



UCLA

Luskin
Public Policy

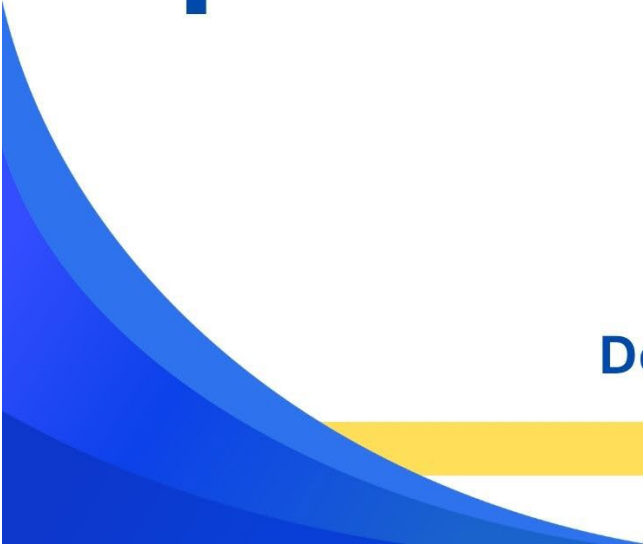
2026

MPP

**APPLICATION
HANDBOOK**

Presented By:

Department of Public Policy



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Introduction to the Program

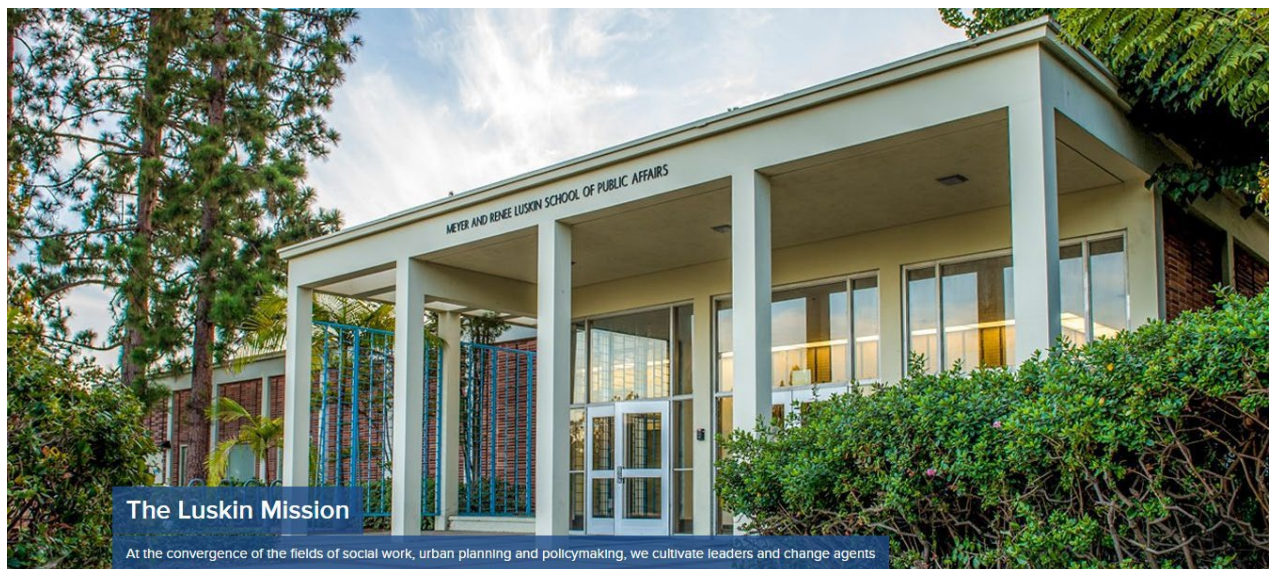
The Luskin School of Public Affairs – Department of Public Policy

At the convergence of the fields of social work, urban planning and policymaking, the Luskin School of Public Affairs cultivate leaders and change agents. The Department of Public Policy at UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs offers the Master of Public Policy (MPP).

We take people who are passionate about making a difference in the world and give them the tools they need to do so. Our master's program combines the best of rigorous policy education with a flexibility and responsiveness that enables us to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world. A career in public service is no longer limited to working in government. By giving students a diversified tool kit of quantitative and analytical skills and the flexibility to design their own program of study—while drawing on all the resources of one of the world's top research universities—we produce graduates who are equipped to become real leaders in policy making, wherever that process takes place.

Our Motto:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” -Margaret Mead



Program Overview

MPP is a two-year, in-person, full-time program that focuses on problem identification, policy analysis, and policy influence. It seeks to enhance the range of ideas and knowledge about how to address public problems and improve the skills of those who deal with them professionally. Candidates conduct research directed to public issues, inform public policy professionals, and partner with public servants and the community to solve public problems.

MPP students can pursue an interdisciplinary certificate in Data Analytics. Concurrent degrees with Law (JD), Management (MBA), Public Health (MPH), Medicine (MD), and Social Welfare (MSW) offer an even broader range of skill and expertise development.

Program Competency

The MPP consists of a core curriculum, a second-year policy analysis project, and numerous electives chosen from the program, the broader Luskin School, and UCLA.

The emphasis of the curriculum is on the following:

- Social science methodologies for data collection, analysis, and program evaluation
- Understanding political institutions and processes
- Economic analysis and other applications of quantitative analysis and modeling, as well as the use of statistical software
- Legal issues around public policy

Career Outcomes

Graduates of the MPP program often find themselves in influential positions across various sectors, including government, non-profit organizations, think tanks, international organizations, and private industry. With the skills gained in policy analysis, program evaluation, and strategic decision-making, MPP graduates are well-prepared to tackle complex social, economic, and political issues.

Career outcomes include roles such as policy analysts, consultants, public affairs managers, and researchers. They often work in high-impact areas such as healthcare, environmental policy, education, and international development. Below, a table outlines some of the organizations where MPP graduates frequently find employment, showcasing the diverse opportunities available.

