Proposal for Program/Major

SOCIAL POLICY ANALYSIS

Rice University

Melissa Marschall (Political Science)
Ruth Lopez Turley (Sociology)
Proposal to establish a New Major in the School of Social Sciences

SOCIAL POLICY ANALYSIS (SOPA)

Summary

Social Policy Analysis is a new interdisciplinary major developed by faculty in the School of Social Sciences. The new major will replace the existing Policy Studies major. The Social Policy Analysis major will continue to be housed in the School of Social Sciences; however, unlike Policy Studies, it will be administered by the faculty. A tenure track faculty member from the School will direct the major, and an advisory board, also made up of faculty in the School, will oversee curriculum development and advising. The central focus of the Social Policy Analysis major is policy design, analysis, and communication. It is distinct from policy studies because of its interdisciplinary orientation, its structured curriculum, and its emphasis on integrating rigorous instruction in theory and method with hands-on, skills-based instruction by social science faculty. The primary goal of the new major is to train Rice students to be the first wave of undergraduates with the specialized knowledge, skill, and experience to be leaders in the field of social policy analysis.

The Social Policy Analysis major at Rice University focuses on the evaluation of alternative interventions that propose to improve human well-being. Graduates will be able to answer pressing questions like: Which early interventions lead to greater educational attainment for low-income children? Which juvenile rehabilitation programs are more likely to reduce the recurrence of criminal behavior? How does healthcare policy influence our daily health behaviors? Without evidence-based research and rigorous evaluations to test these ideas, there is no way to know which solutions work and for whom. In a time of limited resources and rising demands, our leaders need the analytical expertise to make a demonstrable, sustained impact on the most pressing issues facing our cities and nation. The Social Policy Analysis major will train Rice students to meet these needs.

Rationale

Two important features of the Social Policy Analysis major center on the terms “Social Policy” and “Policy Analysis.” First, Policy Analysis is distinct from Policy Studies. Whereas Policy Studies is the study of the process of creating, developing, and implementing policy, Policy Analysis focuses on specific problems and their policy solutions. Second, Social Policy is different from Public Policy. Whereas public policy refers to all laws, regulations, and programs developed by governments to solve problems,
social policy refers specifically to policies that focus on human wellbeing. Like public policy more broadly, social policy is inherently interdisciplinary and can be carried out through government agencies, nonprofit organizations, or non-governmental organizations. **Combining the rigor of policy analysis with an emphasis on social policy, Rice University could offer the first Social Policy Analysis major of its kind in the U.S.**

While there are many public policy analysis programs at peer institutions, as well as related majors such as environmental policy analysis, international policy analysis, and education policy analysis, social policy analysis majors are difficult to find. One example is the [Social Policy & Practice Coordinate Major in the School of Liberal Arts at Tulane University](#). This major introduces students to problems, policies, and methods in social policy and welfare through a small set of core courses and additional elective coursework. While it offers opportunities for independent research and/or internship experiences, it lacks the hands-on, faculty-led experiential learning piece central to Rice’s proposed major. The main comparator programs are actually Master’s level programs. Examples include the [Master of Science in Social Policy Program at the University of Pennsylvania](#), the [Social Policy & Policy Analysis program at University of Minnesota’s Humphrey School of Public Affairs](#), and the [Master of Science in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation at Oxford University](#). Like Rice’s proposed Social Policy Analysis major, these programs are interdisciplinary in nature and emphasize research methods for evaluating interventions and policies as well as the advanced study of evidence-based practice.

Rice University’s School of Social Sciences is well positioned to create a Social Policy Analysis major. We already have the academic underpinnings of such a program with faculty expertise in research design, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and critical appraisal. With the city of Houston as our backyard, we also have one of the most relevant and demographically diverse urban policy labs in the nation. The solutions we generate here will not only play a critical role in improving the life chances and wellbeing of Houston residents but will also provide key insights to other urban environments throughout the country. By taking a leadership role in this new and increasingly important field, the School of Social Sciences, and Rice University more generally, will enhance its national reputation and visibility.

In addition, the School of Social Sciences will leverage its existing faculty strengths and community partnerships to generate training opportunities for students and to make the greatest possible impact. Expanding our leadership in social policy analysis will elevate the school’s national prominence across multiple departments. It will foster interdisciplinary partnerships in the Kinder Institute for Urban Research, the Baker Institute
for Public Policy, and the newly established Doerr Institute for New Leaders. As part of Rice’s new Data Sciences Initiative, it represents an opportunity to feed our strengths in data sciences and elevate the university’s research preeminence. In concert with Rice’s Initiative for Students and the Social Sciences Gateway program, it will aggressively expand curricular and research opportunities for students, providing them with the essential analytical skills and hands-on experiences to develop their potential as future leaders and further extend Rice’s reputation.

Ultimately, we have the momentum and opportunity to become a national leader in social policy analysis, while setting a distinct vision for the school and producing knowledge that influences social policies as diverse as health, education, poverty, and criminal justice.

Relationship to Existing Programs at Rice

The curriculum and mission of the Social Policy Analysis major differ considerably from the current Policy Studies major, which will be sunsetted if the new major is approved. Social Policy Analysis will replace the relatively unstructured Policy Studies second major with a clearly structured, stand-alone major. The emphasis in Policy Studies on policy areas (energy, environment, health care, international affairs, law and justice, and urban/social change), will shift to analysis of policy proposals. A strength of the proposed major is the role of tenure track faculty in curriculum development, advising, and administering the major, in contrast to the existing Policy Studies major. From both a curricular and administrative perspective, we believe it is time to sunset the Policy Studies major and replace it with a stand-alone major that not only capitalizes on assets in the School of Social Sciences and the city of Houston, but is also directed and administered by social science faculty.

