School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

Graduate Programs in Public Affairs

Doctor of Philosophy in Public Affairs

75 hours minimum beyond the baccalaureate degree

Faculty

Professors: L. Douglas Kiel, Robert W. Taylor

Clinical Professor: Donald R. Arbuckle

Associate Professors: R. Paul Battaglio Jr., Doug Goodman, Sarah Maxwell, Sheryl L. Skaggs

Assistant Professors: Evgenia Gorina, James Harrington, Young-joo Lee, Meghna Sabharwal

Senior Lecturer: Teodoro Benavides

Mission

The mission of the PhD in Public Affairs program is to prepare students for research-oriented careers in academia, policy analysis, and executive public/nonprofit management positions. The rigorous core curriculum provides advanced conceptual and theoretical training in the principal areas of public administration and management, including: public policy, intergovernmental relations, budget and finance, human capital and organizational theory. Students develop analytical competencies through a sequence of research methods courses, and technical knowledge in specific topics through a flexible elective sequence.

Objectives

Through a faculty-guided program of instruction, research and mentoring, students in the Public Affairs doctoral program develop a firm understanding of the broad intellectual tradition of public administration and related fields. The guiding philosophy of the degree is that "public affairs" involves more than mere functional administration, policy implementation or quantitative policy analysis. Rather, doctoral education in public affairs requires an interface between the traditions of public management, public policy, and organizations with a practical appreciation for the challenges of maintaining and building institutions of governance and a civic culture in a complex, democratic society.

The PhD in Public Affairs begins as a cohort program where entering students remain together
through the completion of a core curriculum and the qualifying examination (QE), after which they are able to pursue one of several areas of concentration. The concentration allows students to take courses appropriate for their research interests. This structure produces shared experiences and progress through the program that enrich student learning and research.

**Faculty Commitments**

The faculty of the PhD program in Public Affairs is committed to assist students in meeting a set of clear and specific education- and research-related goals. The specific objectives for all graduates of the PhD in Public Affairs program are to:

1. **Demonstrate Comprehensive and Deep Knowledge:** Students will demonstrate their knowledge in principal fields of public administration and management, including: public policy, intergovernmental relations, organization theory, budget and finance, and human capital.

2. **Understand and Apply Theories and Processes of Knowledge Acquisition:** Students will demonstrate familiarity with key theories in each of the principal fields of public administration and management, and will apply this theoretical knowledge in the development of research projects ranging from course assignments to their dissertation research projects.

3. **Produce Scholarly Manuscripts and Publications:** Students, as scholars, will have the ability to execute research projects that utilize state of the art methodologies to produce scholarly manuscripts that are worthy of publication in the journals of the field.

4. **Develop, Present, and Defend Complex Ideas:** Students will have the ability to develop, present, and defend both orally and in writing complex ideas based on in-depth scholarly research.

**Facilities**

Students have access to the computing facilities in the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences and the University’s Computer Labs. The School has two computing laboratories which house over 30 computers that are network linked and equipped with major social science software packages, including EViews, R, RATS, SPSS, and Stata. A computerized geographic information system, the LexisNexis database, and Westlaw are also available for student use. The University’s Computer Labs provide personal computers and UNIX workstations.

**Application, Admission and Assistantships**

**Application Deadlines:** Due to the cohort nature of the PhD program in Public Affairs, admissions are limited to the fall semester only. The application deadline for students seeking funding through assistantships is March 31. Applications for international students must be received by May 1 and June 1 for all required documentation (transcripts, test scores, letters of recommendation, etc.). The application deadline for US Citizens and Residents is July 1 with all documentation (transcripts, test scores, letters of recommendation, etc.). These deadlines must be followed to ensure applications are given full consideration. The web-based application form can be accessed using...
Admission Requirements: The program typically admits only students who have completed a Master's degree in Public Affairs or Social Science from an accredited University. A graduate GPA of 3.0 or better is expected. Prospective students must complete the University's online graduate application and submit a narrative outlining 1) academic interests, 2) current or long-range interests in research, teaching or other professional objectives, 3) description of publications or other scholarly endeavors, and 3) listing of academic and professional organizations and fellowships, scholarships, or other honors received. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is also required of all applications with a minimum verbal score of 156 and quantitative score of 146. International students whose native language is not English are also required to submit the Test of English as a Second Language (TOEFL), unless they graduated from a four-year college or university in the United States or other English speaking country. Students should submit examination scores and transcripts from all colleges previously attended to UT Dallas Admission and Enrollment Services. Three letters of recommendation from individuals (employers, community leaders, teachers, etc.) who are able to judge a student's probable success in graduate school are required. The letters may be sent directly to the program office or uploaded online.

