

A Proposal for an Accelerated MPP Degree

Thomas Jefferson Program in Public Policy

College of William & Mary

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TJPPP is proposing to create a new option whereby W&M undergraduate students will be able to earn both a Bachelor's degree and a Master's in Public Policy in five years. Many other public policy programs have similar five-year, two-degree programs, including the University of Virginia. Initially, this program will be implemented with a very small number of students (1-3 annually).

There are three chief advantages to this proposal. First, it allows W&M students to earn a valuable master's degree, while saving time and money compared to the traditional six-year route to an MPP. Second, it allows the TJPPP program to expand modestly in a cost-effective manner by recruiting outstanding W&M undergraduates, using private funds donated in support of this plan. Third, it creates new possibilities for undergraduate students to participate in collaborative research with faculty.

The proposal:

- Students will apply for the five-year BA/MPP option in their junior year. Admission will be highly competitive. We anticipate that successful applicants will have a high overall GPA and will have done well in any Public Policy, Economics, and Government classes they have taken. In addition, students must have earned 90 undergraduate credits by the end of their junior year to be eligible for the program. In their application, students must submit a proposed class schedule for their fourth year that illustrates how the student will complete his or her undergraduate degree (major requirements and GERs) and comply with the requirements of the joint program.
- Students will be informed of their acceptance into the program in the Spring of their junior year. Accepted students will complete an individually-designed, collaborative research project with a faculty member in the summer between third and fourth years. Much like current Dintersmith or HHMI Fellows, this project could form the basis for a subsequent honors thesis in one of several academic disciplines. The project will earn six credits and can either be conducted full-time during one of the summer school sessions or half-time over the course of both summer school sessions. This should allow students who wish to conduct research in another discipline or wish to study abroad the ability to do so. Any direct costs associated with the summer program will be covered by TJPPP and students will receive free room (in campus housing). Students will also be eligible to apply for a scholarship to cover other expenses associated with their summer research (e.g., travel, books, data).
- In their fourth year, students will take a minimum of 16 credits in the MPP program. One of these credits is associated with the Public Policy 500, an intensive mathematics course that begins the week prior to the official beginning of the undergraduate school year. The other 15 credits include Public Policy 604 and 607 in the fall semester and Public Policy 606 and 612 in the spring semester. Nine of these credits will count as electives toward the student's undergraduate major. Students who need additional undergraduate credits to complete the

120 credits required for the undergraduate major will take up to 15 credits in undergraduate classes. If the student has not yet taken Govt 350, Econ 307, and Econ 308, these classes must be taken in their fourth year. If the student has already taken any or all of the specified undergraduate classes, they can take any other undergraduate classes. If a student does not need additional undergraduate classes (due to AP, IB, transfer or overload credit) they will enroll in some or all of the other 1st year MPP graduate classes. Because students will have a minimum of six elective undergraduate credits in their fourth year they may register for honors or any other courses normally taken by seniors. The BA or BS normally will be awarded at the end of the 4th year.

- Students will participate in an MPP internship in the summer following the fourth year. In their fifth year, students will enroll in the normal second-year MPP curriculum.
- Students completing this program will earn a minimum of 151 credits during the 5 year program. Of these at least 111 are undergraduate credits and 40 are graduate credits. For the undergraduate degree, up to 9 credits from graduate coursework will be counted toward the 120 credits required for the undergraduate degree. While the graduate degree usually requires 49 credits, up to 9 credits will be waived based on successful completion of Govt 350, Econ 307, and Econ 308.