

PUBLIC POLICY, B.S.

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Harrisburg

Program Description

The Public Policy major is designed for students interested in policy issues, politics, public administration, and related areas like policy analysis and policy advocacy. The program explores a myriad of critical issues facing our communities, the nation, and the world. Students receive the educational foundation for careers in the public sector, in government-related businesses, and in non-profit organizations, as well as for graduate work in the fields of law, public administration, criminal justice, public policy, political science, and health care administration. Building on the program core, students may choose electives from a broad array of courses in public policy and other areas. For-credit Internship opportunities are available, including the Harrisburg Semester program, where qualifying students may apply for a scholarship.

Students may wish but are not required to pursue a concentration within the Public Policy major. The following concentrations are available:

1. State and Local Government
2. Governmental Affairs and Public Service Careers
3. Policy Analysis and Governance Studies

Students should consult their adviser for a complete listing of courses in each of these concentrations. Overall, the Public Policy program seeks to advance the ideals of civic culture and a commitment to public service.

Our proximity to the state capital at Harrisburg provides students with a rich environment for both study and for internships. In addition to our full-time faculty, Public Policy draws on part-time faculty with particular professional strengths. In recent years students have explored politics and political issues in classes taught by a state senator, a former lieutenant governor, a corrections system administrator, and a governor's press secretary. This integration of academic study with the "real world" of Pennsylvania politics and policy making is further enhanced through quality internships. The Public Policy program prides itself in placing qualified students in internships that facilitate the development of professional skills and promote the prospects for professional employment following graduation.

Students are encouraged to complete an internship during their senior year. Additional information regarding internships may be obtained by contacting the School of Public Affairs Internship Coordinator (see <https://harrisburg.psu.edu/public-affairs/internships>). For-credit Internship opportunities are available, including the Harrisburg Semester program, which offers scholarship opportunities to qualifying students.

What is Public Policy?

Public Policy is a discipline that focuses on the systematic analysis of public policy issues and decision processes. It includes study in the role of economic and political factors in public decision-making and policy formulation, microeconomic analysis of policy issues, resource allocation and decision modeling, and policy advocacy.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You have an interest in fostering positive policy change.
- You are concerned about critical issues facing your community or nation.
- You would enjoy working with others to solve these critical issues.
- You are interested in a career in government or with an NGO or non-profit.