

HEALTH CARE POLICY (BS)

Brooks School of Public Policy

Program Website (<https://publicpolicy.cornell.edu/undergraduate/study/public-policy/>)

CIP: 44.0503 | HEGIS: 1202.00 | NYSED: 39663

Program Description

The Health Care Policy (HCP) major is offered within the Cornell Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy, and merges curriculum from both the social and natural sciences. HCP builds on the research strengths of the Brooks School faculty, who use the theories and methods from economics, sociology, political science, and demography to study the effects of government policies on individuals and families, public health, education, crime, product markets, financial markets, and a wide variety of other social impacts. The research tools learned and used—robust theory, rigorous empirical quantitative skills, and practical applications to real-world policy issues—are highly sought after by the best employers in the healthcare industry and government.

The HCP major prepares students for leadership roles in health policy. Some of these leadership roles require a strong foundation in the natural sciences, which is available through the major. In addition, graduates will be prepared for careers that combine clinical health care with involvement in the broader health care system and public policy.

HCP will provide students with in-depth training in the analysis of health care and public policies that affect health, access to medical care, and medical spending. Students will learn to integrate analytical thinking and data analysis skills. HCP majors employ theories and methods from economics and demography to analyze health care and policy. Students will learn to apply theories designed to explain the development of government policies addressing health care and how the private health care system interacts with the public sector to affect health, access, and costs. The HCP requirements provide all students with a strong foundation in natural sciences while allowing flexibility in course selection to pursue either: a non-premedical track; or a premedical track that meets the course requirements for admission to medical school and other health professional graduate programs.

Standard Admissions Requirements

The Brooks School recommends sixteen units of secondary coursework, including four of English, four of mathematics (Calculus and/or Statistics recommended), and three of science. A foreign language is recommended as additional preparatory coursework.

Policies and Procedures

In addition to these program level requirements, students are expected to meet all Brooks School and University level policies noted elsewhere in this catalog.

Academic Support Courses

1000-level academic support courses do not count towards graduation requirements but do contribute towards maintaining full time semester status and towards good academic standing requirements.

Academic Standards

Majors in Health Care Policy are expected to meet the following academic standards:

- A student must maintain a semester and cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher.
- A student must complete at least 12 credits per semester, excluding physical education courses unless they have received an approved petition to take fewer than 12 credits (e.g. for SDS accommodation).
- Students enrolling in the Brooks School as first-years must enroll in a minimum of one 3-credit course each semester in PUBPOL during each of their first four semesters, excluding winter and summer sessions. Transfer students must take six credit hours of PUBPOL coursework in each of their first two semesters in the Brooks School.
- All students must complete their requirements for first-year writing seminars (FWS) during their first two semesters at Cornell.
- A student must be making “satisfactory progress” toward a Brooks School bachelor’s degree.
- A student cannot carry more than two (2) incomplete grades simultaneously.
- Students must receive a passing grade in PUBPOL 2000 - Intermediate Microeconomics and PUBPOL 2101 - Statistics for Public Policy. Students who do not receive a passing grade in either of these courses will be placed on a warning status in the following semester.

Review Process

At the end of each semester, the Brooks School committee on academic status (CAS) reviews each Bachelor of Science and Professional Masters student’s academic record to ensure that the minimum academic standards are met. The committee takes appropriate action for students whose academic achievement is considered unsatisfactory as defined by the criteria above. To support every student’s success, the committee may take any of the following actions:

- Withdraw the student permanently from the Brooks School and Cornell University.
- Require the student to take a leave of absence for one or more semesters.
- Issue a warning to the student at one of the following levels (these imply that if the student does not show considerable improvement during the semester, the committee may withdraw the student):
 - Severe warning with danger of being withdrawn
 - Severe warning
 - Warning
- Add the student’s name to a review list; students with this status are monitored by the committee throughout the semester.
- Return the student to good standing.

Any of the above actions may be accompanied by a semester credit limit or a requirement for the student to meet with an academic advisor by a date set by the committee.

Students placed on a required leave must appeal to CAS to return. This appeal occurs at the end of the required leave period. Students who have been withdrawn may appeal the decision before the committee during the pre-semester appeals meeting.

