

MASTER OF SOCIAL POLICY EVALUATION (MSPE) DEGREE

Program Learning Outcomes for the MSPE Degree

Upon completing the MSPE degree, students will be able to:

1. Acquire analytical skills that can be applied to a broad range of policy evaluation questions.
2. Design and conduct a program evaluation by constructing a logical model that uses appropriate data sources, data collection methods, and analytical techniques.
3. Assess the social responsibilities of government, non-government organizations, and corporate policies in the 21st century.
4. Communicate statistical findings in a clear and concise narrative that recognizes the positive and negative outcomes of potential policy solutions.

Requirements for the MSPE Degree

The MSPE degree is a non-thesis master's degree. For university requirements, please see [Non-Thesis Master's Degrees \(https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-non-thesis-masters-degrees/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-non-thesis-masters-degrees/). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see [All Graduate Students \(https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/). Students pursuing the MSPE degree must complete:

- A minimum of 10 courses (30 credit hours) to satisfy degree requirements.
- A minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate-level study (graduate semester credit hours, coursework at the 500-level or above).
- A minimum of 30 graduate semester credit hours must be taken at Rice University.
- A minimum of 24 graduate semester credit hours must be taken in standard or traditional courses (with a course type of lecture, seminar, laboratory, lecture/laboratory).
- A minimum residency enrollment of one fall or spring semester of full-time graduate study at Rice University.
- A maximum of 2 courses (6 graduate semester credit hours) from transfer credit. For additional departmental guidelines regarding transfer credit, see the [Policies](#) (p. 2) tab.
- A practicum.
- A minimum overall GPA of 2.67.
- A minimum program GPA of 2.67 in all Rice coursework that satisfies requirements for the non-thesis master's degree.

The courses listed below satisfy the requirements for this degree program. In certain instances, courses not on this official list may be substituted upon approval of the program's academic advisor or, where applicable, the department or program's Director of Graduate Studies. Course substitutions must be formally applied and entered into Degree Works by the department or program's [Official Certifier \(https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/\)](https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/). Additionally, these course substitutions must be approved by the Office of Graduate

and Postdoctoral Studies. Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the MSPE Degree		30

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
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Core Requirements

SOPE 501	INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC POLICY	3
SOPE 503	QUANTITATIVE METHODS FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION	5
SOPE 505	MICROECONOMICS FOR POLICY EVALUATION	3
SOPE 512	POLICY EVALUATION CODING AND SOFTWARE LAB	1

Elective Requirements

Select 4 courses from the following: 12

SOPE 502	APPLICATIONS OF PROGRAM EVALUATION – CRIMINAL JUSTICE	
SOPE 504	APPLICATIONS OF PROGRAM EVALUATION – LABOR MARKETS	
SOPE 506	APPLICATIONS OF PROGRAM EVALUATION – HEALTH	
SOPE 508	APPLICATIONS OF PROGRAM EVALUATION – EARLY CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	
SOPE 510 / SOCI 521	RESEARCH-PRACTICE PARTNERSHIPS	

Practicum ¹

SOPE 513	SOCIAL POLICY EVALUATION PRACTICUM I	3
SOPE 514	SOCIAL POLICY EVALUATION PRACTICUM II	3

Total Credit Hours 30

Footnotes and Additional Information

¹ Practicum experience is offered in a two-course summer-long intense consulting evaluation (SOPE 513 and SOPE 514, *Social Policy Evaluation Practicum I* and *Social Policy Evaluation Practicum II*) with the Texas Policy Lab, HERC, or other Rice research center clients. Students will be actively engaged in projects to gain real-world, applied experience in areas such as education, health, criminal justice and others. Students summarize their experience in a final paper presented to practicum partners.

Proposed Plan-of-Study

The following plan-of-study represents the current lockstep three-semester (fall, spring, and summer) sequence in which students pursuing the MSPE degree complete the required coursework. Substitution of courses may be made on a rare, exception basis with permission of the program director.

Course	Title	Credit Hours
First Year		
1st Semester		
SOPE 501	INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC POLICY	3
SOPE 503	QUANTITATIVE METHODS FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION	5
SOPE 505	MICROECONOMICS FOR POLICY EVALUATION	3
Credit Hours		11
2nd Semester		
SOPE 512	POLICY EVALUATION CODING AND SOFTWARE LAB	1
Elective one	Elective one ¹	3
Elective two	Elective two ¹	3
Elective three	Elective three ¹	3
Elective four	Elective four ¹	3
Credit Hours		13
3rd Semester		
SOPE 513	SOCIAL POLICY EVALUATION PRACTICUM I	3
SOPE 514	SOCIAL POLICY EVALUATION PRACTICUM II	3
Credit Hours		6
Total Credit Hours		30

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Social Policy Evaluation website: <https://socialpolicy.rice.edu/>.

Opportunities for the MSPE Degree

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Social Policy Evaluation website: <https://socialpolicy.rice.edu/>.

Footnotes and Additional Information

¹ Students must select elective coursework from 4 of the following 5 courses: SOPE 502, SOPE 504, SOPE 506, SOPE 508, SOPE 510/SOCI 521.

Policies for the MSPE Degree

Social Policy Evaluation Graduate Program Handbook

The General Announcements (GA) is the official Rice curriculum. As an additional resource for students, Social Policy Evaluation publishes a graduate program handbook, which can be found here: https://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2024_25/Social_Policy_Masters_Handbook.pdf.

Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see [Transfer Credit \(https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer\)](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. Requests for transfer credit must be approved for Rice equivalency by the appropriate academic department offering the Rice equivalent course (corresponding to the subject code of the course content) and by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program's advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

Program Transfer Credit Guidelines

Students pursuing the MSPE degree should be aware of the following program-specific transfer credit guideline:

- No more than 2 courses (6 credit hours) of transfer credit from U.S. or international universities of similar standing at Rice may apply towards the degree.