



LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

SCHOOL of PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

THE FIRST TWO YEARS: EMERGING LEADERS SEQUENCE

FIRST YEAR: TEAM BUILDING

SPA-361 Laboratory in Leadership Development I

Weekly class meetings and small group work on a “leadership in public affairs” social action research project. Taken fall and spring semesters of the first year for 1 credit hour each term.

Students meet once a week in class to learn the hard and soft skills of leadership, such as résumé preparation, learning the stages of research, team-work, communication and public speaking. First-year students work in small groups to design their project. These projects allow students to learn about pressing issues in public affairs and work successfully with others to identify policy solutions.

Course readings in the fall term focus on the key theories of leadership; the spring term features a variety of team-building leadership development activities in association with Student Activities. Such activities could include the skills of negotiation, communication, and group dynamics.

Student teams present their research design and preliminary results of their project at the end of the first semester; they present the results of their completed project at the end of the second semester.

SECOND YEAR: INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECT

SPA-362 Laboratory in Leadership Development II

Weekly class meetings and individual “leadership in public affairs” social action research project. Taken fall and spring semesters of second year for 1 credit hour each term.

Second-year students build on the hard and soft skills of leadership developed in the first year. Sophomores work on a public affairs problem that has piqued their curiosity; they design and carry out a project to address that problem. In the process, students learn a variety of practical skills, including grant-writing, public speaking, and networking.

In the fall term, the focus of class lectures and readings is on how leadership is understood in a differing cultural contexts as well as the role of decision-making and leadership in public affairs; the spring term examines the principles of human perception, judgment, and decision-making, with particular focus on the legal system. Students will learn about how individuals arrive at judgments and decisions in a variety of cultural and professional settings, and the possible biasing effects of factors beyond their control.

The class will also welcome occasional team-building leadership development activities in association with Student Activities. Such activities could include personality assessments and negotiation simulations.

Each student presents his or her research design and preliminary results of the project at the end of the first semester; the final results are presented at the end of the second semester.

THE FINAL TWO YEARS: THE ADVANCED STUDY AND PRACTICE OF LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

THIRD YEAR: WORKING IN GOVERNMENT

SPA-391 Internship: Leadership

Weekly seminars to study organizational behavior in conjunction with an internship. Taken fall or spring semester after first four semesters for between 3 and 6 credit hours.

Juniors take advantage of the unique opportunities Washington, D.C. affords by pursuing an internship in one of the many public and private organizations located in the nation's capital, such as the White House, the National Republican or Democratic Parties, political consulting firms, lobbying firms, non-profit advocacy organizations, think-tanks, or national media news outlets. Students earn between three and six academic credits in a special internship class, using their internships to explore organizational behavior and theory.

FOURTH YEAR: ADVANCED STUDY

GOVT-460 Political & Organizational Leadership

Weekly capstone seminar. Taken spring semester during final year for 3 credit hours. This final course in the certificate program is designed to help students understand political and organizational leadership: how they act, interact, and are influenced by factors within and beyond them. Class readings and discussions employ various perspectives and case studies to gain practical insight into the behavior of, and the challenges facing, authoritative institutional actors. The first part of the course examines the key theoretical concerns of the fields of leadership, bureaucracy, and public policy. These include transformational and transactional leadership, political institutions, agenda-setting and agenda control, issue-framing, path dependence, and American exceptionalism. Research presentations and class discussion will take place during the second part of the course.

PROGRAM CAPSTONE: *THE SPA LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO*

The *SPA Leadership Portfolio* provides students with an opportunity to reflect on their curricular and co-curricular experiences in order to earn a deeper understanding of how to use their gifts to make the world a better place. It is integrated into the leadership curriculum, and involves a series of four levels where students incrementally build the interactive online portfolio to showcase the leadership skills they learn here. At a minimum, students upload a resume and letter of introduction in SPA 361. In SPA 362, students upload a sample of their work. In SPA 391, students present information about their internship and other activities, including study abroad. Students may present their final portfolio in SPA 460, the program capstone course. During the course of the program, all students are invited to document and reflect on their growth as a leader in their personal leadership portfolio. Students also use their leadership portfolio as a virtual résumé and can take it with them after they graduate to become more competitive in today's job market.