

Joint Degree Programs in Urban Planning and Public Policy/Public Administration

Harvard University Graduate School of Design and Harvard Kennedy School

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The Harvard University Graduate School of Design (GSD) and Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) offer a joint degree program in urban planning and public policy or public administration (note that HKS refers to this program as a “concurrent degree program”). The GSD/HKS joint degree programs support and encourage students seeking an interdisciplinary education in urban planning and public policy or administration, and prepares them for leadership positions at the intersection of these fields. The joint degree programs permit students to pursue a [Master in Urban Planning \(MUP\)](#) degree at the GSD and a [Master in Public Policy \(MPP\)](#), [Master in Public Administration \(MPA\)](#) or [Master in Public Administration in International Development \(MPA/ID\)](#) degree at HKS simultaneously and to complete both degrees in three years rather than the four years that would be required if the two degrees were pursued independently. Students in the joint degree programs must complete all of the basic requirements for both the MUP and MPP, MPA or MPA/ID degrees, as further described below.

A committee made up of GSD Professor Rachel Weber and GSD Professor Nestor Davidson (“Faculty Committee”) oversees the joint degree programs. The Faculty Committee is responsible for making decisions regarding the structure and requirements of the program and for working with the students enrolled in the program.

ADMISSIONS

Prospective MUP/MPP, MUP/MPA and MUP/MPA/ID students must apply, and be separately admitted, to the GSD and HKS, each of which will independently review and admit applicants. Questions relating to the admissions process at each school should be addressed directly to [HKS Admissions](#) and to the [Admissions Office at the GSD](#).

Prospective MUP/MPP, MUP/MPA and MUP/MPA/ID students may choose to apply to the GSD and HKS at the same time in advance of admission to both schools, or to the GSD or HKS during their first year at the school to which they have already matriculated. Students interested in applying to either school should be careful to observe the application deadlines for each school. All GSD applicants are required to submit a GRE score, in accordance with application guidelines. All HKS applicants are required to submit a GRE or GMAT score, in accordance with

application guidelines. Once admitted, students should follow the notification procedures at each school regarding acceptance of admission and plans to matriculate.

Students admitted to both schools at the same time must inform both schools of their enrollment decision no later than the deadline set by each school and they must indicate their intention to pursue the joint degree program and at which school they plan to begin their studies. Students admitted to the GSD or HKS during their first year at the other school must inform both schools no later than the deadline at which they must accept admission that they intend to pursue the joint degree program. All information must be communicated to [Sean Conlon](#), GSD Registrar, your HKS Program Director (contact details below), and both Admissions Offices.

STRUCTURE OF COURSEWORK

Students in the joint degree programs have three academic years to complete both degrees and are required to spend three terms in residence at the GSD and three terms in residence at HKS, for a total of six terms. During the third year of the joint degree students are in-residence in both schools simultaneously. In three years, students must satisfy all curricular course requirements for both the MUP and MPP, MPA or MPA/ID programs.

In the first two years of the joint degree programs, students are required to enroll for one full year of study at the GSD and for one full year of study at HKS. Either can come first. In the third year of the program, joint degree students will be considered simultaneously enrolled in both schools where they must enroll in three 4-unit GSD courses and two additional 4-unit courses for a total of 20 GSD units on their GSD transcript to meet the requirements for the MUP/MPP, MUP/MPA and MUP/MPA/ID joint degree programs. All joint degree students must complete at minimum 60 units during the terms they are enrolled at the GSD and complete at least 48 credits (52 credits for MPA/ID) during the terms they are enrolled at HKS. See below for more information about the coursework and meaning of credits and units at each school. Students in the joint degree programs will have faculty advisors at both the GSD and HKS. Faculty advisors will supervise a student's academic work and assist in determining the most appropriate sequencing for each student's course of study, keeping in mind the requirements for both degrees.

First-Year Requirements

The Graduate School of Design

The first year at the GSD consists of 20 units each term (40 units total). A lecture or seminar course is 4 units, and a studio course is 8 credits. In the first term, students normally take 12 units of required courses and 8 units that can be an elective or satisfy other curriculum requirements. In the second term, students normally take 16 units of required core courses and

4 units that can be electives or satisfy other curriculum requirements. For a complete articulation of curriculum requirements, please refer to the online listed requirements in effect at the time of matriculation into the joint degree program at:

<https://www.gsd.harvard.edu/urban-planning-design/programs/master-in-urban-planning/degree-requirements/>

Harvard Kennedy School

First-year Master in Public Policy (MPP) students take four core courses (16 credits) in the fall term plus one elective (4 credits), and 3.5 core courses (14 credits) in the spring term (including the [Spring Policy Exercise](#)) plus 1.5 additional electives (6 credits). Normally, students earn 40 credits in their first year. For a complete list of the core courses, please refer to:

<https://www.hks.harvard.edu/educationalprograms/masters-programs/master-public-policy/curriculum>

First-year MPA/ID students must take four core courses in each of the fall and spring terms, and a 4-credit year-long core course. The summer following their first year, they complete a development-related internship, usually in a developing or transitional country. For a list of core courses, please refer to: <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/educational-programs/masters-programs/master-public-administration-international-development-0>.

MPA candidates need to complete one course (4 credits) in each of the following areas:

- Economics & Quantitative Analysis
- Management & Leadership
- Political Thought & Institutions

The remainder of the courses a student takes during their time in-residence at HKS is up to the student, with guidance from faculty and administrators.

Upper Level Requirements

The Graduate School of Design

During their third year, GSD/HKS joint degree students are considered in-residence at both schools and are required to three 4-unit GSD courses, and two additional 4-unit courses for a total of 20 GSD units on their GSD transcript. During the third and final year in the joint degree program, students must fulfill any remaining MUP curriculum requirements, including Methods, Project-Based Learning, and an Area of Concentration.

Harvard Kennedy School

During their third year, GSD/HKS joint degree students are considered in-residence at both schools and are required to complete at least 12 HKS credits in order to fulfill the HKS residency requirement. MPP Students: In addition to completing all remaining elective credits, students must complete a [Policy Analysis Exercise \(PAE\)](#) and enroll in the related Seminar. For their PAE, MPP students examine an existing public or nonprofit sector problem presented by a real-life client organization. The PAE is a professional-quality product, usually around 40 pages in length, where MPP students have the opportunity to integrate the technical skills and specialized knowledge they have gained from the MPP core curriculum. The PAE is carried out within each student's chosen [policy area of concentration](#). For the purpose of the joint degree program, students must write their [Policy Analysis Exercise \(PAE\)](#) on an urban planning topic.

MPA/ID Students: During the third year, MPA/ID students should enroll at HKS in the fall semester. Over the course of the year, they must complete the remaining core courses and complete a [Second Year Policy Analysis \(SYPA\)](#) and enroll in the related Seminar. This capstone project is an opportunity to apply the skills acquired during the program, integrate the coursework, and provide specific policy recommendations for a concrete development problem.

MPA Students: During their final term at HKS, MPA students need to complete all necessary remaining elective courses and credits, including any remaining distribution requirements.

TUITION AND FINANCIAL AID

Tuition

Enrollment in the joint degree programs will result in significant tuition savings compared with the cost of pursuing the two degrees separately. Tuition is paid as follows: during the first two years, students will pay full tuition to the school in which they are enrolled full-time. During the third year, students will pay full tuition to the GSD in the fall and full tuition to HKS in the spring.

Financial Aid

Joint degree program students should apply for financial aid through the [GSD Office of Financial Aid](#) for the first year at the GSD and through the [HKS Student Financial Services](#) the first year in HKS. For the fifth and sixth terms, students receive financial aid from the GSD in the fall and HKS in the spring term.

CONTACT INFORMATION

GSD

Admissions: admissions@gsd.harvard.edu; 617-495-5453

<https://www.gsd.harvard.edu/offices-and-facilities/admissions-office/apply/>

Program Information: Sean Conlon, Registrar; sconlon@gsd.harvard.edu; 617-496-5154

Financial Aid Office: financial_aid@gsd.harvard.edu; 617-495-5455

<https://www.gsd.harvard.edu/offices-and-facilities/financial-aid/>

HKS

Admissions: admissions@hks.harvard.edu; 617-495-1155

<https://www.hks.harvard.edu/admissions-aid/masters-program-admissions/how-apply>

Financial Aid Office: financial_aid@hks.harvard.edu; 617-495-1155

<https://www.hks.harvard.edu/admissions-aid/funding-your-education/funding-your-masters-education>

MPA Program Information: mpa_program@hks.harvard.edu; 617-495-7864

MPA Director, Emma Heffern, emma_heffern@hks.harvard.edu

MPA Associate Director, Suzanne Shende, suzanne_shende@hks.harvard.edu

MPA/ID Admissions and Program Information: mpaid_program@hks.harvard.edu

MPA/ID Director, Carol Finney, carol_finney@hks.harvard.edu

MPA/ID Assistant Director, Sarah Olia, sarah_olia@hks.harvard.edu

MPP Program Information: mpp_program@hks.harvard.edu; 617-496-1845

MPP Director, Cate Monahan, cate_monahan@hks.harvard.edu

MPP Assistant Director, Emily Rogan, emily_rogan@hks.harvard.edu