

MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Program Director: C. Burgat

To survive in the complex political environment of Washington, DC, the legislative affairs professional must have a comprehensive understanding of how Congress operates, how decisions are made on and off Capitol Hill, how to influence those decisions, and how to accomplish specific objectives within the legislative process.

Developed in consultation with government relations experts and legislative specialists, the master of professional studies (MPS) in legislative affairs program delivers the knowledge and skills graduates need to establish themselves as sought-after operatives in the national policymaking arena. Students learn how Congress and the White House develop public policy and examine the workings of Congress from the perspective of both scholars and practitioners.

The curriculum covers the full scope of the policymaking environment, from interest groups and PACs, to the media, to policy-specific deep dives into topics like cybersecurity and environmental policy. Classes meet Monday through Thursday evenings at the Hall of States on Capitol Hill. The program can be completed online or in a hybrid format in less than two years.

Visit the program website (<http://gspm.gwu.edu/legislative-affairs/>) for additional information.

ADMISSIONS

Admission Deadlines: Fall Priority Admission/General Scholarship Deadline - April 1

Fall International Application Deadline - May 1

Fall General Admission Deadline - July 1

Spring Priority Admission/General Scholarship Deadline - September 1

Spring International Application Deadline - September 1

Spring General Admission Deadline - November 1

Summer Priority Admission - March 15

Summer General Admission Deadline - April 15

Recommendations: Two (2) letters of recommendation from professional and/or academic references; at least one academic reference for those who graduated within the last five years.

Prior academic records: Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended should be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission.

Transcripts from institutions outside the United States must be accompanied by an official transcript evaluation from an accredited independent evaluating agency. Please be sure you request a detailed, course-by-course evaluation that includes all course titles, credit hours, grade-point average (GPA), United States degree equivalency, and date of degree conferral. Please see the list of acceptable foreign credential evaluation services (<https://www.naces.org/members> (<https://www.naces.org/members/>)).

Statement of purpose: In an essay of 250-500 words, state your purpose in undertaking graduate study in this field and describe your academic objectives, research interests, and career plans. Also, discuss your related qualifications, including collegiate, professional, and community activities, as well as any other substantial accomplishments not already mentioned on the application form.

Additional requirements: A resumé.

International applicants only: Please review International Applicant Information (<https://www.cps.gwu.edu/international-student-admissions> (<https://www.cps.gwu.edu/international-student-admissions/>)) carefully for details on required documents, earlier deadlines for applicants requiring an I-20 or DS-2019 from GW, and English language requirements.

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

College of Professional Studies – Office of Admission
George Washington University
805 21st Street, NW
Suite 301
Washington DC 20052

Contact for questions:

CPS Office of Admission
applycps@gwu.edu ~ 571-553-0025 (phone) ~ 202-242-1047 (fax)

8:30 am – 5:00 pm EST, Monday through Friday

REQUIREMENTS

Code	Title	Credits
Required		
LGAF 6201	Politics and Public Policy	
LGAF 6202	Legislative Politics	
LGAF 6203	Executive–Legislative Relations	
LGAF 6205	Legislative Data and Analytics	
LGAF 6298	Capstone in Legislative Affairs	

LGAF 6298 should be taken in a student's penultimate or final term.

Electives

Six courses from the following:

LGAF 6212	Congressional Committees
LGAF 6217	Budgetary Politics
LGAF 6219	American Presidency
LGAF 6220	Congress and the Courts
LGAF 6221	Executive Branch Decision Making
LGAF 6222	Parties and Elections
LGAF 6223	Public Opinion and Political Socialization
LGAF 6224	Interest Group Politics
LGAF 6228	Media and Congressional Politics
LGAF 6233	Comparative Legislatures
LGAF 6234	PACs and Congress
LGAF 6235	Ethics and Congress
LGAF 6240	Special Topics in Legislative Affairs
LGAF 6241	Legislative Writing and Research
LGAF 6242	Legislative Drafting
LGAF 6243	Advanced Legislative Procedure
LGAF 6244	Running for and Representing in the U.S. Congress
LGAF 6246	Congress and Foreign Policy
LGAF 6247	Managing a Congressional Office
LGAF 6248	Religion and Politics
LGAF 6249	Congress and National Security Policy
LGAF 6251	Budgetary Policy
LGAF 6260	Special Topics: Domestic Policy
LGAF 6261	Congress and Defense Policy
LGAF 6262	Congress and Intelligence Policy
LGAF 6263	Congress and Cybersecurity Policy
LGAF 6264	U.S. Energy and Environmental Policy
LGAF 6266	Congress and Trade Policy

LGAF 6267	Congress and Healthcare Policy
LGAF 6270	Special Topics: Congress and Foreign Policy
LGAF 6271	Race and Ethnicity in American Politics
LGAF 6272	Congressional and Political Reforms
LGAF 6273	Congressional Oversight
LGAF 6281	Congress and Federalism
LGAF 6290	Independent Study

COURSES

Explanation of Course Numbers

- Courses in the 1000s are primarily introductory undergraduate courses
- Those in the 2000s to 4000s are upper-level undergraduate courses that also may be taken for graduate credit with permission and additional work assigned
- Those in the 6000s and 8000s are for master's, doctoral, and professional-level students
- The 6000s are open to advanced undergraduate students with approval of the instructor and the dean or advising office

LGAF 6201. Politics and Public Policy. 3 Credits.

Examination of political processes that influence policy formulation, policy implementation, and the uses of policy analysis. Topics include political and policy decision making, actors, and process.

