



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, D C

School of Public Affairs Ph.D. Program

(Ph.D.s in political science; public administration; and justice, law and society)

Department Website: <http://www.american.edu/spa/>

1. Learning Outcomes

Overall Goal: Produce scholars who can influence theory and practice within their disciplinary field(s) through effective careers in academic institutions, think tanks, or other research-oriented organizations, etc.

Doctoral graduates will be able to:

1. Articulate key theories and controversies in their field(s)
2. Conduct a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods
3. Formulate sound research questions and study approaches
4. Write academically sound and influential papers
5. Teach college level courses in their subject matter area(s)

2. **Assessment Plan**

Measures	Target	Learning Outcomes	Cycle and Reviewers
<p>1. Articulate key theories and controversies in their field(s)</p>	<p>Significant percentage of candidates are able to pass comprehensive examinations in their field(s) of study</p>	<p>1. Passing performance on culminating comprehensive examinations which demonstrates knowledge of key theories and controversies</p> <p>3. Successful dissertation proposal which demonstrates ability to formulate sound research questions and study approaches</p> <p>Successful dissertation research and defense which demonstrates ability to formulate and conduct sound research, apply relevant theory and analytic methods, and write sound and influential papers.</p> <p>Course papers and research projects that demonstrate theory and/or methodological comprehensions as well as ability to write sound and influential papers.</p>	<p>For all measures, the Director of the SPA Ph.D. programs and all faculty who teach in the programs meet every June to review each doctoral student's progress and accomplishments and consider revisions to the doctoral courses and overall program based on the indicated measures and feedback from students</p>

2. Able to conduct a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods	Candidates are able to pass specific statistical and methodological tools of research qualifiers	Successfully pass Conduct I and Conduct II courses which demonstrate comprehension of research philosophy, methodology and approaches.	See above
3. Formulate sound research questions and study approaches	Candidates are able to develop approved dissertation proposals	Successful dissertation proposal to address a specific research question	See above
4. Write academically sound and influential papers	Candidates are able to successfully conduct and defend their dissertation Publish and present papers in scholarly and research-oriented journals and at conferences	Defense and approval of dissertation Track papers published or presented at conferences by students and recent alums Network with graduates and colleagues at academic conferences and workshops to track contributions and advancement in the field.	See above
5. Teach college level courses in their subject matter areas	Candidates are capable of teaching a college-level course in their field	Observation and review of teaching within a seminar or other course setting by doctoral faculty members SET measures when assigned a full course to teach Placements at universities after graduation	See above