Policy Studies

The School of Social Sciences

Director
Donald Ostdiek

Degree Offered: B.A.

This interdisciplinary major focuses on policy issues that are of public interest. Students in policy studies evaluate and analyze both the determinants and the effects of policy decisions, gaining an understanding of the policy-making process and acquiring an intellectual base for policy-making skills. The course of study addresses theoretical issues as well as applied and prescriptive policy questions.

Students may take policy studies only as a second major. It complements majors in any university department. For instance, engineering or science majors who are contemplating careers in business or government can investigate how technical innovations or regulations are adopted and implemented as matters of public policy, and humanities majors can explore career options where language skills are particularly valuable.

Students are encouraged to investigate research opportunities with Rice faculty. Students may also elect to participate in the Washington Semester Program at American University, which includes both course work and an internship within the federal government. See the policy studies director for more information on these programs.

Degree Requirements for B.A. in Policy Studies

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements (pages 17–19). Students may take the policy studies major only as a second major (their first major cannot also be in an interdepartmental program). The major contains 11 courses divided into the following elements: a basic curriculum, an area curriculum, and a research requirement.

The policy studies basic curriculum introduces students to the basic concepts and tools needed to understand and study policy, regardless of the policy area they choose to focus on. The four courses ensure that all policy studies majors have a common professional vocabulary and conceptual frame of reference. The policy studies area curriculum provides specialized training that builds on students’ work in the basic curriculum.

Students are required to take six courses from one of the following areas of specialization:

- environmental policy
- government policy and management
- health-care management
- international affairs
- law and justice
- managerial and business policy
- political management and communications

Policy studies students must also engage in a research project in their area of interest, either through a research seminar or independent study. In consultation with the policy studies director, each student must select a research seminar or complete an approved research project through independent study or other credit. The Policy Studies Research Seminar (SOSC 400) also counts for this requirement.
4 Basic Curriculum Courses
POLI 338/SOSC 301 Policy Analysis
ECON 211 or 212 Principles of Economics I or II
SOSC 300 Social Science and Public Policy
or POLI 337 Public Policy and Bureaucracy
1 advanced analysis or methods course approved by the policy studies director

6 Area Curriculum Courses
6 courses from 1 of the following 7 groups

1. Environmental Policy:
Core Courses (Choose at least 3)
ECON 480 Environmental and Energy Economics I
POLI 331 Environmental Politics and Policy
SOCI 367 Environmental Sociology
ENVI 306 Global Environmental Law and Sustainable Development
ENVI 406 Introduction to Environmental Law
HIST 330 U.S. Environmental History

Electives (Choose up to 3)
ANTH 468 Palaeoclimat and Human Response
BIOS 322 Global Ecosystem Dynamics
BIOS 324 Wetland Ecosystems
BIOS 325 Ecology
ENGL 478 Literature and the Environment
ENVI/HPHS 201 Introduction to Environmental Systems
ENVI 445 Natural Environmental Factors
GEOL 326 Environmental Geology
GEOL 341 The Oceans
GEOL 345 Geology of National Parks
POLI 336 Politics of Regulation
RELI 362 Environmental Ethics
SPAC 203 Atmosphere, Weather, and Climate
SPAC 443/ENVI 443 Atmospheric Science
UNIV 303 Environmental Problem Solving

2. Government Policy and Management:
Core Courses (Choose at least 3)
ECON 436 Government Regulation of Business
ECON 461 Urban Economics
ECON 483 Public Finance
POLI 300 Federalism and Intergovernmental Politics

Electives (Choose up to 3)
POLI 301 State Politics
POLI 332/432 Urban Politics
POLI 337 Public Policy and Bureaucracy
POLI 436 Politics of Regulation

