

# WORK AND LABOR POLICY, MASTER OF ARTS

The Master of Arts (M.A.) Work and Labor Policy program is designed for unionists, human resource professionals, arbitrators, educators, journalists, political activists, lawyers, individuals involved in government or private industry, and anyone in the world of work and labor in the 21st century. While the program provides students with a background in American labor relations, labor history, labor law and collective bargaining, the focus is on current problems and policies generated by changes in the global economy, technology, the workforce and the workplace. This program can increase effectiveness in present positions or prepare students for new positions that deal in labor, government, industrial relations or human resources.

Students are encouraged to use elective courses and produce a final project to develop an area of specialty. Faculty will help students choose elective courses, as well as a final project focused on a policy memorandum.

## Program Delivery and Tuition Rate

This master's program is delivered through online courses and is billed at the non-MBA rate.

## Admission

Admission to this program is selective. This program enrolls new students in the fall and spring terms. Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree.

## Application

Please see the Graduate Admission (<http://catalog.sunyempire.edu/graduate/admission/>) section of this catalog for a complete listing of materials required to complete a graduate application.

## Program Curriculum

In order to complete this 30-credit program, students must take 4 core courses, 5 concentration courses, and the capstone course.

Code	Title	Credits
<b>CORE COURSES</b>		<b>12</b>
PPOL 6007	Policy Process	
LABR 6010	Work and Labor Studies	
LABR 6015	Labor Policy in America	
CHOOSE:		
PPOL 6021	Methods for Policy Research (preferred course)	
OR		
PPOL 6020	Research Methods (if you intend to pursue doctoral studies)	
<b>CONCENTRATION COURSES</b>		<b>15</b>
Students select one of two concentrations: Workforce Development or the General Concentration. Each concentration requires completion of 5, 3-credit courses. The General concentration allows a student to take scheduled or individualized electives to reflect their interests and to reinforce the individual focus of their degree.		
<i>For the General Concentration:</i>		
Choose 5 Electives (3cr each)		
<i>For the Workforce Development Concentration:</i>		
CAED 6010	Principles of Community & Economic Development	

CAED 6070	Workforce Development Policy	
LABR 6030	Sociology of Work: Human Resources	
ADLC 6040	Learning & Education in the Workplace	
Choose 1 Elective (3cr)		
<b>CAPSTONE</b>		
LABR 7010	Final Project - Professional Project: Work and Labor Policy	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

## Electives

Students are urged to use their electives to build a concentration in such areas as trade union administration, collective bargaining and dispute resolution, or human resource management. Examples of some electives include but are not limited to:

Code	Title	Credits
LABR 6050	Government, Work, & Labor	3
LABR 6070	Theories of the Labor Movement	3

## Transfer Credit

After admission, students should discuss the possibility of transfer credit with their academic advisor. To request transfer credit, students complete the Transfer Credit Request Form available through the Quicklinks box of the Graduate Student Center on MySUNYEmpire (<https://www.sunyempire.edu/mysunyempire/>).

Typically, 9 credits are acceptable for transfer subject to the Transfer Credit Policy (located in the policy section of this catalog).

## Final Project

The final project represents the capstone experience in the program. This shall take the form of a Policy Memorandum, which is designed to support students' professional and personal goals. This is a challenging task which draws on and brings together the skills and concepts learned through the master's program. It requires identification of a public policy issue, examination and interpretation of various sources of information relating to the issue including scholarly sources, analysis of possible approaches to the issue and the student's recommendations regarding the issue. In some cases, students may choose to do a Practicum, a learning opportunity to develop skills and practical insights related to workplace development, analysis, and implementation.

## Learning Activities and Course Goals

As the capstone project for the master's program, the policy memo builds on prior coursework and provides the opportunity for the student to engage in a sustained examination of a major policy issue. The purpose is to reinforce the knowledge and skills required to analyze policy issues, develop defensible positions on policy issues, and clearly communicate a position in the form of a policy memo, which is standard fare in the work of legislators, elected officials, agency heads and other organizational leaders involved in the formation of policy.

The policy memo includes the exploration of a critical issue, the development of alternative approaches to the issue and a reasoned, evidence-based, defensible argument about how the issue should be addressed. It is important to keep in mind the distinction between a policy memo and other academic papers. Whereas academic papers build arguments by gradually introducing the least important ideas first, a policy memo uses an "inverted pyramid" of ideas, delivered as efficiently as possible, beginning with the most important. In a policy memo getting

at the truth through the exploration and the interpretation of what is known about an issue is more important than developing new knowledge. As such, no thesis statement or theoretical framework underpins a policy memo.

Course goals:

- The ability to clearly identify a critical policy issue related to the student's program;
- The ability to identify and access relevant information related to the problem;
- Demonstration of a nuanced comprehension, evaluation and interpretation of the body of knowledge surrounding the issue;
- Exhibition of a disciplined application of knowledge in the formulation of alternative, feasible approaches to the issue; and
- Presentation, in tightly-constructed prose, of a well-reasoned defensible approach to the issue that draws on relevant concepts from previously completed coursework.

The student will engage in the relevant readings for this project and prepare drafts of the policy memo. As opposed to preparing the entire memo all at once, the student will develop the memo in sections as follows: Executive Summary (while this appears first in a policy memo, its exact contents will change as the student progresses through this course); Argument, Counter Arguments, Analysis, Recommendations.

Following instructions in the online course, drafts will be submitted to the instructor for review and comments; the student will revise project drafts and return. This process will be repeated until the draft is accepted by the instructor. While there is no set number of pages for a policy memo, which can range from a page to a hundred pages, for the purposes of this program, 20-30 pages is the target. The specific task should dictate the length. The writer should use a direct, efficient style of writing that results in a "tight" memo that does not ramble or engage in needless repetition.

### **Practicum**

A practicum must be a learning opportunity where you develop skills and practical insights related to the development, analysis, implementation or evaluation in the workplace. It involves considerable work at a specific site or in a fieldwork setting where you can try out the ideas you have developed in this program. A practicum is a very effective way to expand the program knowledge and provide an exciting and challenging culminating experience. It also allows you to use your coursework and gain experience in actual field settings.

In the final project term:

**120 hours of unpaid work** in the practicum during the term in which a student is registered for final project. The work must be substantive, meaning it cannot be something like routine production or administrative work. Students should consult with their final project instructor for approval of the work to be completed.

Field site supervision by an appropriate professional, or observations of the nature and quality of the work that you do or the projects that you undertake during the practicum. At the end of the practicum, your field supervisor will need to provide an evaluation of the work done in the practicum.

The practicum reflection paper should be 20 to 25 pages long, double-spaced, and in an appropriate font (Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial). It

should include primary and secondary source references. The practicum paper should include:

- Analysis of the experience;
- Evaluation of self-identified goals;
- Recommendations for practice or research in the area.

**Upon successful completion of the program, students will be able to:**

- Understand the policy process from formation to implementation.
- Create a paradigm for analyzing public policy.
- Intensively engage with specific policy issues.
- Engage in sustained, disciplined research effort.
- Develop competencies that they are likely to need as professionals in the public policy arena.