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 ED POL.

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 ED POL 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.

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet the minimum requirements** (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s). Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Deadline</td>
<td>December 15</td>
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<td>Spring Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the spring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the summer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)</td>
<td>Required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Proficiency Test</td>
<td>Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<a href="https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency">https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency</a>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Letters of Recommendation Required</td>
<td>3</td>
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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.

**FUNDING**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information ([https://grad.wisc.edu/funding](https://grad.wisc.edu/funding)) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and processes related to funding.

**PROGRAM RESOURCES**

The department offers 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. Each semester (and summer) the department posts positions teaching undergraduate and graduate classes. Positions for teaching assistants are also posted each semester and occasionally for summer.

**REQUIREMENTS**

### MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements ([http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/policiesandrequirementstext](http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/policiesandrequirementstext)), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

### MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Mode of Instruction Definitions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evening/Weekend</strong>: These programs are offered in an evening and/or weekend format to accommodate working schedules. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses and personal connections, while keeping your day job. For more information about the meeting schedule of a specific program, contact the program.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Online</strong>: These programs are offered primarily online. Many available online programs can be completed almost entirely online with all online programs offering at least 50 percent or more of the program work online. Some online programs have an on-campus component that is often designed to accommodate working schedules.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Accelerated**: These on-campus programs are offered in an accelerated format that allows you to complete your program in a condensed time-frame. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses with minimal disruption to your career. For more information about the accelerated nature of a specific program, contact the program.

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<tr>
<th>PROGRAM RESOURCES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Take advantage of the convenience of online learning while participating in a rich, interactive learning environment. For more information about the online nature of a specific program, contact the program.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hybrid</strong>: These programs have innovative curricula that combine on-campus and online formats. Most hybrid programs are completed on-campus with a partial or completely online semester. For more information about the hybrid schedule of a specific program, contact the program.</td>
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**CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS**

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<th>Requirements Detail</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum Credit Requirement</strong></td>
<td>30 credits</td>
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<td><strong>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</strong></td>
<td>16 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement</strong></td>
<td>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 (<a href="https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/">https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/</a>).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Graduate GPA Requirement</strong></td>
<td>3.00 GPA required.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other Grade Requirements</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
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| Assessments and Examinations | Contact the program for information on required assessments and examinations. |
| Language Requirements | Contact the program for information on any language Requirements. |

**REQUIRED COURSES**

All candidates for the master of arts degree must take the introductory colloquium, ED POL 701 Introduction to Educational Policy Studies, during their initial semester, or for those entering the program in the spring semester, the following fall. Students intending to complete only the M.A. degree plan a program defined by a minimum of 30 graduate-level credits. In addition to ED POL 701, M.A. students must take at least 18 further credits in the Department of Educational Policy Studies (exclusive of Independent Reading and Research and Thesis). Students may count no more than 3 credits of ED POL 990 Research or Thesis and no more than 3 credits of ED POL 999 Independent Reading in fulfilling the requirements for the minimum 30-credit master's degree. Entering master's students who are or may be interested in pursuing the doctoral degree in EPS should plan their master's program in accordance with the Ph.D. concentration requirements described here ([http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/educational-policy-studies/educational-policy-studies-phd/#requirements](http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/educational-policy-studies/educational-policy-studies-phd/#requirements)).
Policies

Graduate School Policies

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

Major-Specific Policies

Graduate Program Handbook

The Graduate Program Handbook (https://eps.education.wisc.edu/docs/WebDispenser/eps-documents/spring-2018-handbook.pdf?sfvrsn=0) is the repository for all of the program's policies and requirements.

Prior Coursework

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.

UW–Madison Undergraduate

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree.

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.

Probation

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.

Credits Per Term Allowed

15 credits

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.

Other

Students are eligible to compete for UW–Madison fellowships. The department has a small number of teaching and project 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 teaching assistantships in related departments.

Professional Development

Graduate School Resources

Take advantage of the Graduate School’s professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the social, cultural, and/or historical contexts surrounding formal and/or informal education in the U.S. and/or in a global context.
2. Interpret educational policy in a national and/or global context.
3. Understand educational inequality related to race, class, gender and/or other dimensions.
4. Recognize and apply principles of ethical research.

People

Faculty: Professors Bartlett, Kendall (chair), Lee, Nelson, Reese; Associate Professors Claessens, Posey-Maddox; Assistant Professors Balridge, Conwell, Moeller, Rodriguez-Gomenz, Turner, Stern