Nonprofit	Government	Private Sector	Research Centers
• Feminist Majority Foundation • Social Policy Research Assoc. • Conrad N. Hilton Foundation • Kaiser Foundation Health Plan • Directors Guild of America • ETI Consulting • Milken Institute • LA Area Chamber of Commerce • Southern CA Grantmakers	• Riverside City Government • Fresno Education Board • PMF - Dept. of Transportation • PMF - Dept. of Interior • PMF - Dept. of Justice • Los Angeles City Council • City LA Human Relations Commission • U.S. Coast Guard • GAO • Japan Ministry of Telecom • LAUSD	• Fox Television • Booz-Allen & Hamilton • Microsoft • Lee Andrews Group • BizRate.com • Nike • Nextel • Price Waterhouse Coopers, LLC • VA Healthcare Systems	• Mathematica, Inc. • Harvard Family Research • Global Windows China Project • UCLA Dept. of Family Medicine • UCLA Center of Health Policy • UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families & Communities • Lewis Center for Regional Studies

Eligibility & Prerequisites

Admissions Requirement

To be eligible for admission as a **U.S. student**, applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution, comparable in quality and content to a University of California degree. Standard graduate admission requires a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 (B average) on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent. However, through the "Dean's Special Action" (DSA) process, departments have the discretion to admit applicants who do not meet the GPA requirement if other aspects of their application indicate readiness for graduate study. The DSA process is initiated by the department and requires no additional action from the applicant.

An **international student** whose post-secondary education is completed outside of the U.S. is expected to hold a degree representing completion of at least four years of study with above average/very good scholarship from a university or university-level institution.

Applicants to the MPP program are evaluated on their **overall record**. The final decision is based on a subjective assessment of the applicant's potential to meet the scholarship requirements of the program and to succeed as a policy professional.

Preference is given to applicants with a grade point average of **3.5 or above**. Additional consideration is given to the strength of the applicant's undergraduate program and its standards. The quantitative nature of the core curriculum requires that attention be given to quantitative and analytical abilities. An elementary statistics course is strongly recommended.

OPTIONAL: Scores on the **GRE** General Test are used in combination with the GPA to help predict academic performance in the MPP program. **Scores above 650** in each area are usually essential for admission to the program, although possible reasons for lower scores are considered. Especially high GRE scores may help alleviate concerns about a troublesome academic record, but a high GRE score alone is insufficient reason for admission.

The statement of purpose is evaluated to determine the applicant's genuine academic interest in and commitment to a career in public policy, as well as the applicant's general ability to write coherent and convincing prose. The statement can also help determine the match between the applicant's interests and the school's offerings and to assess written communication skills.

Recommendations should be from individuals who know the applicant well and who can comment specifically on the potential for a career as a policy professional rather than someone of high status in a firm or school who has minimal knowledge of the applicant.

Non-traditional applicants and applicants with professional experience strongly encouraged to apply.

Ministry of Japan and University of Tokyo students and professionals are highly encouraged to apply.

Professional Experience

Applicants with at least two years of work experience in policy-making or implementation are preferred. Internships and volunteer work in a policy setting are also viewed positively.

English Language Proficiency

International students A score of at least 600 (paper-based test) or 100 (iBTt) on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or an overall band score of 7.0 on the International English Testing System (IELTS) examination is required for applicants whose native language is not English.

Application Process

Application Deadline

The [application for the MPP degree](#) will open on October 1, 2026.

Priority Funding Deadline*	December 1, 2026
Rolling Deadline**	April 15, 2027

*Late applications will not receive full consideration for funding.

**Late applications may not be reviewed if the program has reached capacity.

Funding Deadline: December 1, 2026 at 11:59pm PST, is the deadline to be considered for funding, **no exceptions**. A minimum of 3 letters of Recommendation must be received by December 6, 2026 at 11:59pm or the application will be considered incomplete and no longer eligible for funding. Applicants who submit by the December deadline can expect to receive their admission decision by February 26, 2027. Incomplete applications will be moved to the rolling review period timeline (see below).

Rolling Deadline: April 15th, 2027 11:59pm PST, is the rolling admission deadline. Letters of Recommendation must be received by April 15th at 11:59pm. Complete applications submitted by April 15th can expect to receive their decision by May 21, 2027. Incomplete applications will not be considered for admission.

Application Fee

If you are applying to UCLA as a graduate student for the first time, or if you have applied before but were not admitted, complete all parts of the application. The \$135.00 (for U.S. citizens and Permanent Residents) or \$155.00 (for all other applicants) application fee must be submitted online by credit or debit card before the application can be processed.

The application fee is devoted to the administrative cost of processing all applications received, and is **not refundable** under any circumstances, regardless of the outcome, the date of filing, time of review, or if, for whatever the reason, the application is withdrawn.

Application Fee Waivers

There are Need-Based and Special Programs-Based application fee waivers. Waivers of UCLA Application Fee are available for US Citizens, Permanent Residents and others who meet the criteria as indicated on the UCLA Admissions Website. Please refer to [Admissions FAQ](#) page under “Fee Waivers” tab for specific information.

Application Form

You may access the UCLA Application for Graduate Admissions [here](#). As a first-time user, you must create an account to start a new application. Once you create an account, you should Log In to continue your application.

Application Checklist

This is an especially useful tool applicants should use when applying to our program. Refer to the checklist on [APPENDIX 1](#) prior to submitting your application to make sure all required materials have been completed.



International Applicant Information

Visa Requirements

Information about obtaining the I-20 Certificate of Eligibility will be made available to admitted applicants by the [Dashew Center for International Students and Scholars](#). Admitted applicants requiring a DS2019 for a J1 visa should contact the program to which they have been admitted to submit the request.

U.S. immigration law requires that international applicants, if admitted, show documented evidence that sufficient funds to cover all tuition, fees, transportation, and living expenses are available for the first year of their studies at UCLA. This must be proved before a Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS2019) for a visa can be issued.

The I-20 form is issued to admitted applicants who apply, and are qualified, for an F-1 (student) visa, after they submit a Statement of Intent to Register accepting admission at UCLA.

The DS2019 form is issued to admitted applicants who apply, and are qualified for, a J-1 visa, after they submit a Statement of Intent to Register accepting admission at UCLA. J-1 (exchange visitor) status is appropriate for students whose programs of study are substantially funded by the U.S. government, their home government, an international or nonprofit organization, or UCLA.