LGAF 6202. Legislative Politics. 3 Credits.

Theory, structure, and process of the U.S. Congress, with emphasis on member–constituency relations, individual and collective decision making, party and committee activities, executive–legislative relations, and interest-group activities.

LGAF 6203. Executive–Legislative Relations. 3 Credits.

Political and institutional relationships between the executive and legislative branches of the federal government.

LGAF 6205. Legislative Data and Analytics. 3 Credits.

Qualitative and quantitative techniques, tools, and processes used to wield data for effective decision-making in the legislative arena.

LGAF 6212. Congressional Committees. 3 Credits.

Overview of the history, function, and influence of Senate and House committees in the U.S. Congress.

LGAF 6217. Budgetary Politics. 3 Credits.

Examination of federal budget policymaking and politics.

LGAF 6219. American Presidency. 3 Credits.

Personalized and institutionalized aspects of the presidency, with emphasis on the politics of contemporary policymaking.

LGAF 6220. Congress and the Courts. 3 Credits.

Institutional and political relationship between the U.S. Congress and the federal courts.

LGAF 6221. Executive Branch Decision Making. 3 Credits.

LGAF 6222. Parties and Elections. 3 Credits.

Nature and functions of American political parties: organizational status, nominating and electoral politics, and role in governing.

LGAF 6223. Public Opinion and Political Socialization. 3 Credits.

Sources and dynamics of public opinion and political socialization.

LGAF 6224. Interest Group Politics. 3 Credits.

Theory, structure, and activities of interest groups in American politics.

LGAF 6228. Media and Congressional Politics. 3 Credits.

Role of the media in American politics, with emphasis on news coverage, political debates, and political advertising, with their impact on the electorate.

LGAF 6233. Comparative Legislatures. 3 Credits.

Selected problems of legislative theory and behavior from a comparative perspective, with particular reference to the parliamentary systems of Germany, France, and Britain.

LGAF 6234. PACs and Congress. 3 Credits.

Examination of the structure and function of political action committees in the United States in the context of wider arenas of campaign finance, elections, and issue management.

LGAF 6235. Ethics and Congress. 3 Credits.

The role of ethics in the U.S. Congress.

LGAF 6240. Special Topics in Legislative Affairs. 3 Credits.

In-depth coverage of significant theoretical and empirical issues in American politics, including such topics as political behavior, electoral politics, and race and politics.

LGAF 6241. Legislative Writing and Research. 3 Credits.

Using specialized databases and policy journals and communicating research findings to a sophisticated, policy-driven audience.

LGAF 6242. Legislative Drafting. 3 Credits.

Introduction for non-lawyers to the process of legislative drafting in the U.S. Congress.

LGAF 6243. Advanced Legislative Procedure. 3 Credits.

Detailed study of the rules, procedures, traditions, and constitutional underpinnings that govern the work of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

LGAF 6244. Running for and Representing in the U.S. Congress. 3 Credits.

Running for and serving in Congress from a member's perspective.

LGAF 6246. Congress and Foreign Policy. 3 Credits.

The role of Congress in setting foreign policy.

LGAF 6247. Managing a Congressional Office. 3 Credits.

Practical consideration of the proper structure, organization, and management of a Congressional office.

LGAF 6248. Religion and Politics. 3 Credits.

The influence of religion on politics in the United States.

LGAF 6249. Congress and National Security Policy. 3 Credits.

The role of Congress in setting defense policy.

LGAF 6251. Budgetary Policy. 3 Credits.

Analysis of U.S. monetary and fiscal policy.

LGAF 6260. Special Topics: Domestic Policy. 3 Credits.

Analysis of U.S. policy on selected domestic problems.

LGAF 6261. Congress and Defense Policy. 3 Credits.

The role of Congress in U.S. defense policy.

LGAF 6262. Congress and Intelligence Policy. 3 Credits.

The role of Congress in U.S. intelligence policy.

LGAF 6263. Congress and Cybersecurity Policy. 3 Credits.

The role of Congress in U.S. cybersecurity policy.

LGAF 6264. U.S. Energy and Environmental Policy. 3 Credits.

An overview of energy and environmental policymaking in the United States.

LGAF 6266. Congress and Trade Policy. 3 Credits.

The role of Congress in setting U.S. trade policy.

LGAF 6267. Congress and Healthcare Policy. 3 Credits.

The role of Congress in U.S. healthcare policy.

LGAF 6270. Special Topics: Congress and Foreign Policy. 3 Credits.

Analysis of U.S. policy on selected issues, challenges, or world regions.

LGAF 6271. Race and Ethnicity in American Politics. 3 Credits.

The role of race and ethnicity in American politics.

LGAF 6272. Congressional and Political Reforms. 3 Credits.

Contemporary political reform in the United States, both inside and outside of Congress.

LGAF 6273. Congressional Oversight. 3 Credits.

Historical origins, constitutional foundation, and purpose of Congressional oversight in U.S. government.

LGAF 6281. Congress and Federalism. 3 Credits.

The role of federalism in the U.S. Congress.

LGAF 6290. Independent Study. 1-3 Credits.

Directed readings in a topic related to Congress and public policymaking. Limited to Legislative Affairs degree candidates. Written permission of program director required.

LGAF 6298. Capstone in Legislative Affairs. 3 Credits.

Application of legislative strategies, tactics, and situational considerations to advanced political problems.

LGAF 6299. Thesis. 3 Credits.

LGAF 6300. Thesis. 3 Credits.