

Public Affairs

Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs

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Vision

A Legacy of Leadership: The LBJ School was the first graduate public affairs program to blend academic theory with practical experience—exposing students to real public life challenges both in and outside the classroom. This unconventional approach proved to be extremely effective, and today it is an accepted model for public affairs graduate programs.

A Legacy of Action: President Johnson insisted on "getting it done." The LBJ School carries out that mandate in a tradition that goes far beyond LBJ's sweeping Great Society program to confront a global environment that is fraught with complex problems. We do not shy away from difficult and persistent problems: they fuel our imaginations.

A Legacy of Public Service: Contributing viable solutions to society is our legacy and our trademark. It's in the LBJ School's DNA, from LBJ himself to distinguished faculty members such as Barbara Jordan to the desire of our students to be tomorrow's public leaders.

Mission

The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs is committed to improving the quality of public service in the United States and abroad at all levels of governance and civic engagement. Our goals are to:

- Prepare students and professionals, from a variety of backgrounds, for leadership positions in public service by providing educational opportunities grounded in theory, ethics, analytical skills and practice;
- Produce interdisciplinary research to advance our understanding of complex problems facing society and to seek creative solutions for addressing them;
- Promote effective public policy and management practice by maintaining a presence in scholarly and policy communities and in the popular media;
- Foster civic engagement by providing a forum for reasoned discussion and debate on issues of public concern.

History

The LBJ School of Public Affairs was designed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to foster new generations of purpose-minded leaders who would continue his mission for social change. Established in 1970, the LBJ School embodies President Johnson's vision of a public affairs school that blends the academic and the practical.

"Above all, I hope that as they master new techniques and disciplines to improve the machinery of government, they will still build their careers of service around a dedication to one of the most cherished principles of our democracy: the greatest good for the greatest number." —Lyndon B. Johnson, May 22, 1971

Student Services

The Office of Student Affairs and Admissions (OSAA) offers a robust community of care model of services to LBJ students. Arranging student engagement and belonging events, student success initiatives, professional development and mentorship opportunities, affinity groups, co-curricular skills-based offerings and more, the OSAA team works to ensure that students feel welcomed and supported throughout their experience at the LBJ School.

Academic Advising

The Office of Student Affairs and Admissions (OSAA) advising team provides personalized 1:1 advising to students to help them map out their LBJ School degree pathway and program experience. The team partners with faculty to ensure that students get the information and mentoring they need to excel in our academic environment.

Career Development

The Office of Student Affairs and Admissions (OSAA) offers student a robust set of career and professional development programming including:

- Career roadmap planning
- Semester action plans
- Workshops (on topics such as networking, salary negotiation, and the job search journey)
- Labs (on topics such as digital branding, resumes and cover letters)
- Resume and cover letter development
- Individualized counseling
- Career and internship fairs
- Employer information sessions
- Job search strategies and resources
- Interview preparation through mock interview practice and workshops
- Employer and alumni connections
- Job board access and weekly "hot jobs" report
- Case competitions
- Alumni Mentorship Program

Requirements and Policy

Minimum Scholastic Requirements

The student must earn a grade point average of at least 2.00 in Public Affairs courses taken at the University and counted toward the degree and major requirements. The student must earn a grade of at least C- in each course used to fulfill any of the requirements for the degree and major. For more information about grades and the grade point average, see the [General Information Catalog](#).

Applicability of Certain Courses

Physical Activity Courses

Physical activity (PED) courses are offered by the Department of Kinesiology and Health Education. Up to three semester hours of physical activity coursework may be counted as general electives toward any School of Public Affairs degree. All physical activity courses are counted among courses for which the student is enrolled, and the grades are included in the grade point average.

ROTC Courses

The Departments of Air Force Science, Military Science, and Naval Science maintain ROTC units on campus. Information about each program is available from the chair of the department concerned.

Twelve semester hours of coursework in air force science, military science, or naval science may be counted toward any degree in the LBJ School of Public Affairs. Such credit may be used only as general electives, and only by students who are commissioned by the University ROTC program.

Courses Taken on the Pass/Fail Basis

No more than 12 semester hours taken on the pass/fail basis may be counted toward LBJ School of Public Affairs degrees. In general, courses taken on the pass/fail basis will count as general electives. Except for the specific core courses P A 136, P A 137, and P A 168 coursework required for major requirements cannot be taken pass/fail. Complete rules on registration on the pass/fail basis are given in the *General Information Catalog*.