3. Health-Care Policy and Management:
(Choose 6)
ANTH 381 Medical Anthropology
ANTH 386 Human Nutrition
ANTH 388 Life Cycle: A Biocultural View
HEAL 212 Consumer Health
HEAL 350 Understanding Cancer
HEAL 407 Epidemiology
HEAL 410 Program Development in Health Education
PHIL 315 Ethics, Medicine, and Public Policy
RELI 462/463 Medical Ethics and American Values I & II
SOCI 330 Health-Care Reform in the 50 States
SOCI 420 Health Care: Competition and Managed Care
SOCI 430 The Shaping of Health Policy in the United States
SOCI 334 Sociology of the Family
SOCI 345 Sociology of Medicine
SOCI 433 Sociology of the Life Cycle: Death and Dying
SPAN 307/308 The Language of Health Care
### 4. International Affairs:

**Core Courses (Choose at least 2)**
- ECON 420 *International Economics*
- POLI 372 *American Foreign Policy*
- POLI 376 *International Political Economy*
- POLI 378 *The Politics of American National Security Policy*
- POLI 462 *Comparative Public Policy*

**Electives (Choose up to 4)**
- ANTH 360 *Modernity and Social Space*
- ECON 421 *International Finance*
- ECON 430 *Comparative Economic Systems*
- ECON 451 *Political Economy of Latin America*
- HIST 232 *The Making of Modern Africa*
- HIST 394 *War in the Modern World*
- HIST 464 *Foreign Policy of Nixon and Kissinger*
- HIST 469 *US–Latin America Relations*
- POLI 354 *Latin American Politics*
- POLI 355 *Government and Politics of the Middle East*
- POLI 356 *Politics of Latin American Economic Development*
- POLI 360 *West European Democracies*
- POLI 361 *Comparative Post-Communist Systems*
- POLI 373 *International Conflict*
- POLI 376 *International Political Economy*
- POLI 464 *Political Economy of Development*

### 5. Law and Justice:

**Choose 6**
- ANTH 326 *Anthropology of Law*
- ANTH 419 *Law and Society*
- ECON 438/439 *Economics of the Law I and II*
- ENVI 406 *Introduction to Environmental Law*
- HIST 297/298 *American Legal History I and II*
- HPER 364 *Sport and the Law*
- PHIL 307 *Social and Political Philosophy*
- PHIL 316 *Philosophy of Law*
- POLI 321 *American Constitutional Law*
- POLI 458 *Property Rights and Privatization*
- SOCI 321 *Criminology*

### 6. Business Policy and Management:

**Core Courses (Choose at least 3)**
- ECON 436 *Government Regulation of Business*
- ECON 445 *Managerial Economics*
- ECON 435 *Industrial Organization*
- POLI 335 *Political Environment of Business*
- POLI 336 *Politics of Regulation*
- PSYC 231 *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*

**Electives (Choose up to 3)**
- ACCO 305 *Introduction to Accounting*
- CAAM 376 *Introduction to Management Science*
- ECON 355 *Money and Banking*
- ECON 370 *Microeconomic Theory*
- ECON 375 *Macroeconomic Theory*
- ECON 415 *Human Resources, Wages, and Welfare*
- ECON 420 *International Economics*
- ECON 421 *International Finance*
- ECON 448 *Corporation Finance*
- HIST 331 *Labor in America*
- POLI 376 *International Political Economy*
- POLI 458 *Property Rights and Privatization*
- POLI 464 *Political Economy of Development*

### 7. Political Management and Communications:

**Choose 6**
- ANTH 342 *Political Cinema*
- ANTH 395 *Culture and Communication*
- POLI 334 *Interest Groups and Political Parties*
- POLI 366 *Elections in Western Democracies*
- POLI 380 *Political Behavior*
- POLI 382 *Public Opinion*
- POLI 431 *Electoral Campaigns*
- POLI 437 *Representation*
- POLI 496 *Survey Research Methods*
- SOCI 336 *Mass Communications*
- SOCI 360 *Television in American Culture*

**1 Seminar or Independent Research**
Must be approved by the policy studies director