MASTER OF ARTS IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC POLICY, PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL POLICY CONCENTRATION

The formulation and evaluation of public policy have become a major concern for both public officials and citizens in U.S. society. Even technical policy issues raise questions about social values and assume knowledge of concepts that call for philosophical exploration. As part of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, the master’s program in philosophy and social policy addresses questions of public policy from a humanistic perspective. Our MA offers an interdisciplinary course of study in the field of public policy, with a concentration in philosophy and social policy.

The “policy core” includes courses in political science, economics, quantitative methods, and a variety of approaches to policy analysis. These courses ensure that all candidates for the degree acquire methodological skills indispensable for the analysis of policy issues. In the “philosophy core,” students examine the broad normative and institutional backgrounds within which specific policy decisions are framed.

The program prepares students to bring the normative, historical, and logical tools of philosophical inquiry to bear upon policy issues. Through case studies, students analyze the underlying concepts and value implications of specific policies in areas including welfare programs, access to health care, protection of the environment, health and safety, equality of opportunity, and protection of human rights. Concentrations within this program include bioethics and health policy, urban and welfare policy, and environmental philosophy and policy. Students may choose to pursue specific concentrations reflecting their interests.

Visit the program website (https://philosophy.columbian.gwu.edu/ma-philosophy-and-social-policy/) for additional information.

ADMISSIONS

Admission deadlines:  
- Fall - April 1 (February 1 for fellowship consideration). Applications received past April 1 may be reviewed, space permitting
- Spring - October 1

Standardized test scores: GRE not required.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the academic International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the PTE Academic is required of all applicants except those who hold a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree from a college or university in the United States or from an institution located in a country in which English is the official language, provided English was the language of instruction.

Minimum scores for the program are:
- Academic IELTS: an overall band score of 7.0 with no individual score below 6.0; or
- TOEFL: 600 on paper-based or 100 on Internet-based; or
- PTE Academic: 68

Recommendations required: Two (2) recommendations

Prior academic records: Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission.

If transcripts are in a language other than English, English language translations must be provided. The English translation alone should be uploaded into your application.

Statement of purpose: A 2-3 page statement of philosophical and policy interests and personal goals.

Writing Sample: A writing sample highlighting analytic, writing, and research abilities is also required. Writing samples should be approximately 10-15 pages.

International applicants only: Please review International Applicant Information (https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants) carefully for details on required documents, earlier deadlines for applicants requiring an I-20 or DS-2019 from GW, and English language requirements.

For more information on the admission process, please visit the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences Frequently Asked Questions (http://columbian.gwu.edu/graduate/admissions/faqs/) page.

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:
Columbian College of Arts and Sciences - Graduate Admissions Office
The George Washington University
801 22nd Street NW, Phillips Hall 215
Washington DC 20052
Contact for questions:
askccas@gwu.edu ~ 202-994-6210 (phone) ~ 202-994-6213 (fax)
8:30 am - 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday

REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be fulfilled:

The general requirements stated under Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Graduate Programs (http://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/#degreeregulationstext).

Thesis and non-thesis options are available at the discretion of the faculty. Thesis option—30 credits, including 24 credits in required courses and 6 credits in thesis; non-thesis option—36 credits, including 24 credits in required courses and 12 credits in elective courses.

### Code | Title | Credits
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**Required**

Four of the following:

- PHIL 6230 Ethical Issues in Policy Arguments
- PHIL 6231 Seminar: Economic Justice
- PHIL 6238 Feminist Ethics and Policy Implications
- PHIL 6242 Philosophy, Law, and Social Policy
- PHIL 6250 Topics in Health Policy
- PHIL 6262 Normative Issues in Foreign Policy
- PHIL 6281 Environmental Philosophy and Policy

One course from each of the following groups:

**Group A**

- PPPA 6010 Politics and The Policy Process
- PSC 8212 Urban Policy Problems

**Group B**

- ECON 6217 Survey of Economics I
- ECON 6237 Economics of the Environment and Natural Resources
- ECON 6248 Health Economics

**Group C**

- PSC 6103 Approaches to Public Policy Analysis
- PPPA 6006 Policy Analysis
- SOC 6248 Race and Urban Redevelopment

**Group D**

- PPPA 6002 Research Methods and Applied Statistics (or substitute as approved by the advisor)

For thesis option:

- PHIL 6998 Thesis Research
- PHIL 6999 Thesis Research

**Electives**

Electives may focus on a particular policy area (e.g., biomedical/health care, urban/welfare, or environmental policy), or may explore varied approaches and policy issues.

**Other requirements**

Successful completion of a master's comprehensive examination.