Correspondence and Extension Courses

Credit that a University student in residence earns simultaneously by correspondence or extension from the University or elsewhere or in residence at another school will not be counted toward a degree in the LBJ School of Public Affairs unless specifically approved in advance by the dean. For additional information about correspondence work by resident students, see the *General Information Catalog*.

In the semester they plan to graduate, students may not take any course to be counted toward the degree at another institution or through University Extension; students who plan to graduate at the end of the summer semester may request approval to take transfer work only in the first summer term.

Bible Courses

Bible courses may be counted as lower-division general electives toward LBJ School of Public Affairs degrees. No more than 12 semester hours of such work may be counted toward any degree offered by the University.

Certificate Policy

A student may not earn any transcript-recognized certificate in the same field as his or her major, and at least one certificate course must be outside the requirements of the major. However, certificate courses outside the major may be counted toward other degree requirements.

Students admitted to transcript-recognized certificates must contact their academic advisors to have approved certificates added to their degree audit profiles. This allows progress toward the credential to be tracked and ensures that certificates are added to official transcripts upon graduation, if all requirements are met.

Graduation

Special Requirements

All students must fulfill the General Requirements for graduation. In addition, students in the LBJ School of Public Affairs must be registered in the school either in residence or in absentia the semester the degree is to be awarded and must apply to the dean for the degree no later than the date specified in the official academic calendar. The student must have an official degree audit on file prior to applying for the degree.

Degree Audit

An electronic degree audit is created for each student each semester. Students should view the audit through IDA, the University's Interactive

Degree Audit system, on a regular basis. The degree audit tells the student the courses they must take and the requirements they must fulfill to receive the degree. While the degree audit normally provides an accurate statement of requirements, students are responsible for knowing the requirements for their degree as stated in a catalog under which they are eligible to graduate and for registering so as to fulfill all these requirements. If in doubt about any requirement, students should always speak with an academic advisor prior to registration.

Applying for Graduation

Each student seeking a degree from the LBJ School of Public Affairs must meet with an advisor prior to registering for the last semester of the degree program to review their degree audit. Students must also meet with an advisor during the semester in which they intend to graduate for an official degree audit. The degree audit is essential to ensure that the student is on track to meet all the degree requirements given in a catalog under which they are eligible to graduate.

In the final semester, a candidate for graduation must apply for the degree by the deadline given in the official academic calendar.

Admission

Admission and readmission of undergraduate students to the University is the responsibility of the director of admissions. Information about admission to the University is given in the *General Information Catalog*.

Admission Policies of the School

Freshman Admission

Applicants should use the ApplyTexas online application and select the Public Affairs major listed in the LBJ School of Public Affairs as a first-choice major.

External Transfer Admission

Students who wish to transfer to the University from another college or university must apply to the Office of Admissions as described in the *General Information Catalog*.

Internal Transfer Admission

A University student who wants to transfer into the Public Affairs major must meet the following requirements:

1. Completion of at least 24 semester hours of coursework in residence at the University. Credit earned by exam, correspondence, and extension may not be counted toward this requirement.
2. Completion of at most five long semesters, cumulative, including transfer work. Students with four or more semesters in transfer credit may only apply in their first semester.
3. A cumulative in-residence grade point average of at least 3.00.
4. Compelling statement of interest in the major touching on academic and extracurricular preparation.

Registration

The *General Information Catalog* gives information about registration, adding and dropping courses, transfer from one division of the University to another, and auditing a course. The *Course Schedule*, published before registration each semester, includes registration instructions, advising locations, and the times, places, and instructors of classes. The *Course Schedule* and *General Information Catalog* are published on the registrar's website.

Honors

University Honors

The designation University Honors, awarded at the end of each fall or spring semester, gives official recognition and commendation to students whose grades for the semester indicate distinguished academic accomplishment. Both the quality and the quantity of work done are considered. Criteria for University Honors are given in the [General Information Catalog](#).

Graduation with University Honors

Students who, upon graduation, have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement are eligible to graduate with University Honors. Criteria for graduation with University Honors are given in the [General Information Catalog](#).

Facilities

The LBJ School is the only public policy school tied to a top-tier research university, a presidential library, a state capital and a foreign border. The LBJ School and its students are connected via a stately granite plaza to the LBJ Presidential Library, whose vast historical archives are an amazing resource for students.