All students with an academic warning status automatically will be reviewed for specific criteria at the end of the subsequent semester. Students put on warning, severe warning, or severe warning with danger of being withdrawn status will be informed of conditions that they are expected to fulfill to return to good standing.

Students who have been previously placed on a required leave and wish to return to the Brooks School must submit a plan of study to the committee before being rejoined. The student should contact the Registrar in the Brooks Office of Admissions, Student Services, and Career Management to discuss the process and due dates (BrooksRegistrar@cornell.edu).

Students who have been withdrawn from the Brooks School by CAS may request that they be readmitted. Such students have three years from the date they were withdrawn to make this appeal with assistance from an advisor in the Brooks Office of Admissions, Student Services, and Career Management. After three years, a former student must apply for readmission through the Brooks School admissions process. A student applying for readmission should discuss their situation with an advisor in the Brooks Office of Admissions, Student Services and Career Management. The student also should talk with others who may be able to help—faculty mentors, instructors, or a member of the university medical staff. Any information given to the committee is held in the strictest confidence.

Semester Credit Limits

Full-time matriculated students must carry a minimum of 12 credits (excluding physical education) to maintain their full-time status.

Undergraduate students enrolled in the Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy are typically limited to taking 18 credits per semester. However, students who have completed more than two semesters at Cornell and have maintained a GPA of at least 3.5 may petition to take up to 22 academic credits.

Students who have been at Cornell for less than two semesters or have a GPA lower than 3.5 may only petition for additional credits if they are for physical education or academic support classes (e.g., MATH 1006 - Academic Support for MATH 1106).

Eligibility to petition does not guarantee approval to exceed 18 credits. Students must also have the support of an academic advisor from the Brooks School Office of Admissions, Student Services and Career Management. Approval for additional credits will only be granted after a meeting with an advisor.

Please be aware that approvals to exceed 18 credits are granted under limited circumstances, and petitions to enroll for more than 18 credits are not accepted during the pre-enrollment period.

Special Study Courses

- A maximum of 12 credits of special study/independent study/research coursework can count towards 120 overall credits. Courses will be indicated on the class roster with a Component of either IND or RSC. In the Brooks School, these courses are PUBPOL 4000, 4010, 4020, & 4030. Additional credits can be taken but will not be applied.
- A maximum of 3 credits of PUBPOL special studies coursework (PUBPOL 4000, 4010, and 4020) may meet the PUBPOL electives requirement. PUBPOL 4030 does not meet the PUBPOL electives requirement.

- A maximum of 3 credits of 4000-4020 (not including 4030) may count towards the 9 Human Ecology credits requirement if the special study is in a department outside the student's major.
- Students cannot TA (PUBPOL 4030) the same course for credit more than once or take and TA the same course simultaneously. PUBPOL 4030 does not fulfill any requirements towards the major. Registration for PUBPOL 4030 may not exceed 5 credit hours per semester.

Study Abroad Credit Limits

Students participating in full-semester study abroad programs offered via the Office of Global Learning may take no more than the equivalent of 15 credits Cornell credits abroad per semester. Credits taken through an approved Global Learning program will automatically count towards the 120 credits needed to graduate.

To request to have a course count towards a major or distribution requirements, students must complete a curriculum substitution petition. Core PUBPOL courses cannot be taken abroad. If a student receives approval for multiple courses to count towards PUBPOL credits, no more than 8 credits per semester abroad may apply towards PUBPOL credits.

S-U Grade Options

- S/U grading option may NOT be used for any required course unless it is the only grade option offered for those courses.
- S/U grades MAY be used for electives and in the 9 Human Ecology credits.
- Students can apply a maximum of 12 credits of S-U grades toward the 120 credits required for graduation. Courses offered only as S-U grades do not count towards this limit.
- Students have the option to take additional S-U courses beyond the 12-credit limit, but those credits will not count toward graduation requirements.

Tracking Graduation Requirements

Undergraduate students must track their progress towards graduation by reviewing degree requirements in this catalog. It is the responsibility of students to plan their course selections carefully to ensure they meet all graduation requirements within eight semesters. Transfer students may have a different timeline based on the number of transferable credits they receive upon admission. Students who require additional semesters to fulfill graduation requirements must schedule a meeting with an advisor at the Brooks Office of Admissions, Student Services, and Career Management. During this meeting, they can request to petition for an extension.

