

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC POLICY, B.S.

Begin Campus: Altoona, Erie, Berks, Beaver, Harrisburg, Brandywine, DuBois, Hazleton, Mont Alto, Greater Allegheny, New Kensington, Schuylkill, Shenango, University Park, Wilkes-Barre, Scranton, York, Lehigh Valley, Fayette, Abington

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The Education and Public Policy major (EPP) offers an interdisciplinary program for students who want to make a difference in society by building democratic participation and improving civic capacity in and through educational institutions and communities. Students interested in politics and government, social reform and organizing, higher education, educational technology, museums and other non-traditional learning spaces, and equity can find meaningful pathways in EPP.

The EPP major prepares students to work in political and economic global systems for the betterment of a diverse and democratic society. EPP students become discerning research consumers and policy analysts working toward socially just reforms in the education space and beyond. The EPP major blends core courses in educational policy with courses in sociology, political science, economics, business, race and class, and research methods. Elective courses within the major include policy problems, public systems, leadership, ethics, diversity, equality, and equity. In addition to academic studies, the EPP major includes a semester field experience culminating in a real-world, meaningful research project. Opportunities for internships include organizations in State College, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. Graduates of the EPP program will enter professional careers in educational organizations, government, community development, think tanks, educational technology and start-ups, business, law, public service, non-profits, consulting, and teaching.

What is Education and Public Policy?

Education and Public Policy is a multidisciplinary program that critically evaluates how society fosters equity and excellence through education. Courses explore the deep cultural meanings of concepts such as democracy and citizenship, and our faculty encourage active problem-solving skills by using real world examples of government-initiated policies and programs. Through readings, case studies and conversations with your peers, you will uncover the practical effects that policies have on students, teachers, school leaders, families, and the community as a whole. You will also have the opportunity to identify education policies and practices that matter to you and consider various strategies that could be effective in solving emerging problems. An 18 credit EPS minor (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/colleges/education/education-public-policy-minor/>) is also available.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You are interested in education and want to make a difference in the world.
- You want to study the big questions related to education and society, such as "how can we improve schools?" "what causes inequality?" and "how do policies impact students and teachers?"
- You want the benefits of a small program situated within a large university.

- You want to pursue a career with policy-related non-profits in public service, government, law, or research.

Entrance to Major

Baccalaureate degree candidates must have a minimum 2.0 GPA by the end of their fourth semester to be admitted to the Education and Public Policy (EPP) major; thereafter, students must earn a C or better in all prescribed and required courses necessary for the major.

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science degree in Education and Public Policy, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Requirements for the Major	87-88

12-13 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 6 credits of GS courses; 3-4 credits of GQ courses; 3 credits of GH courses.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
CAS 222N/ CIVCM 211N	Foundations: Civic and Community Engagement	3
ECON 102	Introductory Microeconomic Analysis and Policy	3
EDTHP 115	Education in American Society	3
EDTHP 200	Educational Reform and Public Policy	3
EDTHP 394	Professional Development in Education and Public Policy	3
EDTHP 395		3
EDTHP 420	Education and Public Policy	3
HIST 21	American Civilization Since 1877	3
PLSC 1	American Politics: Principles, Processes and Powers	3
SOC 5	Social Problems	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
PLSC 2		3
or PLSC 10	Scientific Study of Politics	
SOC 1	Introductory Sociology	3
or RSOC 11	Intro Rural Sociology	
SOC 23	Population and Policy Issues	3
or SOC 207	Research Methods in Sociology	
Select 3-4 credits of the following:		3-4
EDPSY 101	Analysis and Interpretation of Statistical Data in Education	
STAT 100	Statistical Concepts and Reasoning	

STAT 200 Elementary Statistics

Supporting Courses and Related Areas*Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better*

Select 12 credits of EDTHP 400-level courses	12
Select 6 credits of Major-related courses in consultation with EDTHP adviser.	6
Select 15 credits of Policy Problems and Public Systems from approved department list	15
Select 6 credits of Leadership and Citizenship from approved department list	6
Select 6 credits of Diversity and Equity from approved department list	6

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements**First Year Engagement**

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Integrated B.S. in Education and Public Policy and M.A. in Educational Theory and Policy

Requirements for the Integrated B.S. in Education and Public Policy and M.A. in Educational Theory and Policy can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/educational-theory-policy/#integratedundergradgradprogramstext>).

Program Learning Objectives

- **Analysis of Evidence:** Students will evaluate evidence to guide ethical policymaking.
- **Communicating Policy Briefs:** Students will write high-quality policy briefs and present high-quality oral policy briefings that summarize policy issues.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students will identify, interpret and critique research related to educational reform and social justice.
- **Developing professional skills and experience:** Students will gain professional skills, including networking, resume building, and professional conduct, through EDTHP 394 and 395. Students will synthesize what they've learned and apply that knowledge to careers in educational organizations, government, community development, public service, non-profits, consulting, philanthropy, and interest groups for the betterment of a diverse and democratic society.

