



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
**BIDEN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION**

M.A. in Urban Affairs & Public Policy Program Policy Statement

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[M.A. UAPP Resource Page](#)

The requirements and guidelines stated herein are in effect for students entering the graduate program as of September 1, 2022.

PROGRAM POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE
MASTER OF ARTS IN URBAN AFFAIRS & PUBLIC POLICY
BIDEN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY & ADMINISTRATION
February 2022

SECTION 1 – CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

Biden School Mission Statement

The Master of Arts in Urban Affairs & Public Policy is an interdisciplinary degree based on the development of skills in critical thinking, concept integration, rigorous examination of the conditions of society, articulation of the consequences and implications of changes to public policy and effective communication of findings to the policy world. The context of the program is distinctively urban. It seeks to graduate individuals who combine the skills and theory to work in a variety of policy analysis/planning positions. The degree can also prepare individuals for further graduate work at the doctoral level.

Degrees Offered

The Biden School of Public Policy and Administration offers both graduate and undergraduate degrees. The undergraduate programs are the Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy and the Bachelor of Science in Leadership. The doctoral graduate programs are: Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy & Administration; Doctor of Philosophy in Disaster Science & Management; Doctor of Philosophy in Energy & Environmental Policy; Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering & Public Policy, offered in partnership with the College of Engineering; Doctor of Philosophy in Education & Social Policy, offered in partnership with the College of Education and Human Development. The masters programs are: Master of Arts in Urban Affairs & Public Policy; Master of Public Administration; Master of Science in Disaster Science & Management; Master of Public Policy; Master of Public Health; Master of Energy and Environmental Policy.

Master of Urban Affairs & Public Policy (MA UAPP) - Overview

The Master of Arts in Urban Affairs & Public Policy is an interdisciplinary degree based on the development of skills in critical thinking, concept integration, rigorous examination of the conditions of society, articulation of the consequences and implications of changes to public policy and effective communication of findings to the policy world. The program is distinctively urban and it is grounded in a commitment to understand the social, political cultural, economic and historical context in which policy occurs. It seeks to graduate individuals who combine the skills and theory to work in a variety of policy analysis/planning positions. The degree can also prepare individuals for further graduate work at the doctoral level.

The M.A. in Urban Affairs & Public Policy is administered by the program director operating under guidance specified in the document "Academic Reorganization of the College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy".

SECTION 2 - DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

CREDITS: Students must complete 36 credit hours of graduate work. All students are required to attain a grade of B- or better in all courses counted towards the Masters of Urban Affairs &

Public Policy degree. In accordance with University policy, students must also maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0.

REQUIRED CORE COURSES: Students take the following two courses which together provide an introduction and overview of the field:

UAPP 649 – Civil Rights Law & Policy
UAPP 703 - Urban Society & Public Policy (3 credits)

Students also take the following three methodological courses:

UAPP 702 - Research Methods for Urban & Public Policy (3 credits)
UAPP 691 - Quantitative Analysis in Public & NP Sectors (3 credits)
UAPP 707 - Public Policy Analysis (3 credits)

The following three theory courses are also required:

UAPP 701 - Public Policy (3 credits)
UAPP 693 - Economics in Public & Non-Profit Sectors (3 credits)
UAPP 613 - Planning Theory & Urban Policy (3 credits)

AREA OF RESEARCH: (6 credits)

Students will take 6 credits of additional coursework that collectively define an area of research. Faculty will pre-define several areas in which the School has strength, but students are also free to develop their own area of research with the advice and consent of their academic advisor. The initial pre-defined areas of research include: urban and regional planning, housing and community development, health services policy, nonprofits and philanthropy, historic preservation, and media and public policy. Information on areas of research is available in the Biden School Administration Office and on the School website.

CERTIFICATE IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION (12 credits)

The Certificate in Historic Preservation has two required core courses: UAPP 629: Historic Preservation Theory and Practice (3 credits) and UAPP 630: Methods of Historic Preservation (3 credits). The student then chooses 3 credits of additional electives from the approved list of courses for the Graduate Certificate in Historic Preservation. The 3-credit Capstone Studio course UAPP 700.

CERTIFICATE IN URBAN DATA SCIENCE (12 credits)

The Certificate in Urban Data Science has three required core courses: SPPA 721 – Data Science Tools for Evidence-based Policy, SPPA 722 – Machine Learning for Public Policy, and either UAPP 613 – Planning Theory & Urban Policy or UAPP 703 – Urban Society & Public Policy. The final 3 credits for this Certificate are fulfilled by the 3-credit Capstone Studio course UAPP 700.