While the proposed Social Policy Analysis major will still overlap with other related programs, namely Political Science, Poverty, Justice, and Human Capabilities, and Policy, Law, and Social Thought, the new major is distinctive in its focus on policy design, analysis, and communication. In addition, Social Policy Analysis will have an exclusively domestic focus and thus will no longer overlap much with two of the three subfields in Political Science (International Relations and Comparative Politics). And, while Social Policy Analysis includes the study of laws, institutions, and political theory, unlike the Politics, Law, and Social Thought (PLST) minor, it does not take a long-term historical perspective or emphasize philosophical and theoretical questions or original texts of social, political, and legal thought. The Social Policy Analysis major and the PLST minor share only one course in common in their respective lists of required and elective courses. Finally, Social Policy Analysis does share the Poverty, Justice, and Human
Capabilities minor’s focus on structural factors that underlie inequality and human wellbeing. However, the proposed major takes a much more data-driven and analytic approach to policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

In terms of existing centers and institutes, neither the Baker Institute for Public Policy nor the Kinder Institute for Urban Research has a teaching mission and thus, the proposed major does not duplicate the activities of these existing institutes. Rather, the Social Policy Analysis major will complement these institutes and provide synergistic opportunities and pursuits. The Center for Civic Leadership (CCL) does have a teaching mission that focuses on experiential learning, but it does not focus on social policy analysis and does not offer a major with a structured course sequence. Students who participate in CCL can major in Social Policy Analysis.

Institutional Home and Budget

The institutional home of the Social Policy Analysis major will be the School of Social Sciences. The Dean’s office in the School of Social Sciences is fully committed to provide the necessary administrative support for the major and help with the day-to-day organization and operation, including developing and maintaining the major’s website.

In addition, the Dean’s office will provide financial resources for the faculty director’s stipend, and for the costs of the capstone courses (SOPA 400/401). These costs include compensating departments for allowing their faculty to teach the SOPA capstone courses as part of their teaching load, and providing incentives to individual faculty members for supervising the students’ research projects (on a per student basis), as described in more detail under Faculty Staffing and Compensation below.

Faculty

The Social Policy Analysis major will be guided by faculty members involved in teaching its courses, particularly capstone research seminars, and supervising students’ independent capstone projects. The advisory board will be comprised of four faculty members—one each from Sociology, Economics, and Political Science, and a fourth from any department in the School of Social Sciences. The board will meet at least once a year to evaluate how the major is working: how many students are part of the major, which courses are listed as part of the curriculum, and what changes should be considered for the major. The advisory board will select capstone projects and form capstone teams. The director of the Social Policy Analysis major will administer the major on a day-to-day basis. She will also be
responsible for overseeing all advising of students in the major and will serve as the official certifier of their degree audit. The director will also have the task of keeping the affiliated faculty members informed about any developments within the major and working with Rice staff and the Dean to ensure that there are ample and appropriate opportunities for career placement, internships, and community-based research experiences.

**Director and Undergraduate Adviser**
- Professor Melissa Marschall (Political Science) has tentatively agreed to be the faculty director.

**Advisory Board**
- The following faculty have tentatively agreed to serve on the Advisory Board: Flavio Cunha (Economics), Ruth Lopez Turley (Sociology), Robert Stein (Political Science), and Chase Lesane-Brown (Psychology).

**Affiliated Faculty**
- Dominic Boyer (Professor of Anthropology and Director, Center for Energy and Environmental Research in the Human Sciences)
- Paul Brace (Clarence L. Carter Professor of Political Science)
- Jenifer Bratter (Associate Professor of Sociology)
- Tony N. Brown (Professor of Sociology)
- Sergio Chavez (Assistant Professor of Sociology)
- Flavio Cunha (Associate Professor of Economics)
- Justin Denney (Associate Professor of Sociology)
- Elaine Ecklund (Herbert S. Autrey Chair in Social Sciences, Professor of Sociology and Director of Religion and Public Life Program)
- James Elliott (Professor of Sociology)
- Chris Fagundes (Assistant Professor of Psychology)
- Bridget Gorman (Professor of Sociology)
- Vivian Ho (James A. Baker III Institute Chair in Health Economics and Professor of Economics)
- Mark Jones (Joseph D. Jamail Chair in Latin American Studies and Professor of Political Science)
- Rachel Kimbro (Professor of Sociology)
- Stephen Klineberg (Professor of Sociology)
- Chase Lesane-Brown (Psychology Lecturer)
- Melissa Marschall (Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for Local Elections in American Politics)
- Steve Murdock (Professor of Sociology)
- Nancy Niedzielski (Associate Professor of Linguistics)
- Robert Stein (Lena Gohlman Fox Professor of Political Science)
structure and requirements

Completion of the Social Policy Analysis major requires a minimum of 42 hours. In addition to two required, math prerequisites, the core curriculum includes five foundation courses that will provide students with the theoretical foundations and analytic tools they need to successfully study the complex and multifaceted nature of social problems and social policy. The core also includes two capstone research seminars in the senior year where students apply these skills to design, conduct, and evaluate social policy research and analysis.

