SOCIAL POLICY
Predesigned Concentration Information

The Social Policy Concentration explores public policy as a significant force in the ordering of social, economic, and political relations. Students pursuing this concentration focus on policy questions related to social problems, social inequalities, social marginalization, and social justice. Understood in this manner, social policy encompasses some of the most divisive public policy issues of our time, such as income inequality, racial disparities and immigration. The concentration invites students to interrogate their basic assumptions about what is to be done and how we understand social problems at the same time that it provides sophisticated analytic and practical tools to determine how best to tackle them. It combines general training to develop analytic skills with in-depth, focused studies of specific substantive policy areas. It encourages students to think technically, normatively, and politically about their issues. Technical questions of analysis, design, implementation, and evaluation are pursued alongside normative questions about what is desirable as well as political questions about how power, institutions, discourses, and actors create obstacles and possibilities for the realization of our goals.

Governments respond in many different ways to social needs. The resulting public policies, whether by directly tackling a problem or deliberately declaring it to be private, significantly shape education, health, housing, employment, and poverty. The Humphrey School differs from many academic approaches to social policy by putting issues of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, age, employment, and immigrant status at the center of its inquiry. Our intersectional approach to social policy leads us beyond the conventional public policy school analysis of social problems and inequalities.

To fulfill the requirements for a Social Policy concentration, students must (a) complete the core courses listed below and (b) design and complete a 9-credit plan for additional coursework. Selected courses must allow for a sustained commitment to a coherent program of student development. Students should think carefully about how their elective courses will provide the kinds of education needed to pursue their public affairs goals in the future. They should describe this rationale in a brief narrative (approximately one paragraph) submitted to and approved by their advisor.

Core Faculty
Christina Ewig
Greta Friedemann-Sánchez
Maria Hanratty
Lawrence R. Jacobs
Morris Kleiner
Deborah Levison
Samuel L. Myers, Jr
Jodi R. Sandfort
Joe Soss
Judy Temple
Core Courses for MPP students (doesn’t count toward the 9 credit minimum):

PA 5032  Intermediate Regression Analysis  2 cr.
PA 5033  Multivariate Techniques  2 cr.

Select elective courses from below (9 credits or more)*

PA 5261  Housing Policy  3 cr.
PA 5301  Population Methods and Issues  3 cr.
PA 5401  Poverty, Inequality, and Public Policy  3 cr.
PA 5405  Public Policy Implementation  3 cr.
PA 5414  Child Human Rights: Work and Education (not offered in 2016-17)  3 cr.
PA 5421  Racial Inequality and Public Policy  3 cr.
PA 5422  Diversity and Public Policy (not offered in 2016-2017)  3 cr.
PA 5431  Public Policies on Work and Pay  3 cr.
PA 5451  Immigrant Health Issues  3-4 cr.
PA 5452  Immigration and Public Policy (not offered in 2016-17)  3 cr.
PA 5490  Contemporary Social Theory and Public Policy  3 cr.
PA 5490  Identity and Public Policy (not offered in 2016-2017)  3 cr.
PA 5413  Early Childhood and Public Policy  3 cr.
PA 5490  Economics of Early Childhood Development  3 cr.
PA 5501  Theories and Policies of Development  3 cr.
PA 5522  International Development Policy, Families and Health (not offered in 2016-2017)  3 cr.
PA 5561  Gender and International Development (not offered in 2016-2017)  3 cr.
PA 5690  Perspectives on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (not offered in 2016-2017)  3 cr.
PA 8312  Analysis of Discrimination (not offered in 2016-17)  3 cr.
PA 8386  Research Methods in Public Policy  2 cr.

* Suggestions listed above are drawn from regularly scheduled Humphrey School courses. A wide variety of suitable courses can also found in other units of the University of Minnesota. Students are encouraged to review these offerings in consultation with their faculty and professional advisor.

** Not all courses on this list are offered every year. Some courses may have prerequisites. Students may select other courses for this concentration in consultation with their faculty and professional advisor.