

# MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Program Director: C. Burgat

To survive in Washington, DC's complex political environment, the legislative affairs professional must have a comprehensive understanding of how Congress operates, how decisions are made on and off Capitol Hill, how to influence those decisions, and how to accomplish specific objectives within the legislative process.

Developed in consultation with government relations experts and legislative specialists, this challenging program delivers the knowledge and skills you need to establish yourself as a sought after operative in the national policymaking arena. Learn how Congress and the White House develop public policy and examine the workings of Congress from the perspective of both scholars and practitioners. The master's degree in legislative affairs offers an 11-course program. Classes meet Monday through Thursday evenings on Capitol Hill at the Hall of the States. The program also may be completed online or in a hybrid format. The degree can be completed in less than two years. The curriculum covers the entire scope of the policymaking environment, from interest groups and PACs, to the media, to policy-specific deep dives into topics like cybersecurity and environmental policy.

Visit the program website (<http://gspm.gwu.edu/legislative-affairs/>) for additional information.

## ADMISSIONS

Admission Deadlines: Fall Priority Admission/General Scholarship Deadline - April 1

Fall International Application Deadline - May 1

Fall General Admission Deadline - July 1

Spring Priority Admission/General Scholarship Deadline - September 1

Spring International Application Deadline - September 1

Spring General Admission Deadline - November 1

Summer Priority Admission - March 15

Summer General Admission Deadline - April 15

Recommendations: Two (2) letters of recommendation from professional and/or academic references; at least one academic reference for those who graduated within the last five years.

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 should be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission.

Transcripts from institutions outside the United States must be accompanied by an official transcript evaluation from an accredited independent evaluating agency. Please be sure you request a detailed, course-by-course evaluation that includes all course titles, credit hours, grade-point average (GPA), United States degree equivalency, and date of degree conferral. Please see the list of acceptable foreign credential evaluation services (<https://www.naces.org/members> (<https://www.naces.org/members/>)).

**Statement of purpose:** In an essay of 250-500 words, state your purpose in undertaking graduate study in this field and describe your academic objectives, research interests, and career plans. Also, discuss your related qualifications, including collegiate, professional, and community activities, as well as any other substantial accomplishments not already mentioned on the application form.

**Additional requirements:** A resumé.

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

### Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

College of Professional Studies – Office of Admission  
George Washington University  
805 21st Street, NW  
Suite 301  
Washington DC 20052

### Contact for questions:

CPS Office of Admission  
applycps@gwu.edu ~ 571-553-0025 (phone) ~ 202-242-1047 (fax)  
8:30 am – 5:00 pm EST, Monday through Friday

## REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 33 credits, including 15 credits in required courses and 18 credits in elective courses.

| Code            | Title                           | Credits |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Required</b> |                                 |         |
| LGAF 6201       | Politics and Public Policy      |         |
| LGAF 6202       | Legislative Politics            |         |
| LGAF 6203       | Executive–Legislative Relations |         |
| LGAF 6205       | Legislative Data and Analytics  |         |

