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Master of Public Policy

Students who wish to become adept at analyzing, designing, evaluating, and advocating for public policies should apply for either the Master of Public Policy (MPP) program or the Master of Public Management (MPM) program. Students in both programs attend the same classes and have the same core requirements and specialization opportunities. The primary difference between the two programs is that MPP students must complete 48 course credits while their MPM counterparts must only complete 36 course credits. The admission criteria/standards of the two programs are identical, with one key exception: Only applicants who will have had five or more years of professional policy or management related experience after their undergraduate studies are eligible for the MPM program.

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Dual Degree Programs: Students may pursue a BA, MBA, JD, or Master of Science in Conservation Biology degree at the same time they pursue their MPP degree. These dual degree programs enable students to obtain two degrees in much less time and at far less cost than pursuing both degrees individually.

Curriculum

The curriculum of both programs has three components: the required core curriculum, the requirements of a chosen specialization (similar to a major at the undergraduate level), and general electives.

Core

The required core courses provide students with a grounding in the various perspectives, skills, and tools policy analysts and leaders must possess to develop and manage policies effectively, without regard to a specific policy field. Requirements vary by specialization, so students must complete requirements with respect to their specializations. Students who have already mastered the topics of a core course may get permission to substitute another course in its place. The core curriculum consists of:

- Quantitative Aspects of Public Policy (PUAF 610)

or Quantitative Analysis of Social Policy (PUAF 611) with permission

- Political Institutions & Leadership (PUAF 620) or Comparative Political Institutions (PUAF 688A)
- Microeconomics and Policy Analysis (PUAF 640)
- Moral Dimensions of Public Policy (PUAF 650)
- Public Management & Leadership (PUAF 711)
- Either Macroeconomics (PUAF 641) OR Finance (PUAF 670), depending on specialization

Specializations

Students then pursue one (or two) specializations, choosing either one of the pre-designed five-course specializations or a self-designed five-course specialization approved by a faculty advisor. The School's pre-designed specializations reflect the unique strengths of the Maryland School of Public Policy:

- Environmental Policy
- Energy Policy
- Federal Acquisition
- International Development Policy
- International Security and Economic Policy
- Management and Leadership
- Non-Profit Management and Leadership
- Public Sector Financial Management
- Social Policy
- Education Policy
- Health Policy

General Electives

The remaining courses needed to complete the required total of 48 credits (MPP) or 36 credits (MPM) may either be additional courses in the student's specialization(s) or nearly any other policy/management related graduate level course in the School, in the overall University, in any of the other major policy/management programs in the area, or in some cases, at any other accredited University throughout the world (including courses taken prior to entering the master's program but not previously counted toward a degree).

Students pursuing one of the dual master's degree programs in business (MPP/MBA), law (MPP/JD), or conservation biology (MPP/MS), or a bachelor's (BA/MPP) degree, pursue the same MPP curriculum with some reduction in combined credits due to overlapping requirements.

Internships

While not required, students with little or no prior experience in professional public policy or management circles are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the School's enviable location by participating in one or more internships during the summer(s) between the traditional academic years or even while taking courses. The School's Career Office

provides students with ample help locating rewarding positions and presenting themselves to prospective employers, and is even able to help fund some internships that would not otherwise provide much compensation.

Admission Criteria

To be admitted to either of these programs, students must demonstrate that they have the academic preparation and ability to handle the highly demanding and diverse curriculum. The typical student will have an undergraduate GPA in the 3.3 to 4.0 range, and combined quantitative and qualitative GRE scores of 1200 to 1500. Applicants must show through either their quantitative GRE score or their performance in previous coursework that they possess the ability to handle the quantitative elements of the curriculum. (A free Math Refresher course is offered for students whose quantitative skills may be rusty.) The School welcomes students from nearly every undergraduate major, and from across the nation and around the world. Unlike applicants to the MPM program who must possess at least five years of professional policy/management related experience, applicants to the MPP program need not have any prior professional experience, though such experience enhances their application.

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Admissions

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