EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES, M.A.

The Department of Educational Policy Studies offers both master of arts (M.A. minimum 30 credits) and doctor of philosophy (Ph.D. minimum 51 credits) degrees. Students who enroll with only a bachelor’s degree and intend to pursue the Ph.D. degree are required to take the M.A. on the way to the Ph.D. Applicants already holding a master’s degree will be admitted either into the EPS master’s program or into the Ph.D. program, depending upon the recommendation of the admissions committee. Students for both the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees are expected to develop both depth and breadth in their studies. For the Ph.D. there are minimum credit requirements of 18 credits for the concentration and of 12 credits within educational policy studies for breadth. All candidates for the Ph.D. must take a minimum of 30 credits in EPS.

The Department of Educational Policy Studies (EPS) offers an interdisciplinary program leading to both the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. The department is dedicated to the study of educational policy in its various manifestations and to the study of traditionally defined fields such as history of education, philosophy of education, comparative and international education, and sociology and anthropology of education. The number of budgeted faculty in the department is 11. Twelve to 18 students enter the department each year. The department includes faculty with interests in education beyond the United States and has formed ties with institutions and scholars in other countries. Several faculty from the departments of Curriculum and Instruction, Geography, Sociology, and Philosophy hold joint appointments in EPS, and several EPS faculty members hold appointments in other departments (History, Sociology, and Anthropology) and in programs in African studies, Development Studies, Global Health Institute, and women’s studies.

Graduates of the department pursue a variety of academic, government, and private sector careers. They may be found across the United States in departments of educational policy studies and educational foundations, and other departments within schools of education; in organizations dedicated to educational research; in government and foundation work; and, in many other countries, in both higher education and ministries of education.

Beyond the department, other faculty at the University of Wisconsin–Madison study educational policy. They may be found, for example, in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, in the Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs, and in the Wisconsin Center For Education Research (WCER). Over the years, WCER projects have provided valuable research and employment opportunities to EPS students.

The department’s graduate students are diverse. They come with a wide range of backgrounds in education and in the liberal arts. They vary in age, ethnicity, and social background, as well as prior practical and educational experience. Students thus provide a resource for one another’s scholarly development. Some EPS courses are cross-listed in the College of Letters & Science; others are cross-listed with other departments in the School of Education. They consequently attract students who approach material with a broad range of intellectual perspectives and complementary knowledge.

Despite the variety structured into the program, the multidisciplinary backgrounds of faculty, and the diversity of students, the small size of the department often leads to closer ties between students and faculty than are possible in most larger departments. Doctoral students generally come to know several faculty well and have an opportunity to work closely together.

FUNDING

The department has a small number of teaching assistantships. In addition, students in educational policy studies are frequently successful in competing for assistantships on professors’ research grants through the Wisconsin Center for Education Research and other research organizations on campus, as well as for administrative assistantships and for teaching assistantships in related departments. University assistantships of at least one-third time routinely provide tuition remission (except for segregated fees), medical insurance, and a stipend.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext) in addition to the requirements of the program.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.A.

MINIMUM GRADUATE DEGREE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

30 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE RESIDENCE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

16 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE COURSEWORK (50%) REQUIREMENT

18 of the 30 total credits must be completed in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university's Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: GRADUATE WORK FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 6 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree or earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNDERGRADUATE

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree.
PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNIVERSITY SPECIAL

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 6 credits of coursework numbered 340 or above taken as a UW–Madison Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree or earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSES REQUIRED

Contact the program for information on any additional required courses.

OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT

3.00

OTHER GRADE REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School requires an average grade of B or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.

PROBATION POLICY

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

Contact the program for information on required assessments and examinations.

TIME CONSTRAINTS

Master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Contact the program for information on any language requirements.

ADMISSIONS

Students may enter the department once a year, in fall. The deadline for applying is December 15, with applicants notified by letter before March 1. All applicants must apply online. Accepted students must respond in writing by April 15. The application is judged on the basis of previous academic record, other experience, 3 letters of recommendation, personal statement, vitae, writing sample, and the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores.

The admissions process in the department is the responsibility of the Admissions Committee. The committee will direct applications from qualified candidates to a faculty member in the department whose interests are similar to the applicant’s. A temporary advisor must be willing to accept temporary responsibility for the student’s graduate program. If no temporary advisor can be found, the candidate cannot be admitted to graduate study. If a faculty member agrees to serve as temporary advisor and the applicant is judged qualified for admission, the student is notified that the department will recommend admission to the Graduate School. Formal notification of admission comes from the Graduate School.

All applications must include a substantial sample of academic writing. For applicants already having an approved master’s thesis, the thesis must be submitted. For students holding an M.A. that did not require a thesis, and for applicants currently pursuing an M.A., a paper from a graduate-level course or seminar may be submitted. For students holding a B.A., the writing sample might include sections from an undergraduate thesis or seminar paper, or a course paper. Applicants who wish to submit an alternative writing sample (for example, solely authored published article, solely authored research report or section of a research report) should check first with the chair of the Admissions Committee.

For students who are admitted, the Admissions Committee will, in consultation with an applicant’s prospective advisor, recommend admission to either the EPS masters program or the EPS doctoral program. See department website for application requirements.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

• Students will understand the social, cultural, and/or historical contexts surrounding formal and/or informal education in the U.S. and/or in a global context.

• Students will be able to interpret educational policy in a national and/or global context.

• Students will understand educational inequality related to race, class, gender and/or other dimensions.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

• Students will be able to recognize and apply principles of ethical research.
PEOPLE

Faculty: Professors Kendall, Lee, Nelson (chair), Reese; Associate Professors Bartlett, Posey-Maddox; Assistant Professors Baldridge, Moeller, Turner, Stem