Prerequisites and Foundation Courses. The prerequisite courses (MATH 101 and 102) are already offered every semester, as are most of the existing foundation courses (POLI 210, ECON 100, and the quantitative methods courses). POLI 338 will be offered at least once a year. The remaining foundation course, SOPA 200: Approaches to Social Policy, is new and will be offered at least once a year. Professor Robert Stein has agreed to teach this course (see Appendix A for a sample syllabus). This course will introduce the study of social policy by describing the different paradigms for policy making, focusing on the approaches of different disciplines.

Capstone Research Seminar. The capstone research seminar is a two-semester course taken in the senior year. In the fall semester, the emphasis is on research skills and experience. Students will be assigned to a capstone project based on their interests and will work on research teams under the direction of a faculty member who is responsible for the project. In the spring semester students may continue to work with their research teams, but this is not required. The objective of the spring capstone seminar is to write and present the research paper. In both semesters, capstone students will meet weekly with the instructor or record to discuss their work and experiences, make presentations about their data, research, methods, etc., submit assignments in order to ensure that they are making progress, and write and present their final research papers.

Selection of Capstone Projects and Teams. Prior to the beginning of each academic year, faculty will propose capstone projects to the SOPA director and advisory board based on existing/ongoing research. Projects must meet the following criteria to be eligible: a) they must be faculty led, b) they must...
directly address social policy, defined as the study of specific social problems (having to do with human wellbeing) and their policy solutions, c) they must include some form of interaction with external policy makers, and d) they must provide students with hands-on research tasks that build on content learned in earlier courses. Faculty-led research projects made possible by external grants are one example of eligible capstone projects. Capstone projects need not be externally funded, but instead may entail ongoing research projects of social science faculty. Indeed, faculty who are already incorporating undergraduate research assistants in their work may wish to expand this activity by working with and mentoring a team of capstone students. Examples include SOCI 327/328 (Supervised Research I/II), as well as the capstone and honors courses in Economics.

The SOPA director and advisory board will review all proposals for capstone projects and make selections based on the merits of the projects and the profiles of the rising seniors. The director and advisory board will also be charged with forming the capstone teams. They will do this based on the interests, coursework and experiences of the rising seniors and the needs of each team. The SOPA director and advisory board will collectively decide which proposals for capstone projects will be offered and which students will be assigned to these projects. This collective decision making process will help ensure that students and projects are well matched and that the teams are composed of students whose skills and substantive interests are complementary and balanced. The goal is to maximize the peer-based learning that will happen in the teams.

**Faculty Staffing and Compensation.** There will be at least one instructor of record for the year-long capstone sequence SOPA 400/401. Prof. Cunha has agreed to serve in this role for 2017-18. The instructor of record will get credit for one course and the Dean’s office will compensate the instructor’s home department for one course. If the number of students taking the capstone seminar increases beyond 20, a second instructor of record will be added. This instructor will receive the same compensation.

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1 For example, faculty from Economics have recently received grants from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation and other external funding agencies to assess pre-K intervention programs designed to close the achievement gap and reduce costs in K-12 education, to evaluate how New Hope Housing’s mixed-use facilities can better support homeless families, particularly victims of domestic violence, and whether food scholarships can motivate learners to complete their degrees and keep the Houston economy growing. Faculty from Sociology have also received grants from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation and Houston Endowment that enable them to work with undergraduates on applied policy research in various health and education projects.
Faculty who agree to supervise capstone projects will be compensated in one of two ways. If they agree to work with six or more students, their capstone project will count as a regular course and their department will receive compensation from the Dean’s office for this course. If the faculty member supervising the capstone project does not agree to work with at least six students or if fewer than six students are assigned to the faculty member’s project, the faculty member will receive a stipend from the Dean’s office. This stipend will be calculated on a per student basis (e.g., between $500-$1,000 per student).

Capstone Grades. Grades will be assigned by the instructor of record with input and feedback from the faculty mentor. The faculty members working directly with the students on their projects have the discretion to allow team-based papers. In other words, it is not required that the final paper be independent.

Prerequisites (required):

— MATH 101 – Single Variable Calculus I (offered every semester)
— MATH 102 – Single Variable Calculus II (offered every semester)

Foundation courses (required):

— POLI 210 – Introduction to American Government (offered every semester)
— SOPA 200 – Approaches to Social Policy (will be offered at least once a year)
— ECON 100 – Principles of Economics (offered every semester)
— A Quantitative Methods course (offered every semester). Select one of the following:
  o POLI 395 – Introduction to Statistics
  o SOCI 382 – Social Statistics
  o PSYC 339 – Statistical Methods-Psychology
  o ECON 307 – Probability and Statistics
— POLI 338 – Policy Analysis (last offered Spring 2015; will be offered at least once a year)

Advanced courses (required):

— SOPA 400 – Capstone Research Seminar I (fall)
— SOPA 401 – Capstone Research Seminar II (spring)

The major includes 15 hours of coursework in three core areas of social policy: groups and identities, institutions, and policy processes and outcomes. As the substantive body of the Social Policy Analysis major,
these courses provide students with an understanding of social problems, institutions, and the processes and outcomes of social policy. Students are required to take at least one course in each of the three areas of specialization, and a total of 15 hours, from the list of approved courses or with the approval of the major adviser.