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| LGAF 6298   | Capstone in Legislative Affairs                   |
| LGAF 6298 should be taken in a student's penultimate or final term. |   |
| <b>Electives</b>  |   |
| Six courses from the following:                                     |   |
| LGAF 6212   | Congressional Committees                          |
| LGAF 6217   | Budgetary Politics                                |
| LGAF 6219   | American Presidency                               |
| LGAF 6220   | Congress and the Courts                           |
| LGAF 6221   | Executive Branch Decision Making                  |
| LGAF 6222   | Parties and Elections                             |
| LGAF 6223   | Public Opinion and Political Socialization        |
| LGAF 6224   | Interest Group Politics                           |
| LGAF 6228   | Media and Congressional Politics                  |
| LGAF 6233   | Comparative Legislatures                          |
| LGAF 6234   | PACs and Congress                                 |
| LGAF 6235   | Ethics and Congress                               |
| LGAF 6240   | Special Topics in Legislative Affairs             |
| LGAF 6241   | Legislative Writing and Research                  |
| LGAF 6242   | Legislative Drafting                              |
| LGAF 6243   | Advanced Legislative Procedure                    |
| LGAF 6244   | Running for and Representing in the U.S. Congress |
| LGAF 6246   | Congress and Foreign Policy                       |
| LGAF 6247   | Managing a Congressional Office                   |
| LGAF 6248   | Religion and Politics                             |
| LGAF 6249   | Congress and National Security Policy             |
| LGAF 6251   | Budgetary Policy                                  |
| LGAF 6260   | Special Topics: Domestic Policy                   |
| LGAF 6261   | Congress and Defense Policy                       |
| LGAF 6262   | Congress and Intelligence Policy                  |
| LGAF 6263   | Congress and Cybersecurity Policy                 |
| LGAF 6264   | U.S. Energy and Environmental Policy              |

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| LGAF 6266 | Congress and Trade Policy                   |
| LGAF 6267 | Congress and Healthcare Policy              |
| LGAF 6270 | Special Topics: Congress and Foreign Policy |
| LGAF 6271 | Race and Ethnicity in American Politics     |
| LGAF 6272 | Congressional and Political Reforms         |
| LGAF 6273 | Congressional Oversight                     |
| LGAF 6281 | Congress and Federalism                     |
| LGAF 6290 | Independent Study                           |

## COURSES

### Explanation of Course Numbers

- Courses in the 1000s are primarily introductory undergraduate courses
- Those in the 2000s to 4000s are upper-level undergraduate courses that also may be taken for graduate credit with permission and additional work assigned
- Those in the 6000s and 8000s are for master's, doctoral, and professional-level students
- The 6000s are open to advanced undergraduate students with approval of the instructor and the dean or advising office

#### **LGAF 6201. Politics and Public Policy. 3 Credits.**

Examination of political processes that influence policy formulation, policy implementation, and the uses of policy analysis. Topics include political and policy decision making, actors, and process.

#### **LGAF 6202. Legislative Politics. 3 Credits.**

Theory, structure, and process of the U.S. Congress, with emphasis on member–constituency relations, individual and collective decision making, party and committee activities, executive–legislative relations, and interest-group activities.

#### **LGAF 6203. Executive–Legislative Relations. 3 Credits.**

Political and institutional relationships between the executive and legislative branches of the federal government.

#### **LGAF 6205. Legislative Data and Analytics. 3 Credits.**

Qualitative and quantitative techniques, tools, and processes used to wield data for effective decision-making in the legislative arena.

#### **LGAF 6212. Congressional Committees. 3 Credits.**

Overview of the history, function, and influence of Senate and House committees in the U.S. Congress.

#### **LGAF 6217. Budgetary Politics. 3 Credits.**

Examination of federal budget policymaking and politics.

#### **LGAF 6219. American Presidency. 3 Credits.**

Personalized and institutionalized aspects of the presidency, with emphasis on the politics of contemporary policymaking.

**LGAF 6220. Congress and the Courts. 3 Credits.**

Institutional and political relationship between the U.S. Congress and the federal courts.

**LGAF 6221. Executive Branch Decision Making. 3 Credits.**

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**LGAF 6222. Parties and Elections. 3 Credits.**

Nature and functions of American political parties: organizational status, nominating and electoral politics, and role in governing.

**LGAF 6223. Public Opinion and Political Socialization. 3 Credits.**

Sources and dynamics of public opinion and political socialization.

**LGAF 6224. Interest Group Politics. 3 Credits.**

Theory, structure, and activities of interest groups in American politics.

**LGAF 6228. Media and Congressional Politics. 3 Credits.**

Role of the media in American politics, with emphasis on news coverage, political debates, and political advertising, with their impact on the electorate.

