

SOCIAL POLICY ANALYSIS

Contact Information

Social Policy Analysis

<https://sopa.rice.edu>

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Melissa J. Marschall

Program Director

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The central focus of Rice University's Social Policy Analysis program is policy design, analysis, and communication. Interdisciplinary in nature, the curriculum's emphasis is on integrating rigorous instruction in theory and method with hands-on, skills-based instruction by social science faculty. The primary goal of the program is to train Rice students to obtain the specialized knowledge, skill and experience to be leaders in the field of social policy analysis.

The Social Policy Analysis program focuses on the evaluation of alternative interventions that proposed to improve human well-being. Graduates will be able to answer questions like: Which early interventions lead to greater educational attainment for low-income children? Which juvenile rehabilitation programs are more likely to reduce the recurrence of criminal behavior? How does healthcare policy influence our daily health behaviors? Without evidence-based research and rigorous evaluations to test these ideas, there is no way to know which solutions work and for whom. In a time of limited resources and rising demands, our leaders need the analytical expertise to make a demonstrable, sustained impact on the most pressing issues facing our cities and nation. The Social Policy Analysis program will train Rice students to meet these needs.

Bachelor's Program

- [Bachelor of Arts \(BA\) degree with a major in Social Policy Analysis](https://ga.rice.edu/programs-study/departments-programs/social-sciences/social-policy-analysis/social-policy-analysis-ba/)

Social Policy Analysis does not currently offer an academic program at the graduate level.

Director and Undergraduate Advisor

Melissa J. Marschall, *Political Science*

Advisory Board

Chase Lesane-Brown, *Psychological Sciences*

Flávio Cunha, *Economics*

Robert M. Stein, *Political Science*

Ruth N. Lopez Turley, *Sociology*

Affiliated Faculty

Dominic C. Boyer, *Anthropology*

Paul Brace, *Political Science*

Jenifer L. Bratter, *Sociology*

Tony N. Brown, *Sociology*

Sergio Chavez, *Sociology*

Flávio Cunha, *Economics*

Justin T. Denney, *Sociology*

Elaine Howard Ecklund, *Sociology*

James R. Elliott, *Sociology*

Christopher P. Fagundes, *Psychological Sciences*

Bridget K. Gorman, *Sociology*

Vivian Ho, *Economics*

Mark P. Jones, *Political Science*

Rachel Tolbert Kimbro, *Sociology*

Stephen L. Klineberg, *Sociology (Professor Emeritus)*

Chase Lesane-Brown, *Psychological Sciences*

Melissa J. Marschall, *Political Science*

Steve H. Murdock, *Sociology*

Nancy A. Niedzielski, *Linguistics*

Robert M. Stein, *Political Science*

Ruth N. Lopez Turley, *Sociology*

Kenneth Wolpin, *Economics*

For Rice University degree-granting programs:

To view the list of official course offerings, please see [Rice's Course Catalog](https://courses.rice.edu/admweb!/SWKSCAT.cat?p_action=cata) (https://courses.rice.edu/admweb!/SWKSCAT.cat?p_action=cata)

To view the most recent semester's course schedule, please see [Rice's Course Schedule](https://courses.rice.edu/admweb!/SWKSCAT.cat) (<https://courses.rice.edu/admweb!/SWKSCAT.cat>)

Social Policy Analysis (SOPA)

SOPA 200 - APPROACHES TO SOCIAL POLICY

Short Title: APPROACHES TO SOCIAL POLICY

Department: Social Policy Analysis

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Lecture

Credit Hours: 3

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Lower-Level

Description: This course provides an introduction to the social sciences and the study of public policy. Students will review the nature of different disciplines and their research programs. These approaches will be studied as different paradigms for policy making.

SOPA 238 - SPECIAL TOPICS

Short Title: SPECIAL TOPICS

Department: Social Policy Analysis

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Internship/Practicum, Lecture, Laboratory, Seminar

Credit Hours: 1-4

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Lower-Level

Description: Topics and credit hours may vary each semester. Contact department for current semester's topic(s). Repeatable for Credit.

SOPA 300 - SOPA FIELD RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Short Title: SOPA FIELD RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Department: Social Policy Analysis

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Seminar

Credit Hours: 3

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level

Prerequisite(s): SOPA 200

Description: Students work on approved field research projects, write a research report for publication and present finding from their field research project to Rice faculty and staff. Recommended Prerequisite(s): POLI 338 or SOSC 301. Repeatable for Credit.

SOPA 340 - INTRODUCTION TO PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Short Title: INTRO TO PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Department: Social Policy Analysis

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Lecture

Credit Hours: 3

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level

Description: This course provides students with a broad, introductory-level overview of the knowledge and skills necessary for preparing a public health response to epidemics or pandemics of infectious diseases. The course will use the recent pandemic, COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019), and the subsequent response efforts in the United States to provide context to covered topics.

SOPA 400 - SOPA CAPSTONE RESEARCH SEMINAR I

Short Title: SOPA CAPSTONE RESEARCH I

Department: Social Policy Analysis

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Research

Credit Hours: 3

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level

Prerequisite(s): (POLI 395 or SOCI 382 or PSYC 339 or SOSC 302 or ECON 307 or STAT 310) and (POLI 338 (may be taken concurrently) or SOSC 301 (may be taken concurrently)) and (SOPA 200 or POLI 337)

Description: Students work on approved field research projects, write a research report for publication and present finding from their field research project to Rice faculty and staff. POLI 338 or SOSC 301 may be taken concurrently with SOPA 400.

SOPA 401 - SOPA CAPSTONE RESEARCH SEMINAR II

Short Title: SOPA CAPSTONE RESEARCH II

Department: Social Policy Analysis

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Research

Credit Hours: 3

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level

Prerequisite(s): SOPA 400 and (POLI 338 or SOSC 301)

Description: The capstone research seminar is a two-semester course taken in the final year of study. During the Spring Semester, the research teams will write up and present their final research report.

SOPA 477 - SPECIAL TOPICS

Short Title: SPECIAL TOPICS

Department: Social Policy Analysis

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Internship/Practicum, Seminar, Lecture, Laboratory

Credit Hours: 1-4

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level

Description: Topics and credit hours may vary each semester. Contact department for current semester's topic(s). Repeatable for Credit.

Description and Code Legend

Note: Internally, the university uses the following descriptions, codes, and abbreviations for this academic program. The following is a quick reference:

Course Catalog/Schedule

- Course offerings/subject code: SOPA

Program Description and Code

- Social Policy Analysis: SOPA

Undergraduate Degree Description and Code

- Bachelor of Arts degree: BA

Undergraduate Major Description and Code

- Major in Social Policy Analysis: SOPA

CIP Code and Description ¹

- **SOPA** Major/Program: CIP Code/Title: 44.0501 - Public Policy Analysis, General

¹ Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2020 Codes and Descriptions from the National Center for Education Statistics: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/>