

Master of Public Affairs, MPAff

One of the enduring grand challenges is how to collectively, creatively, and democratically respond to key challenges facing our communities, nation, and the world. Among these challenges are environmental change, including an increased incidence and intensity of disasters such as flooding, sea level rise, and wildfires attributable to climate change; health care; an aging population; addiction; inadequate infrastructure; inequality; unaffordable housing; racism; transportation; immigration; economic development; and public safety.

In response, the Master of Public Affairs program trains future leaders to systematically and creatively address these and other challenges in the coming years. With its interdisciplinary public affairs infrastructure—representing colleges, departments, and centers across campus—the University of Iowa is a leader in public affairs locally and nationally. The program educates public affairs leaders who will creatively and knowledgeably address society's most critical issues and contribute to addressing the grand challenges of the 21st century.

Learning Outcomes

Ability To Lead and Manage in Public Governance

- Understand public administration and management theories and practices.
- Apply public administration and management theories and practices to achieve the goals of public and nonprofit organizations.
- Understand budgeting, financing, and human resource management in public and nonprofit organizations.
- Develop leadership and team-building skills.

Ability To Participate In and Contribute to the Public Policy Process

- Understand the policymaking process in the institutional and market context.
- Identify key stakeholders in the policy process and understand their interactions with the public policy process.
- Conduct policy analysis and make policy recommendations.

Ability To Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems, and Make Evidence-Informed Decisions in a Complex and Dynamic Environment

- Properly frame policy problems, policy goals, and policy alternatives.
- Collect, analyze, and report data, and apply economic, statistical, and spatial analysis methods in data analysis.
- Synthesize quantitative and qualitative evidence to inform policymaking.

Ability To Articulate and Apply a Public Service Perspective

- Recognize competing values in public interest and engage the general public in decision-making.
- Understand the importance of accountability in public administration.
- Apply professional codes of ethics in policy analysis, policymaking, and administering policy.

Ability To Communicate and Interact Productively With a Diverse and Changing Workforce and Society at Large

- Understand the changing demographics and values of society and the implications of these changes for public service and public policymaking.
- Value and identify ways to engage and represent the public in the public sector.
- Develop oral, writing, and media skills for effective communication with diverse stakeholders.

Ability To Pursue Sustainable Outcomes Through Public Policy, Public Administration, and Public Management (Program-Specific Competency)

- Understand complex interactions between public, private, and nonprofit organizations and the role of these organizations within human and natural systems.
- Articulate and apply a sustainability perspective (the implementation of policies, processes, and practices that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs) to public administration, management, and policy.
- Analyze real-world problems through multidisciplinary perspectives and work collaboratively to solve problems.