WHY STUDY
public affairs
AT WSU VANCOUVER?

The Program in Public Affairs at WSU Vancouver helps you prepare for a rewarding and meaningful career in public service and governance. The program seeks to transform students into ethical, engaged and competent professionals by fostering evidence-based reasoning and practice on the part of those working for the public good. In addition to legislators and government officials, this includes those working in the nonprofit sector, community members, scholars and other issue stakeholders.

With a Bachelor of Arts in Public Affairs from WSU Vancouver, you will be ready for public service at the local, state, national or global levels, or for further studies.

For more information

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Earn a degree in Public Affairs

Washington State University
Vancouver, WA 98686-9600
vancouver.wsu.edu
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"The price of apathy towards public affairs is to be ruled by evil men."
—PLATO
Combining theory and practice

Through interactive learning and challenging courses, students in the program gain experience with rigorous academic research as well as practical applications. The program includes core course work in American and comparative public policy, public administration, public leadership and social science research methods.

Students also complete a concentration in one of the following areas:

- Public policy and politics
- Public administration and management
- Justice studies

You can find a full description of the BAPA degree, including core and elective courses, on our website.

The Bachelor of Arts in Public Affairs requires a minimum GPA of 2.75. Washington State University offers this degree only on the Vancouver campus.

Opportunities for students

Internships

You have the option to complete an internship in local government or with a local nonprofit organization. Several BAPA students have been chosen for the prestigious Washington State Legislative Internship in Olympia.

Faculty research

Some BAPA students also participate in faculty-directed research. Faculty are exploring research in such areas as criminal justice, civil liberties, political psychology, environmental justice, neurodiversity, the effects of military service on work and health, and many other topics.

Student clubs

More than 50 student clubs at WSU Vancouver offer opportunities to practice the skills used every day by public affairs professionals, such as analysis, advocacy and negotiation. For example, the Associated Students of Washington State University Vancouver is the student governing board, and the VanCoug American Democracy Project promotes participation in the democratic process.

Careers

A Bachelor’s Degree in Public Affairs provides a foundation for a variety of career opportunities, from state and local government and public policy analysis, to law enforcement and corrections, to personnel administration and strategic planning. It also prepares you for many jobs outside of government service, such as those in nonprofit organizations. Some graduates go on to graduate-level work—law school, Ph.D. programs, or the Master of Public Affairs program on the WSU Vancouver campus.

In their own words

Two graduates of the Public Affairs program say:

“I found my purpose and my passion in public affairs as a student in this program. I always knew I found politics interesting but public affairs expanded my understanding of the world and the intricacy of policy, law, civic engagement, criminal justice, and social and environmental justice.”

“Being surrounded by dedicated students, engaging educators, and materials selected to expose me to both educational and professional connections to public affairs has set me up for being successful as a student, employee, and citizen in my community.”

“Public service must be more than doing a job efficiently and honestly. It must be a complete dedication to the people and to the nation.”

—MARGARET CHASE SMITH

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