

Urban Affairs PhD Academic Program Requirements

This curriculum requires 48 hours for students entering with a master's degree. Those entering the Ph.D. in Urban Affairs without a master's degree would be expected to earn a master's in one of the host disciplines before beginning the Ph.D. program. To meet University requirements, all students must have at least 72 hours of post-baccalaureate coursework to confer the doctoral degree.

Table 1 below summarizes the courses required.

Program Core (15 Hours)		
Course Number and Prefixes	Course Title	Credit Hours
UAPP 8009	Exploration of Policy Theory and Frameworks	3
UAPP 8010	Exploration of Urban Research and Theory	3
UAPP 8011	Methodological Approaches in Urban Affairs Research	3
UAPP 8012	Collaborative Urban Problem-Solving Studio I	3
UAPP 8013	Collaborative Urban Problem-Solving Studio II	3
Methods Courses (9 Hours)		
UAPP 8014	Survey of Advanced Quantitative Methods	3
Qualitative Methods	The qualitative methods requirement is satisfied by ANTH 7/8075, SWRK 7/8030 or SOCI 7/8325	3
GIS Methods	The geographic information systems requirement is satisfied by one course selected from the following list: ESCI 6430, PLAN/ESCI 6515, ESCI 6525, ESCI 6535, ESCI 7998, ESCI 8504, ESCI 8613, or PLAN 7207 (3)	3
Specialization Area Courses (15 Hours)		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p>Urban Cultures and Societies Track: ANTH 8200 Engaged Anthropology Theory SOCI 8210 Sociology Theory Seminar Three courses from ANTH and SOCI</p> <p>Urban Governance and Planning Track: PADM 8600 Administrative Theory and Ethics PLAN 7002 Planning Theory and Perspectives Three courses from PADM and PLAN</p> </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p>Urban Policy and Services Track: CJUS 8541 Criminology Theory SWRK 8040 Advanced SW Theory Three courses from CJUS and SWRK</p> <p>Urban Political Development and Urban Economics Track: POLS 8100 Scope and Methods in Political Science or POLS 7222/8222 Seminar in Urban Politics PADM 7224 Seminar in Urban Problems Three courses from PADM, POLS, or PLAN</p> </div> </div>		

<p>Specialization Regulations: Students will choose from existing SUAPP courses with the direction of a faculty advisor. Specialization courses can include Directed Readings courses. 6 (or more) of these credits must come from outside the discipline of the student's master's degree to ensure interdisciplinarity. Substitutions for courses listed below must be pre-approved by the program director.</p> <p>For all specialization tracks, six of the total fifteen hours must be interdisciplinary (i.e., outside the students' master's degree area), and only six hours of the total program curriculum can be taken at the 6000-level.</p>		
Dissertation Credits (11 hours)		
UAPP 9001	Dissertation Workshop	1
UAPP 9000	Dissertation	Variable
Total Credit Hours for Degree		48

Below are descriptions of the core courses. The Graduate Academic Catalog contains all other courses.

UAPP 8009 Exploration of Policy Theory and Frameworks (3 credits) This course is broadly concerned with public policy theory and research on policy processes in the United States, including democratic theory, multiple streams, and punctuated equilibrium. This course will focus on major policy process theories, explore how policy changes, and examine important empirical contributions to the policy field. The course will examine micro-foundations of policy dynamics through models of individual to organizational decision-making and explore policy agendas, formation of public policies, and the factors influencing change to agendas and policies over time. It will emphasize process approaches to examine policy change rather than substantive issues. However, a focus on policies that impact the urban core, such as housing, education, criminal justice, healthcare, and other social policies, will also be reviewed. This course focuses primarily on American politics but will include select works on comparative policy process perspectives. This is a required core course in the Urban Affairs Ph.D. curriculum.

UAPP 8010 Exploration of Urban Research Theory (3 credits) This is a survey course that provides critical examination of the theories and theoretical frameworks of the multiple social science disciplines central to the Urban Affairs PhD curriculum. Explores theories relevant to urbanism and urban environments, their structures, the processes of urbanization, urban power and economics, industrial and post-industrial cities, and other urban forces. Covers urban theories ranging from classical to contemporary theoretical perspectives.

UAPP 8011 Methodological Approaches in Urban Affairs Research (3 credits) This course focuses on research design and epistemology used in qualitative and quantitative research. It introduces different types of studies, such as theoretical, explorative,

empirical, and experimental research. Emphasis will be placed on ‘ways of knowing’ in social science, which includes a detailed discussion of ontology and epistemology in the context of urban affairs research. This course also discusses how theories can be developed and how theories lead to testable hypotheses. After theories and hypotheses are derived, the focus shifts to data collection (e.g. surveys, case studies, experiments, interviews, and the selection and use of secondary data). Sampling is crucial to avoid sample selection biases will be discussed. Finally, students will discuss the construction of variables, including latent variables (e.g., social constructs), selecting proxy variables, and using control variables in social science research.

UAPP 8012: Collaborative Urban Problem Solving I (3 credits) Collaborative Urban Problem Solving I is a required course for the Ph.D. in Urban Affairs. It is the first course in a two-course sequence generally completed in the student’s second year of study. This course serves as the synthesis mechanism for the Ph.D. program, which is 1) interdisciplinary, 2) geared at preparing researchers to address urban or metropolitan issues, and 3) designed to give students the opportunity to learn through engaging in local research that benefits the greater Memphis community.

UAPP 8013: Collaborative Urban Problem Solving II (3 credits) Second course in a two-course sequence that is generally completed in the student’s second year of study. This course serves as the synthesis mechanism for the Urban Affairs and Public Policy Ph.D. program, which is 1) interdisciplinary, 2) geared at preparing researchers to address urban or metropolitan issues, and 3) designed to give students the opportunity to learn through engaging in local research that benefits the greater Memphis community. Students will work collaboratively (internally and externally) to address a complex community challenge.

UAPP 8014 Seminar in Advanced Quantitative Methods (3 credits) This course shows how to do high-quality data analysis in social science. Students will gain a deep intuition behind the theories of inference underlying most statistical methods. This course will cover statistical methods beyond ordinary least squares, including but not limited to binary logistic regression, multinomial logistic regression, hierarchical linear modeling, time series analysis, structural equation modeling, and Cox-Proportional Hazards modeling in urban affairs research. Students will utilize statistical software (STATA, R, or SPSS) to analyze different datasets throughout the course. This is a required core course in the Urban Affairs Ph.D. curriculum.

UAPP 9000 Dissertation (Variable) The final and central requirement for awarding an Urban Affairs Ph.D. is completing a substantial and original independent research project. The dissertation is individual research that reflects the student's ability to delineate, investigate, and analyze an appropriate topic of inquiry in a professional manner. The successful completion of this requirement is demonstrated through the production of a dissertation document describing the research project and its results and completing a public defense of the project from challenges offered by the members of a student’s

Dissertation Committee. The quality of the dissertation and defense of its thesis will be evaluated by each student's Dissertation Committee.

UAPP 9001 Dissertation Proposal Development (1 credit workshop) This course is a dissertation research and design workshop for students who have completed their comprehensive exams. This course will take students through the process of developing a dissertation proposal. It will focus on writing a cohesive literature review, defining, and refining theory for testing, developing testable hypotheses, understanding the internal and external validity issues of a student's selected research design, and identifying data or datasets for doctoral students. This is a required course in the UAPP curriculum.