International applicants without Permanent Resident Visas must submit evidence of financial support (financial affidavit and original bank statement) before they can receive the I-20 or other required documents needed for visa application.

Teaching Assistantships: Prospective students interested in receiving assistantships must have submitted all application materials including a Teaching Assistant (TA) application form by March 31 of the year they intend to start the program. Applications for the assistantships may be obtained from the Public Affairs Program Office. Offers of teaching assistantships will be made by May 1 of the year of fall enrollment, although additional appointments may be made as new positions become available each semester.

It is expected that students can communicate effectively in both written and spoken English. State law and regulations of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board require that international students appointed as TA's be proficient in the use of the English language. An English Proficiency Interview conducted under the auspices of the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies will be used to screen for students requiring remedial help in the form of English as a Second Language (ESL) course. International students must satisfy the proficiency requirement upon appointment or pass the ESL course within two semesters to be eligible for consideration of continued appointment as a TA. Regardless of test scores, students must meet the language requirements of their programs.

Program Overview

The PhD in Public Affairs requires the completion of at least 75 hours including a minimum of 45 hours of course work and 12 hours of dissertation work. Students may be allowed to transfer some of their graduate course work (a maximum of 18 hours) which can be applied to the 75 hours required. To qualify for transfer credit, the student must have completed the graduate course work within the past 24 months at an accredited college or university and earned a grade of B or better. Grades of B- and courses completed through correspondence or extension are not eligible for
Prerequisites

Prior to enrolling in core classes for the PhD program, students must have completed a master's degree in public affairs/administration or related field and show evidence of completing a graduate level course within the past 24 months in statistics/quantitative methods and public policymaking/public institutions. A grade of B or better is expected in these course prerequisites.

Qualifying Exam (QE)

Students must pass the Qualifying Exam (QE) to continue in the PhD program. If a student fails the exam he or she will be dismissed from the program.

Students must have a grade of B or better in each of the four exam-related courses to be eligible to sit for the exam. Students who don’t meet this requirement may choose to leave the program or repeat a course to earn a better grade. Students are encouraged to review the University’s Retaking Courses Policy. Students retaking an exam related course are required to enroll in the course in the next semester it is offered. Students will not be permitted to enroll in courses outside the doctoral core curriculum until successful completion of the QE.

Overview

All Public Affairs (PA) PhD cohort members entering the program in the fall must pass a QE taken after their first spring semester to continue in the program.

1. The QE is based on four specified courses from the core curriculum. The exam comprises 3 sections: (1) general public affairs topics; (2) policy topics; and (3) research methods.

2. The QE is a classroom proctored test. It includes three 4-hour sessions, which will take place over a two day period. The specific days and location of the sessions will be designated by the Department Head and announced at the start of the spring semester.

Exams will be read and graded by a committee of PA faculty. Each section will be read by a minimum of two readers and given a Pass or Fail grade.

A student who fails two or more sections of the QE will be dismissed from program.

If a student fails one section, he or she will be given the opportunity to retake that section. The retake exam will be given within four weeks of the original exam, and will be graded as described above (see 2). If the student passes the retake exam he or she may continue in the program.

Only under extreme, documented circumstances will a student be allowed to reschedule the QE. If an emergency arises, the student must notify the Department Head within 12 hours of the scheduled exam and request to take a rescheduled exam. If approved, the exam will be rescheduled within 2 weeks of the original exam date.
Required Courses and Dissertation: 57 hours

The Program consists of course work in six core substantive knowledge areas central to public administration and management, including: public policy, intergovernmental relations and management, organizational theory, fiscal and budgetary theory, and human capital (18 hours).