Since the University cannot assume financial responsibility for its students, U.S. government regulations require that we be satisfied that entering students have sufficient funds to meet all expenses while at UCLA.

Language Proficiency Requirements

If your bachelor-awarding institution was not located in an Anglophone country, and/or did not provide instruction primarily in English, as determined by [WHED](#), you must meet English proficiency requirements when you apply to UCLA. There are two ways to meet this English language proficiency requirement:

1. Prior education – A bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited university located in the U.S or another country in which English is both the primary spoken language of daily life and the language of instruction (e.g., Australia, Barbados, Canada, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, United Kingdom), or at least two years of full-time study at such an institution. If you meet either of these criteria, you are exempted from submitting English proficiency test scores. Please be sure to include such information and transcripts in your application.
2. Exam score – If you did not receive your bachelor's degree in an Anglophone country, you must certify proficiency in English when you apply. UCLA accepts the Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT) and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic exams.

Minimum overall score on TOEFL iBT: 87. However, competitive applicants generally have a TOEFL score of 100 or better. TOEFL iBT scores should be sent to your major department. Be sure to list the TOEFL institution code for UCLA 4837. UCLA does not currently accept MyBest TOEFL.

Minimum overall band score on IELTS Academic: 7.0. Ask IELTS to send your scores to your major department and the Division of Graduate Education.

This requirement applies to U.S. citizens and Permanent Residents as well as international applicants. If you are admitted, you may also be required to confirm your proficiency upon arrival.

Special note: If you studied at a satellite campus located in a country where English is not the primary spoken language of daily life, be sure to submit recent TOEFL iBT or IELTS Academic scores. Citizenship, U.S. residence and/or work experience are not substitutes for meeting the requirement.

Cultural Adjustment

As an international student, adjusting to a new culture takes time and the pace of transition varies depending on the person. Many people adjusting to a new country experience culture shock. Culture shock is defined as feelings of discomfort when immersed in a new culture. There are some serious symptoms associated with culture shock: depression, loss/gain or weight/appetite, insomnia, withdrawal, anger, desire to return home. To deal with culture shock, it's important for international students to get involved on campus, socialize with other international students who have shared understanding, keep an open mind, be patient, have a learning-mindset, and continue to be engaged with others and those who can support you.

Resources

Please refer to UCLA Graduate Education's guide for [International Applicants to Graduate School](#).

Financial Information

Tuition & Fees

Fees are flat amounts assessed to all full-time students based on enrollment status and program—not on enrolled units. Most UCLA fees are paid by term. Costs for housing, books, materials, etc. are not included. See Financial Aid and Scholarships for total estimated cost of attendance ([COA](#)) information.

The university will assess tuition, health insurance and fees depending on the residency status as well as your status as a continuing student or a new student.

For most updated information about UCLA Public Policy's tuition and fees, visit the [Annual and Term Student Fees](#) page on the UCLA Registrar's Office website.

All students pay tuition and fees, but out-of-state and international students pay the non-resident supplemental tuition as well. International students require additional documentation of financial resources to qualify for student visa. For more information, visit [Visa Procedures](#).

California Residency Requirements

For information on who qualifies as a resident of California or for establishing residency for tuition purposes, please consult the Registrar's Office website on [Residence for Tuition Purposes Index](#).

Non-resident Supplemental Tuition Exemptions (AB 540 and California Dream Act)

For more information about these and other programs, click [here](#).

Funding your Graduate Education

Financial Aid

Graduate students may be eligible for various forms of financial aid, including need-based grants, loans, and work-study programs. Federal and state aid can help offset tuition and living expenses. Be sure to explore all available options and meet application deadlines to maximize support.

The [Financial Aid Office](#) is responsible for administering financial support based on need to domestic, full-time students. To apply for financial aid, submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the FAFSA Renewal Application by May 30, 2027 at 11:59 PM CST. Completion of the FAFSA or the FAFSA Renewal Application is required for all financial aid programs. The UCLA Code for FAFSA is 001315.

Financial aid awards include long-term low interest loans and work study funds. Students may also apply for Federal Stafford Student Loans, which are long-term loans made by banks and other institution.

Division of Graduate Education Student Financial Support

Applicants must apply for the [Division of Graduate Education Awards](#) through the [Application for Graduate Admission](#) and be nominated by the prospective academic program for consideration.

Awards are competitive and nominations are reviewed by a campus-wide faculty committee. Awardees must maintain satisfactory progress throughout the award tenure.

UCLA seeks to achieve a student body and faculty which is inclusive of individuals from all cultural, linguistic, geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Our commitment to academic excellence places a high value on sustaining the diversity of experience and perspective which is critical in promoting lively

intellectual exchange and the breadth of new ideas that are essential for creative research and scholarship.

- **Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP):** One year of funding from the Division of Graduate Education, \$25,000 stipend + fees/tuition + non-resident supplemental tuition (if applicable). The professional degree supplemental tuition is not provided by this award.
- **Native American Opportunity Plan (NAOP):** UC's Native American Opportunity Plan ensures that in-state systemwide Tuition and Student Services Fees are fully covered for California students who are also enrolled in federally recognized Native American, American Indian, and Alaska Native tribes and are California residents. This plan applies to undergraduate and graduate students.
- **Privately Endowed Awards (PEA):** These awards are funded by private donors to support graduate education. Please refer to the [Graduate Student Financial Support Booklet](#) for eligibility requirements and more information.
 - Charles F. Scott- Several awards of up to \$20,000 each.
 - Gordon Hein Memorial- Several awards of up to \$5,000 each.
 - Kasper and Siroon Hovannisian- One award of up to \$10,000.
 - Dr. Ursula Mandel- Several awards of up to \$15,000 each.
 - Rose and Sam Gilbert- Approximately two awards of up to \$10,000 each.

Department of Public Policy Awards

No separate application is required for the Awards listed below. Applicants **MUST** be submitted by the December 1st deadline for consideration. All students with satisfactory progress towards completing the MPP degree will be considered for award renewal during their second year in the program. Should you be admitted to the program, more information and timelines will be provided.