The LBJ School contains several classroom and event spaces, providing unparalleled opportunities for students to be on the front lines of society's greatest public policy challenges. Each year, the country's most important policymakers visit the LBJ School, providing exceptional experiences in and beyond the classroom.

The LBJ School Computer Lab is reserved for public affairs students and is available 24 hours a day. It provides access to a variety of software useful for completing coursework such as ArcGIS, Stata, and Tableau.

The School's research centers focus on a range of public policy issues, around which faculty members and students collaborate on interdisciplinary policy research.

Centers Located in the LBJ School

Center for the Study of Race and Democracy (CSRD)

CSRD leads an important and robust dialogue on race relations, civil rights and democracy through interdisciplinary research and scholarship.

Center on Municipal Capital Markets (CMCM)

Developing greater understanding and expertise in the municipal capital markets in response to the substantial amount of resources governments at all levels require to address their sizable and growing infrastructure needs.

Extreme Weather Adaptation Lab

With extreme weather events striking with more frequency and intensity, the need for proactive governance is critical. By equipping local leaders with tailored insights and resources, the Extreme Weather Adaptation Lab aims to reduce the human, environmental and financial costs of these escalating threats, fostering more resilient and better prepared communities across the state.

The Impact Factory

A collaboration between Dell Medical School and the LBJ School of Public Affairs, The Impact Factory is an engine for civic innovation, entrepreneurship and service learning at The University of Texas at Austin. A first-of-its kind, cross-sector collaboration, The Impact Factory

aims to measurably improve health and prosperity for vulnerable populations in the United States.

LBJ Urban Lab

A "do-tank" that will inform future urban policy and create strategy for cities in Texas and beyond, training the next generation of local leaders and exploring issues affecting urban communities.

LBJ Washington Center

The LBJ Washington Center helps aspiring policy professionals launch their careers via immersive programs involving accelerated study and work focused on policymaking within the federal arena. The Center currently offers three pathways to policy leadership in our nation's capital.

- DC Concentration: A 15-month accelerated degree during which students work as policy professionals at a required policy apprenticeship and take evening classes taught by experts and scholars working in Washington.
- DC Foreign Policy Semester: An immersive spring semester providing students with unparalleled exposure to how foreign policy is created and impacted by entities within the federal arena.
- DC May Term: A condensed one-week program offered in conjunction with the Patman Center in which students gain a foundational understanding of the federal arena with an emphasis on civil discussion and advocacy.

Patman Center for Civic and Political Engagement

The Patman Center for Civic and Political Engagement seeks to strengthen democracy by cultivating the next generation of public leaders and citizens.

Prison and Jail Innovation Lab

The Prison and Jail Innovation Lab (PJIL) serves as a bridge between academic research, practical experience, and policy in order to shine a light on conditions of confinement, advocate for improved oversight, and transform the way we treat people in prisons and jails.

Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources (RMC)

RMC identifies and fosters creative solutions to challenging education, workforce and social problems through applied research, policy analysis and innovative program design.

RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service (RGK)

RGK prepares the next generation of nonprofit and philanthropic leaders through graduate education and research.

Intelligence Studies Project (ISP)

ISP was established to be a premier center for the study of U.S. Intelligence through a variety of programs, including new course offerings and research projects, as well as periodic conferences and other public events focused on intelligence topics.

Affiliated Centers

Center for Enterprise & Policy Analytics (CEPA)

CEPA trains and influences leaders who can solve prevailing public problems through the twin arts of politics and policymaking.

Center for International Energy and Environmental Policy (CIEEP)

CIEEP is a joint initiative with UT's Jackson School of Geosciences that seeks to inform the policymaking process with the best scientific and engineering expertise.

Energy Institute

The Energy Institute leverages the expertise of UT Austin faculty members to study critical energy policy questions and broadens the educational experience of students by creating a community of scholars around energy issues of importance to Texas, the nation and the world.

Population Research Center (PRC)

PRC provides infrastructure resources and supporting research that moves well beyond the bounds of traditional demography to the cutting edge of population research.

Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law

The Strauss Center supports policy-relevant research, innovative education, fellowship opportunities and public events, with more than a dozen specific programs ranging from cybersecurity to the influence of water scarcity on conflict in the Middle East.

William P. Clements Center for National Security

The Clements Center draws on the best insights of diplomatic and military history to train the next generation of national security leaders.