



# **POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY (MPP) PROGRAM**

(October 2017)

## **PART I: CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW**

### ***Mission Statement***

The School of Public Policy and Administration (SPPA) equips students with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform research and public service activities that address pressing social and economic problems and enhance the quality of life in communities in Delaware, the nation, and the world. Through its academic programs and research and public service centers, SPPA engages faculty, professional staff, and students from a variety of disciplines and diverse backgrounds in the classroom, on public service project teams, and in collaboration with outside organizations.

### ***Degrees Offered***

SPPA is an academic unit within the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Delaware, and offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees. The undergraduate programs are the Bachelor of Science in Organizational and Community Leadership, and the Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy. The graduate programs are the Doctor of Philosophy in Urban Affairs and Public Policy, the Master of Arts in Urban Affairs and Public Policy, the Master of Science in Disaster Science & Management, the Doctor of Philosophy in Disaster Science & Management, the Master of Public Administration (MPA.), and now the Master of Public Policy (MPP). In addition, SPPA offers accelerated degree programs for undergraduate Public Policy majors with the M.A. in Urban Affairs and Public Policy, the MPA, and now the MPP.

### ***Master of Public Policy (MPP) - Overview***

As a well-recognized core degree at research universities across the nation, the MPP program's objective is to provide advanced analytic and substantive knowledge of public policy to educate professionals for work in the public, private, and non-profit sectors on issues of public concern at all levels, local to global. This interdisciplinary degree draws from multiple fields of study, including economics, political science, sociology, psychology, education, law, history, and public health. The MPP degree focuses on professional skills in public policy analysis, evaluation, and communication, as a complement to SPPA's existing professional graduate education in public administration and management (through the MPA). Classroom learning for

the MPP is supplemented by applied policy research and internship opportunities offered by SPPA, its affiliated programs and centers, and external partners.

MPP graduates often serve in a “translational” role between researchers, advocates, and policymakers. They help policymakers to understand complex data and research results that should inform public policy-making, as well as stakeholder and constituent demands for public policy. This translational role can be served from within or outside of government, including in nonprofit organizations, consulting firms, and other private businesses. Indeed, many public policy graduates work at some point in their careers for both governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Students may enroll in the MPP full-time or part-time, although the curriculum is optimized to serve cohorts of full-time, locally-resident students in two years.

The MPP program is administered by an MPP program director, in consultation with the SPPA director and SPPA’s academic curriculum coordinating committee.

## **PART II: ADMISSIONS**

### ***Policy Statement***

Given SPPA’s mission, the MPP program seeks students with a mix of interests, backgrounds, and areas of competence and among whose goals include a commitment to public service. SPPA employs a wide spectrum of information in assessing a prospective student's motivation, interest, and ability to perform successfully in the MPP program. Applicants are sought who show promise of constructive involvement with faculty, staff, and other students in instruction, research, and public service. Consideration is given to the student’s potential for successful completion of his or her graduate program within a reasonable period. No one criterion is the sole basis of an admissions decision.

The MPP program’s admissions criteria and indicators of these criteria include:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Indicators and Sources</b>
Genuine interest and motivation to pursue graduate study in public policy; personal objectives, aspirations, and plans are well formulated, ethically based, and coherent.	Personal statement by candidate in admission application and/or subsequent communications; personal interviews (telephone conversations when personal interviews are not possible) with members of the SPPA faculty and the MPP admissions committee.

<p>Expectations of sound academic performance in graduate level work.</p>	<p>Review of undergraduate achievement and any previous graduate level work. Particular emphasis on assessing achievement in the context of the quality of the institutions candidate has attended and the trends or patterns in achievement in the last 1 - 2 years of applicant's program. GRE scores; TOEFL scores, if applicable. Recommendations of faculty, professional associates, community leaders. Reports or research papers written by candidate (published or unpublished).</p>
<p>Ability to apply previously acquired competencies to problem areas, community, or organizational needs.</p>	<p>Contributions in and nature of professional work experience, volunteer service and/or internships. Assessments by faculty, professionals, and/or community leaders (letters of recommendation).</p>

Given the professional objectives of the MPP program, the goal of serving students from a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and career stages as well as empirical analysis of prior student admissions and performance, the successful candidate for admission will ordinarily have an undergraduate grade point average index above 3.0 and an index of 3.3 or better in his/her major field of study (out of 4.0 scale). In addition, the quality and extent of previous related work experience and the motivation to pursue a professional career in public service are particularly important.