- **Merit Award:** Awards between \$2,500-\$18,000 based on the overall strength and cohesion of the submitted application, including letters of recommendation, essays/statements, professional policy work experience, social activism in relation to policy, and academic merit. Students that rank high in the admissions evaluation process, have exhibited strong leadership skills and commitment to the field of public policy are considered for this award.
- **First-Generation Opportunity Award:** Awards up to \$10,000 for domestic applicants who identify as first-generation graduate students (meaning neither parent completed a four-year degree). This award is based on academic merit and policy experience (paid or unpaid). Students that rank high in the admissions evaluation process, have exhibited strong leadership skills and commitment to the field of public policy are considered for this award.
- **Emerging Public Policy Leader Award:** Awards up to \$8,000 for domestic applicants with limited work experience who have accomplished any of the following: engaged in activism related to public policy, have at least 3 months of volunteer work in relation to policy, have conducted policy research and/or analysis outside of the classroom, or have completed a paid or unpaid internship with a focus on public policy. Students that rank high in the



admissions evaluation process, have exhibited strong leadership skills and commitment to the field of public policy are considered for this award.

- **Leaders in the Field Award:** Awards up to \$12,000 for domestic applicants with a GPA of 3.5 or better and at least one year of work experience, who have demonstrated leadership skills in public policy through significant volunteer work, effective social activism, or participated in a policy relevant award within the last 5 years (including Teach for America, Peace Core, Military experience, etc.). Students that rank high in the admissions evaluation process, have exhibited strong leadership skills and commitment to the field of public policy are considered for this award.
- **International Leader in Policy Award:** Awards up to \$12,000 for international applicants with a GPA of 3.8 or better and at least 2 years of work experience, who have demonstrated leadership skills in public policy through significant volunteer work, effective social activism, or participated in a policy focused award within the last 5 years (including Teach for America, Peace Core, Ministry work, etc.). Students that rank high in the admissions evaluation process, have exhibited strong leadership skills and commitment to the field of public policy are considered for this award.

Academic Apprentice Positions

On-campus employment can provide a steady source of income for graduate students while offering opportunities for professional development. Positions may include research assistantships, teaching assistantships, or jobs in libraries, student centers, and other campus facilities.

“Academic Apprentice Personnel” (AAP) is the term applied to registered graduate students who have fulfilled the University’s established criteria for appointment (no more than 50% time) to teaching or research assistantships and for which they are compensated at rates approved annually by the Regents of the University of California. These apprenticeships are intended to provide qualified students with relevant training experience for academic and academic-related careers in teaching and research and to augment limited resources from within the University for graduate student support. As a matter of University policy, apprentice personnel in both the teaching and research series are considered primarily as students being professionally trained. Graduate students who are recipients of teaching and research assistantships must meet all registration and enrollment criteria established by the Graduate Council and the department. They must also maintain satisfactory progress throughout their appointments.

Fee Remissions

Eligible graduate students who serve in teaching assistant, graduate student researcher, tutor, reader, and special reader titles for at least 25% time for an entire academic quarter are eligible to receive paid medical insurance coverage. They are also eligible to receive 100% of the student services and tuition portions of the mandatory fees paid by the University; **however**, mandatory PDST fees are not covered by these fee remissions. Qualified GSRs in appointments of at least 45% time for an entire academic quarter may be eligible to receive nonresident tuition remission.

Teaching Assistants

Teaching assistants (TA) are selected on the basis of scholarship and promise as teachers and serve an apprenticeship under the tutelage and supervision of regular faculty members who are responsible for curriculum and instruction in the University.

Applicants whose first language is not English: Please see information on the [Test of Oral Proficiency](#).

Graduate Student Researcher

Research assistants are appointed to the title Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) and are selected on the basis of scholastic achievement and promise as creative scholars and serve an apprenticeship under the direction and supervision of a faculty member.

GSRs are selected for high achievement and promise as creative scholars and assist faculty members with scholarly research. They may or may not collaborate in the publication of research results as determined by supervising faculty members. GSRs may not be assigned teaching, administrative or general assistance duties.

In order to qualify for a GSR position, the person must be registered and enrolled as a UCLA graduate student. GSRs must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 units, hold a cumulative GPA of 3.0 at the time of appointment, and be appointed for no more than 50% time. If a GSR holds multiple appointments, the combined appointments may not exceed 50% time.

GSRs must serve under the active supervision of a UCLA faculty member. GSRs appointed at 25% time or greater qualify for fee remissions that cover 100% of the Education, Registration, and UCSHIP fees for the quarter(s) of appointment. The hiring department is responsible for paying these fee remissions from the same account-fund as the salary source.

Nonresident GSRs appointed at 45% time and enrolled in 12 or more units qualify for nonresident supplemental tuition remission, which covers 100% of the nonresident supplemental tuition for the quarter(s) of appointment. The hiring department is responsible for paying the nonresident supplemental tuition remission from the same account-fund as the salary source, except in those cases where the salary derives from state funding (i.e., 19900), in which case the hiring department must designate a non-state funding source. Neither Graduate Division allocation resources nor special awards can be used to pay the nonresident supplemental tuition for GSRs.



Cost of Living

2026-27 Graduate Student Budgets



Housing Plans	All Housing
University Fees (UC Systemwide Tuition: \$15,066, Campus fees: \$542)	\$15,608
Housing	\$18,221
Food	\$10,546
Books, Course Materials, Supplies, and Equipment	\$2,004
Transportation	\$3,819
Personal	\$3,219
Health Insurance (can be waived for students with own insurance)	\$7,515
Estimated CA Resident Total Costs	\$60,932
Nonresident Supplemental Tuition (NRST)	\$15,102
Estimated Nonresident Total Costs	\$76,034

Figures for tuition and fees may not be final. Actual tuition, fees, and charges are subject to change by the Regents of the University of California. Final approved 2026-27 tuition and fee levels may be higher or lower than the amounts presented and are published at [Annual and Term Student Fees | UCLA Registrar's Office](#). At the time of admission, the tuition and fees reflected on your aid letter will be based on the preliminary information from your admission application. Residence status for tuition purposes is determined by the Registrar's Office. If your residence status changes, once you complete your Statement of Intent to Register, your financial aid will be revised.

