

Public Affairs

Entering the degree mid-career, Master of Public Affairs students are accomplished managers and executives in their fields with diverse and extensive work experience. In some cases, students already hold an advanced degree or advanced training in a field. The focus of the degree is on policy analysis combined with deep engagement on questions of organizational leadership, innovation, strategy, and adaptation. The MPA curriculum has been strategically designed to not only equip students with the fundamentals to succeed in policy-driven roles, but also to give them the leadership capabilities necessary to excel.

Please visit departmental website for comprehensive information at gspp.berkeley.edu/mpa (<https://gspp.berkeley.edu/programs/masters-of-public-affairs-mpa/applying-for-the-mpa/application-criteria>)

Unit Requirements: 27 Units

Required Core Courses:

PUB AFF 201	Confronting Public Policy Challenges	2
PUB AFF W202	Policy Analysis Toolkit Course	3
PUB AFF W207	The Capstone	4
PUB AFF 215	Economics for Public Policy Makers	3
PUB AFF 225	Policy Communications	1
PUB AFF 235	Research Methods for Policy Leaders	1
PUB AFF 245	Inferential Statistics for Policy Makers	1
PUB AFF 255	Risk and Decision Models	1
PUB AFF 265	Financial Management and Budgeting	1
PUB AFF 283	Leading People and Organizations	2
PUB AFF 285	Ethical Issues for Policy Leaders	1
PUB AFF 287	Innovation, Strategy and Leadership: Making Change in Public Organizations.	2

Public Affairs

Expand all course descriptions [+]Collapse all course descriptions [-]

PUB AFF 201 Confronting Public Policy Challenges 2 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session

This course is designed to introduce mid-career executives to three things: a typology of "kinds of problems" that confront those leading organizations; a sampling of major problems confronting leaders in the next decades; and a sampling of solutions to problems confronting leaders. It introduces the rest of the Berkeley MPA summer core program with examples of the kinds of problems that modern leaders must confront and the kinds of solutions that must be devised. The course features at least one article or book by a GSPP faculty member in each session except the last.

Confronting Public Policy Challenges: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 36 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Confronting Public Policy Challenges: Read Less [-]

PUB AFF 202 Policy Analysis Toolkit Course 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2018, Fall 2017

This course is designed to improve our abilities to think creatively and critically about public policy problems and solutions. The course provides the opportunity to synthesize the skills you have acquired through your summer core coursework and apply these skills to real world policy problems. We open the course with a discussion of what it is that policy analysts do and how their work fits into the broader policy process. We then move into an overview of the policy analysis framework, drawing on the eightfold path you were introduced to in the Policy Frameworks course.

Policy Analysis Toolkit Course: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Policy Analysis Toolkit Course: Read Less [-]

PUB AFF W202 Policy Analysis Toolkit Course 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2018, Fall 2017

This course is designed to improve our abilities to think creatively and critically about public policy problems and solutions. The course provides the opportunity to synthesize the skills you have acquired through your summer core coursework and apply these skills to real world policy problems. We open the course with a discussion of what it is that policy analysts do and how their work fits into the broader policy process. We then move into an overview of the policy analysis framework, drawing on the eightfold path you were introduced to in the Gateway course.

Policy Analysis Toolkit Course: [Read More](#) [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of web-based lecture and 2 hours of web-based discussion per week

Online: This is an online course.

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Policy Analysis Toolkit Course: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF 205 Policy Frameworks and Challenges 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2019 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2018 Second 6 Week Session

This course is designed to introduce mid-career executives to "big ideas" in public policy: the fundamental dilemmas in governance, representation, resource creation and distribution, that eternally confront societies and public leaders, and various approaches to resolving these dilemmas.

Policy Frameworks and Challenges: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: This class takes material from Pub Aff 201 and puts it into a 1-credit class format. Students may not receive credit for both Pub Aff 201 and Pub Aff 205.

Hours & Format

Summer: 6 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Mauldon

Policy Frameworks and Challenges: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF 207 The Capstone 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2020, Spring 2019, Spring 2018

The MPA Capstone Course is designed to enable each MPA student to write their Capstone Analytic Project, which will address a specific policy or programmatic challenge facing a real-world client. The weekly course meetings are structured to help students further hone their creativity, their analytic capacities and their writing and presentation skills as they develop the project through its various stages. Participants work closely together to learn from and help each other. Each student's final product, their CAP, is a thorough analysis of the client's problem or challenge that draws on the interdisciplinary methods, approaches, and perspectives studied in the Toolkit class and other classes in the MPA core curriculum. The Capstone: [Read More](#) [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

The Capstone: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF W207 The Capstone 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session, Spring 2020, Summer 2019 Second 6 Week Session

The MPA Capstone Course is designed to enable each MPA student to write their Capstone Analytic Project, which will address a specific policy or programmatic challenge facing a real-world client. The weekly course meetings are structured to help students further hone their creativity, their analytic capacities and their writing and presentation skills as they develop the project through its various stages. Participants work closely together to learn from and help each other. Each student's final product, their CAP, is a thorough analysis of the client's problem or challenge that draws on the interdisciplinary methods, approaches, and perspectives studied in the Toolkit class and other classes in the MPA core curriculum. The Capstone: [Read More](#) [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of web-based lecture and 2 hours of web-based discussion per week

Online: This is an online course.