**GRE SCORES.** Generally, those admitted for graduate study have scores that are distributed similarly on the quantitative and verbal aptitude portions of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) at or above the 69th percentile, with a priority on the demonstration of strong analytical ability. GRE scores are viewed in the context of the applicant’s complete record. The School has established no minimum GRE score required for admission.

**TOEFL SCORES.** International applicants must demonstrate a satisfactory command of English, particularly if English is not their first language. The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is required of all international applicants. A minimum score of 600 (paper-based test), or 100 (TOEFL iBT) is usually required for consideration for admission. TOEFL scores are viewed in the context of the applicant’s complete record. The School has established no minimum TOEFL score for admission.

The MPP program follows University guidelines that allow waiving of the TOEFL exam for those international students who have earned an undergraduate degree in a country where English is the primary language, or if a degree has already been earned in the United States.

(See <http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/apply/testscores.html>).

**CAP PROGRAM.** The MPP program participates in the University's Conditional Admissions Program (CAP) offered in conjunction with the English Language Institute (ELI). Through CAP, the University offers admission to otherwise qualified international graduate students with the condition that they must first improve their English language skills by successfully completing the highest levels of oral and written communications skills training offered by the ELI. Once CAP students meet these English language objectives they begin their regular graduate coursework without submitting a TOEFL score. (See <http://sites.udel.edu/eli/programs/cap/>).

Admission to the MPP program is competitive. Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths.

### *Process*

**MPP ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE.** Applications to the MPP program are evaluated by the MPP committee on admissions. This committee is appointed by the SPPA director from among SPPA faculty and consists of at least two members. Decisions of the committee are subject to review and modification by the SPPA faculty and are made on behalf of the full faculty.

**ESTIMATES OF PROGRAM ADMISSIONS.** The MPP program seeks to admit 10 candidates (both full- and part-time) each year. While the majority of new admissions occur in the fall semester, students may also be admitted to begin their studies in the spring semester. Students may be admitted directly to the program or through the accelerated BA to MPP program.

**ADMISSION VIA THE BA-MPP PROGRAM.** Current undergraduate students enrolled in the BA in Public Policy program would be eligible to apply to the BA-MPP program after completing 60 credits, which is typically the fall of their junior year. These students must be enrolled in, or have completed, the introductory sequence of UAPP110, UAPP225, and UAPP325. The BA-MPP student applicants would complete the "short form" for admission, which requires a plan of study that indicates the courses intended to be double-counted between the two programs.

Admissions decisions for entrance to the BA-MPP program would be made on similar criteria as above, excepting that students should have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher. GRE scores and recommendation letters may be waived by the admissions committee for students with a 3.5 or higher cumulative GPA. Accepted students would then begin their MPP coursework in the spring of their junior year, in consultation with their new graduate degree advisor.

## **PART III: DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Curriculum***

The **Master of Public Policy (MPP)** degree requires completion of 42 credits: a core of 27 credits, electives of 9 credits, an internship, and a 6 credit capstone course.

#### Core Courses (27cr)

*Complete 6 credits of **policy foundations**:*

UAPP701 - Public Policy (3cr)

UAPP707 - Public Policy Analysis (3cr)

*Complete 21 credits of **research methods and tools**:*

UAPP702 - Research Methods in Urban and Public Policy (3cr)

UAPP691 - Quantitative Analysis in Public and Non-Profit Sectors (3cr)

UAPP704 - Advanced Quantitative Methods (3cr)

UAPP693 - Economics in Public and Non-Profit Sectors (3cr)

UAPP709 - Advanced Economics in Public and Non-Profit Sectors (3cr) -- NEW

UAPP684 - Performance Management and Program Evaluation (3cr)