Budgeting for Cost of Attendance essential for housing, food, transportation, and other daily expenses. The total Cost Of Attendance (COA) at UCLA includes tuition, fees, housing costs, food, books, and transit. We have compiled information about Typical Housing Costs. This gives you an idea of housing prices near UCLA.

Your choice of HOUSING OPTION affects your COA. It is used to determine the maximum amount of financial aid given. For example, living in the residence halls will cost more than living at home. This means your choice of housing affects the total sticker price of attending of UCLA.

IF YOUR HOUSING PLANS CHANGE, please inform the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office, so your aid can be recalculated.

The Financial Aid and Scholarships office does NOT determine RESIDENCE STATUS. The UCLA Campus Residence Deputy decides your Residence Status for Tuition purposes. For more information regarding Residence for Tuition Purposes, please visit the Registrar's Office website.

Program Structure

Curriculum Overview

The MPP program has thoughtfully curated courses that will best prepare you for identifying problem, critically analyze policy, and its policy influence. The required core courses must be taken in sequence. Students are required to take a minimum of 78 units to complete the MPP degree. In addition to the core requirements, students select elective or concentration courses. The elective courses must be policy related. A minimum of three courses in a related substantive area are required for a concentration. Students may take elective courses in the Department, the Luskin School, other UCLA graduate programs, exchange program institutions or approved host institutions (and may include one undergraduate course as explained below). Concentrations are optional, and students can create their

own concentration with faculty advisor consultation. The School offers a certificate program in [Data Analytics Certificate](#), and the [UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability \(IoES\)](#) offers the [Leaders in Sustainability Certificate](#). Certificate program courses count as electives toward the MPP degree. Refer to [APPENDIX 2](#) for Plan of Study for MPP program.

Sample Syllabi: An example of the coursework for the Public Policy core required courses.

Course Requirements

The MPP program consists of twelve required courses (36 units) which must be taken in sequence as indicated on the Plan of Study. The remaining eleven courses (42 units) are policy-related electives. Students may use electives to build analytic skills through research methods, advanced statistics, microeconomics, macroeconomics, applied GIS, etc., courses. Students may also take courses in related substantive areas. Concentrations are optional.

Students enroll in PUB PLC 496 (4 units) internship course during the second year of the MPP program in quarter they complete their hours of fieldwork.

To meet program requirements, students must complete 78 graduate units with a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average. Students must earn a letter grade of C or better to apply coursework towards the degree.

For students in the dual degree programs (MBA-MPP, MD-MPP, JD-MPP, MPH-MPP, MSW-MPP), the minimum required units are 68 with 36 units from required courses and 32 units from elective courses. Students must complete the following courses:

- **PP 201 or M201A:** Principles of Microeconomic Theory I (4 units)
- **PP 202:** Politics and Policymaking (4 units)
- **PP 203:** Statistical Methods of Policy Analysis I (4 units)
- **PP 204 or M204A:** Principles of Microeconomic Theory II (4 units)
- **PP 208:** Statistical Methods of Policy Analysis II (4 units)
- **PP 210:** Methods of Policy Analysis (4 units)
- **PP 298A-E:** Applied Policy Project (8 units)
- **PP 496:** Internship (4 units)
- **Electives** (32 units)

Internship Requirements

As part of graduation requirements, all Master of Public Policy (MPP) students must complete 400 internship hours. The purpose of the internship program is to:

- augment students' academic preparation with professional application
- bring high standards of technical expertise, critical insights and political sensitivity to the analysis of policy problems and their social contexts

- analyze the implications of competing alternatives, including their indirect and long-term social impacts
- develop effective strategies for implementing the chosen alternatives.

Through the internship requirement, the program prepares graduates for the complexity of the future with the analytical tools to meet this challenge.

If a student comes with extensive work experience in a public policy setting, they may request that their previous experience satisfy the requirements of the PUB PLC 496: Internship course.

Applied Policy Project (APP)

Applied Policy Project (APP) is the capstone requirement for all MPP Students. This is a year-long consulting project that bridge theory to practice. Students must enroll in PUB POLC 298A-E series (8 units total) to receive credit. This requirement is mandatory. Students work in teams of 4-5 members and also work with APP Coordinator and faculty advisor. Students must gauge a public policy topic of interest and then select a client to work with. The APP consists of research, policy report, and oral presentation.

Program Offerings

Student Groups

Consistent with the University policy on nondiscrimination in all University-sponsored programs, all students may participate in any of the described clubs and organizations.



Public Policy Leadership Association

The Public Policy Leadership Association (PPLA) is a student organization representing and advocating for the interests of public policy students. The PPLA advances the mission to foster an accommodating, inclusive, and equitable learning environment for all UCLA MPP students. To further promote the interest of the students, the PPLA incorporates Public Policy administration and student leaders from different Luskin Caucus organizations. Every UCLA MPP student is a member of PPLA and is invited to attend and participate in PPLA events.

Asian/ Pacific Islander (API) Student Caucus

The API Caucus strives to bring awareness to the social issues faced by the diverse communities represented in the Asian (American) Pacific Islander population. These issues include, and are not limited to APIs in mental health, immigration, education, and so forth.

Black Caucus

The Social Welfare Black Caucus is a student organization established to serve as a network of support for African American students and all interested students in the Department of Social Welfare located in the School of Public Policy building. The Black Caucus will act as a service-oriented resource, providing both information and a forum where all students can dialog about social welfare issues as they pertain to the Black community.

Latina/o Student Caucus

The mission of the UCLA Department of Social Welfare Latina/o Caucus is to support and supplement the education of social workers interested in working with Latino populations. We fulfill our mission through social, educational and political activities. The caucus provides a safe and welcoming environment where students can receive support and resources in their journey to becoming great social workers.

Pride at UCLA Luskin

PRIDE at UCLA Luskin serves to encourage education, social justice, and activism around issues affecting the LGBTQ+ community. The student organization also exists to provide a welcoming and inclusive community for LGBTQ+ students and allies in the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs.

First Generation Organization

The First-Generation Organization seeks to connect first-generation students, provide support, and create a space for collaborative dialogue and learning about educational opportunities, volunteer experiences and community actions.