- **Exploring the policy world:** Students will become well-versed in a concentration area of their choosing.
- **Knowledge Acquisition:** Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of core concepts in the policy-making process and in policy analysis, using issues in American education as the focal point.
- **Knowledge Application:** Students will arrange recent reforms and reform movements into the proper social, cultural, political, economic, and historical context.
- **Knowledge Outreach:** Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of the range of organizations dedicated to the enhancement of, and research about, American public schools.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

University Park

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Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2024-25 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

Education and Public Policy, B.S. at University Park Campus and Commonwealth Campuses

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year				
Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits	
EDPSY 101, STAT 100, or STAT 200 (or GQ Selection) ^{*†}	3	3-4 Arts Selection	3	
ENGL 15 or 30H ^{*†}	3	ECON 102 ^{*††}	3	
Natural Science Selection ¹	3	HIST 21 ^{*††}	3	
PLSC 1 ^{*†}	3	Natural Science Selection ¹	3	
EDUC 100	1	SOC 1 or RSOC 11 ^{*††}	3	
		13-14	15	
Second Year				
Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits	
GQ Selection ^{**†}	3	3-4 EDTHP 200 ^{**†}	3	
CAS 222N ^{**†}	3	Natural Science Selection ¹	3	
EDTHP 115 ^{**†}	3	Humanities Selection	3	
SOC 5 ^{**†}	3	CAS 100	3	
Arts Selection	3	PLSC 2 or PLSC 10 ^{**†}	3	
Health and Physical Activity	1.5	Health and Physical Activity	1.5	
		16.5-17.5	13.5	
Third Year				
Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits Summer Credits	
EDTHP 420 [*]	3	SOC 23 or 207 [*]	3 EDTHP 395 [*]	3
Leadership, Decision Making and Ethics Selection ^{*2}	3	EDTHP 394 [*]	3	
EDTHP 400 Level Selection	3	Policy Problems and Public Systems Selection ^{*2}	3	
Major Related Course Selection [*]	3	EDTHP 400 Level Selection [*]	3	
Policy Problems and Public Systems Selection ^{*2}	3	Major Related Course Selection [*]	3	
		15	15	3
Fourth Year				
Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits	
EDTHP 400 Level Selection [*]	3	Policy Problems and Public Systems Selection ^{*2}	3	

Policy Problems and Public Systems Selection ^{*2}	3 EDTHP 400 Level Selection [*]	3
Policy Problems and Public Systems Selection ^{*2}	3 Diversity and Equity Selection ^{*2}	3
Diversity and Equity Selection ^{*2}	3 Leadership, Decision Making and Ethics Selection ^{*2}	3
ENGL 202A or 202B	3 Elective	3
	15	15

Total Credits 121-123

- * Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
 ‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
 # Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
 † Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

¹ Natural Science Selection list of acceptable courses available here (<https://ed.psu.edu/academics/departments/department-curriculum-and-instruction/undergraduate-teacher-education-pk-12/elementary-early-childhood-education-bs-pk-4/suggested-courses/>).

² Supporting Courses and Related Areas Selections list of acceptable courses available here (<https://ed.psu.edu/academics/departments/department-education-policy-studies/educational-theory-and-policy-program/education-and-public-policy/education-and-public-policy-path-through-major/>).

Additional Notes

- GWS, GHW, GQ, GN, GA, GH, and GS are codes used to identify General Education requirements.

- Must complete at least 3 cr. of United States (US) and 3 cr. of International Cultures (IL).
- Summer study could reduce some of the credit loads above.
- Effective Fall 2012, all incoming Schreyer Honors College freshmen at University Park will take ENGL/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry GWS designation and replace both ENGL 030 and CAS 100. Each course is 3 credits. At the discretion of the college, ENGL/CAS 138T satisfies the first-year seminar requirement.
- Academic Advising Notes: **The course series listed above is only one of many possible ways to move through this curriculum. Please be sure to also use the curriculum checksheets and degree audits, as well as consult with an adviser about appropriate scheduling sequences, clearances for field experiences and Testing requirements. Advisers also can assist students in identifying coursework offered at Penn State in the SUMMER.**

Career Paths

Penn State students with a B.S. in Education and Public Policy have been successful in establishing careers in a wide variety of fields. We encourage majors to develop a concentration in another field to match your career goals. Students have pursued EPP concentrations in museum studies, women's and gender studies, sports education, music and art education, sustainability, and human development and family studies. We welcome new areas of concentration and will help you tailor the program to match your career goals.

Careers

The Education and Public Policy degree prepares students to enter careers in educational organizations, government, public service, non-profits, philanthropy, advocacy, and research. Graduates have worked both domestically and internationally and pursued education- and policy-related paths. Alternative careers include educational journalism and educational entrepreneurship.

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

Many EPP students have gone on to pursue graduate degrees in Law, as well as Education Policy, Educational Leadership, Student Affairs, and Higher Education administration. All of these can be pursued at Penn State with the same faculty you have been taking classes with as an undergraduate. Other related fields include economics, political science, sociology, and social work. The Education and Public Policy program also offers an Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate Program in Education and Public Policy (B.S.) and Educational Theory and Policy (M.A.) through the Schreyer Honors College.

Accreditation

The College of Education educator preparation programs are fully accredited at the Initial and Advanced levels by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The next CAEP program review will be Fall 2026. CAEP advances excellence in educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ACCREDITATION OF THE EDUCATION AND PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAM (<https://ed.psu.edu/about/accreditations/>)

Contact

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