THESIS (6 credits)

Under circumstances deemed appropriate for the student, with approval of the student's advisor and the appropriate program committee director, a thesis (6-credits) must be submitted as a capstone project. The thesis is to be written under the supervision of a three-person faculty committee chaired by the student's principal advisor and defended in an oral examination before this three-person faculty committee. The thesis committee should provide guidance throughout the process of topic selection, research, writing, and evaluation. Successful oral defense of the thesis, as certified by the student's advisor to the M.A. program director enables a recommendation to be made that the Master of Arts degree be conferred upon the student. General guidelines and regulations governing the format, development, and presentation of the thesis must conform to the University requirements reflected in the Graduate College Thesis Manual.

MA CERTIFICATE CAPSTONE COURSE

For the Historic Preservation certificate, the UAPP 700 Capstone focuses on completion of a group project solving a real-world problem in historic preservation, drawing on a variety of skills gained during graduate Certificate and MA coursework. such as architectural documentation, evaluation, archival research, and policy development.

For the Urban Data Science Certificate, the UAPP 700 Capstone course will consist of a project that addresses modern problems in urban data science including civic analytics and urban informatics. These group projects will be scoped with public, private, and academic sector partners and include the analysis of urban data sets for decision making, problem solving, and evidence-based public policy and management. Upon completion of the course, students will have both gained the experience of direct application of applied data science to cities and produced a tangible output that can serve as a demonstration to the broader community of the skills acquired in the MA program with a concentration in Urban Data Science.

WAIVERS OF REQUIRED COURSES

Courses required in the M.A. may be waived if comparable courses or the requisite skills are, or will be, acquired elsewhere under an approved plan of study. To waive a required course, a student must have a petition to waive approved and signed by her or his advisor and a person currently responsible for teaching a course. A record of the signed waiver shall be sent to the program director and included in the student's file. Students must petition to substitute one course for each one that is waived. Waivers cannot be used to reduce the total number of credit hours (36) required for the completion of the M.A. degree. The petition must be approved by the student's advisor and a record of the substitution sent to the program director to be included in the student's file.

With the approval of the Urban Affairs and Public Policy program director, a maximum of 6 credits may be waived for a matriculating student in the M.A. program who has completed graduate level M.A. courses with a grade of "B" or higher in an urban affairs and public policy or equivalent program as part of their undergraduate program so long as those credits were not used to satisfy the requirements of a previous degree program.

SECTION 3 - ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of the admissions criteria is to identify those applicants who can benefit from and make a distinct contribution to the graduate programs in the Biden School of Public Policy & Administration. Applicants are sought who show promise of constructive involvement with faculty, staff, and other students in instruction, research, and public service. Consideration is also given to the student's potential for successful completion of their graduate program.

Given its mission, the School seeks students with a mix of interests, backgrounds, and areas of competence and among whose goals is to do research in urban affairs and public policy. To meet its academic and research goals as well as to be responsive to the multicultural backgrounds of prospective students, the Biden School of Public Policy & Administration employs a wide spectrum of criteria in assessing a prospective student's motivation, interest, and ability to perform successfully. No one criterion is the sole basis of an admissions decision. (Approved by Academic Council 7/30/86).

M.A. ADMISSIONS

M.A. admissions criteria and indicators of these criteria are listed below.

Criteria	Indicators and Sources
Genuine interest and motivation to pursue graduate study in public administration/urban affairs and public policy; personal objectives, aspirations, and plans are well formulated and coherent.	Statements by candidate in admission application and/or subsequent communications; personal interviews (telephone conversations when personal interviews are not possible) with members of the M.A. faculty and the Admissions Committee.
Expectations of sound academic performance in graduate level work	Review of undergraduate achievement and any previous graduate level work. Particular emphasis on assessing achievement in the context of the quality of the institutions candidate has attended and the trends or patterns in achievement in the last 1 - 2 years of applicant's program. Letters of recommendation from faculty; reports/papers written by candidate (published or unpublished).
Ability to apply previously acquired competencies to problem areas, community, or organizational needs.	Contributions in and nature of professional work experience, volunteer service and/or internships. Assessments by faculty, professionals, and/or community leaders.

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

The TOEFL or IELTS is required of all international applicants, unless a bachelors, masters, or doctoral degree has been or will be earned from a university recognized by the ministry of

education in a country where English is the primary language. The School has established no minimum TOEFL or IELTS score for admission but a minimum score of 600 (paper-based test), or 100 (TOEFL iBT, IELTS) is usually required for admission. English proficiency scores are viewed in the context of the applicant's complete record. The MA program follows University guidelines on English proficiency waivers (see <https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/grad/prospective-students/grad-admissions/test-scores/>).

ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Applications for the M.A. program are assessed by an admissions committee. The committee is appointed by the director of the M.A. in Urban Affairs and Public Policy program. The committee is composed of between 2-4 faculty members. Recommendations concerning admissions are transmitted to the Graduate College by the program director.

SECTION 4 - ADVISEMENT, EVALUATION, AND EXAMINATIONS

One or more members of the faculty share the advising of all incoming M.A. students and monitor the progress and performance of students during the first semester of full-time study. The student's advisor is responsible for monitoring student progress and performance on a regular basis until the completion of all degree requirements. The student prepares a plan of study that is approved by the advisor and that plan becomes the basis for monitoring progress throughout the program.

All candidates for the M.A. degree are expected to maintain a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative index out of a possible 4.0. The grades of all students in the M.A. program are reviewed after each semester by the program director. In cases of substandard performance, actions are initiated in accord with general University guidelines regarding warning, probation, and termination. A decision to recommend to the Graduate College to terminate a student requires the review and confirmation of a majority of the Biden School of Public Policy & Administration faculty. In addition to these procedures, at the end of each academic year the program faculty convenes to review the progress and performance of students in the program and to take appropriate action in cases of substandard performance.

SECTION 5: FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is available to MA students in the form of graduate assistantships research assistantships, tuition scholarships as well as University graduate scholars awards, assistantships and fellowships. The primary type of aid awarded is research assistantships (RAs) provided to those students working on public service or research projects in one of the Biden School's affiliated centers, with a faculty members or other University office. Awards are competitive and merit-based.

SECTION 6: ASSOCIATED 4+1 PROGRAMS

Admission to the M.A. program in Urban Affairs & Public Policy can be achieved through the associated 4+1 programs. In every program, the student will complete their undergraduate program before embarking on the graduate year (the "plus one"). The 4+1 students will

complete the full 36 credits of the M.A. program. Students in all the associated 4+1 programs have several modifications to their undergraduate degree so MA coursework will “double count” for both degrees. Per UD Graduate College guidelines, 4+1 MA students can “double count” a maximum of 12 graduate credits towards the MA.

Special Admission Requirements for 4+1 MA Applicants

Applicants to the MA through 4+1 programs have additional requirements for admission, in recognition that 4+1 MA students begin graduate study while still an undergraduate. To be eligible to apply, applicants must have completed 60 credits, which is typically the Fall of their junior year. Students will be admitted based on enrollment availability, their perceived fit within the program, and their ability to meet the minimum recommended entrance requirements of an undergraduate GPA of 3.3 or higher (on a 4.0 scale).

All 4+1 program applicants must complete the Graduate Course Approval Form for 4+1 Admission Application at the time of application. This form is required by the Graduate College (see <http://www1.udel.edu/gradoffice/forms-new/4%2B1.pdf> for the form). On this form, applicants must indicate their plan of study, including the courses intended to be “dual counted” in both their undergraduate program and MA degree. This form should be completed in collaboration with the MA advisor and must be signed by their undergraduate major advisor and the MA Director. It will be reviewed by the Assistant Dean of Student Services to ensure all University policies are being followed. In the case of students with multiple majors, the undergraduate advisor in the major with the preferred connection to the 4+1 should be used.

Applicants to all 4+1 MA programs must submit their completed application through the Graduate Admissions website (<https://grad.udel.edu/apply/>) by **December 1** for the following spring semester start, or **May 31** for the following fall semester start.

All accepted students will have dual enrollment status in both the Bachelors program and the MA program. No provisional admissions will be granted.

Additional requirements for admission depend on the undergraduate major.

Undergraduate students in majors other than Public Policy, may declare the Public Policy minor in their junior or senior year. In order to declare a Public Policy minor, students will need to complete the **Change of Major, Minor, Concentration form** from the Registrar’s Office at <http://www.udel.edu/chgacaprogram>. Choose a minor in the drop down menu listed as "Minor" and then click "Add Line" before finally clicking "Submit". For more information on adding a minor, please view **Change of Major, Minor, Concentration: Additional Information & Frequently Asked Questions** here: <https://www1.udel.edu/registrar/helpdocs/changeplan.html>

Advisement of 4+1 Students

During the undergraduate portion of the program, students will be assigned a faculty member teaching in their major as their advisor. Students would apply to the `4+1` MA program after the completion of 60 credits, which is typically in the fall of the 3rd year. Through the application

process, the student prepares a plan of study and that plan becomes the initial basis for monitoring progress throughout the program.