Luskin International Student Group

LISG was founded last year to improve international students' academic and social experiences across all departments (Public Affairs, Public Policy, Urban Planning, and Social Welfare) at Luskin School.

Affiliated Research Centers

Luskin Center for Innovation



Co-Executive Directors: [Colleen Callahan](#), [Gregory Pierce](#)

Executive Director: [Megan Mullin](#)

The mission of the [Luskin Center for Innovation](#) (LCI) is to solve environmental challenges through collaborative, actionable research for California's communities, our nation and world. The Center translates rigorous research and expertise into real-world environmental policy solutions. Faculty and staff from a variety of academic disciplines pursue research on climate, energy, transportation, urban greening, and water, with a cross-cutting theme of environmental equity.

Institute of Transportation Studies



Director: [Brian D. Taylor](#)

UCLA's [Institute of Transportation Studies](#) (ITS) is one of the leading transportation policy research centers in the U.S. The ITS works closely with and is generously funded by two organizations: the UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies and the University of California Transportation Center (UCTC). Each year dozens of ITS faculty, students and research staff collaborate on a wide array of transportation

policy and planning studies, ranging from an analysis of the travel trends and transportation needs of immigrants and low-income workers, to the testing and evaluation of innovative fare programs to increase public transit use.

The Ralph and Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies



Director: [Evelyn Blumenberg](#)

The [Lewis Center](#) for Regional Policy Studies was established in 1988 to promote the study, understanding and solution of regional policy issues, with special reference to Southern California, including problems of the environment, urban design, housing, community and

neighborhood dynamics, transportation and economic development. The center's interdisciplinary activities involve faculty members and graduate students from many schools and departments at UCLA. It also fosters links with researchers at other California universities and research institutes on issues of relevance to regional policy.

UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy



Deputy Director: [Marisa Lemorande](#)

The [UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy](#) advances radical democracy in an unequal world through research, critical thought, and alliances with social movements and racial justice activism. We analyze and transform the divides and dispossessions of our times, in the university and in our cities, across global South and global North.

Center for Neighborhood Knowledge



Director: [Paul Ong](#)

The mission of the [Center for Neighborhood Knowledge](#) (CNK) is to conduct basic and applied research on the socioeconomic formation and internal dynamics of neighborhoods, and how these collective spatial units are positioned and embedded in the Southern California region. The CNK emphasizes the study of diversity, differences and disparities among neighborhoods, and explicitly covers immigrant enclaves and minority communities. CNK examines neighborhoods through multi-disciplinary lenses and through collaboration with community partners. Equally important, CNK is dedicated to translating its finding into actionable neighborhood-related policies and programs and to contributing to positive social change.

Latino Policy and Politics Institute



Deputy Director: [Lila Burgos](#)

The [UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Institute](#) (LPPI) addresses the most critical domestic policy challenges facing Latinos and other communities of color through research, advocacy, mobilization and leadership development to propel policy reforms that expand genuine opportunity for all Americans. UCLA LPPI is built around a belief that there is no American agenda without a Latino agenda, envisioning policymaking that centers on the needs of Latinos and communities of color to operationalize dignity and opportunity.

Los Angeles Education Research Institute



Co-Founder and Faculty Director: [Meredith Phillips](#)

The [Los Angeles Education Research Institute](#) (LAERI) advances educational equity and improvement in Los Angeles by bringing researchers and practitioners together to address important educational challenges. We cultivate and maintain a shared research and partnership infrastructure that facilitates new empirical projects and builds connections among academics, practitioners and policymakers. Our research-to-practice model emphasizes the importance of locally developed research questions; sustained collaboration and communication; and cumulative projects that build toward solutions.

The Gay Sexuality and Social Policy Initiative



Director: [Ian Holloway](#)

The [Gay Sexuality and Social Policy Initiative](#) (GSSPI) at UCLA Luskin is an academic center dedicated to understanding the complexities of gay male sexuality and empowering global gay communities through research, policy analysis and community mobilization. The initiative's research centers on gay men's unique experiences related to sex to increase the effectiveness of ongoing efforts to improve quality of life for gay men around the world.

The UCLA Hub for Health Intervention, Policy and Practice



Director: [Ian Holloway](#)

The [UCLA Hub for Health Intervention, Policy and Practice](#) (HHIPP) connects the academy, community and policymakers to address health disparities among diverse communities in Los Angeles and beyond.

The Hub engages community members in impactful, theory-driven and sustainable research that informs high-level policy and street-level social justice health outcomes. UCLA HHIPP's work situates health policy within a social welfare and social justice framework. We espouse a broad definition of health and wellness with special consideration given to adverse social conditions, stigma, discrimination, poverty, racism and homophobia.

Student Support Services

OSAAR: [Office of Student Affairs and Alumni Relations](#) (formally Luskin Career Center) offers programs and resources that are tailored to areas of interest within the fields of Public Policy, Social Welfare, and Urban Planning. Check out the [Alumni](#) and [Graduate Student Resource Library](#) page for more information.

Dashew: UCLA is home to more than 12,000 international students and scholars. From the moment they arrive at UCLA, the [Dashew Center](#) functions as the central hub to provide international students, scholars, and their departments with visa services, resources, support and advocacy on campus. At the center of its mission, the Dashew Center aims to serve the entire UCLA community by promoting the values of creating global connection, international understanding and cultural sensitivity.

Housing: Single graduate students and students with families may apply to live in our University Apartments. We offer a variety of accommodations both in Westwood, the area adjacent to campus and in the Palms/Mar Vista area, which is about 5 miles south of campus. Visit the [UCLA Housing](#) website for more information.

CPO: The mission of the [Community Programs Office](#), UCLA's cross-cultural center, is to build and nurture an inclusive and diverse community of scholars and leaders who are committed to giving back to historically marginalized communities by engaging, educating, and empowering students to develop and execute student-initiated, student-run outreach, service and retention programs.

