



Tools of Analysis Requirement for MPP Students

Updated: Summer 2017

In addition to the analytic skills incorporated in the MPP required core, MPP students should select at least two additional “tools of analysis” courses from the following list of course options:

- **PPPA 6005 – Public Budgeting, Revenue & Expenditure Analysis**
 - What: This course provides an introduction to governmental budgeting and finance. The course will survey the broad areas of public budgeting, governmental expenditure and management, and revenue analysis in the public sector. Students will learn the principles of public budgeting, budgetary accounting, the key steps of the federal budget process, the vocabulary of the field, and basic tools of tax analysis. Students will utilize Excel to perform budgetary analysis.
 - When: Typically offered in Fall, Spring, and first Summer sessions
 - Who: Students who are looking to understand the public budgeting process should consider taking this course.

- **PPPA 6016 Public and Nonprofit Program Evaluation [Pre-req: 6002]**
 - What: This course reviews the theory and practice of program evaluation and evaluative research. Exploration of scope, methods, limitations, and ethics of current practice in evaluation, incorporating economic, political, social, and administrative factors. Examination of methodological considerations for design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
 - When: Typically offered in Fall and Spring semesters
 - Who: Students who are looking to develop program evaluation skills or want to undertake policy research or monitoring and evaluation efforts at a non-profit organization, government agency, or think tank should consider taking this course.

- **PPPA 6015 – Benefit-Cost Analysis [Prerequisite: 6014]**
 - What: This course links economic theory with policy analysis, using the tool commonly referred to as “benefit-cost analysis” or BCA. As a formal assessment of a policy’s costs and benefits, BCA attempts to measure and compare the economic efficiency of policy options. The goal of the course is to provide you with the conceptual foundations and practical skills you will need to be thoughtful consumers and producers of BCA. The course is typically structured around a substantial benefit-cost analysis project undertaken on a topic of the student’s choosing.
 - When: Typically offered in Fall and Spring semesters
 - Who: Students who are looking to develop quantitative policy analysis skills, as well as those interested in regulatory policy analysis should consider taking this course

- **PPPA 6020 – Decision Modeling for Public Policy [Prerequisite: 6013]**
 - What: This course introduces students to practical modeling approaches (e.g., simulation, probabilistic sensitivity analysis, and optimization) used by policy analysts to explain and assess complex problems, to bound a solution space, or to determine what data is needed to support policy decisions. Students will utilize Excel to analyze policy.
 - When: Typically offered in Spring semester
 - Who: Students who are looking to develop practical quantitative policy analysis skills should consider taking this course.

- **PPPA 8022 – Econometrics for Policy Research II [Prerequisite: 6013]**
 - What: This course covers more advanced econometric methods in public policy research. Students will develop capabilities in more advanced empirical modeling and analysis by critically reading research, completing a series of empirical assignments and an empirical research paper. Students will strengthen their knowledge of Stata.
 - When: Typically offered in Fall and Spring semesters
 - Who: Students who are looking to deepen their understanding of econometrics and gain practical research skills should consider taking this course.

- **PPPA 8023 – Mixed Methods in Research Design [Prerequisite: 6013]**
 - What: This course bridges the gap between qualitative and quantitative research designs. It explores historical and philosophical foundations of mixed method research design, reviews “canonical” designs, and provides opportunities to develop and hone skills to implement mixed methods research designs. The overarching goal of this course is to provide students a foundation that will give them both the capacity and the courage to undertake and implement mixed method research designs, learn and use it in conjunction with other approaches such as experiments.
 - When: Typically offered in the Spring semester
 - Who: Students who are looking to integrate qualitative and quantitative research designs should consider taking this course.

- **PPPA 6085 – Data Visualization [Prerequisite: 6013]**
 - What: Both theoretically and practically, this course teaches students how to present quantitative information as intuitively as possible. We review the major contributors to the theory of the visual display of quantitative information, and we study at least one programming language as an example of how to implement these techniques. For their final paper, students re-do a policy paper, improving the visual display of the quantitative analysis.
 - When: usually spring semester
 - Who: students who want to learn how to communicate numbers clearly and powerfully.

Still have questions about the MPP tools requirement? Discuss your options with your faculty advisor or the MPP program director (Elizabeth Rigby: erigby@gwu.edu).