Department of Political Studies and Public Administration

MA in Public Policy and International Affairs

PPIA Program Faculty Committee

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Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

Students who earn a Master's degree in Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) will be able to participate in and analyze the policy process in the Arab region within the global context. The PPIA program is a professionally-oriented, terminal degree that seeks to expose students to perspectives and approaches from practitioners in public policy and international affairs.

Upon successful completion of this interdisciplinary course of study, students will be able to:

- explain fundamental theories and processes of public policy and international affairs,
- apply techniques and methodologies in public and international policy research,
- critically analyze key policy and international affairs issues,
- demonstrate oral and written communication skills in public and international policy arenas,
- formulate domestic and international public policy alternatives and arguments, and critically appraise the validity and limitations of domestic and international public policy theories and arguments.

Admission Requirements

Admission requirements to the program follow FAS admissions policies. Admission to the MA in PPIA is restricted to the fall semester. Applicants are expected to have a BA degree in a social science field (broadly define) relevant to public policy and/or international affairs, or else professional experience in public policy and/or international affairs as it relates to the Arab region In all cases. A minimum of one-year work/policy experience is strongly recommended and more is encouraged.

Applicants must have a strong academic record, two letters of recommendation (at least one must assess academic rather than professional abilities), and a statement of purpose that clearly outlines applicant's background and goals. In addition, applicants are recommended to submit a relevant writing sample of no longer than 5,000 words.

Degree Requirements

The program permits full-time or part-time enrollments. To obtain a Master of Arts degree in Public Policy and International Affairs, the student must complete a minimum of 24 credits of graduate coursework and a thesis (6 cr.) or a final project (3 cr.) plus an internship (3 cr.) Course work must include the three core courses (PPIA 301, PPIA 302, PPIA 308) and two additional PPIA courses plus any three courses in PPIA, PSPA, or other program relevant to the student's program of study.

Credit Summary

Required core courses (3)		9 cr.
Additional PPIA courses (2)		6 cr.
Open elective courses (3)		9 cr.
Thesis (6 cr.) or Project (3 cr.) plus Internship (3 cr.)		6 cr.
Credits required for graduation		**30 cr.**

Required core courses (9 cr.)		9 cr.
PPIA 301	Public Policy and Practice	3 cr.
PPIA 302	International Affairs and Policy	3 cr.
PPIA 308	Research Methods	3 cr.

Thesis and Project Tracks

Thesis Track (6 cr.): To follow the thesis track, students must first gain approval of a thesis proposal by a thesis committee that includes members of the PPIA program faculty and then defend the completed Master's thesis.

Project Track: Students are expected to complete a project (3 cr.) plus a 3 credits Internship.

Research Methods
Upon approval of the PPIA director, a student may substitute a relevant methods course for PPIA 308 Research Methods.

Internship:
All students are recommended to take an internship. Internships offer an exploration of public policy and international affairs through work experience in governmental, non-governmental, or private sector organizations. Students are responsible for securing their internships and having the PPIA program confirm that they meet AUB guidelines. Internships for credit require about 45 contact hours with about 90 hours of work beyond this (total 135 hours or about 10 hr/wk for 3 months). To register for internship the student must have his/her supervisor confirm to the PPIA program in writing at the beginning of the internships that the internships meets these guidelines. At the end of the internship, the supervisor must confirm in writing that these guidelines have been met. Upon completion, the student will write up a short report about the internship that will form a PPIA internship database.

Course Descriptions

PPIA 301   Public Policy and Practice 3 cr.
The course covers topics related to the formation, development and evolution of frameworks of public policy. It compares theories and models of policy-making and decision-making to illustrate the special requirements of the country's context and environment. It examines the roles of various participants in the policy process: legislators, political parties, interest groups, civil society groups, media, administrative structures, citizens and the judiciary. Using a comparative perspective, the course discusses how public policy is formulated, how it changes, and why. The course also examines the role of formal and informal institutions, actors, structures and networks including challenges. The course provides students with an increased understanding of theories of public policy, and the ability to critically analyze and compare public policy. *(Annually)*

PPIA 302   International Affairs and Policy 3 cr.
The seminar provides a survey of international affairs and policy. In addition to covering central theoretical perspectives, the course will introduce students to contemporary political, economic, social, and/or environmental issues as well as relevant actors and institutions with a special focus on those relevant to Lebanon and the Arab world. Students will develop critical thinking and analytical writing skills through close reading of key texts and writing exercises. Student engagement will include activities such as class presentations and participation in policy simulations. *(Annually)*

PPIA304   Development 3 cr.
This course offers students historical, political, and policy analysis of development both as a reality and as a concept and discipline in the social sciences. It explains the emergence and the continuing relevance of development, offering particular critical attention to the close interdependence between development paradigms, international institutions (UN System, World Bank), and global political economy. The course deepens and broadens students' historical understanding of the antecedents behind contemporaneous global and local development issues and challenges with a critical focus on the interdependence between science, advocacy, and policy. *(Annually)*

