develop students' practical understanding of American intergovernmental relations and intergovernmental management. The course is structured to examine contemporary relationships between U.S. federalism and public policy making processes at the federal, state, and local levels. It will also provide a comparative view of federalism, recognizing differences in the developing world as well as increased international relationships due to globalization. Students will analyze how various theories of intergovernmental relations apply to key areas of public policy making - federalism and the courts, fiscal federalism, and regulatory federalism. Students will engage in action-oriented learning to synthesize theories of intergovernmental relations and institutions to recommend policy programs and appraise future policy reform.

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MPPA 435-0 Regulatory Policy (1 Unit)

This is an advanced specialization course in the politics and practice of governmental regulation, designed to give students the tools needed to understand the many facets of regulatory politics. It will cover broad

areas of regulatory policy and procedure from communications, to environment, to consumer products. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to understand, articulate, and assess the political debates around regulatory policy and approaches to regulation. Additionally, students will be able develop policy solutions to address various regulatory problems using standard regulatory tools and best practices.

MPPA 435-DL Regulatory Policy (1 Unit)

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MPPA 438-0 Environmental and Climate Policy (1 Unit)

Climate and environmental issues are among the most complex and consequential arenas of 21st century public policy. This course will study major US environmental laws and how the courts interpret them, explore efforts to reach international consensus to tackle global environmental threats, compare frameworks for environmental protection regimes, and consider federal natural resource protections. Students will also study the main programs to protect US surface waters and air quality, as well as examine how the US federal system addresses issues as diverse as energy policy, transportation, and land use planning. The international climate regime, including the primary scientific sources of climate change data that set the parameters for international climate policy, is examined. The class will discuss current international accords, the role of nations, youth activists and businesses and evaluate emerging issues that will shape climate solutions.

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MPPA 440-0 International Institutions (1 Unit)

Examines several prominent international organizations, including the United Nations, NATO, the European Union, and the World Trade Organization. Focuses on both policy controversies and broader theoretical analysis. Students will address why each organization was created, its institutional structure, and current problems confronting each organization. The effects of international organizations on world politics will also be examined. Students think critically about the nature of problems that face states as well as the development of global governance mechanisms.

MPPA 440-DL International Institutions (1 Unit)

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MPPA 450-0 Global Economic Policy (1 Unit)

The goal of this course is to give students the knowledge, tools, and confidence to understand, craft, and advocate for incentives and economic policies. Students will be able to apply macroeconomic principles, draw conclusions about the relevance of economic incentives, and explain in substantial detail the current debates covering such topics as economic systems, international trade, monetary policy, global resource allocation, and development economics. While a working understanding of undergraduate-level microeconomics is helpful, and it is recommended students take 404 Microeconomics first, the content of this course will cover these areas in sufficient detail for students without any background.

MPPA 450-DL Global Economic Policy (1 Unit)

The goal of this course is to give students the knowledge, tools, and confidence to understand, craft, and advocate for incentives and economic policies. Students will be able to apply macroeconomic principles, draw conclusions about the relevance of economic incentives, and explain in substantial detail the current debates covering such topics as economic systems, international trade, monetary policy, global resource allocation, and development economics. While a working understanding of undergraduate-level microeconomics is helpful, and it is recommended students take 404 Microeconomics first, the content of this course will cover these areas in sufficient detail for students without any background.

MPPA 490-0 Special Topics in Public Policy (1 Unit)

Special Topics in Public Policy. Topics vary.

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MPPA 498-0 The Capstone Project (1 Unit)

The capstone project course is the culmination of the MPPA program and demonstrates to faculty a student's mastery of the curriculum and core competencies in the public policy and administration field. Working both in small groups and individually, students complete a comprehensive project chosen in conjunction with their instructor. Students are individually assessed and graded throughout duration of class. Students should retain all course material from previous classes in the program, including textbooks, to successfully complete assignments.

MPPA 498-DL The Capstone Project (1 Unit)

The capstone project course is the culmination of the MPPA program and demonstrates to faculty a student's mastery of the curriculum and core competencies in the public policy and administration field. Working both in small groups and individually, students complete a comprehensive project chosen in conjunction with their instructor. Students are individually assessed and graded throughout duration of class. Students should retain all course material from previous classes in the program, including textbooks, to successfully complete assignments.

MPPA 499-0 Independent Study (1 Unit)

Independent study.

MPPA 580-DL Global Policy Laboratory (1 Unit)

Provides students with a hands-on opportunity to apply core skillsets from the MPPA program, particularly as they relate to an organization facing global, social and economic policy challenges. Students work for a client organization on a commissioned project supervised by an MPPA faculty member. The goal of the project is to analyze a challenge facing the organization, then develop a set of policy recommendations for the client. Student teams produce final deliverables. Project culminates in a live client briefing and written report (so one site visit by a student team representative may be required). Students should expect to spend 20 hours per week on the course. Counts toward all specializations.

MPPA 590-0 Thesis Research (1 Unit)

The 590 Thesis Research is an individual research project in an independent study format. The paper is written under the supervision of an approved faculty member and presents an opportunity to research and explore a topic thoroughly. The typical time to complete the master's thesis is four months to a year.

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