

PUBLIC AFFAIRS, MPA

The Master of Public Affairs (MPA) Program provides education in public management and policy analysis that prepares students for careers in public policy and administration within the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

The award-winning La Follette School faculty includes economists, political scientists, sociologists, and public affairs scholars who teach the skills and tools needed for a career in public affairs. They are experts in social policy, health policy and management, public administration, public policy analysis, environmental policy, poverty, and tax policy and government finance.

Beyond campus, the city of Madison, as the state capital, provides a wealth of opportunities for La Follette School students to participate in outreach and acquire practical experience as professional project assistants or interns with public and private entities. Students benefit from the strong relationships that La Follette School faculty have with these organizations, in keeping with the Wisconsin Idea of public service. This includes the Wisconsin Family Impact Seminar and Campus Connect—opportunities that use evidence-based research to inform policymakers and improve public policy.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DOUBLE DEGREES, DUAL DEGREES, AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Some students earn additional credentials while they work toward their public affairs degrees. Students must follow double degree (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/?policy=doubleddegrees>) and dual degree (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/?policy=dualdegreesgradprof>) policies. The following combined degree and certificate programs have been established, though students choose to embark on double degrees and graduate certificates beyond those listed below:

- Law (Juris Doctorate)
- Master of Public Health
- Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning
- Doctorate in Neuroscience
- Energy Analysis and Policy Certificate through the Nelson Institute in Environmental Studies
- Business, Environment, & Social Responsibility; Entrepreneurship; or Strategic Innovation offered through the School of Business.

Law and Public Affairs (MPA/JD)

Increasingly, careers in the federal, state, and local governments, as well as nonprofit organizations and private sector businesses require an understanding of public administration, policy analysis, and public affairs, as well as law. Many students choose to pursue the dual law and public affairs degree because of their interest in employment in government agencies, government relations law practice, or other policy-oriented firms and organizations.

For most students, the dual degree program will add about a year of study to the three years it takes to complete law school but will save approximately one year of study compared to doing the two programs separately. Students earn a Master of Public Affairs degree and a Juris Doctor. It is recommended that students apply to both programs at the same time.

Public Health and Public Affairs (MPA/MPH)

The La Follette School and the School of Medicine and Public Health offer education in public health policy, policy analysis, and global governance to address critical health and health policy issues in the United States and throughout the world.

The dual degree program generally takes three years to complete, including summers. Students earn a Master of Public Affairs degree and a Master of Public Health degree.

Neuroscience and Public Affairs (MPA/PhD)

Advances in neuroscience have important policy implications for child welfare and education, community development, mental health and health care, bioethics and aging, environmental risks, and national security. The Neuroscience and Public Policy Program (NPP) courses prepare students to work in the growing array of domestic or international policy jobs involved in the management of science and its integration into policy analysis and design. Students become good scientists and effective communicators, managers, and advocates of good public policy.

This combined degree program typically takes five years to complete, including summers. Students earn a Master of Public Affairs degree and a Doctor of Philosophy in Neuroscience. Degree requirements are completed in the first three years. The focus of the fourth year is on research and thesis development, as well as completion of the Ph.D. Preliminary Exam. Students continue doing research and defend their thesis in the fifth year.

Urban and Regional Planning and Public Affairs (MPA/MS in URPL)

The La Follette School and the Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture offer education in planning, policymaking, and public affairs to address domestic and global environmental, housing, and transportation policy issues. This double degree takes three years to complete, including summers. Students earn a Master of Public Affairs degree and a Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning.