

## A Public Affairs Career

Career development is an integral part of the La Follette School experience. The Career Development Office arranges mentorships with alumni, organizes networking opportunities, brings public affairs professionals to campus for a career development seminar, and arranges for agency representatives to come to La Follette to interview applicants for internships and employment. The career development coordinator helps students apply for the Presidential Management Fellowship and individually assists students in finding internships and permanent employment with government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses with government interests.

La Follette School alumni work for federal agencies such as the Government Accountability Office, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Others work for nonprofit organizations and state, city, and local agencies all over the United States and around the world.

Listed here are some of the job titles that La Follette School graduates have held:

- ◆ policy analyst, including specialists in health, energy, education, housing, and transportation
- ◆ governor's policy advisor
- ◆ budget analyst
- ◆ human resources specialist
- ◆ non-governmental organization coordinator
- ◆ executive director of a nonprofit organization
- ◆ contract compliance officer
- ◆ department manager or project manager for a local or state government
- ◆ state agency liaison to federal government
- ◆ consultant
- ◆ elected official
- ◆ development officer
- ◆ social policy researcher

## Applying for Admission

Students are selected for the Master of Public Affairs degree program on the basis of their academic records, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, work experience, and evidence of commitment to a career in public affairs. Applicants whose native language is not English must present the equivalent of 92 or greater on the computer-based TOEFL test to be considered for admission.

## Suggested Course Work for Admission

- ◆ Introductory course in microeconomics
- ◆ American government course
- ◆ Introductory course in calculus or statistics

Candidates who have taken these suggested courses prior to enrolling will be better prepared for the graduate program. To ensure an applicant can handle the La Follette School's rigorous quantitative curriculum, the admissions committee looks closely at completed quantitative courses and at the quantitative GRE score.



"I chose to attend La Follette because of its outstanding coursework and faculty expertise in policy analysis and in social and poverty policy. Students work alongside professors to gain skills for collaborating with state agencies, legislators, and other groups."

**Joanna Marks, MPA '10,  
Assistant Researcher,  
Institute for Research on Poverty**



**ROBERT M. LA FOLLETTE  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

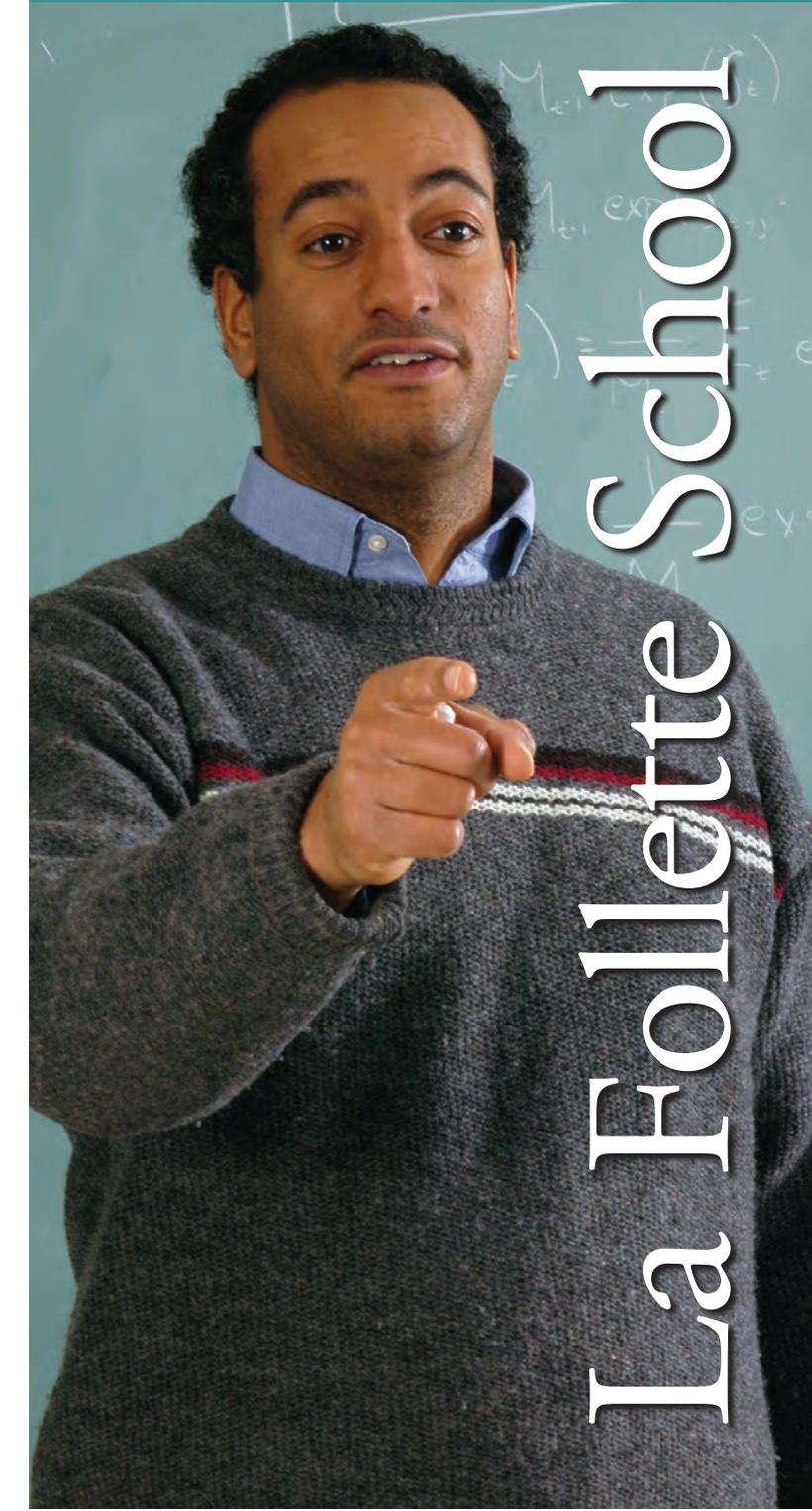
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September 2010

## Master of Public Affairs Degree Program



# Master of Public Affairs Degree at the La Follette School

The Master of Public Affairs degree at the La Follette School offers training in public management and policy analysis that prepares students for careers in public policy and administration within the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

## The La Follette School Faculty

The La Follette School faculty is made up of economists, political scientists, sociologists, and public affairs scholars who teach the skills and tools needed for a career in public affairs. They are experts in tax policy and government finance, public management, education funding and policy, welfare, emergency management, the economics of marriage and family, poverty, human resources, child support, Social Security and retirement, environmental regulation, trade policy, public sector performance, energy policy, regional economics, and health care.

The faculty admit about 50 students a year to this program and the master of international public affairs degree program. The small class size enables the faculty to know, advise, and mentor students.

"I have been thoroughly impressed with the quality of the education offered at the La Follette School of Public Affairs, by the focus and diversity of experience of my peers, and by the professional opportunities accessible to students and alumni."

**Colleene Thomas, MPA '10,**  
former member of University  
of Wisconsin System's  
governing board



## The Degree Program

The Master of Public Affairs program consists of 42 credits and requires two years of study. Students take six foundational courses, a one-credit career seminar, plus eight elective courses. An internship can count for up to three elective credits.

## Foundational Courses

- ◆ **The Policymaking Process** examines the political processes that shape U.S. public policy.
- ◆ **Introduction to Public Management** introduces key theories of how public organizations work, the relationship between democracy and management, and critical public management issues such as accountability and policy implementation.
- ◆ **Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Public Policy Analysis** develops competence with statistical analytical tools for the study of public affairs.
- ◆ **Microeconomic Policy Analysis** explores how to evaluate the implications of policies for efficiency and equity, and to employ statistical methods to interpret and present quantitative data.
- ◆ **Introduction to Policy Analysis** focuses on defining policy problems, determining goals, designing policy alternatives, and assessing trade-offs to make recommendations.
- ◆ The **Workshop in Public Affairs**, the capstone course taken in the final semester, gives students experience working in teams with a faculty supervisor on a real-world policy project. They apply conceptual and analytical policy tools to issues their clients face in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors.



## Elective Courses

Students build proficiency beyond the core requirements through elective public affairs courses, including:

- ◆ **Advanced Public Management**
- ◆ **Advanced Quantitative Methods for Public Policy Analysis**
- ◆ **Public Program Evaluation**
- ◆ **Cost-Benefit Analysis**

Students can choose electives from other highly regarded graduate departments at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, such as political science, population health, urban and regional planning, social work, law, business, educational leadership and policy analysis, sociology, and environmental studies.

## Joint Degree and Certificate Programs

Some students earn additional credentials while they work toward their public affairs degrees. The following joint degree and certificate programs are available:

- ◆ Law (Juris Doctorate)
- ◆ Master of Public Health
- ◆ Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning
- ◆ Energy Analysis and Policy Certificate
- ◆ Transportation Management and Policy Certificate
- ◆ Ph.D. in Neuroscience

"The La Follette School advanced my career by giving me the tools necessary to evaluate policy and public expenditure decisions in a consistent and effective manner. The faculty and staff support was incredible. I had access to professors in and out of class that helped me dig deeper into the issues we were discussing."

**Michael A. Rodriguez, MPA '09,**  
Associate Transportation Consultant,  
Parsons Brinckerhoff

## Madison, Wisconsin

The Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs is located in an historic landmark, a nineteenth-century house at the center of campus, overlooking Lake Mendota, with classroom buildings nearby. Beyond the campus, the city of Madison, as the state capital, provides a wealth of opportunities for La Follette School students to acquire practical experience as professional project assistants or interns in state agencies. Students benefit from the strong relationships that La Follette School faculty have with these agencies, in keeping with the Wisconsin Idea of service to government.

