DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN PUBLIC POLICY (DRPP)

The Ph.D. in Public Policy prepares students for advanced professional work or for academic careers. The doctorate degree is based on a core curriculum that stresses intellectual and methodological rigor, using the theories and applications of quantitative analysis; political, economic, and organizational analysis; research design and execution. This core is supplemented with in-depth study of substantive areas of public policy. The academic requirements for the Ph.D. total 54 credit hours with the following key elements:

Doctoral graduates from the School of Public Policy at Georgia Tech will find employment as university faculty and as senior research analysts in government and the private sector. Colleges and university faculty's demands for public policy Ph.D. graduates is much stronger (relative to supply) than most liberal arts degrees.
With an analytical focus, you may address substantive areas such as science, technology and innovation policy, environmental policy, information and communication policy, health policy, social policy, public administration and public management, policy evaluation, among others.

About the College

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts, established in 1990, consists of six schools, three ROTC units and several research centers, and exemplifies strengths in humanities and social sciences.

The six schools are: Economics; History and Sociology; Literature, Media, and Communication; Modern Languages; Public Policy; and the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs.

Ivan Allen College provides innovative, human-centered perspectives at the intersections of humanities, social sciences, arts and STEM, developing leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition. Nearly 350 tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure track and permanent research faculty, prepare students to be leaders capable of balancing a richly defined base of expertise with a well-grounded sense of responsibility.

Our programs encompass traditional fields as well as unique and professional disciplines. Many of our faculty members engage in ground-breaking, interdisciplinary research to solve complex issues of the world.

Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of background do students in the program have?
Public Policy students come from a variety of educational and professional backgrounds. It is also a very diverse student body concerning gender, age, ethnicity, and national origin. It is especially suited for students who wish to develop a complete set of analytical skills applicable in many policy domains, the interface of private, public and non-profit sectors, and the pursuit of advanced research oriented graduate degrees. Since it is not common for students to already be proficient in several analytical tools, the program offers the opportunity to strengthen those in which they have less experience. This applies to quantitative, economic, conceptual, ethical, data science, qualitative, analytical tools.

What kind of opportunities are available for graduates of the Doctoral program?
The School of Public Policy has an outstanding record in placement of graduates in both the public and private sectors. Our graduates go on to work for all levels of government in the United States and beyond, multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank and the United Nations, consulting firms, government liaison offices in business corporations, NGOs in various areas of interest, among others. Others go on to pursue further advanced degrees. Their analytical profile is especially sought after.

How long does it take to get through the program?
It takes about 5 years to complete the 54 credit-hours of the program in addition to the doctoral milestones.

Can I take the program part-time while working?
Yes. Some courses are held in the evening for working students and you can take as little as 3 hours per term.

What kind of financial aid is available?
The School of Public Policy has several Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs) and Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) available to qualified students. The positions include a tuition waiver and a monthly stipend starting at $2174. Most Ph.D. students can find some sort of funding if it isn't offered with admission to the program.

What courses do I need to take to complete the degree program?
The DRPP is a 54-credit degree program in addition to the doctoral milestones. The curriculum is described in full on the following website:

https://spp.gatech.edu/doctorate/requirements

When do I need to apply?

The Doctoral program only admits students for the fall term. The fall admission deadline is January 15th.

Our application process is online at: http://grad.gatech.edu/apply-now.

What do I need to submit to apply?

The application package requires:

1. Application fee - $75 Domestic Applicants | $85 International Applicants
2. Official transcripts from all schools attended
3. Test scores
   a. The School of Public Policy has waived the GRE until December 31, 2021 due to the global pandemic.
4. An essay describing your career goals and answering the following prompts:
   a. We would like to have a sense of your career goals. Please describe your ideal post-graduation placement and what you would like to be doing in that position.
   b. Why is the School of Public Policy at Georgia Tech for you and your career aspirations?
   c. Articulate a research question agenda you are interested in pursuing during your doctoral studies.
5. Three letters of recommendation from people in the field, your former employers or teachers who can vouch for your interest in the field and capabilities to do graduate level work.
6. International Applicants should view this page: https://grad.gatech.edu/international-students