GSRC: The [Graduate Student Resource Center](#) is a resource, referral and information center for graduate and professional school students. They offer advice and assistance in dealing with the challenges of graduate school, as well as a number of workshops and programs done in collaboration with our campus partners. Additionally, the GSRC works with some of our campus partners (including [GSA](#)) to organize the campus-wide Graduate Student Orientation ([GSO](#)) and Graduate & Professional Student Appreciation Week ([GPSA](#)). We are also the home of the Graduate Writing Center ([GWC](#)).



Program Expectations

As a graduate student, you will be part of a rigorous academic community committed to fostering excellence, innovation, and scholarly development. Our program is designed to provide you with the knowledge, skills, and resources to succeed in your field while encouraging personal growth and professional development. To help ensure a positive and productive academic experience, it is important to understand and adhere to the expectations set by the program. These expectations outline both your academic responsibilities and the ethical standards required to maintain a successful graduate career.

Academic Standards

MPP students are expected to demonstrate a high level of academic excellence, critical thinking, and scholarly integrity throughout their studies. Our program emphasizes a deep understanding of subject matter, critical thinking, and the ability to contribute meaningfully to your field of study. Below are key academic standards for all graduate students:

1. **Coursework Performance:** You must maintain a cumulative 'B' (3.0) grade point average (GPA) in all courses taken in graduate status at the University. Only courses in which a grade of 'C' or better is received may be applied towards graduate degrees unless the program requirements are set a higher standard. Consistent academic performance in coursework is expected, and students should strive to meet or exceed the standards set for each class, including meeting deadlines and engaging in class activities.
2. **Pedagogy for MPP Curriculum and Courses:** MPP is a full-time, in-person program. Because of the conceptual and analytical demands of graduate education, our curriculum assumes that students are physically present in class sessions in order to more fluidly engage with instructors and their peers through questions and discourse. All students are expected to attend class sessions unless events beyond the student's control, such as illness or family emergencies, require them to miss specific sessions. To achieve our overall pedagogic objectives, the Department strongly discourages the use of live-streaming or posting of video recordings of in-class lectures that would substitute for in-person attendance. All instructors collaborate with

the UCLA Center for Accessible Education (CAE) to implement formally specified accommodations for particular student disabilities.

3. **Adherence to Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty is strictly prohibited. As a graduate student, students are expected to conduct yourself with integrity and respect for the work of others. Violations of academic integrity may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from the program.
4. **Engagement and Collaboration:** Active participation in seminars, group projects, and discussions is essential. Students are expected to engage with faculty, peers, and the broader academic community in a collaborative and respectful manner. Collaborative research and interdisciplinary work are highly encouraged and should be pursued with professionalism and academic rigor.
5. **Professional Development:** MPP students are strongly encouraged to participate in workshops, conferences, and other events that will help them grow both academically and professionally. Engagement with professional organizations and networking in your field is expected.

Code of Conduct

UCLA's reputation for academic excellence and institutional integrity is among our most valued assets; as such, academic integrity is of paramount importance to our institution and it is vital that the institution do all within our power to maintain these standards. Our graduate program is built on the foundation of mutual respect, professionalism, and ethical behavior. As a student, you are expected to adhere to the highest standards of conduct in all aspects of academic and social life within the program. Students must abide by the [UCLA Student Conduct Code](#).

Important Contacts & Resources

Program Contact Information

Ariana Rodriguez
Director of Recruitment and Student Success
ariana@luskin.ucla.edu
310.206.3148

Jake Maish
Director of Admissions and Student Affairs
jake@luskin.ucla.edu
310.825.0448

Connect with Us



A connection to the Department of Public Policy for events and announcements

<https://www.facebook.com/pollycwonk>



A connection to the Department of Public Policy for events and announcements and light engagement.

<https://www.instagram.com/uclaluskinpublicpolicy/>



A connection to the entire Luskin
School of Public Affairs

<https://www.linkedin.com/school/uclaluskin/>

Website & Online Resources

Luskin Public Policy Website <https://luskin.ucla.edu/public-policy/>

Admission Requirements <https://luskin.ucla.edu/public-policy/admissions/>

UCLA Graduate Admission <https://grad.ucla.edu/admissions/admission-application-for-graduate-admission/>

UCLA Funding Database <https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/#/>

UCLA Schedule of Fees <https://sa.ucla.edu/RO/Fees/Public/public-fees>

Appendix 1: Application Checklist

The [application for admission to the Master of Public Policy Program](#) can be accessed online beginning October 1, 2026.

Priority Funding Deadline*	December 1, 2026
Rolling Deadline**	April 15, 2027

*Late applications will not receive full consideration for funding.

**Late applications may not be reviewed if the program has reached capacity.

Refer to this checklist prior to submitting your application to make sure all required materials have been completed.

- ☐ Complete the **online application** at <https://grad.ucla.edu/admissions/>. You do not have to complete the application in one sitting. Every application requires a unique email address and password, which you will set up the first time you log into the site. *Please be sure to select the correct major/academic on your application: Master of Public Policy*
- ☐ Pay the \$135 **application fee** (\$155 for international applicants). You can pay the application fee by credit card online. Your application will not be processed until payment is received. For fee waiver eligibility click [here](#).
- ☐ **Transcripts:** Unofficial transcripts are recommended for the purpose of applying to the MPP program. Please make sure your transcripts show your name, the name of the university and are legible.
*Note, official transcripts uploaded into the application are no longer considered official by the UCLA Graduate Division. This is a requirement for all applicants.

International applicants may be required to submit unofficial materials in English and their language of origin, in addition to diplomas and certificates. **WES translations are not required.** For questions about international transcript and document requirements please reach out to the department.

***Note: Official transcripts** will be requested should you be accepted to the program

- ☐ **Curriculum Vitae or Resume:** Your curriculum vitae or resume should provide a complete accounting of your educational, research, volunteer, and paid work experience. Publications and conference papers should be fully cited. While there is no page limit, the CV/Resume should keep any narrative descriptions to a minimum.
- ☐ **GRE Scores:** Graduate Record Examination scores (for exams completed within the last five years) are *only required for international applicants*. Still, we strongly recommend domestic applicants without a quantitative background submit scores. Be sure to indicate the correct GRE institution code (UCLA is 4837) code on your GRE registration materials. Self-reported scores can be used for the purpose of applying but will need to be officially verified should you be offered a place in the program.
- ☐ **Statement of Purpose:** The statement of purpose should concisely address the following in your own words: 1) your personal, educational, and professional background, 2) your motivation to seek an MPP degree and why you wish to study at UCLA, and 3) the specific skills and questions you hope to explore in the program. Please be as specific as possible. Your statement may be 800-1000 words. Please see the [guide](#) for tips on how to write your statement of purpose.