**Breadth requirement (5 courses, at least one from each of the following three areas; the expectation is that each course will be offered at least every other year starting in a.y. 2017-18):**

**Groups and Identities**
- ANTH 354 – Disability and Gendered Bodies (last offered Spring 2016)
- LING 205 – Language and Society (last offered Spring 2017)
- LING 303 – Language and Gender (last offered Spring 2015)
- LING 322 – Language and Ethnicity (last offered Fall 2010)
- POLI 330 – Minority Politics (last offered Spring 2017)
- PSYC 331 – Psychology of Gender (last offered Fall 2014)
- PSYC 475 – Stereotyping and Prejudice (last offered Fall 2007)
- SOCI 309 – Race and Ethnic Relations (last offered Spring 2016)
- SOCI 313 – Demography (last offered Fall 2016)
- SOCI 329 – Multiracial America (last offered Fall 2014)
- SOCI 301 – Social Inequality (last offered Spring 2017)

**Institutions**
- ANTH 341 – Museums and Heritage (last offered Fall 2015)
- ANTH 345 – Archaeology in Social Context (last offered Fall 2016)
- ANTH 326 – Law, Power and Culture (last offered Spring 2017)
- ECON 210 – Behavioral Economics (last offered Spring 2017)
- ECON 239 – Law and Economics (last offered Spring 2017)
- ECON 343 – Corporate Finance (last offered Spring 2017)
- ECON 355 – Financial Markets (last offered Fall 2016)
- ECON 365 – World Economic History (last offered Spring 2017)
- ECON 435 – Industrial Organization (last offered Spring 2017)
- ECON 439 – Advanced Topics in Law and Economics (last offered Spring 2017)
- ECON 452 – Religion, Ethics and Economics (last offered Spring 2017)
- ECON 455 – Money and Banking (last offered Fall 2015)
- POLI 317 – The Congress (last offered Spring 2017)
- POLI 318 – The Presidency (last offered Fall 2008)
- POLI 321 – American Constitutional Law (last offered Spring 2017)
POLI 332 – Urban Politics (last offered Fall 2016)
— POLI 335 – Political Environment of Business (last offered Fall 2016)
— POLI 336 – Politics of Regulation (last offered Fall 2012)
— POLI 342 – Politics of the Judiciary (last offered Fall 2015)
— PSYC 231 – Industrial & Organizational Psychology (last offered Spring 2017)
— PSYC/POLI 420 – Election Systems (last offered Fall 2016)
— SOCI 308 – Houston: The Sociology of the City (last offered Fall 2015)
— SOCI 310 – Urban Sociology (last offered Fall 2016)
— SOCI 314 – Science at Risk (last offered Spring 2015)
— SOCI 319 – Work and Occupations (last offered Spring 2013)
— SOCI 325 – Sociology of Law (last offered Spring 2017)
— SOCI 358 – Crime, Punishment and Society (last offered Fall 2016)
— SOCI 437 – Sociology of Education (last offered Spring 2013)

Policy Processes and Outcomes
— ECON 418 – Economic Forecasting (last offered Spring 2017)
— ECON 432 – Political Economy (last offered Spring 2017)
— ECON 437 – Energy Economics (last offered Fall 2016)
— ECON 450 – Economic Development (last offered Spring 2017)
— ECON 462 – Economics of Human Capital (last offered Fall 2016)
— ECON 470 – Market Design (last offered Fall 2016)
— ECON 479 – Economic Modeling and Public Policy (last offered Spring 2015)
— ECON 480 – Environmental Economics (last offered Fall 2015)
— ECON 481 – Health Economics (last offered Fall 2016)
— ECON 483 – Public Finance (last offered Fall 2016)
— ECON 484 – Public Economics (last offered Spring 2017)
— POLI 356 – Representation & Policy Making (last offered Fall 2012)
— POLI 438 – Race and Public Policy (last offered Fall 2010)
— POLI 435 – Money and Politics (last offered Spring 2017)
— PSYC 345 – Health Psychology (last offered Fall 2016)
— PSYC 346 – Stress and Health (last offered Spring 2017)
— PSYC 435 – Pollution & Psychological Development (last offered Spring 2017)
— PSYC 445 – Advanced Seminar in Health Psychology (last offered Fall 2011)
— SMGT 361 – Sport Finance (last offered Spring 2014)
— SOCI 321 – Criminology (last offered Fall 2015)
— SOCI 344 – Sociology of Mental Health (last offered Fall 2016)
SOCI 345 – Medical Sociology (last offered Fall 2015)
SOCI 368 – Sociology of Disaster (last offered Fall 2016)
SOCI 406 – Demographic Methods (last offered Spring 2017)
SOCI 422 – Social Autopsies (last offered Fall 2016)
SOCI 425 – Population Health Seminar (last offered Spring 2017)
SOCI 465 – Gender & Health (last offered Fall 2015)
SOSC/BUSI/GLHT 464 – Social Entrepreneurship (last offered Spring 2017)

In some cases, transfer credit may be awarded for courses completed at
other schools after the student has matriculated at Rice. Requests for
transfer credits will be considered by the director on an individual basis.
However, all students should keep in mind the university’s policies on
graduation requirements, and transfer credit, including the requirement that
students must complete more than half of their upper-level major work at
Rice

Student Learning Outcomes for the BA Degree with a Major in Social Policy
Analysis

1. Understand social policy as an interdisciplinary field and demonstrate the
ability to synthesize key knowledge, theories, and research across
different disciplines in the social sciences.

2. Develop critical analysis, problem solving and research skills in order to
design and evaluate evidence-based interventions for social problems.

3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate policy research and findings in
written and oral formats.