**LGAF 6233. Comparative Legislatures. 3 Credits.**

Selected problems of legislative theory and behavior from a comparative perspective, with particular reference to the parliamentary systems of Germany, France, and Britain.

**LGAF 6234. PACs and Congress. 3 Credits.**

Examination of the structure and function of political action committees in the United States in the context of wider arenas of campaign finance, elections, and issue management.

**LGAF 6235. Ethics and Congress. 3 Credits.**

The role of ethics in the U.S. Congress.

**LGAF 6240. Special Topics in Legislative Affairs. 3 Credits.**

In-depth coverage of significant theoretical and empirical issues in American politics, including such topics as political behavior, electoral politics, and race and politics.

**LGAF 6241. Legislative Writing and Research. 3 Credits.**

Using specialized databases and policy journals and communicating research findings to a sophisticated, policy-driven audience.

**LGAF 6242. Legislative Drafting. 3 Credits.**

Introduction for non-lawyers to the process of legislative drafting in the U.S. Congress.

**LGAF 6243. Advanced Legislative Procedure. 3 Credits.**

Detailed study of the rules, procedures, traditions, and constitutional underpinnings that govern the work of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

**LGAF 6244. Running for and Representing in the U.S. Congress. 3 Credits.**

Running for and serving in Congress from a member's perspective.

**LGAF 6246. Congress and Foreign Policy. 3 Credits.**

The role of Congress in setting foreign policy.

**LGAF 6247. Managing a Congressional Office. 3 Credits.**

Practical consideration of the proper structure, organization, and management of a Congressional office.

**LGAF 6248. Religion and Politics. 3 Credits.**

The influence of religion on politics in the United States.

**LGAF 6249. Congress and National Security Policy. 3 Credits.**

The role of Congress in setting defense policy.

**LGAF 6251. Budgetary Policy. 3 Credits.**

Analysis of U.S. monetary and fiscal policy.

**LGAF 6260. Special Topics: Domestic Policy. 3 Credits.**

Analysis of U.S. policy on selected domestic problems.

**LGAF 6261. Congress and Defense Policy. 3 Credits.**

The role of Congress in U.S. defense policy.

**LGAF 6262. Congress and Intelligence Policy. 3 Credits.**

The role of Congress in U.S. intelligence policy.

**LGAF 6263. Congress and Cybersecurity Policy. 3 Credits.**

The role of Congress in U.S. cybersecurity policy.

**LGAF 6264. U.S. Energy and Environmental Policy. 3 Credits.**

An overview of energy and environmental policymaking in the United States.

**LGAF 6266. Congress and Trade Policy. 3 Credits.**

The role of Congress in setting U.S. trade policy.

**LGAF 6267. Congress and Healthcare Policy. 3 Credits.**

The role of Congress in U.S. healthcare policy.

**LGAF 6270. Special Topics: Congress and Foreign Policy. 3 Credits.**

Analysis of U.S. policy on selected issues, challenges, or world regions.

**LGAF 6271. Race and Ethnicity in American Politics. 3 Credits.**

The role of race and ethnicity in American politics.

**LGAF 6272. Congressional and Political Reforms. 3 Credits.**

Contemporary political reform in the United States, both inside and outside of Congress.

**LGAF 6273. Congressional Oversight. 3 Credits.**

Historical origins, constitutional foundation, and purpose of Congressional oversight in U.S. government.

**LGAF 6281. Congress and Federalism. 3 Credits.**

The role of federalism in the U.S. Congress.

**LGAF 6290. Independent Study. 1-3 Credits.**

Directed readings in a topic related to Congress and public policymaking. Limited to Legislative Affairs degree candidates. Written permission of program director required.

**LGAF 6298. Capstone in Legislative Affairs. 3 Credits.**

Application of legislative strategies, tactics, and situational considerations to advanced political problems.

**LGAF 6299. Thesis. 3 Credits.**

**LGAF 6300. Thesis. 3 Credits.**