Plus choose one of the following (3cr):

UAPP663 - Decision Tools for Policy Analysis (3cr) [MAST owner]

UAPP694 - Financial Management in Public and Non-Profit Sectors (3cr)

UAPP718 - Survey Research Methods (3cr)

UAPP755 - Evaluation Models and Approaches (3cr) [EVAL owner]

UAPP756 - Advanced Seminar in Evaluation (3cr) [EVAL owner]

UAPP761 - Conflict Resolution and Collaborative Problem Solving (3cr)

UAPP800 - Research Methods and Data Analysis (3cr)

UAPP808 - Qualitative Methods for Program Evaluation (3cr)

HLPR632 - Health Science Data Analysis (3cr)

MAST672 - Benefit-Cost Analysis (3cr)

PHIL613 - Research Ethics (0-3cr)<sup>1</sup>

#### Electives (9cr)

Each student must design a plan of study in consultation with their assigned faculty advisor, including 9 credits of electives built around the student's substantive policy interests.

Possible areas of interest include but are not limited to:

*Urban Policy:*

UAPP605 - Metropolitan Planning and Governance (3cr)

UAPP606 - Local Economic Development: Policy and Practice (3cr)

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<sup>1</sup> If used to satisfy the extra methods requirement, must be taken for 3 credits.

UAPP608 - Poverty, Neighborhoods, and Community Development (3cr)  
UAPP612 - Urban Housing Policy and Administration (3cr)  
UAPP613 - Planning Theory and Urban Policy (3cr)  
UAPP627 - World Heritage Sites (1cr)  
UAPP639 - Community Development Theory, Concepts, and Practice (3cr)  
UAPP703 - Urban Society and Public Policy (3cr)  
UAPP706 - Plan Sustainable Communities and Regions (3cr)  
EDUC659 - Urban Schools in Urban Landscapes (3cr)

*Social Policy:*

UAPP640 - International Development Policy and Administration (3cr)  
UAPP649 - Civil Rights Law and Policy (3cr)  
UAPP703 - Urban Society and Public Policy (3cr)  
UAPP823 - Social and Urban Policy (3cr)  
GEOG630 - Food Geographies and Food Justice (3cr)  
HDFS870 - Prevention Intervention and Policy (3cr)  
MALS630 - Human Rights and Liberties (3cr)  
SOC1615 - Race, Class, and Gender (3cr)  
SOC1630 - Juvenile Justice and Inequality (3cr)  
SOC1637 - Law and Society in Historical Perspective (3cr)

*Education Policy:*

EDUC659 - Urban Schools in Urban Landscapes (3cr)  
EDUC811 - Topics in Education Policy (3cr)  
EDUC839 - Education Policy and Governance (3cr)  
ECON820 - Economics of Education Policy (3cr)  
HDFS870 - Prevention Intervention and Policy (3cr)

*Emergency Management:*

DISA650 - Introduction to Disaster Science and Management (3cr)  
DISA651 - International Comparative Analysis of Disasters (3cr)  
DISA670 - Issues in Disaster Response (3cr)  
DISA690 - Natural Hazards (3cr)  
CIEG641 - Risk Analysis (3cr)  
SOC1667 - Disasters and Society (3cr)  
SOC1671 - Disasters, Vulnerability, and Development (3cr)  
SOC1837 - Criminology and Systems of Criminal Justice (3cr)

*Health Policy:<sup>2</sup>*

UAPP653 - Politics and Healthcare (3cr)  
UAPP657 - Health Policy (3cr)

*For use with any area of interest:*

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<sup>2</sup> The university and SPPA identified health policy as a desired area of growth.