Transfer Credit Policies

All students who matriculate fall 2025 and later are expected to follow the university transfer credit policy.

Prior to enrolling in the course, students must complete a petition to have an external course count towards a Brooks School requirement. Petitions are not required for test credit. See the curriculum requirements tab for more information about how test credit may meet degree requirements.

Students who matriculated prior to fall 2025, and who have not switched to the 2025-2026 curriculum year, are held to the policies from the year they matriculated:

- Of the 120 credits required to graduate, at least 60 credits must be earned at Cornell University.

- After matriculation, transfer students may take no more than 15 credits external to Cornell. AP and IB credits also count towards this limit.
- First-year matriculated students may apply a maximum of 15 non-Cornell credits toward the 120 credits required for graduation. These credits include AP, IB, and college credits earned elsewhere (refer to the Advanced Placement Credit section below).
- Courses taken in a high school setting or counted toward high school graduation, such as Syracuse Project Advance, are not eligible to count for credits or fulfill graduation requirements or count towards the 120 credits needed to graduate.

Program Information

- Instruction Mode: In Person
- Location: Ithaca, NY
- Minimum Credits for Degree: 120

Program Requirements

Major Requirements

Must be completed with a grade of C- or better in each course unless S/U is the only grading option available in which case a grade of SX must be received.

Code	Title	Hours
Public Policy Required Courses		
PUBPOL 1111	Building Success at Brooks	1
PUBPOL 2101	Statistics for Public Policy	4
PUBPOL 2301	Introduction to Public Policy	4
PUBPOL 2350	The U.S. Health Care System	3
PUBPOL 2370	Race, Racism, and Public Policy	3
PUBPOL 3100	Multiple Regression Analysis	4
PUBPOL 3830	Ethics and Public Policy	3

Code	Title	Hours
Demography Coursework		
Select one of the following:		
PUBPOL 2030	Population and Public Policy	
PUBPOL 3280	Fundamentals of Population Health	

Code	Title	Hours
Introductory Economics		
Select one of the following:		
ECON 1110	Introductory Microeconomics	
A 5 on the AP microeconomics exam		
A 6 on the IB HL Economics exam		

Code	Title	Hours
Intermediate Microeconomics		
Select one of the following:		
PUBPOL 2000	Intermediate Microeconomics	
ECON 3030	Intermediate Microeconomic Theory	

Code	Title	Hours
Introduction to Sociology		
Select one of the following:		

PUBPOL 2250 Social Problems in the United States ¹

SOC 1101 Introduction to Sociology

¹ PUBPOL 2250 cannot count for both the Introduction to Sociology requirement AND the public policy electives requirement.

Health and Policy Electives

Students must complete 35 total credits across the Health Care and Health Policy, Public Policy, and Pre-Med elective categories. A minimum of 12 credits must be completed of Health Care and Health Policy coursework and a minimum of 9 credits of Public Policy coursework must be completed. The remaining 14 credits can be across any area.

- Engaged Learning: Within the health and public policy electives, at least one course must have the CU-CEL tag as of the 2025-2026 catalog.