Research methods provide analytical skills necessary to conduct doctoral level research beginning with Research Design, a regression course suitable for the student’s mathematical skill set (EPPS 6316 for algebra, EPPS 7316 for calculus), and a methods course appropriate for the student’s intended dissertation research (9 hours).

Building on the core curriculum, students have the flexibility to choose from one of four concentrations or develop their own customized concentration based on their area of interest (18 hours). Each concentration allows students the flexibility to select from existing EPPS course (6000 level or above; with program director approval).

To graduate, students are required to enroll for dissertation research credit (PA 8V99) with their appointed dissertation chairperson (12 hours minimum). To remain in good standing, students must remain enrolled in 8V99 while completing their dissertation.

Program Course Work

I. Public Affairs Core: 18 hours

- [PA 7320](https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/programs/epps/public-affairs) Advanced Human Capital Research and Theory
- [PA 7350](https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/programs/epps/public-affairs) Advanced Organizational Theory and Behavior
- [PA 7360](https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/programs/epps/public-affairs) Advanced Fiscal and Budgetary Policy
- [PA 7381](https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/programs/epps/public-affairs) Special Topics in Public Affairs
- [PA 8302](https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/programs/epps/public-affairs) Proseminar in Public Affairs (this course includes a series of professional workshops which runs through a student's first year)

II. Research Methods: 9 hours

- [PA 7330](https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/programs/epps/public-affairs) Research Design in Public Affairs


ONE of the following:

- [EPPS 6346](https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/programs/epps/public-affairs) Qualitative Research Methods
- [EPPS 7344](https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/programs/epps/public-affairs) Categorical and Limited Dependent Variables
EPPS 7370 Time Series Analysis
EPPS 7386 Survey Research
EPPS 7390 Bayesian Analysis for Social and Behavioral Sciences

III. Concentration: 18 hours

Concentration 1: Policy Analysis and Evaluation
SOC 6340 Domestic Social Policy
PA 6344 State/Local Government Management
EPPS 6352 Evaluation Research Methods in the Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
EPPS 7304 Cost-Benefit Analysis
or PA 7317 Microeconomics and Policy Analysis
PA 7382 Seminar in Urban Policy
Approved elective (6000 level or above)

Concentration 2: Personnel Policy
PA 6345 Human Resource Management
PA 7305 Leadership and Change in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
PA 7318 Ethics, Culture and Public Responsibility
PA 7322 Negotiations for Effective Management
PA 7383 Diversity in the Public Sector
Approved elective (6000 level or above)

Concentration 3: Nonprofit Management
EPPS 6352 Evaluation Research Methods in the Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
PA 6369 Grant Writing and Management
PA 6374 Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations
PA 7305 Leadership and Change in Public and Nonprofit Organizations
PA 7375 Nonprofit Organizations: Theory and Practice
Approved elective (6000 level or above)

Concentration 4: Urban Policy and Administration
PA 6326 Decision Tools for Managers
**SOC 6340** Domestic Social Policy

**PA 6344** State/Local Government Management

**EPPS 6352** Evaluation Research Methods in the Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

**PA 7382** Seminar in Urban Policy

Approved elective (6000 level or above)

**Concentration 5: Customized and Directed Research**

Choose 6 courses; *ALL courses must be pre-approved by program director.

**IV. Dissertation Research (minimum of 12 hours)**

**Dissertation:** Students are encouraged to consult with the department head and/or doctoral program director about the selection of their dissertation chair. Following a successful public proposal defense, students begin work on their dissertation research, and enroll in **PA 8V99** Dissertation during each semester until the dissertation is completed and defended. The final dissertation defense is conducted when the student's chair and committee agree that the dissertation is satisfactorily completed.

1. One of the four (4) courses included in the required qualifying examination taken during summer immediately following the first two semesters of course work.

**Program Policies**

**Required Grades for Qualifying Exam:** To be eligible for the Qualifying Exam (QE), a student must have earned a grade of 'B' or better in each of the examination related courses (see classes previously listed with ***). Students not eligible to take the exam will be dismissed from the program.

**Required Grade Point Average:** The minimum acceptable University grade point average for graduation is 3.0 for all graduate courses taken in the student's degree program at UT Dallas.

**Time Limits:** All requirements for the doctoral degree, including transfer credit, must be completed within one ten-year period. Students exceeding the time limit will not be eligible for their degrees and will be dismissed from the graduate program. An approved leave of absence will not alter the time limits placed on graduate degrees.

