

Master of Public Policy Graduate Assessment Plan
School of Public Policy
Oregon State University

Program Outcomes

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

Through participation in and successful completion of the Master of Public Policy (MPP), students will graduate with:

Outcome 1: The ability to conduct original policy research that extends the knowledge of both policy and other social science disciplines. This will be demonstrated through mastery and application of critical thinking, and application of standard and innovative policy theory and methods in both coursework and an individual research project.

Outcome 2: Substantive knowledge in an area of concentration that allows for immediate immersion in a relevant policy arena. This will be accomplished through coursework, independent study, and a professional practicum.

Outcome 3: Experience in the practice of policy analysis, development, and implementation through an appropriate professional practicum. This will be demonstrated through the completion of a professional placement that includes a mentoring relationship with a current practitioner.

Outcome 4: A commitment to diversity “because it enhances our education and provides tools to be culturally respectful, professionally competent, and civically responsible” (OSU Mission Statement). This will occur through participation and training in courses and seminars throughout the entire program.

Outcome 5: Skills and experience in designing and teaching in both formal and informal venues with students, practitioners, and community members. This will be demonstrated through university teaching assignments, development and implementation of community outreach/training programs and professional development seminars, and presentations at professional conferences.

Outcome 6: High ethical standards in public policy research, teaching, and service. This will be accomplished through participation and training in research methods courses, professional development seminars, and core courses in public policy and administration.

Outcome 7: The development of a public service ethic resulting in student understanding of the significance of working collectively, in collaboration with the public and prioritizing the desires of citizens, communities, and society at large. This outcome will be achieved through coursework and service learning projects that involve public partners in mutually beneficial, community-driven efforts.

Measurement

Methods used to assess each outcome.

Assessment strategies for each of the learning outcomes are discussed, followed by a strategy for integrating findings into appropriate program modifications.

- Upon completion of coursework students conduct independent research with oversight by a

major professor (MPP Essay). When the research is completed, the MPP Essay is examined along with an oral defense so that faculty can assess the qualifications of the student as an independent scholar. Success rates for defenses is collected by the Graduate Program Director; documentation of deficiencies that delay or inhibit successful completion of the MPP degree are noted and reviewed on an annual basis by both the Executive Committee and in the future with an External Advisory Board.

- Students in the MPP program must maintain a 3.00 GPA in all coursework. Any term that GPA falls below this average, the student will meet with the major advisor and Graduate Program Director to develop an educational plan for addressing difficulties. The student will have one term to raise the GPA to appropriate levels or will face termination from the program. Information about classes taken by students, grades and GPAs, as well as educational plans is tracked by the Graduate Program Director and reviewed on an annual basis with both the Executive Committee and in the future an External Advisory Committee.
- Each MPP student will complete a professional practicum that lasts at least ten weeks. The practicum will be developed in conjunction with the major advisor and committee to complement the student's interests, experience, and knowledge. Students may prepare for the placement with extensive study with appropriate experts at OSU and other universities. While many students will be off-campus during their practicum they will be required to communicate regularly with their major advisor and complete a policy-style document (e.g., report, briefing, whitepaper) in conjunction with their practicum mentor (a policy practitioner) and their major advisor. The practicum mentor will provide a written evaluation that will be reviewed with the student, the major advisor, and the Public Policy Graduate Program Director. The Graduate Program Director will track all practicum evaluations and review these with the Executive Committee and External Advisory Board on an annual basis.
- Each student will be provided the opportunity to design and teach appropriate classes in both formal and informal settings (e.g., professional training). The major advisor and appropriate programs will provide training and oversight of all teaching experiences. Each student will be observed in their teaching experiences by a Public Policy Program faculty member and, as appropriate, someone from the academic unit in which they are teaching or from the organization that is sponsoring the professional development. All teaching observations will be shared with the student and with the Public Policy Graduate Program Director. In addition, students will be encouraged and supported in presenting at professional and practitioner meetings throughout their education.
- In addition, the Public Policy Graduate Program Director will track information about the program including the number of applicants, offers, and acceptances on a yearly basis; retention and graduation rates; and post-graduation employment. Information about all students' background qualifications (e.g., undergrad/grad degrees, schools attended, GPA, GRE scores, etc.) will be collected and reviewed on a regular basis. Each graduate will also participate in an exit interview with the Graduate Program Director to describe their experiences – good and bad – with the program as well as suggestions for improvements. Students will also be provided the opportunity to submit anonymous information to the Graduate Program Director as appropriate through a Current Student Survey and an Alumni Survey (see attachments). Currently two elected MPP students serve on the Program Executive Committee to represent the students' perspective on the design and implementation of the program.
- As described above, information from the assessment tools will be brought regularly to the Executive Committee and External Advisory Board for review and input. At one meeting each year, the full assessment package will be discussed in detail to determine if program goals are being met. As evidence is collected that curriculum, program requirements, or any other aspect

of the program needs improvement, these groups will move to make necessary changes.

b) Measurement tools to be used

In addition to tracking the assessment indicators described above, the Public Policy Graduate Program Director will be responsible for collecting and maintaining information including, but not limited to:

- Number of applicants, offers, and acceptance
- Characteristics of incoming students including previous degrees, GPA, GRE scores
- Retention and graduation rates
- Employment rates and characteristics of employment (e.g., sector, position)
- Current student and alumni satisfaction/feedback (as measured through an exit interview and surveys; see attached student surveys)
- Continued support and funding from the college and university
- Results of external reviews

Assessment Plan:

Plan for specific activities and assessment method for each outcome. Map all required course (with their learning outcomes and assessments to the program outcomes).

Outcome 1 > Required core courses: ECON 524-Introduction to Econometrics; ECON 539-Public Policy Analysis; SOC 515-Understanding Social Research; SOC 516-Conducting Social Research; SOC 519-Applied Social Research. Final independent research project: ECON/PS/SOC 501-MPP Essay. MPP 510-Internship.

Outcome 2 > Required 16 credit hours in a substantive MPP concentration including International Policy, Environmental Policy, Rural Policy, Science and Technology Policy and Social Policy (approved courses are located at the MPP website - <http://oregonstate.edu/cla/mpp/home>). The final MPP Essay (ECON/SOC/PS 501) and internship (MPP 510) are also related to the student's chosen MPP concentration.

Outcome 3 > Required internship for 10 weeks (MPP 510-Internship).

Outcome 4 > This will occur through participation and training in courses and seminars throughout the entire program including the following required core courses: MPP 507 – Professional Development Seminar; PS 571 – Public Policy Theory; PS 572 – Public Administration.

Outcome 5 > This will be demonstrated through university teaching assignments, development and implementation of community outreach/training programs and professional development seminars, and presentations at professional conferences.

Outcome 6 > Required core courses: ECON 524-Introduction to Econometrics; ECON 539-Public Policy Analysis; MPP 507 –Professional Development Seminar for First Year Students; MPP 507- Professional Development Seminar for Second Year Students; PS 571 – Public Policy Theory; PS 572 – Public Administration; SOC 515-Understanding Social Research; SOC 516-Conducting Social Research; SOC 519-Applied Social Research; Final independent research project: ECON/PS/SOC 501-MPP Essay; and MPP 510-Internship.