Code	Title	Hours
Health Care and Health Policy Elective Courses		12
Select a minimum of 12 credits from the following:		
ECON 3910/NS 4570	Health, Poverty, and Inequality: A Global Perspective	
PUBPOL 2050	Critical Perspectives in Global Health and Policy	
PUBPOL 3110	Pharmaceutical Management and Policy	
PUBPOL 3180	Health Disparities	
PUBPOL 3251	Health Equity, Politics and Policy	
PUBPOL 3230	Public Policy for an Aging Society	
PUBPOL 3260	Sexuality Law and Policy	
PUBPOL 3300	Cost-Benefit Analysis	
PUBPOL 3320	Mental Health Care Delivery and Policy	
PUBPOL 3490	Housing Equity Lab	
PUBPOL 3650	Social Care Navigation to Advance Health Equity	
PUBPOL 3720	Addiction Medicine Practice and Policy	
PUBPOL 3780	Sick Around the World? Comparing Health Care Systems Around the World	
PUBPOL 3870	Economic Evaluations in Health Care	
PUBPOL 4110	Pollution, Climate Change, and Health	
PUBPOL 4281	The Economics and Regulation of Risky Health Behaviors	
PUBPOL 4370	The Economics of Health Care Markets	
PUBPOL 5500	Introduction to Senior Living and Related Programs	
PUBPOL 5640	Data Analytics in Health Care	
PUBPOL 5660	Strategic Management and Organizational Design of Health Care Systems	
PUBPOL 5670	Health Policy	
PUBPOL 5740	Short Course in Fundamentals of Health Facility Planning for Managers	
PUBPOL 5900	Special Topics in Health Administration and Finance	
Public Policy Electives		9
Upper Level Elective (2000, 3000 or 4000 level public policy courses)		
Additional Health and Policy Electives		14
Remaining electives can be from any area (Health Care and Health Policy, Public Policy, or Pre-Med)		

Pre-Med Electives (Optional) ²	
CHEM 2080	General Chemistry II
CHEM 2081	General Chemistry II Laboratory
CHEM 3530	Principles of Organic Chemistry
CHEM 3570	Organic Chemistry for the Life Sciences
CHEM 3580	Organic Chemistry for the Life Sciences
NS 3200	Introduction to Human Biochemistry
BIOMG 3300	Principles of Biochemistry, Individualized Instruction
BIOMG 3310	Principles of Biochemistry: Proteins and Metabolism
BIOMG 3320	Principles of Biochemistry: Molecular Biology
BIOMG 3310	Principles of Biochemistry: Proteins and Metabolism
BIOMI 2900	General Microbiology Lectures
BIOMG 3330	
BIOMG 3350	Principles of Biochemistry: Proteins, Metabolism, and Molecular Biology

² Some chemistry courses overlap in content, check the current catalog to see which courses are noted as forbidden overlaps. Only one course within a forbidden overlap may be completed. Students who are not pre-med or pre-health should take additional health and social policy coursework to apply towards their health and policy electives.

Distribution Requirements (Minimum of 30 Credits)

Must be completed with a grade of D- or better in each course unless S/U is the only grading option available or otherwise stated.

Code	Title	Hours
First Year Writing Seminars ³		6
AP English Literature Score of 5 or AP English Language Score of 5 or IB HL English Score of 7 can count towards one FWS course.		
Students can only use AP/IB credit for one FWS, the other must be taken at Cornell.		

³ The two required first-year writing seminar courses must be completed within the first two semesters at Cornell.

Code	Title	Hours
Mathematics		3-4
AP Calculus BC exam score of 4 or 5 ⁴		
IB HL Mathematics AA or AI score of 6 or 7		
CASE Exam credit confirmed through the MATH department		
Any 3-credit Cornell math course except MATH 1101 and MATH 1710 (must be taken at Cornell)		

⁴ It's important to note that while AP Calculus AB credit (with a score of 4 or 5) may be applied as elective credits, it does not fulfill this specific requirement.

Code	Title	Hours
HCP Biology Lecture		6-8
Select two of the following:		
BIOG 1140	Foundations of Biology	

BIOMG 1350	Introductory Biology: Cell and Developmental Biology
BIOG 1440	Introductory Biology: Comparative Physiology or BIOG 1445 Introduction to Comparative Anatomy and Physiology, Individualized Instruction
BIOEE 1610	Introductory Biology: Ecology and the Environment or BIOEE 178 An Introduction to Evolutionary Biology and Diversity
AP Biology Score of 5 OR IB Biology score 7	

Code	Title	Hours
Biology Lab		
BIOG 1500	Investigative Biology Laboratory	2

Code	Title	Hours
Introductory Chemistry		3-4
Select one of the following:		
CHEM 1560	Introduction to General Chemistry	
CHEM 2070	General Chemistry I	
AP Chemistry Score of 5		
IB Chemistry HL Exam Score of 6 or 7		
CASE exam approved by Chemistry department		

Code	Title	Hours
Additional Distribution Coursework		10-12
Any course with the course distribution codes ALC, BIO, ETM, GLC, HST, PHS, SCD, SSC, SDS, SMR, PBS, BIOLS-AG, BIONLS-AG, SBA, KCM, MQR, LA, CA, or HA may fulfill this requirement. Language courses are also eligible to count here.		
Any AP, IB or CASE credits that equate to an equivalent Cornell course as that has one of the above distributions may meet this requirement. Test equivalencies are noted on the university's "Advanced Placement & Advanced Standing" Catalog page.		