**Continuous Enrollment:** Unless on an approved leave of absence, a graduate student in a degree program must maintain continuous enrollment during the fall and spring (long session) semesters of each academic year. A graduate student who fails to register in any given long session will be permitted to re-enroll through his/her program office in any two subsequent semesters provided the student was in good academic standing at the time of last enrollment. Students absent more than three long semesters will be required to reapply to the doctoral program.
Reduced Enrollment during Last Semester: Students must be enrolled in at least one credit hour in the semester in which they graduate. Enrollment for one semester hour in the final semester is only allowed once.

Master of Public Affairs

42 hours minimum

Faculty

Professors: L. Douglas Kiel, Robert W. Taylor

Clinical Professor: Donald R. Arbuckle

Associate Professors: R. Paul Battaglio Jr., Doug Goodman, Sarah Maxwell

Assistant Professors: Evgenia Gorina, James Harrington, Young-joo Lee, Meghna Sabharwal

Senior Lecturer: Teodoro Benavides

Mission

The Master of Public Affairs (MPA) program advances excellence in public service. The program is designed to prepare students to build competencies and develop creative solutions for challenges in finance, leadership, human resource, and project management.

Objectives

The Master's degree in Public Affairs is a professional diploma that focuses on skills of management and analysis that contribute to successful carrying out of administrative and leadership responsibilities in government and nonprofit settings. The specific outcome objectives for students who graduate with the MPA degree are:

- An understanding of the philosophical, theoretical, and legal foundations of public management, policy making, and leadership in government and nonprofit settings;
- Proficiency in organizational and decision analysis, research and evaluation practice, and quantitative and qualitative techniques;
- Sound preparation for advanced study aimed at research centers;
- Mastery of persuasive written and oral communication.

Facilities

Students have access to the computing facilities in the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences and the University's Computer Labs. The School has two computing laboratories which have over 30 computers that are network linked and equipped with major social science software packages, including EViews, R, RATS, SPSS and Stata. A computerized geographic information...
system, the LexisNexis database, and Westlaw are also available for student use. The University’s Computer Labs provide personal computers and UNIX workstations. Many important data and reference materials are also available online via the library and School's memberships in numerous organizations.

Admissions Requirement

The University's general admission requirements are discussed on the [Graduate Admission page](catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/admission).

The Public Affairs Master’s program at UT Dallas typically admits only students who have an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better. Prospective students must complete the University's online graduate application and submit a narrative outlining 1) academic interests, 2) current or long-range interests in research, teaching or other professional objectives, 3) description of publications or other scholarly endeavors, and 3) listing of academic and professional organizations and fellowships, scholarships, or other honors received. International students whose native language is not English are also required to submit the Test of English as a Second Language (TOEFL), unless they graduated from a four-year college or university in the United States or other English speaking country. Students should submit examination scores and transcripts from all colleges previously attended to UT Dallas Admission and Enrollment Services. Three letters of recommendation from individuals (employers, community leaders, teachers, etc.) who are able to judge a student's probable success in graduate school and a current resume are required. The letters and resume may be sent directly to the program office or uploaded online.

To be guaranteed consideration for admission, fall applications must be received by July 1 (late registration deadline is August 1). Applications for spring admission must be received by November 1 (late registration deadline is December 1). Any incomplete application received after these dates will not be considered for admission during the designated semester. Students who do not meet this deadline must reapply for the following semester.

In addition to the university's transfer of credit requirements, a maximum of 9 credit hours of transfer credit can be applied to the MPA degree.

Prerequisites

While there are no specific prerequisites required for any MPA course, students who lack background in particular areas may be advised or required to take preparatory courses. In particular, students who lack background or experience in American political and policymaking institutions, in mathematics, and micro computing may be required to develop proficiency in these areas before being admitted into certain courses. Students meet with the MPA Director to determine these requirements. Leveling courses will not count toward the MPA degree.