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

The Capstone: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF 215 Economics for Public Policy Makers 3 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2019 First 6 Week Session, Summer 2018 First 6 Week Session

This course is designed to familiarize the executive student with the ways in which microeconomic analysis is brought to bear on public policy issues. You will learn (1) to identify the relevant economic questions concerning policy issues of interest to you, (2) to comprehend the economic arguments that bear on these issues, (3) to evaluate these arguments in terms of their strengths and weaknesses, and (4) when to utilize specific tools and methods from microeconomics to address the policy issues.

Economics for Public Policy Makers: Read More [\[+\]](#)

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 15 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Economics for Public Policy Makers: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

PUB AFF 225 Policy Communications 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session

The Goldman School equips students to speak truth to power. In this course, the goal is to focus on the art and science of persuasive oral communication in policy. This course equips students with the best practices of oral communication and provides them with a safe space to find their voice. We focus primarily on persuasion.

Policy Communications: Read More [\[+\]](#)

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Policy Communications: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

PUB AFF 235 Research Methods for Policy Leaders 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2019 First 6 Week Session, Summer 2018 First 6 Week Session

This course presents an introduction overview of quantitative and qualitative research methods and an introduction to the research process in public policy decision making.

Research Methods for Policy Leaders: Read More [\[+\]](#)

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Research Methods for Policy Leaders: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

PUB AFF 245 Inferential Statistics for Policy Makers 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2019 10 Week Session, Summer 2019 First 6 Week Session

In this course, we are going to study the use of research methods, statistics, and probability theory in public decision making. We will begin with case studies of important public policy topics where key decisions depend on the interpretation of results from empirical research or on probabilistic assessments of the likelihood of various outcomes. We will then study the basics of probability theory, statistical sampling, hypothesis testing, and inferring causality.

Inferential Statistics for Policy Makers: Read More [\[+\]](#)

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Inferential Statistics for Policy Makers: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

PUB AFF 255 Risk and Decision Models 1 Unit

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

This course examines mathematical models useful in policy analysis and management through a series of exercises and hands-on experimentation. It assumes knowledge of basic economics and introductory statistics.

Risk and Decision Models: Read More [\[+\]](#)

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Risk and Decision Models: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

PUB AFF 260 Applied Inferential Statistics for Policy Analysis 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2019 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2018 Second 6 Week Session

There is increasing emphasis throughout the public and non-profit sectors to invest in practices that are "evidence based". In this course, we are going to study the role of empirical research in public decision making and the common research strategies employed to study problems of causal inference and prediction. The effectiveness of specific intervention often relies on research attempting to demonstrate that one variable (for example, a particular educational intervention) has a causal effect on an outcome of interest (for example, successful completion of high school). We will study the various research strategies that are employed to uncover causal effects and to evaluate the effects of programmatic interventions.

Applied Inferential Statistics for Policy Analysis: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Summer: 1.5 weeks - 13 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Raphael

Applied Inferential Statistics for Policy Analysis: Read Less [-]

PUB AFF 265 Financial Management and Budgeting 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session

This course discusses methods for making organizations perform with an emphasis on managerial and financial accounting. Procurement, quality assurance, and performance evaluations of employees are also discussed. Managerial accounting is a set of tools used by managers for planning, implementation, and control. Financial accounting is a set of tools used by managers and outside observers for reporting on and analyzing an organization's financial health.

Financial Management and Budgeting: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Financial Management and Budgeting: Read Less [-]

PUB AFF W270 Negotiations 3 Units

Terms offered: Not yet offered

The objective of this course is to improve negotiation skills and to increase the ability to resolve conflicts in a multitude of situations, including public policy disputes. Topics will include: distributive and integrative bargaining; preparation strategies; defense to ploys; power and perceptions; team and multi-party negotiations; political, legislative and regulatory negotiations; emotions and gender, email negotiations, handling difficult negotiators, impact of personality traits and public policy mediation. Simulated negotiation exercises and role-plays will be used extensively.

Negotiations: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of web-based lecture and 2 hours of web-based discussion per week

Online: This is an online course.

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Dayonot

Negotiations: Read Less [-]

PUB AFF W271 Program Evaluation 3 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

Program evaluation is the systematic investigation of social programs, regulations, or policies. The aim of program evaluation is to provide valid findings in order to determine whether a particular program or policy is achieving its objectives. Evaluations are used for various reasons, most commonly to aid in decisions concerning whether programs should be continued, improved, expanded, or curtailed. This course will introduce students to a variety of research designs and related methodological tools useful for evaluating the impact of public policies and programs.