Sample Program

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<td>Policy</td>
<td>Approaches to Poverty</td>
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<td>Minority Politics</td>
<td>ANTH 326 Inst</td>
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APPENDIX A
Sample Syllabus for SOPA 200:
Approaches to Social Policy

Prof. Robert Stein Ext. 3371
Sewall 490

This course provides an introduction to the social sciences and the study of public policy. Students will review the nature of different disciplines and their research programs. These approaches will be studied as different paradigms for policy making.

Required texts:

Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions
Carl Hempel, Philosophy of Natural Science
Robert Reich, Public Management in a Democratic Society
Weimer and Vining Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practices

Course Outline and reading assignments:

I. Introduction

A. A systems approach to public policy
   1. Policy stages and cyclical majorities
   2. Policy implementation and policy impact

   Reading: Hempel, Philosophy of Natural Science (entire book), Weimer and Vining, chapters 1-2

II. Paradigms and a normal science

A. A general theory of social science paradigms

   Reading: Kuhn, The Structure of Science Revolutions, ch. 1-6

B. Crises and new theories

   Reading: Kuhn, The Structure ... ch. 7-13
   Terrance Ball, "From Paradigms to Research Programs," American Journal of Political Science (1976)
C. Logical positivism and current social science paradigm

Reading: Blaug, "From the received view to the views of Popper."
Blaug, "From Popper to the new heterodoxy,"

III. Social science approaches to the study of public policy

A. An economic theory

Reading: Blaug, "The theory of consumer behavior Blaug, "the theory of the firm"
Weimer and Vining, Chapter 3

B. Political choice theory

Reading: Barry, "Introduction: the state of political theory."
Barry, "Political participation as rational action."
Barry, "Economic theory of Democracy." Weimer and Vining, Chapters 4-5

C. A sociological approach

Reading: Durkheim, "Social facts, social laws and reduction."
Merton, “The bearing of sociological theory on empirical research.”
Merton, “The bearing of empirical research on sociological theory.”

D. A historical approach

Reading: Fogel, "Scientific history and traditonal history,"
Elton, "Two kinds of history,"
Weingartner, "The quarrel about historical explanation."

IV. Case Studies and Practicum.

Readings: selected chapters and cases in Reich Public Management in a Democratic Society and Weimer and Vining, chapters 6-8
Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree with a Major in Social Policy Analysis

Program Learning Outcomes for the BA Degree with a Major in Social Policy Analysis

Upon completing the BA degree with a major in Social Policy Analysis, students will be able to:

1. Understand social policy as an interdisciplinary field and demonstrate the ability to synthesize key knowledge, theories, and research across different disciplines in the social sciences.
2. Develop critical analysis, problem solving and research skills in order to design and evaluate evidence-based interventions for social problems.
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate policy research and findings in written and oral formats.

Requirements for the BA Degree with a Major in Social Policy Analysis

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements. Students pursuing the BA degree with a major in Social Policy Analysis must meet the requirements as listed below.

Summary

| Total Credit Hours Required for the Major in Social Policy Analysis: | 42-43 |
| Total Credit Hours Required for the BA Degree with a Major in Social Policy Analysis | 120 |

Degree Requirements

| Prerequisites | Core Requirements |  |
| Prerequisites | Core Requirements |  |
| MATH 101 | Single Variable Calculus I | 3 |
| MATH 102 | Single Variable Calculus II | 3 |
| ECON 100 | Principles of Economics | 3 |
| POLI 210 | American Government and Politics | 3 |
| POLI 338/POST 338/SOSC 301 | Policy Analysis | 3 |
| Select one from the following: | | 3-4 |
| ECON 307/STAT 310 | Probability and Statistics |  |
| POLI 395 | Introduction to Statistics |  |
| PSYC 339 | Statistical Methods-Psychology |  |
SOC 382  
Social Statistics

Advanced Courses

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<td>SOPA 401</td>
<td>Capstone Research II (Spring)</td>
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Electives (Breadth Requirement)  
15

Students must complete a total of 5 courses (15 credit hours) from the breadth areas listed below. At least 1 course must be taken from each of the 3 areas (see below for course lists for each breadth area):

- Groups and Identities
- Institutions
- Policies, Processes and Outcomes

Total Credit Hours Required for the Major in Social Policy Analysis  
42-43

University Graduation Requirements  
77-78

Total Credit Hours Required for the Bachelor of Arts Degree with a Major in Social Policy Analysis  
120

Footnotes and Additional Information  
Includes coursework completed as Distribution, FWIS, LPAP, Upper-Level, 60 hours outside of the major (if applicable), and any additional academic program requirements. The “hours outside of the major” requirement may include all of the above university requirements.

Electives (Breadth Requirement)

Students must complete a total of 5 courses (15 credit hours) from the 3 breadth areas listed below. At least 1 course must be taken from each of the 3 breadth areas.