Human Ecology Electives		9
This requirement may overlap with any other requirement. These can be taken S/U only if course is NOT used to fulfill another requirement. A maximum of 3 credits of 4000-4020 (not including 4030) may count towards the 9 Human Ecology credits requirement.		
Any course with the subject code DEA, FSAD, HD, HE or NS, except FWS courses, HE 1006, HE 1105, HE 1110, HE 1115, HE 1200, and any 4030 Teaching Apprenticeship course.		
AP Psychology with a score of 4 or 5 may meet this requirement.		
Electives		variable

Any courses that are not taken in the areas mentioned above will count as Electives towards the 120 credits needed to graduate. PE and 1000 level academic support courses do not meet this requirement.

University Graduation Requirements
Requirements for All Students

In order to receive a Cornell degree, a student must satisfy academic and non-academic requirements.

Academic Requirements

A student's college determines degree requirements such as residency, number of credits, distribution of credits, and grade averages. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the specific major, degree,

distribution, college, and graduation requirements for completing their chosen program of study. See the individual requirements listed by each college or school or contact the college registrar's office (<https://registrar.cornell.edu/service-resources/college-registrar-directory/>) for more information.

Non-academic Requirements

Conduct Matters. Students must satisfy any outstanding sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed or agreed to under the Student Code of Conduct (Code) or Policy 6.4. Where a formal complaint under the Code or Policy 6.4 is pending, the University will withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the adjudication process set forth in those procedures is complete, including the satisfaction of any sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed.

Financial Obligations. Outstanding financial obligations will not impact the awarding of a degree otherwise earned or a student's ability to access their official transcript. However, the University may withhold issuing a diploma until any outstanding financial obligations owing to the University are satisfied.

Additional Requirements for Undergraduate Students

The University has two requirements for graduation that must be fulfilled by all undergraduate students: the swim requirement, and completion of two physical education courses. For additional information about fulfilling University Graduation Requirements, see the Physical Education website (<https://scl.cornell.edu/pe/>).

Physical Education

All incoming undergraduate students are required to take two credits (two courses) of Physical Education prior to graduation. It is recommended they complete the two courses during their first year at Cornell. Credit in Physical Education may be earned by participating in courses offered by the Department of Athletics and Physical Education (https://courses.cornell.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=60&poid=30232) and Cornell Outdoor Education, by being a registered participant on a varsity athletic team, or performing in the marching band.

Students with medical concerns should contact the Office of Student Disability Services (<http://sds.cornell.edu/>).

Swim Requirement

The Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education has established a basic swimming and water safety competency requirement for all undergraduate students. Normally, the requirement is taken during the Fall Orientation process at Helen Newman Hall or Teagle Hall pools. The requirement consists of the following: jump or step feet-first into the deep end of the pool, float or tread for one minute, turn around in a full circle, swim 25 yards using any stroke(s) of choice without touching the bottom or holding on to the sides (there is no time limit) and exit from the water. Students who do not complete the swim requirement during their first year, during a PE swim class or during orientation subsequent years, will have to pay a \$100 fee. Any student who cannot meet this requirement must register for PE 1100 Beginning Swimming as their physical education course before electives can be chosen.

If a student does not pass the swim requirement in their first Beginning Swimming PE class, then the student must take a second Beginning Swimming PE class (PE 1100 or PE 1101). Successful completion of two Beginning Swimming classes (based on attendance requirements)

with the instructor's recommendation will fulfill the University's swim requirement.

Students unable to meet the swim requirement because of medical reasons should contact the Office of Student Disability Services (<http://sds.cornell.edu/>). When a waiver is granted by the Faculty Committee on Physical Education, an alternate requirement is imposed. The alternate requirement substitute is set by the Director of Physical Education.