MAKE YOUR MARK

With this PhD program, I’m working to understand the theory and practice related to energy and environment policy. In a longer run, I hope to bridge the gap between engineering and public policy in this sector.

Vivek Bhandari
PhD Candidate

DEGREE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Students take a common set of core classes, choose one of the four academic specializations, select a customized set of courses in consultation with their adviser, and complete a dissertation.

The program requires advanced training in theory, research design, statistics, and other quantitative and qualitative methods.

Students will also complete training in pedagogy and gain experience in teaching.

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Public Affairs degree program at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs prepares students for careers as researchers in public affairs. Graduates are employed both as faculty members in academia and as analysts with innovative institutions in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors. Students are advised by highly accomplished Humphrey School faculty members with research expertise related to policy analysis, urban and regional planning, environmental and energy policy, public and nonprofit management, social policy, transit and transportation planning, and global policy.

The Humphrey School welcomes candidates from all fields. Successful applicants will be clear about the research they wish to undertake and why they think the Humphrey School is the best place to do that research. They are expected to make original theoretical, methodological, or substantive contributions in the area of their specialization. Admission is limited to full-time students. Specializations are available in:

- Public Policy
- Urban Planning
- Management and Governance
- Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy
CORE CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the PhD in Public Affairs is customized based on the educational background of the student, the student's research interests, and the student's academic specialization.

Students may be admitted with a prior master's degree or with a bachelor's degree. Previous coursework from accredited graduate programs may be transferred and used to fulfill PhD degree requirements with approval by faculty advisers and the PhD program director. Decisions about transfers will be made following admission and enrollment into the program. Students who enter the program with only a bachelor's degree must complete, prior to completion of the PhD, one of these five master's degrees:

- Master of Public Policy (MPP)
- Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP)
- Master of Science in Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy (MS–STEP)
- Master of Development Practice (MDP)
- Master of Human Rights (MHR)

Requirements include two Integrative Seminars (total of six credits), a Research Design Seminar (three credits), a seminar on Current Research in Public Affairs (three credits), research methods courses appropriate to the dissertation research (12 credits), up to 18 specialization credits, and 24 thesis credits.

Each candidate must complete training in pedagogy and a teaching experience as a course instructor or teaching assistant (TA) with instructional responsibilities. The pedagogical training may take place prior to or concurrent with the teaching experience.

BACKGROUND OF CURRENT STUDENTS

PhD students come to the Humphrey School from throughout the country and around the world with backgrounds as diverse as their areas of research interest. They are teachers, engineers, researchers, consultants, investment bankers, software developers, and nonprofit leaders, who all have a common interest in developing the critical skills necessary to address increasingly complex domestic and global policy challenges. They will graduate prepared for careers in academia or other research organizations.

PROGRAM FIT

Admission to the PhD program is highly selective and competitive, and is limited to full-time students. The PhD program enrolls a limited number of students annually to ensure opportunities for close collaboration with faculty advisers and mentors, and the availability of financial assistance. Admitted students are provided financial aid in the form of tuition fellowships, stipends, or research or teaching assistantships.

Admission is limited to applicants with research interests closely aligned with the interests of one or more Humphrey School faculty members. Applicants are encouraged to identify faculty members who are doing research related to their interests. An applicant's statement of purpose and research interests should be as clear as possible about how their research interests align with those of a faculty member. Students who have strong relationships with faculty mentors based on shared research interests and who receive funding from their school or department are more likely to be successful in completing their doctorates.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

- Statement of purpose and research interests
- Resume or CV
- GPA and transcripts
- GRE scores
- Writing sample
- Three letters of recommendation
- Diversity statement (optional)
- Indication of English language proficiency (for non-native English speakers)

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

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The PhD program at the Humphrey School takes advantage of the multidisciplinary nature and active research agendas of our faculty, as well as the great resources of the University of Minnesota, to produce public affairs scholars ready to make cutting-edge contributions to the fields of public policy, urban planning, and management.

Greg Lindsey, professor and director, PhD in Public Affairs program