UAPP668 - Government Budgets and Fiscal Federalism (3cr)  
UAPP687 - State Government Policy and Management (3cr)  
UAPP715 - Media, Citizenship and Public Policy (3cr)  
UAPP730 - Topics in Public Policy (3cr)  
UAPP666 - Special Problem (1-3cr) - maximum of 3cr applied to degree  
UAPP661 - Comparative Public Administration and Policy (1cr)  
UAPP724 - Comparative Public Policy (3cr)

*Note: we deliberately chose not to design an area of interest in environmental policy despite relevant capacity because **separate master's degrees are already offered at UD in Energy and Environmental Policy, Water Science and Policy, and Marine Policy**. All three programs are research-oriented degrees so there may be student interest in adding an environmental track for the professional MPP degree. We will see how that interest develops and design student plans of study accordingly.*

#### Internship (0cr)

Complete a non-credit-bearing internship, ideally during the summer between years:  
UNIV554 - Graduate Internship Semester (0cr)

#### Capstone (6cr)

Complete the following capstone experience in the last spring semester:  
UAPP714 - Policy Studio (6cr)

#### Waivers of Required Courses

Courses required in the MPP may be waived if comparable courses or the requisite skills are, or will be, acquired elsewhere under an approved plan of study. To waive a required course, a student must have a petition to waive approved and signed by her or his advisor and a person currently responsible for teaching the course. A record of the signed waiver shall be sent to the program director and included in the student's file. Students must petition to substitute one course for each one that is waived. Waivers cannot be used to reduce the total number of credit hours (42) required for the completion of the MPP degree.

#### Waiver of Internship Requirement

MPP students with substantial prior or ongoing professional experience may petition to waive the internship requirement. Substantial professional experience is interpreted as at least 2 years of full-time work in a public or nonprofit organization where the individual has responsibility for public policy analysis, communication, program evaluation, development, or administration. Students who believe they meet this standard should contact the MPP program director.

### ***Advisement***

All students entering the MPP program are assigned a faculty advisor by the MPP program director, or the student may choose his/her advisor if the student has a preference. The faculty advisor is responsible for monitoring the progress and performance of the student throughout their course of study with the MPP program. A student may request a change of academic advisor at any time by contacting the SPPA graduate program staff.

### ***Assessment***

MPP students will be assessed through their coursework on their (1) knowledge of the public policy-making process; (2) analytic skills to be used for policy analysis, evaluation, and decision support; (3) communication and interpersonal skills (including leadership and teamwork) for working with diverse populations in and out of government; and (4) an ethical foundation for conducting professional policy research from a public-service perspective, such as outlined in the American Society for Public Administration's Code of Ethics.<sup>3</sup> Students will be expected to demonstrate and integrate all four knowledge and skill areas in their internship placement and capstone experiences.

### ***Retention***

SPPA follows university policies on student retention and degree progress, which require graduate students maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale).<sup>4</sup> At the end of each academic year, the MPP program director reviews the performance of all students in the program and, if needed, initiates appropriate corrective actions based on SPPA and University guidelines.

## **PART IV: PLAN OF STUDY**

All MPP students, in consultation with their academic advisor, are required to complete and periodically review the attached Plan of Study form. Each successive revised form becomes part of the student's official file.

## **PART V: FINANCIAL AID**

Financial aid is available to MPP students in the form of graduate assistantships, research assistantships, tuition scholarships as well as University graduate scholar awards, assistantships and fellowships. The primary type of aid awarded are research assistantships (RAs) provided to those working on public service or research projects in one of the SPPA affiliated centers, or other University office. Detailed information on financial aid options, along with the applicable

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.aspanet.org/ASPA/About-ASPA/Code-of-Ethics/ASPA/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> <http://grad.udel.edu/policies/graduate-academic-policies/#gpa>

application processes and funding policies as approved by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. (See <http://www.sppa.udel.edu/content/financial-aid>.) Awards are competitive and merit-based.

Applications and nominations for financial aid for new students are generated by the MPP admissions committee when reviewing the Supplementary Information Form submitted as part of the application packet. These are transmitted as recommendations to the director of the MPP program and, in turn, to the School director for final disposition. Funding commitments are made through consultation between the MPP director, the School director, the directors of SPPA affiliated centers and faculty who provide graduate stipend support.

## **PART VI: PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

The MPP program is reviewed regularly by the MPP program director, the School director, and SPPA faculty and staff to assure that the program is meeting its objectives and effectively serving the students.