**Breadth Area: Groups and Identities**

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<td>LING 303</td>
<td>Language and Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LING 322</td>
<td>Language and Ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI 330</td>
<td>Minority Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 331/SWGS 331</td>
<td>Psychology of Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 475</td>
<td>Stereotyping and Prejudice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 301</td>
<td>Social Inequality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 309</td>
<td>Race &amp; Ethnic Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 313</td>
<td>Demography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 329</td>
<td>Multiracial America</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Breadth Area: Institutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANTH 326</td>
<td>Law, Power and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANTH 341/HURC 341</td>
<td>Museums and Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANTH 345</td>
<td>Archaeology in Social Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Code</td>
<td>Course Title</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 210</td>
<td>Behavioral Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 239</td>
<td>Law and Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 343</td>
<td>Corporate Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 355</td>
<td>Financial Markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 365/HIST 365</td>
<td>World Economic History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 435</td>
<td>Industrial Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 439</td>
<td>Advanced Topics in Law and Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 452</td>
<td>Religion, Ethics, &amp; Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 455</td>
<td>Money and Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI 317</td>
<td>The Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI 318</td>
<td>The Presidency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI 321</td>
<td>American Constitutional Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI 332</td>
<td>Urban Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI 335</td>
<td>Political Environment of Business</td>
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<td>POLI 336</td>
<td>Politics of Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI 342</td>
<td>Politics of the Judiciary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 231</td>
<td>Introduction to Cognitive Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 420/POLI 420/COMP 435</td>
<td>Election Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCI 308</td>
<td>Houston: Sociology of a City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 310</td>
<td>Urban Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 314</td>
<td>Science at Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 319</td>
<td>Work and Occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 325</td>
<td>Sociology of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 437</td>
<td>Sociology of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 358</td>
<td>Crime, Punishment and Society</td>
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</table>

**Breadth Area: Policies, Processes and Outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECON 418</td>
<td>Economic Forecasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 432</td>
<td>Political Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 437</td>
<td>Energy Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 450</td>
<td>Economic Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECON 462</td>
<td>Economics of Human Capital</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECON 470</td>
<td>Market Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 479</td>
<td>Economic Modeling and Public Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECON 480/ENST 480</td>
<td>Environmental Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 481</td>
<td>Health Economics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see [Transfer Credit](#). Additionally, students pursuing the major in Social Policy Analysis must be aware of the following departmental or program guidelines:

- Request for transfer credit will be considered by the program director (and/or the program's official transfer credit advisor) on an individual case-by-base basis.

### Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECON 483</td>
<td>Public Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 484</td>
<td>Public Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI 356</td>
<td>Representation &amp; Policy Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI 435</td>
<td>Seminar on Money and Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI 438</td>
<td>Race and Public Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 345</td>
<td>Health Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 346</td>
<td>Stress and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 435</td>
<td>Pollution and Psychological Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 445</td>
<td>Advanced Seminar in Health Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMGT 361</td>
<td>Sport Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCI 321</td>
<td>Criminology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 344</td>
<td>Sociology of Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 345</td>
<td>Medical Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 368</td>
<td>Sociology of Disaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 406</td>
<td>Basic Demographic Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 422</td>
<td>Social Autopsies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 425</td>
<td>Population Health Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 465</td>
<td>Gender and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOSC 464/BUSI 464/GLHT 464</td>
<td>Social Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
March 28, 2017

Dear Dr. McIntosh and Members of the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum:

I write to express my support for the Social Policy Analysis major. The broad coursework and hands-on learning and instruction activities in this cross-disciplinary major span the social sciences at Rice, and will provide a solid educational structure that will allow our students to address the basic areas of policy design, analysis, and communication.

With regards,

Marie Lynn Miranda, PhD
Provost
February 1, 2017

Letter of Support for the New Major in Social Policy Analysis

I am writing to enthusiastically support the proposal for a new major in Social Policy Analysis. The interdisciplinary perspective, well-structured curriculum and emphasis on instruction in theory and method makes the new major a timely and welcome replacement for the existing Policy Studies Major. The major’s distinctive focus on domestic policy design, analysis and communication, combined with the hands-on approach to learning and instruction, should provide comprehensive training for students who are interested in social policy analysis.

Our Department offers several courses that are suitable as electives toward the major. All of these courses are taught on a regular basis. In addition to our commitment to regularly offer courses that will apply toward the major, our department is happy to provide advising and mentoring to students who elect to major in Social Policy Analysis. We are also happy to cost-share lectures and other events as well as provide administrative support as the need arises.

To conclude, I wholeheartedly support the establishment of the major in Social Policy Analysis at Rice University. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Eugenia Georges
Professor and Chair
Department of Anthropology
March 11, 2017

Letter of Support for the Social Science Policy Analysis Major

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse the launch of the new Social Science Policy Major at Rice University as presented in the SOPA proposal dated March 6, 2017. As discussed in the proposal, students in this new interdisciplinary major will be trained to become leaders in the field of social policy evaluation and analysis. The coursework will span the social sciences, drawing on the expertise among the faculty in those disciplines. The economics department will be able to absorb the impact of the new major under the agreed-upon conditions of SOPA 400/401 faculty involvement and the compensation for additional staffing provided by the Dean. The economics department looks forward to contributing to the major in terms of coursework and faculty. I believe that the major, in many ways the first of its kind, will become a template for other universities to follow.

Best,

Kenneth I. Wolpin
Chair, Department of Economics
To: Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum
Re: Social Policy Analysis Major Proposal
Date: January 25, 2017

I am writing to express my full and enthusiastic support for the proposal submitted for creating a new Social Policy Analysis major. Students across campus will benefit from this broadly interdisciplinary major, as it will allow them tackle core questions in policy design, analysis, and communication from a diverse set of disciplinary perspectives. Linguistics is pleased to participate in this effort.

Specifically, the proposed Social Policy Analysis major offers several Linguistics courses as electives in the “Groups and Identities” area of specialization. These courses are central to the Linguistics curriculum as well, and I assure the committee that our department will continue to staff them and teach them with enough frequency such that students registered for the major will be able to fulfill the requirements within a four year period.