Degree Requirements

The University's general degree requirements are discussed on the [Graduate Policies and Procedures page](catalog.utdallas.edu/2013/graduate/policies/policy).
Students seeking a Master of Public Affairs (MPA) degree must complete at least 42 semester credit hours of work in the program. The program has three components: a 21 hour core, 15 hours of directed electives within a chosen specialization and the 3 hour Capstone seminar (PA 6399 Capstone in Public Affairs). For students without evidence of at least 12 months full time managerial experience in the public or nonprofit sectors, 3 hours of internship credit are also mandatory. Students for whom the internship requirement is waived must complete an additional 3 hours of approved elective coursework.

Grade Point Requirements

Students must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average in the core courses and an overall grade point average of 3.0 to graduate. If a student's GPA does not meet these standards University policy concerning academic probation and removal from the program are in effect.

Major Core Courses: 21 hours

All MPA students should complete the core courses as soon as possible. A full-time student entering the program will normally take three core courses and one additional course each semester. The Capstone or internship is usually undertaken when the student has completed most of the other degree requirements.

**Required core courses for the MPA (21 hours)**

- **EPPS 6313** Introduction to Quantitative Methods
- **PA 6311** Public Management
- **PA 6313** Public Policymaking and Institutions
- **PA 6320** Organizational Theory
- **PA 6321** Government Financial Management and Budgeting
- **PA 6342** Local Economic Development
- or **PA 7317** Microeconomics and Policy Analysis
- **PA 6345** Human Resource Management

Professional Specialization Core Courses: 15 hours


Students who specialize in Public Management take 15 hours from:

- **PA 6344** State/Local Government Management
- **PA 6300** Quality and Productivity in Government
**PA 6318** Information Systems in Policy Environments  
**PA 6324** Community Planning  
**PA 6370** Project and Contract Management  
**SOC 6341** Urban Economics

or other appropriate courses approved by the MPA Director

**Students who select the Local Government Management track take 15 hours from:**

**PA 6344** State/Local Government Management  
**PA 6345** Human Resources Management  
**PA 6321** Government Financial Management and Budgeting  
**PA 6342** Local Economic Development

or other appropriate courses approved by the MPA Director

**Students who wish to focus on the Nonprofit Management track take 15 hours from:**

**PA 6380** Nonprofit Organizations  
**PA 6382** Nonprofit Management  
**PA 6374** Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations  
**EPPS 6352** Evaluation Research Methods in the Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

or other appropriate courses approved by the MPA Director

**Students who choose Policy Analysis complete 15 hours from:**

**PA 7317** Microeconomics and Policy Analysis  
**EPPS 6316** Applied Regression Analysis  
**EPPS 6352** Evaluation Research Methods in the Economic, Political and Policy Sciences  
**EPPS 7304** Cost-Benefit Analysis

or other appropriate courses approved by the MPA Director

**Elective Courses: 15 hours**

Students not wishing to complete a professional specialization must complete 15 hours of elective coursework in addition to the core courses, capstone and internship. These courses will be determined in consultation with the MPA Director. *Other courses, including online offerings, may be authorized for all tracks at the discretion of the MPA Director.*
Capstone Course: 3 hours

The capstone in public affairs is the culminating experience for graduating MPA students. Students integrate knowledge from across the MPA curriculum in a faculty-directed semester-long applied research project (PA 6399 Capstone in Public Affairs). This required 3 hour seminar should be taken in the semester in which the student intends to graduate.

Internship: 3 hours

Three (3) hours of internship credit (PA 8V97) are required for completion of the MPA. The internship involves work in a professional capacity in an organization, under the joint supervision of an experienced professional mentor at the internship site and the MPA Internship Coordinator. The standard three hour internship requires approximately a 20-hour per week time commitment to the work experience for a total of 300 internship contact hours during the semester. The objective of the internship is to provide an introduction to professional life and to establish sound approaches to the practice of public affairs. Students shall not take more than 6 hours of approved internship credit toward the MPA. For students with evidence of at least 12 months full time managerial experience in the public or nonprofit sectors, 3 hours of internship credit may be waived at the discretion of the MPA director. Students who wish to seek the internship waiver must submit a formal written request to the MPA Director that includes a letter documenting the duration of their experience and its relevance to public or nonprofit management. This request must be approved no later than the student's penultimate semester in the program. Students for whom the internship requirement is waived must complete an additional 3 hours of approved elective coursework in lieu of the internship.