- ☐ **Personal History Statement:** Unlike the Statement of Purpose, the Personal History Statement is a chance to provide a more narrative description of your background which may have lead to your research interests. This statement is an opportunity to share more about yourself in your application and will be used for certain diversity-based award considerations (GOP). This should be limited to 500 words.
- ☐ **Three Letters of Recommendation:** You should request letters from people who are familiar with your academic, scholarly, and/or professional work and who are in a position to evaluate your promise for master's study. At least one of your references should be an academic or researcher. The letters and accompanying evaluations are submitted directly by referees, as prompted by the web-based application system.
- ☐ **[GPA Worksheet](#) (required for domestic degree applicants only. International degree applicants DO NOT submit this worksheet.)** – See [Appendix 4](#)
- ☐ **TOEFL and IELTS Scores (international applicants only):** Test of English as a Foreign Language scores are required for all international applicants. The minimum TOEFL score required for admission is 100. An IELTS score of 7.0 or higher may be used in place of the TOEFL. **7.5 is preferred.** Institution codes can be found [here](#). *Note: If you have completed or are enrolled in an accredited academic degree program that runs for two years or more in an English-speaking country, the [English requirement](#) is waived.
- ☐ **Optional Addendum/Supplemental Document:** This statement has no specific format requirement and can be used to explain or expand on anything in your application you feel warrants additional attention or context, example: a GPA below a 3.0, rocky academic background, etc.

Dual Degree Exceptions: If applying as a dual-degree student, the following exams are acceptable in place of the GRE.

- MPP/MD program, MCAT is acceptable
- MPP/JD program, LSAT is acceptable
- MPP/MBA program, GMAT is acceptable

Appendix 2: MPP Plan of Study

The Plan of Study Grid provides an overview of the two-year MPP curriculum and degree requirements. The required core courses must be taken in sequence. Students are required to take a minimum of 78 units to complete the MPP degree. In addition to the core requirements, students select elective or concentration courses. The elective courses must be policy related. A minimum of three courses in a related substantive area are required for a concentration. Students may take elective courses in the Department, the Luskin School, other UCLA graduate programs, exchange program institutions or approved host institutions (and may include one undergraduate course as explained below). Concentrations are optional, and students can create their own concentration with faculty advisor consultation. The School offers a certificate program in [Global Public Affairs \(GPA\)](#), [Data Analytics Certificate](#), and the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability (IoES) offers the [Leaders in Sustainability Certificate](#). Certificate program courses count as electives toward the MPP degree.

FALL - YEAR 1	UNITS	WINTER - YEAR 1	UNITS	SPRING - YEAR 1	UNITS
PUB PLC 201: Principles of Microeconomic Theory I	4	PUB PLC 204: Principles of Microeconomic Theory II	4	PUB PLC 202: Politics & Policymaking	4
PUB PLC 203: Statistical Methods of Policy Analysis I	4	PUB PLC 208: Statistical Methods of Policy Analysis II	4	PUB PLC 210: Methods of Policy Analysis	4
Elective	4	Elective	4	Elective	4
		Elective	2	Elective	4
Total Units Planned	12	Total Units Planned	14	Total Units Planned	16
FALL - YEAR 2	UNITS	WINTER - YEAR 2	UNITS	SPRING - YEAR 2	UNITS
PUB PLC 298A: Applied Policy Project I	1	PUB PLC 298B: Applied Policy Project II (IP)	3	PUB PLC 298D: Applied Policy Project IV	1
Elective	4	PUB PLC 298C: Applied Policy Project III	2	PUB PLC 298E: Applied Policy Project IV	1
Elective	4	Elective	4	PUB PLC 496: Internship	4
Elective	4	Elective	4	Elective	4
Total Units Planned	14	Total Units Planned	13	Total Units Planned	10

Program Course Requirements (36 units / 12 courses)

The MPP program consists of twelve required courses (36 units) which must be taken in sequence as indicated on the Plan of Study. The remaining eleven courses (42 units) are policy-related electives. Students may use electives to build analytic skills through research methods, advanced statistics microeconomics, macroeconomics, applied GIS, etc., courses. Students may also take courses in related substantive areas. Concentrations are optional.

Students enroll in PUB PLC 496 (4 units) internship course during the second year of the MPP program in quarter they complete their hours of fieldwork.

To meet program requirements, students must complete 78 graduate units with a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average. Students must earn a letter grade of C or better to apply coursework towards the degree.

Electives / Areas of Concentration (42 units / 11 courses)

Traditionally, MPP students have taken courses in the following areas of concentration.

- Education Policy
- Employment and Labor Policy
- Environmental and Natural Resource Policy
- Health Policy
- International Policy
- Nonprofit Policy
- Regional Development Policy
- Social Policy
- Transportation Policy
- Urban Policy
- Urban Poverty

A minimum of three related courses are required for a concentration. In consultation with the Director of Student Affairs, students may design a concentration from courses offered within the Luskin School of Public Affairs or by other UCLA departments. Please review the [Area of Concentration Handbook](#) for more information.

Please Note: In creating a concentration/s, students must meet the prerequisites of the proposed concentration courses. These courses must be graduate level courses offered at UCLA, exchange program institutions, or approved host institutions. Most graduate courses are offered only once a year so it is critical to project the plan of study to make sure that students can complete the requirements within the proposed two-year time frame.

To be applied towards degree requirements, electives must be graduate level courses (but see below) and relevant to the public policy curriculum. Courses must be taken for a letter grade if S/U or P/NP is given. Students must earn a letter grade of C or better to apply coursework towards the degree.

Students have the option to apply one upper-division undergraduate course (UCLA numbered 100 to 199) toward the required 78 MPP degree units. This is permitted only when similar course content is not offered at the graduate level.