Overall, I strongly support the timely proposal to develop a Social Policy Analysis major at Rice. This faculty-led initiative will be welcomed by the undergraduate students, and I very much look forward to its success. If can be of any further help, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Michel Achard, Professor and Chair
Department of Linguistics
Rice University
Memorandum

To:  Antonio Merlo, Dean of Social Sciences  
From:  Ashley Leeds, Chair of Political Science  
Subject:  SOPA major proposal  
Date:  March 16, 2017

Political science is enthusiastic about Rice offering a program in social policy analysis, and we look forward to being an affiliated department.

There will be a significant impact on our department. Specifically, Professor Melissa Marschall is tentatively scheduled to serve as the Director of the SOPA major, and Professor Bob Stein is scheduled to teach both SOPA 200 and POLI 338 in the first year. These two courses must be offered every year. In addition, Professors Marschall and Stein are expecting to serve as capstone mentors. We will be able to absorb this as long as the expectation is not that an individual faculty member commits all of his/her courses to the SOPA major year upon year. Our biggest concern is that we have needs for graduate teaching in the public policy area also, and Stein and Marschall are the two faculty members most likely to offer that. Thus, if Professor Stein were expected to teach SOPA 200, POLI 338, and a SOPA capstone every year, thus leaving no room for him to teach in our graduate program, we would find that problematic. I am assured, however, that Professor Marschall and others will rotate in on SOPA 200 and POLI 338. I am pleased to see as well that Dean Merlo plans to offer compensation to departments when faculty teach in the SOPA program.

In sum, we enthusiastically support the development of this major and we expect to be able to absorb its impact.
January 31, 2017

Letter of Support for the Social Policy Analysis Major

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse the establishment of the new Social Policy Analysis major, an interdisciplinary major housed in the School of Social Sciences at Rice University. Policy design, analysis, and communication will be the focus of the Social Policy Analysis major. As outlined in the proposal, the development of this new major could make Rice University the first to offer such a major in the U.S., separate and distinct from the more common Policy Studies majors and Public Policy majors. Because of the “interdisciplinary orientation, its structured curriculum, and its emphasis on integrating rigorous instruction in theory and method with hands-on, skills-based instruction by social science faculty,” Rice will be uniquely positioned to prepare and train new leaders in the field of social policy analysis.

Because of the faculty expertise which already exist in the areas of research design, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and critical appraisal within the School of Social Sciences, and our position as a major institution in the city of Houston, we will positioned as “one of the most relevant and demographically diverse urban policy labs in the nation.” As such, we will be able to make significant contributions to improving the lives of not only Houston residents, but throughout many other urban environments across the nation.

As explained in the proposal, Rice University and the School of Social Sciences faculty already possess the requisite skills and knowledge in the areas of research design, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and critical appraisal, and, when combined with existing and future collaborations throughout the city, will propel this program to the forefront of opportunities to have maximum impact, locally, as well as nationally.

The launch of the Social Policy Analysis major will have no adverse impact on the undergraduate psychology curriculum, since no faculty resources will be diverted from teaching undergraduate courses to teaching in the new program.

To conclude, I wholeheartedly support the establishment of the Social Policy Analysis major in the School of Social Sciences at Rice University. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best,

Eduardo Salas
Allyn R. & Gladys M. Cline Professor and Department Chair of Psychology
Letter of Support for a New Major in Social Policy Analysis

On behalf of the Sociology Department, I am writing to support the establishment of a new major in Social Policy Analysis (SOPA) at Rice University. As detailed in the proposal, the School of Social Sciences is well positioned to support a successful launch of a new major in Social Policy Analysis. For the Sociology Department in particular, we see the SOPA program’s focus on specific problems relating to human well-being, and their policy solutions, as directly complimenting the primary research focus of the sociology faculty (and by extension, the content of our classes and major): to examine the causes and consequences of social inequality and the patterns and processes of culture. The interdisciplinary nature of the SOPA curriculum, paired with training in how to conduct evidence-based evaluations of various policy interventions and programs, will help our students further develop a desirable and in-demand skill set.

While sociology faculty will be involved, this new major should have minimum impact on our department. The courses listed for the SOPA major are already being taught by sociology faculty, and our expectation is that relatively few students will choose to major in Social Policy Analysis in lieu of majoring in Sociology. More likely, given the number of cross-listed classes and our department’s long-standing focus on inequality and social problems, students will choose to double-major in Sociology and Social Policy Analysis. The new major is very complimentary to the content and focus of the Sociology major (and minor), and our expectation is that this combination would be of significant value to our students on the job market.

Furthermore, we expect that absorbing the impact of faculty involvement in the capstone courses (SOPA 400/401) will be a fairly smooth process. Members of our department already teach team-based research project courses (SOCI 327/328 – courses that have similarities to what is being proposed for SOPA 400/401, and detailed in the SOPA new major proposal). Additionally, faculty compensation for teaching a capstone course (i.e., teaching credit for a course with six or more students as well as funds to the department to cover a patch hire position, or a stipend for classes under six students) is fair.

In closing, let me reiterate our strong support for the approval and launch of a new major in Social Policy Analysis. Please contact me anytime if you have questions or need additional materials for me to support this proposal.

Sincerely,

Bridget K Gorman, Chair, Rice Sociology Department
Feb. 1, 2017

My name is Clark Haptonstall and I am the Chair of the Department of Sport Management at Rice University. This is a letter of support for the proposed Social Policy Analysis major.

The School of Social Sciences considered this major after its faculty recognized the need for a curriculum designed to educate Rice students into becoming the future leaders in developing social change for the purposes of improving a community and its citizens. This major was constructed to prepare our students to handle the social challenges that face our towns and our country. I appreciate that the major is intended to be a combination of theory coupled with hands-on experiences that move students outside of the classroom and into the field.

