

PUBLIC POLICY MINOR

College of Arts and Sciences

Program Website (<http://government.cornell.edu>)

Program Description

Citizens interested in addressing societal problems and even experts with deep, technical knowledge of particular issues often find that politics and governance interfere with and complicate proposals for change. The process through which policy problems are defined, whether issues find a place on the political agenda, and the particular alternatives that gain prominence may owe less to their efforts and preferences than to political developments and the institutional context. Once policies are enacted, the political process starts anew as implementation unfolds. Policies may develop very differently "on the ground" than intended, as policy design and delivery can alter their meaning or actual outcomes and produce unintended consequences. Political factors also influence the sustainability of policies and how, once in place, they themselves influence the political process.

The public policy minor enables students to comprehend such paradoxes by developing their understanding of the political dimensions of public policy and how they shape its conception, formulation, implementation, chances of success, intended and unintended consequences, and evaluation. Students will have the opportunity to take courses that deal with public policy in the United States, Africa, China, Europe, India, Latin America, and Southeast Asia, and with attention to domestic policy (including health, education, energy, criminal justice, natural resources, immigration, social welfare policy, and urban policy) and foreign policy (including foreign aid and national security). The minor is housed in the Government Department but policy courses offered by other departments, if their content pertains to the purposes of the minor, will also be approved for elective credit.

Minor Requirements

The requirements are:

- A minimum of 15 credits and five qualifying courses.
- Among the five qualifying courses, students must successfully complete (at least) one of the following gateway courses (which will be offered at least twice every three years)
 - GOVT 3032 Politics of Public Policy in the U.S.
 - GOVT 3583 Comparative Public Policy: Political Pathways to Equality
- Students must also take one methods course. The following courses fulfill this requirement:
 - GOVT 3282 Data Science Applications in Political and Social Research
 - GOVT 3990
 - GOVT 3999 How Do You Know That?
- An additional three electives, from a list of eligible courses.
 - *Optional:* As a pathway through the minor, students may choose their electives exclusively from one of the following groupings: US domestic policy, foreign policy, comparative policy.
- At least four of the five courses must be taken within the Government Department. Students may count, subject to advisor approval, a maximum of one public policy course offered by another department

or school at Cornell. The gateway course must be taken in the Government Department.

- Students must earn a minimum grade of C+ on all classes to be used toward the minor.
- Government majors who wish to qualify for the minor may count a maximum of one course toward both the major and the minor.