Program Evaluation: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of web-based lecture and 3 hours of web-based discussion per week

Online: This is an online course.

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Weare

Program Evaluation: Read Less [-]

PUB AFF 274 Storytelling for Leadership 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session

Inspirational and authentic leaders understand that in order to inspire and earn the trusts of others, they must first be willing to reveal who they are and what they truly believe in. In this course, we will study how leaders and change agents use storytelling to inspire people and enroll others into their vision. More importantly, you will have the opportunity to discover and tell your own leadership stories—who you are, your personal beliefs and values, and your personal/professional aspirations and passion. The goal of the course is to provide the foundations to develop both the content and the delivery of a compelling story.

Storytelling for Leadership: [Read More](#) [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1 hour of lecture per week

Summer: 2 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Charnsupharindr

Storytelling for Leadership: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF 280 The Eightfold Path for Policy Analysis 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2019

Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2018 Second 6 Week Session

This course is focused exclusively on teaching a classic method of public policy analysis, the so-called Eightfold Path for Policy Analysis. Class sessions will be devoted to discussion and applications of each step of this approach. Students will develop a policy analysis on a topic of their choice, and write it up as a final course assignment.

The Eightfold Path for Policy Analysis: [Read More](#) [+]

Hours & Format

Summer: 1.5 weeks - 14 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Mauldon

The Eightfold Path for Policy Analysis: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF 283 Leading People and Organizations 1 Unit

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

This course is designed to help students develop their skills for leading and managing large groups, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and public advocacy, with the goal of achieving positive social change. Materials include case studies, analyses, and works from several disciplines. This course will provide higher-level topics of leadership strategy, visionary management, and executive communication styles.

Leading People and Organizations: [Read More](#) [+]

Hours & Format

Summer: 1.5 weeks - 13 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Leading People and Organizations: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF 285 Ethical Issues for Policy Leaders 1 or 2 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2019

Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2018 Second 6 Week Session

The objective of this course is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of ethical arguments in the process and substance of policymaking.

Those who seek to govern well inescapably confront questions of value in their political, professional and personal choices. The discussion of ethical dilemmas is designed to provoke analytic reflection on the moral challenges and responsibilities for public policymaking in a democracy.

The focus is on the many and often competing obligations, commitments and values that should guide public actors, as well as on the public principles that guide the design of good public policy.

Ethical Issues for Policy Leaders: [Read More](#) [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 8 weeks - 2-4 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 3 weeks - 5-13 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Ethical Issues for Policy Leaders: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF 287 Innovation, Strategy and Leadership: Making Change in Public Organizations. 2 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2019 First 6 Week Session, Summer 2018 First 6 Week Session

This course focuses on creating and implementing change within public organizations through the application of strategic planning, innovation and leadership. We will discuss where new ideas come from and how they can be generated, evaluated and implemented. The methods developed in other parts of the summer curriculum become the support for proving that new ideas are good ideas (or for finding out that they are bad ideas). We will explore how each method can be useful to a leader (both formal and informal) at various levels within a public organization through case studies and real world examples. The course will introduce leadership themes which will be explored further in PUB AFF 283: Leading People and Organizations.

Innovation, Strategy and Leadership: Making Change in Public Organizations.: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 10 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Innovation, Strategy and Leadership: Making Change in Public Organizations.: Read Less [-]

PUB AFF 288 Digital Economy: Public Policy Making in the Fourth Industrial Revolution 1 Unit

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

In the Fourth Industrial Revolution, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and gene editing will transform the way we work and the way we live. The speed, scope, and scale of the technological changes are unprecedented, which pose serious challenges to policy makers – how do you create agile public policies to not only keep up with technologies, but to anticipate future trends in this fast-moving digital economy? We will take a practical approach to examine the issues and challenges of “tech policy” from a global perspective, including topics such as digital trade, data privacy, digital payment, artificial intelligence, gene editing, blockchain, and more. Digital Economy: Public Policy Making in the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Read More [+]

Objectives & Outcomes

Course Objectives: Apply the learnings of the class and develop “mock policy” for an emerging technology.

Discover tech policy-making from three different perspectives: government, private sector, and civil society.

Understand the fundamentals of tech policy and how to develop tech policy for the digital economy.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 2 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Fan

Digital Economy: Public Policy Making in the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Read Less [-]

PUB AFF 290 Special Topics in Public Affairs 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2020, Summer 2020 Second 6 Week Session, Spring 2020

Course examines current problems and issues in the field of public affairs. Topics may vary from year to year and will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

Special Topics in Public Affairs: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 2.5-10 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Special Topics in Public Affairs: [Read Less](#) [-]

PUB AFF W290 Special Topics in Public Affairs 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2020, Spring 2020, Fall 2019

Course examines current problems and issues in the field of public affairs. Topics may vary from year to year and will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

Special Topics in Public Affairs: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of web-based lecture and 1-4 hours of web-based discussion per week

Online: This is an online course.

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Public Affairs/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Special Topics in Public Affairs: [Read Less](#) [-]