This is also an excellent opportunity for Rice to be a leader in this area as there are no other universities offering such a program. The location of our campus is also a major benefit. Houston is the most diverse city in the United States so the opportunities for our students to gain real-world experience and make decisions that truly impact a community are plentiful.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my support for the creation of the Social Policy Analysis major at Rice University. Certainly feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

My best regards,

C. Haptonstall

Clark D. Haptonstall, Ph.D.
Chair
Department of Sport Management
Rice University
March 17, 2017

Letter of Support for the New Major in Social Policy Analysis

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse the launch of a new major in Social Policy Analysis in the School of Social Sciences at Rice University. I applaud this faculty-led, multi-disciplinary initiative by the Departments of Anthropology, Economics, Linguistics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Sport Management which plays a critical role in setting the strategic priorities for the school and in moving the school forward toward developing its own, distinctive identity.

As pointed out in the proposal, the School of Social Sciences at Rice is uniquely positioned to launch a very successful major in Social Policy Analysis, both because of the reputation of its faculty, and because of its location. With extensive faculty expertise in research design, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and program evaluation, Rice’s School of Social Sciences is poised to lead in the development of groundbreaking educational training in social policy analysis. We also recognize that academic research is only as helpful as the audience that it reaches. To increase our impact beyond academia, our faculty has formed partnerships with local and state agencies to ensure research on effective interventions is put into the hands of actual decision makers with the power to translate evidence into practice. We are in one of the most relevant, demographically diverse urban policy labs in the nation. Coupled with the Houston community’s willingness to experiment, the city is the ideal place to draw in real world issues to incorporate experiential learning into our new program. Interventions piloted and studied here have broad applicability to other urban environments across the country.

The cross-disciplinary coursework in the proposed curriculum will train our students to tackle each step of identifying, developing, piloting, critically evaluating, implementing, and continuously monitoring social policy. By incorporating our departments in anthropology, economics, linguistics, political science, psychology, sociology and sport management each discipline will contribute unique elements including how to determine metrics, measure success, analyze resource allocation and return on investment, understand the cultural and political contexts for implementation, and disseminate findings.

The Dean’s office in the School of Social Sciences is fully committed to provide the necessary administrative support for the major and help with the day-to-day organization and operation, including developing and maintaining the major’s website. In addition, the Dean’s office will provide financial resources for the faculty director’s stipend, and for the costs of the capstone courses (SOPA 400/401), including compensating departments for allowing their faculty to teach these courses in lieu of courses in their own major, and providing incentives to individual faculty.
members for supervising the students’ research projects (on a per student basis). For example, in the first year of the program, the year-long capstone sequence (SOPA 400/401) will count as one course toward the teaching load of the faculty member designated as the instructor of record. Moving forward, as the major grows in number, there will be multiple instructors of record for the capstone sequence to ensure a faculty-student ratio of no more than 1:20. Whenever multiple instructors of record will be necessary (as determined by the major director and faculty advisory board), the year-long capstone sequence will count as one course toward the teaching load of each faculty listed as an instructor of record and the affected departments will be compensated accordingly.

To conclude, I wholeheartedly support the establishment of a new major in Social Policy Analysis in the School of Social Sciences at Rice University. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Antonio M. Merlo
Dean of the School of Social Sciences and
George A. Peterkin Professor of Economics
February 7, 2017

On behalf of the Social Sciences Undergraduate Advisory Board, we are writing to enthusiastically endorse the establishment of a new major in Social Policy Analysis (SOPA) at Rice University.

We believe that the interdisciplinary nature of policy design, analysis, communication, and outcome measurement meets a need that is requested by Rice Undergraduates. We have conducted 11 meetings at each Residential College in which the Dean of Social Sciences has presented this information and found nothing but positive support.

As outlined in the proposal, this major is the first of its kind in the United States and provides tremendous opportunity to enhance the current Policy Studies major. The interdisciplinary orientation, structured curriculum, and integration of rigorous theory with hands-on instruction draws upon the distinct position of Rice’s dedication towards progress in the overlap of various areas of departmental learning.

In addition to faculty expertise in the areas of study, the major will leverage our unique position in the city of Houston, which is “one of the most relevant and demographically diverse urban policy labs in the nation.” Keeping with Rice fashion, the City of Houston is also eager to provide the best solutions and improve the lives of Houston residents as well as offer best practices throughout urban environments in the United States and around the world.

This program will provide foundations for creating cross-collaborative environments in which faculty and students will break through the barriers common to singular thinking about social problems through the lens of only one department. This is an ongoing theme which we have seen students ask for again and again (such as the results of the Student Association’s Rice Education of the Future Initiative conducted two years ago).

The creation of this program will fulfill a much needed service in interdisciplinary thinking as well as benefit each individual department within the School of Social Sciences as a whole. Based upon the feedback of the students we represent, and the incorporation of student ideas into the final proposal seen before you, we stand behind the creation of the SOPA program.

In conclusion, as representatives of the Social Sciences Undergraduates, we passionately support the establishment of the Social Policy Analysis major within the School of Social Sciences at Rice University. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Olivia Aguilar, Griffin Thomas, Sawyer Knight
Co-Chairs Social Sciences Undergraduate Advisory Board
oa11@rice.edu - gft2@rice.edu - smk8@rice.edu

1 Proposal for a New Major in the School of Social Sciences, Social Policies Analysis, Section: Rationale