The Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies

The Harris School of Public Policy is known for its policy-relevant research and for preparing talented individuals to become leaders and agents of social change. One of six professional schools, Harris is part of a world-class intellectual community and continues the University’s tradition of scholarship intended to address real-world problems. Established in 1988, Harris emerged from the interdisciplinary Committee on Public Policy Studies. Influential founding supporters include educational sociologist James Coleman, urban sociologist William Julius Wilson, and the 2000 Nobel laureate economist James Heckman.

Degree Offerings & Programming

An exciting and challenging place to learn, Harris’ model of public policy training reflects the University of Chicago's tradition of research and teaching — meticulous scholarship, open inquiry, and cross-disciplinary, critical thinking. Faculty come from diverse academic backgrounds and lend their individual expertise to a collaborative curriculum. Students come ready and willing to work and prepare for leadership in public policy. Alumni around the world apply their Chicago Harris training to a multitude of public policy issues, making an impact in whatever arena they choose to work.

The rigorous curriculum stresses the development of analytical tools, which form the basis of the program’s approach to understanding the nature of social problems and the impact of public policy. Harris students become conscientious consumers of social science research and are able to evaluate information and make informed policy choices.

However, classroom training is only part of the equation. Harris provides opportunities for students to apply the critical skills that they learn in the classroom to real-world situations. Through a mentor program, internships, Policy Labs and other practica, Harris students are able to enrich their education, network with community leaders, and lend their growing public policy expertise to local, national, and international organizations. The School fosters a spirit of cooperation between students, public policy professionals, faculty, and others to address societal concerns and is constantly seeking new partnership opportunities.

Harris Degree Programs

- Master of Public Policy (https://harris.uchicago.edu/academics/degrees/master-public-policy-mpp/) (MPP), A two-year program for students interested in gaining a thorough training in analytical skills.
- Master of Science in Computational Analysis and Public Policy (https://capp.uchicago.edu/) (MSCAPP), A two-year program offered with the Computer Science Department for students interested in the design, implementation, and rigorous analysis of data-driven policies.
- Master of Arts in Public Policy (http://harris.uchicago.edu/degrees/masters-degree/one-year-am/) (AM), A one-year program for students already possessing another graduate degree or in conjunction with another University graduate program.
- Master of Arts in Public Policy with Certificate in Research Methods (https://harris.uchicago.edu/academics/degrees/ma-public-policy-certificate-research-methods-macrm/) (MACRM), A 15-month program designed to prepare students for top-tier Ph.D. programs in economics and political science as well as other social sciences, policy, and business.
- Evening Master’s Program (https://harris.uchicago.edu/academics/degrees/evening-masters-program-part-time-ma/overview/) (AM), A four academic quarter, 15-month, part-time degree program designed to help mid-career professionals lead their organizations through complex policy challenges and drive social impact.
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (http://harris.uchicago.edu/degrees/phd/), a doctoral degree for students seeking research-related careers in academia or elsewhere.

Joint Degree Programs with other University of Chicago Schools

Students can earn two University of Chicago graduate degrees in an accelerated time frame.

- Center for Middle Eastern Studies (http://harris.uchicago.edu/degrees/joint-degree/middle-eastern-studies/) (MPP/AM), a three-year program combining public policy with modern Middle Eastern languages, history, and civilization.
- Divinity School (http://harris.uchicago.edu/degrees/joint-degree/divinity-school/) (MPP/MDiv), a four-year program combining public policy with issues related to public and urban ministry.
- Chicago Booth School of Business (http://harris.uchicago.edu/degrees/joint-degree/booth-school-of-business/) (MPP/MBA), a three-year program combining studies in public policy and business administration.
Law School (http://harris.uchicago.edu_degrees/joint-degree/law-school/) (MPP/JD), a four year program combining studies in law and public policy.

MPP plus AM in Social Work, Social Policy & Social Administration (MPP/AM) (https://harris.uchicago.edu_academics_degrees/mpp-am-crown-family-school/): a three-year program. Study broad social policy and issues that influence the social work profession.

MPP plus SSL in Social Sector Leadership (https://harris.uchicago.edu_academics_degrees/mpp-ssl-crown-family-school/): (MPP/SSL), a two-year program. Learn how to address some of society’s key social service and public policy issues by combining your knowledge of social sector leadership with an understanding of public policy.

Committee on International Relations Master of Arts in Public Policy and International Relations (http://harris.uchicago.edu_degrees/masters-degree/am-ma-cir/) (AM/MA), A two-year program offered with the Committee for International Relations for students interested in combining public policy training with a focus on international relations.

Doctor of Political Economy (PhD) (https://politicaleducation.uchicago.edu/), a doctoral degree for students seeking to develop skills in preparation for a career in academia.

Programs for University of Chicago College Students

The AB/MPP in Public Policy Studies Program (http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu_jointdegreeppha/) with the College, a five-year program that offers students an opportunity to begin their professional training in public policy while still in the College, leading to the award of a four-year undergraduate degree in their declared major and a two-year Master of Public Policy (MPP) degree after five years of studies at the University of Chicago.

The AB/MS in Computational Analysis and Public Policy Program (http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu_jointdegreepphams/) (BA/MSCAPP) with the College, a five-year program offered by The Harris School of Public Policy in conjunction with the Department of Computer Science, offers students an opportunity to begin their professional training in the growing field of civic technology and data science in public policy while still in the College, leading to the award of a four-year undergraduate degree in their declared major and a two-year master of science degree in computational analysis and public policy (MSCAPP) after five years of study at the University of Chicago.