PPIA 306   Political Economy 3 cr.
This course starts from the premise that history matters and that a long-term view of production, power and social change is essential for understanding enduring patters of wealth and poverty in the contemporary world. It goes on to provide students with an overview of scholarly debates on the causes and consequences of the rise of Europe, asking whether the historical literature on state formation and capitalist development helps us understand socio-political developmental success and failure in the Global South after WWII. By emphasizing the historical specificity of the structure of social power inherited from the agrarian past, the course tries to highlight the pitfalls of deploying models based on European example for understanding development and social change in other parts of the globe *(Occasionally)*

PPIA 307   Politics of Policy Making 3 cr.
The course provides an analysis of the politics of the policy making process, in its different stages, from elaboration to implementation, through the examination of a range of policy case studies (urban/spatial, development, environment, energy, social, health…), at different scales (neighborhood, city, region, state, groups of states) and in different contexts (local, regional and international). It equips students to understand how policy ideas are framed into technical and normative discourses that depoliticize policy issues and neutralize power and inequalities. It trains them to identify, trace and deconstruct the political elements that determine how policy paradigms emerge, how policy windows come to be created, how policy actors mobilize, network and advocate their positions, and how policy agendas and tools are negotiated and assembled. It also approaches policy making as a hybrid space between expertise and politics, science and democracy, nature and humanity. *(Occasionally)*

PPIA 308   Research Methods 3 cr.
This course provides students with an understanding of research language, concepts and ethics for the purpose of generating evidence-based research for policy-making. It introduces the elements of the research process within quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches, with an emphasis on problem formulation, research design, data collection, analysis and reporting. The students will engage in identifying their main research question, selecting appropriate research methods, and designing the relevant data collection and field work to address their research question. They will also learn how to present their research ideas into research proposals for academic, professional and other audiences. Students will also be exposed throughout the course to the variety of public policy tools used to communicate with different publics (memos, briefs, reports, etc.). *(Annually)*

PPIA 309   Evidence, Policy and Communication 3 cr.
This course introduces students to the types of questions that need to be answered to address and make improvements to public policy concerns and priorities including what's the problem; what policy and programmatic options are best suited to address the problem; and how can change be brought about. This course will train students to use the knowledge translation tools and resources available to public policymakers and stakeholders in order to support their use of research evidence; and will enhance students' skills in assessing, selecting, adapting and applying research evidence. Students will experiment with key tools and resources to communicate with different types of policy makers including priority setting, evidence briefs, policy briefs, policy memos, personalized briefing and policy dialogues. This course will provide skills on how to prepare briefs and effective tips on how to communicate evidence (both published and tacit) to policy makers and to the public. *(Annually)*

PPIA 310   Topics in Public Policy 3 cr. *(Annually)*   *May be repeated for credit*

PPIA 311   Topics in International Affairs 3 cr. *(Annually)*   *May be repeated for credit*

PPIA 314   History of the Global South 3 cr.
The purpose of this course is to develop greater understanding of the evolution and history of the Global South. The course highlights the nature of changes within global frameworks and structures. While the course explores the common historical processes that unify the various states, societies and peoples within the global south (e.g. imperialism/colonialism; core/periphery; formation of the G77 block within the United Nations, etc.), it also unpacks the contradictions, class, race and gender discrepancies, power imbalances, and other particularities within the global south. *(Occasionally)*

PPIA 321   Tutorial in Public Policy
This course is designed to allow students to pursue a course of directed study with a faculty member. It may consist of independent research, directed reading, or policy-related work. *Requires instructor approval. (May be taken for 1, 2 or 3 credits) (Occasionally)*

PPIA 322   Tutorial in International Affairs
This course is designed to allow students to pursue a course of directed study with a faculty member. It may consist of independent research, directed reading, or policy-related work. *Requires instructor approval. (May be taken for 1, 2 or 3 credits) (Occasionally)*

PPIA 395   Comprehensive Exam 0 cr.
Requires instructor approval

PPIA 397   Internship 3 cr.
An exploration of Public Policy and International Affairs through work experience in governmental, non-governmental, or private sector organizations. Students perform work for academic credit.
Requires instructor approval.

PPIA 398   Project 3 cr.
This option for a final project allows MPPIA participants to investigate an issue of relevance to public policy or international affairs in line with their personal research interests. Each student is assigned a committee consisting of an advisor (first reader) and a second reader who jointly supervise and guide the student throughout. It is the responsibility of the student to select a topic and submit a project proposal to be approved by her/his readers and then by the FAS Graduate Studies Committee. While the projects can be presented in diverse forms, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity, scientific rigor and professional relevance while presenting their findings. All accepted projects should be deposited at the library. A student who is unable to finish the project within the allotted time period can petition to be allowed an additional semester subject to consent of his committee.   *Requires advisor approval*

PPIA 399   Thesis 6 cr. *Requires advisor approval*