

EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES, PHD

The Department of Educational Policy Studies (EPS) offers an interdisciplinary program leading to the PhD degree. 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 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 such as History, Sociology, and Anthropology, and in programs in African Studies, Global Health Institute, and Gender 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.

The cornerstone of the department's doctoral program is the concentration. The department offers concentrations in social sciences and education, history of education, and comparative international education and global studies. Concentrations are intended to embody the content knowledge and learning experiences that students need to achieve necessary levels of proficiency within a field of study. While these levels of proficiency are acquired largely through course work and other traditional academic activities, in appropriate fields they may also be

based in work experiences, internships, independent studies, and similar activities.

CONCENTRATION IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION

Students in the Social Sciences and Education (SSE) concentration apply disciplinary perspectives, theories and methodologies to the study of issues in educational policy. Faculty members in this concentration utilize sociological, anthropological, political, and economic perspectives. SSE members aim to inform public discourse and educational policy and practice.

EPS students choosing to concentrate in Social Sciences and Education will develop a program of study that combines deep exploration of a particular educational problem, theoretical perspective, methodology, or disciplinary approach with broad grounding in social foundations of education and in key substantive fields relevant to educational policy and/or practice. Programs of study will be individually designed (with the support and approval of an EPS advisor) to reflect students' prior knowledge, skills and experience as well as their current educational goals. Students in this concentration are required to become well-versed in methodological approaches common to social science research, and specifically are required to take a methodology course and two research methods courses.

Students who successfully complete this concentration should be well-prepared for careers as researchers, policy analysts, and advocates in academic, governmental, or non-governmental settings.

CONCENTRATION IN COMPARATIVE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND GLOBAL STUDIES

Study in comparative international education prepares researchers, teachers, and planners who are interested in education across nations and cultures. Various modes of inquiry and the intellectual orientations of several disciplines are used to investigate, from a comparative and/or cross-cultural perspective, the following aspects of education in one or more geographical regions of the world: educational change and modernization, the interaction between education and development (social, political, economic), the politics of educational reform, educational planning and institution building, and the interrelationships of particular aspects of schools, societies, and cultures.

CONCENTRATION IN HISTORY AND HUMANITIES

The study of history helps us understand past educational policies and practices in the context of their time. It also often provides a unique perspective on modern developments. Students in the history of education usually study subjects from interdisciplinary angles, adapting theories and interpretive points of view from the humanities as well as the social sciences in their understanding of the past. In addition, great emphasis is placed in the program on the mastery of core knowledge in the field, the honing of analytical tools, and the improvement of writing skills, all of which are useful in a variety of academic and other settings. Students who choose a concentration in the history of education may specialize in the history of American education, African American education, the history of European education, comparative history of education, or any combination of these approved by the student's advisory committee.