



Doctor of Philosophy with a Major in Public Policy FAQs

1. 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.

2. Do I need a master's degree to be considered for the doctoral program?

No.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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 students whose home institution is GT. The positions include a full tuition waiver and a monthly stipend starting at \$2,284. Students who aren't offered funding with admission can apply for GRA or GTA positions after confirming their attendance. All Ph.D. students are initially paid \$2174 monthly during their first year, \$2501 monthly after passing the comprehensive exams, and \$2718 monthly post-proposal. Domestic students can also apply for federal financial aid.



5. continued

Joint Program with Georgia State University

For students whose home school is GSU, the Andrew Young School has been able to fund virtually all full-time students for at least three years. Assistantships typically provide full tuition waivers and stipends of \$18,000 per year. Three new doctoral students each year receive Andrew Young or AYSPS Dean's Scholar Fellowships, which provide an additional \$6,000 annually. Graduate research assistants work with individual faculty members or with one of the Andrew Young School's policy research centers, including the Fiscal Research Center, the International Studies Program, the Georgia Health Policy Center, and the Nonprofit Studies Program. Over the course of their studies, most students work on both academic and more practical policy-related research projects. Third-year and fourth-year students typically have opportunities to teach undergraduate classes.

6. 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>

7. When do I need to apply?

The Doctoral program only admits students for the fall term. The fall admission deadline is December 15th 11:59 PM EST.

Joint Program with Georgia State University

The Doctoral program only admits students for the fall term. The fall admission deadline is January 15th 11:59 PM EST.

Our application process is online at: <https://spp.gatech.edu/doctorate/joint-degree-gsu> and <http://grad.gatech.edu/apply-now>.

8. When do classes start?

For every semester you can find all important dates regarding when classes start, when you can sign up for classes, and other important dates with the link below:

<https://registrar.gatech.edu/calendar>

9. When will application decisions be released?

March 30th for the Fall and Summer. October 30th for the Spring semester.

10. What are my chances of being accepted?

Last year's acceptance rate was 34.5%.

11. Does the program qualify as a STEM program for Visa purposes?

Unfortunately for interested international students, at this time the DRPP program does not qualify as a STEM program, including 24-month STEM OPT extensions for F1 Visas.

Additional information for international students can be found at:

<https://oie.gatech.edu/directions>



12. What do I need to submit to apply?

The application package requires:

- Application fee - \$75 Domestic Applicants | \$85 International Applicants
- Official transcripts from all schools attended.
 - During the application process you can upload your unofficial transcript, and once you have been accepted you will be contacted with further information on where to send your official transcript.
- Test scores
 - GRE scores are mandatory.
 - Institute code: R5248
 - Department code (GRE/TOEFL): 94
 - English Proficiency requirements: <https://grad.gatech.edu/english-proficiency>
 - The department does not accept Duolingo test scores as a proof of English proficiency.
- An essay describing your career goals and answering the following prompts:
 - 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.
 - Why is the School of Public Policy at Georgia Tech for you and your career aspirations?
 - Articulate a research question agenda you are interested in pursuing during your doctoral studies.
- 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.
- International Applicants should view this page: <https://grad.gatech.edu/international-students>