PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION, DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PH.D.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Program mission
The mission of the Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration program is to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to conduct original and scholarly research in academic institutions, governmental agencies and public policy research institutions. The purpose of the program is to prepare students for scholarly and leadership roles in government, universities, research organizations and other settings where knowledge and research skills in public policy and administration are needed. The doctoral program is committed to accomplishing this mission by creating an intellectually vibrant atmosphere for scholarship involving an active faculty from a broad spectrum of academic disciplines and substantial interaction with government agencies and community groups.

Program goals
1. Enable students to develop expertise in a particular area of public policy
2. Enable students to apply their knowledge and skills in order to conduct original and scholarly research

Student learning outcomes
1. Students will complete an original research project that will demonstrate the capacity to utilize appropriate methods in addressing major public policy and administration issues.
2. Students will develop mastery in a concentration area of the appropriate content and methods that will qualify them to perform original research.
3. Students will be able to expertly apply public policy theories, integrating relevant ideas, concepts and approaches from the humanities, social sciences, law and public administration to policy formulation, implementation and analysis. Students will be able to demonstrate mastery of a particular area of public policy.
4. Students will be able to formulate appropriate research questions related to public policy and apply methodological knowledge to develop an appropriate research design for a research proposal.
5. Students will be able to conduct original and scholarly research on public policy issues.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs
The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin website (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regls/grad/candidacy/)

Degree candidacy requirements
A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student’s graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regls/grad/candidacy/)

Graduation requirements
As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regls/grad/graduation-info/)

Apply online today. (https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/)

Admission requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree:</th>
<th>Semester(s) of entry:</th>
<th>Deadline dates:</th>
<th>Test requirements:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Dec 15 for assistantships (Jan 30 final date for admission consideration)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Special requirements
- Master's degree, J.D. or M.D. from an accredited university. Graduate assistantships are only awarded for fall admission. For students wishing to be considered for a limited number of fellowships,
Admission is open to qualified persons without regard to age, physical disability, national origin, race, religion or gender. Admission is competitive. The admission process is intended to assure a reasonable fit between the student’s professional and research interests and faculty expertise. Consequently, otherwise qualified applicants may be denied admission.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/), applicants to the program must hold a master’s degree or a recognized post-baccalaureate degree in one of the professions such as law or medicine from an accredited institution of higher education. A standardized test score, fewer than five years old, is required. Accepted examinations include the Graduate Record Examination, the Graduate Management Admissions Test, the Miller Analogies Test and the Law School Admissions Test and the Test of English as a Foreign Language for international students. Professional experience is not required, but is considered desirable.

In order to apply for admission to the Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration program, prospective students must submit:

1. A VCU application for graduate study
2. Transcripts from all previous colleges or universities
3. Three letters of reference
4. A personal statement describing reasons for applying to the program
5. A current professional resume

Scores from a standardized examination (GRE, GMAT, MAT or LSAT) are optional.

Admission standards

Applicants are evaluated based on the entire admission package; however, the following provides some guidelines for a competitive application.

1. Cumulative minimum GPA of 3.6 (on a four-point scale) or equivalent for graduate-level work
2. Standardized examination scores less than five years old (GRE preferred)
3. Three references – a minimum of one academic recommendation attesting to the applicant’s ability to succeed in doctoral-level work
4. Personal statement, resume, curriculum vita that:
   a. Clearly articulates the applicant’s academic research interests whereby a decision can be made as to the applicant’s “fit” with the program
   b. Shows a clear indication of a faculty match and expertise for the applicant’s research interests
   c. Displays enthusiasm for the field of public policy and administration
   d. Is well-written and error-free
5. All students admitted to the program must have completed prior to admission, or are required to complete during the first year, the following graduate-level courses (or their equivalents):
   a. Research methods (equivalent of PADM 624)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 721</td>
<td>Survey of Applied Research Methods in Public Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 722</td>
<td>Survey of Data Analysis Techniques in Public Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 724</td>
<td>Seminar in Advanced Analytical Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 780</td>
<td>Synthesizing Seminar in Public Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPAD 740</td>
<td>Seminar in Public Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 741</td>
<td>Advanced Theory in Public Administration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Select six credits from the following concentration electives: 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GVPA 672</td>
<td>Social Equity and Public Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 630</td>
<td>Strategic Planning and Management in the Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 650</td>
<td>Principles of Nonprofit Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 654</td>
<td>Program Design and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 680</td>
<td>Leadership in the Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 681</td>
<td>Governmental Administrative Decision-making Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 715</td>
<td>U.S. Political Processes and Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 716</td>
<td>Public Policy Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 717</td>
<td>Law and Public Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 723</td>
<td>Survey Research Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 726</td>
<td>Advanced Research Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 791</td>
<td>Topical Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPAD 792</td>
<td>Independent Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dissertation Research

Students will take at least two elective courses outside the concentration. Students may take courses at the 500-level or higher from other Ph.D. concentration areas (as listed under each concentration) and other programs within the Wilder School, such as homeland security, criminal justice, public administration, and urban and regional planning. Alternately, students may choose two elective courses from other VCU graduate programs with the approval of the Ph.D. director.

The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 45.

Qualifying Examinations

After completing all of the core courses in the Ph.D. program, each student takes a comprehensive qualifying examination on the core. The examination is designed to evaluate the mastery students have achieved over the body of knowledge represented by the core. It is intended to measure the ability of students to organize, integrate and creatively apply the knowledge in the field to important problems. Although organized around the courses in the core, the examination is not restricted to material covered in those courses. It is expected that doctoral students will read well beyond the confines of individual courses.

In order to continue in the program, students must attempt the qualifying examination no later than the next regular semester following the completion of the core course requirements. They must pass the exam by the end of the second regular semester after completing the core course requirements. A student may attempt the examination twice. Examinations are offered twice per year.

A student also must take a written or oral comprehensive examination in the concentration. The concentration faculty will determine the form of the examination. A student may attempt the examination twice. Each student must pass this second examination before defending a dissertation proposal.

Dissertation

After completing all course work for the concentration and passing both qualifying examinations, students must prepare a dissertation involving original research that contributes to the body of knowledge in the field. A committee approved by the associate dean of the Wilder School supervises the dissertation work. The chair of the committee must be appointed as graduate faculty and be a core or affiliate faculty member of the Ph.D. program.

The first formal step in the dissertation process is the development and defense of a dissertation prospectus that frames the problem to be studied, provides background on the problem, presents a review of relevant literature and justifies the methodology to be used. The defense of the prospectus as well as the completed dissertation must be presented orally and be approved by the dissertation committee. The dissertation defense is conducted in a forum open to other students and faculty.

Contact
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(804) 827-0364

Program website: wilder.vcu.edu/academic/pubpolicy.html (http://wilder.vcu.edu/academic/pubpolicy.html)