After the student is admitted to the 4+ 1 program, students will be appointed an MA advisor. Students in the '4+1' programs will typically be enrolled full-time throughout both degree programs. The MA advisor is responsible for monitoring student progress and performance on a regular basis until the completion of all degree requirements. MA courses would be introduced incrementally to the student's program for the remainder of their 3rd and 4th years. Full-time MA study should commence in the 5th year. Sequencing and timing of courses should be discussed closely and frequently with the MA advisor. Full-time study for BA students is at least 12 credits per semester, typically 15-16 credits. Full-time study for an MA student is typically 9 credits per semester:

4+1 PROGRAM: B.A. IN PUBLIC POLICY/M.A. IN URBAN AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC POLICY (BA-MA)

Students admitted to the 4+1 accelerated, combined program will complete all requirements for the B.A. in Public Policy and the degree requirements for the MA. Admitted students will enroll in the 600 and 700 level sections of 400 level courses that already are part of the concentrations in the Public Policy major. During the second semester of the junior year and throughout the senior year, students must enroll in a minimum of 12 credits of 600 and 700 level sections; these are the same sections required for first-year students in the M.A. in Urban Affairs and Public Policy.

These courses will prepare students for research in a specialized area in the fifth year of study. After senior year, students will immediately begin taking the remaining graduate credits over a 1-year period.

4+1 PROGRAM: B.S. IN LEADERSHIP/M.A. IN URBAN AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC POLICY (OCL BS-MA)

Students in the 4+1 OCL BS-MA program must complete the degree requirements of the Bachelor of Science degree in Leadership and the degree requirements of the MA. A maximum of 12 credits may be "double counted" across the two degrees. In the freshmen and sophomore years and first semester of the junior year, students follow the OCL curriculum as outlined in the undergraduate catalog, additionally students will take UAPP 110, 225, and 325 in preparation for the MA 4+1 program. Leadership majors may declare a Public Policy minor in their junior or senior year.

Students admitted to the 4+1 accelerated, combined program will complete all requirements for the B.S. in Leadership and enroll in advanced sections of the courses that they may use to complete the Public Policy minor if they have declared the minor. During their last three semesters (second semester of the junior year and both semesters of the senior year), students enroll in a total of 12 credits of 600 and 700 level sections. These are the same 600 and 700 level sections required for first-year students in the M.A. program. These courses will prepare

students for completion of the MA requirements in the fifth year of study. After senior year, students will immediately begin taking the remaining graduate credits over a 1-year period.

By completing work in these advanced sections with grades of B- or better, students admitted to the program will be able to complete the requirements for both the B.S. in Leadership and MA in five years.

4+1 PROGRAM: B.A. IN ENGLISH/M.A. IN URBAN AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC POLICY (BA-MA)

Students admitted to the 4+1 Program must complete the degree requirements of the Bachelor of Arts degree in English and the degree requirements of the MA. In the freshmen and sophomore years and first semester of the junior year, students follow the English curriculum as outlined in the undergraduate catalog, additionally students will take UAPP 110, 225, and 325 in preparation for the MA 4+1 program. English majors may declare a Public Policy minor in their junior or senior year.

English majors may apply to 4+1 accelerated, combined program after completing 60 credit hours including UAPP 110; UAPP 225; and UAPP 325. This is typically in the Fall semester of their Junior Year. The completed application will be reviewed by the admissions committee for the MA in Urban Affairs and Public Policy.

Students admitted to the 4+1 accelerated, combined program will complete all requirements for the BA in English prior to the start of their fifth year of study.

4+1 PROGRAM: B.A. IN ART HISTORY/M.A. IN URBAN AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC POLICY (BA-MA, HBA-MA)

Students admitted to the 4+1 program must complete the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts in Art History or the Honors Bachelor of Arts in Art History and the degree requirements of the MA. Art History majors may apply to the 4+1 program after completing 60 credit hours, including UAPP 110; UAPP 225; and UAPP 325, typically in the Fall semester of their Junior Year. An undergraduate GPA of 3.3 or higher is required. Art History majors may declare a Public Policy minor their junior or senior year.

There are 12 credits of graduate level courses that may be double counted across both programs. Nine credits of UAPP graduate-level courses taken by students after they are already admitted to the 4 + 1 program may double count as the required 9 credits of ARTH-related coursework and, upon the approval of the art history advisor, additional 3 credits of UAPP graduate-level course(s) taken in the senior year may also double count as 3 credits of ARTH's related work on historical and cultural change. (The 12 credits of ARTH related coursework do not count toward ARTH major, but they are required as related work for ARTH BA.)

Students admitted to the 4+1 program will complete all requirements for the BA in Art History prior to the start of their fifth year of study.

SECTION 7: PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The MA program is reviewed regularly by the MA director, the MA program committee, the Dean of the Biden School and the faculty and staff of the Biden School to assure that the program is meeting its objectives and effectively serving our students.