

**ACADEMIC
YEAR
2025-2026**



**Student
Experience Guidebook**

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Introduction

A Note from Director Maria Ivanova

For nearly two decades, the Policy School at Northeastern University has been a vanguard in public policy and urban affairs. Our mission centers on interdisciplinary research, policy-oriented training, and meaningful community involvement.

We cultivate thinkers and doers, poised to transcend conventional limits and combine disciplines. These capabilities prepare students to develop actionable solutions across local, national, and global landscapes.

Faculty and graduate students engage in multi-faceted research projects. These range from addressing social issues in Boston and Oakland to national policy modeling. Our global efforts lead in areas like environmental governance and social justice. Across these tiers, urban resilience and sustainability are recurring themes, reinforcing our holistic approach to problem-solving.

Our experiential learning framework includes six-month co-op opportunities across various sectors. These co-ops arm students with the skills and experience needed to navigate today's multifaceted job market confidently.

Policy School graduates contribute to diverse fields including government, business, non-profits, international organizations, and academia.

As you begin your academic journey, I welcome you to our dynamic community, supporting you in becoming trailblazers in the policy arena.



Maria Ivanova, Director
School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs



Graduate Programs Information & Degree Checklists

[Master of Public Policy](#)

The Master of Public Policy provides the qualitative and quantitative skills needed for those seeking careers that emphasize policy research, analysis, and design. Program core requirements (28 credit hours) focus on foundational skills and experiential learning. Three elective courses (12 credit hours) provide MPP students with flexible options to expand their policy expertise, expand their research skills, or earn a Concentration or Certificate in one of the options offered by the Policy School or College of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Program Director: Cristina Stanica

[Master of Public Administration](#)

The Master of Public Administration is a management and leadership degree for those seeking to serve the public good. Program core requirements (28 credit hours) focus on foundational skills and experiential learning. Three elective courses (12 credit hours) provide MPA students with flexible options to expand their policy expertise, research skills, or earn a Certificate in one of options offered by the Policy School or College of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Program Director: *Cristina Stanica*

[Master of Arts in International Affairs](#)

The Master of Arts in International Affairs is an interdisciplinary graduate program dedicated to preparing tomorrow's global citizens. Spanning several social sciences and humanities, our courses are taught by leading scholars who research democratization, gender, globalization, ethnic conflict and cooperation, human rights and international law, international relations, social activism, and social justice—among other topics. The program is designed to respond to the increasing demand, evident in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors for professionals equipped with the substantive, analytic, and methodological skills needed to address a wide array of issues facing societies and organizations across the globe.

Program Director: Julie Garey

Academics

[Master in Urban Informatics](#)

In Northeastern's MS Urban Informatics, you'll leverage Big Data, tech, and policy to improve public well-being. This program is accessible to students from technical and nontechnical backgrounds and is offered in Boston, Arlington (VA), and online. It emphasizes democratic and inclusive processes. Learn how to use data analytics, statistical modeling and visualization, mapping and spatial analysis, and apps and sensor systems to address real urban issues. How does neighborhood development impact public health? How do building design, weather, and surrounding structures affect solar capture? Learn to tackle any urban issue.

Program Director: Moira Zellner

[Master of Science in Urban Planning and Policy](#)

The Master of Science in Urban Planning and Policy program trains leaders interested in building just and sustainable solutions to today's critical urban problems. Students in the program develop the theoretical and analytical tools to understand contemporary challenges of social, racial, and environmental injustice in cities and urban regions. They develop professional tools to work effectively in the realms of planning, policy, politics, and advocacy to impact urban challenges, including affordable housing provision, equitable and sustainable economic growth, sustainable transportation, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. This innovative program combines the expertise in urban planning and policy analysis data analytics of the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs with expertise in physical planning, design, and data visualization at the School of Architecture.

Program Director: Serena Alexander

Certificates

Students can earn an additional credential by pursuing an optional graduate certificate that's relevant to their academic interests or professional goals. All certificates require 12 total semester hours and a Minimum 3.00 GPA.

Certificate options **vary across graduate programs and campuses**. If you are eligible, a certificate can be completed as part of your master's degree, using your elective courses (12 credit hours), or as a standalone credential for non-enrolled students. Some certificates can be fully completed fully online; however, course options may be limited. Students can apply for certificates to appear on their transcripts [here](#).

To view certificate requirements, including required courses, refer to the CSSH course catalogue. Most of our certificates are offered by the Policy School, but our students have access to several options from other program in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Certificate	Eligible Programs	Online
Computational Social Science	MPA, MPP	
Data Analytics	MPA, MSUI, MPP, MUPP	✓
Information Ethics	MPA, MPP	
Nonprofit Sector, Philanthropy, and Social Change	MIA, MPA, MSUI, MPP, MUPP	✓
Public Policy Analysis	MPA, MIA, MSUI, MUPP	✓
Security and Resilience Studies	MPA	✓
Sustainability and Climate Change Policy	MPA, MPP	✓
Urban Analytics	MPA, MPP	✓
Urban Studies	MPA, MSUI, MPP, MUPP	
Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies	MPA, MPP	

Academic Policies and Procedures

Academic Appeals Process

Northeastern students are able to appeal their final grade in a course at the College level through the academic appeals process. This involves having formal discussions with the course professor, Program Director, and then the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. For the detailed process on appeals please visit [here](#).

Academic Standing and Progress

All students are monitored for academic progress. Those students whose grade point average (GPA) falls below a 3.0 and are/or not making satisfactory academic progress are notified by and meet with the Associate Director of Academic Operations. They are counseled that if their GPA does not rise to a 3.0 or higher they run the risk of not graduating and are advised on strategies for improvement in collaboration with their Faculty Advisor.

Campus Transfer

Northeastern University encompasses several campuses across the global network. In the 2025-2026 academic year, the Master of Public Policy & Master of Public Administration program is offered at the Boston campus, Oakland campus, and the Arlington campus. Students interested in experiencing one of these campuses may request a campus transfer to complete their program. Please consult with your advisor and the Graduate Program Administrator before beginning the campus transfer process.

Graduation Requirements

Students in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities need to meet certain academic requirements to graduate and must complete the application to graduate. All Policy School programs require students to complete all core and elective courses, and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. Individual programs may have additional requirements that are listed in the academic program section.

Incomplete Grades

On occasion, students will not be able to complete coursework for a class and can request an incomplete grade. The student and the professor will determine if an incomplete grade is appropriate, outline the outstanding assignments, and decide on a timely deadline for the work to be completed, 1 month being the maximum allotted timeframe. An incomplete grade contract will need to be completed and approved by the College of Social Science and Humanities. If the coursework is not completed by the deadline, the incomplete (I) remains on the student's academic record.

Academics

Leave of Absence

Personal and/or professional circumstances may require time away. See the *University Withdrawal Policy* in the university Academic Catalog. Find more information [here](#).

Military Deployment and Veterans Support

Staff members in the Dolce Center for the Advancement of Veterans (CAVS) can provide helpful information related to military deployment and veteran specific information. Find more information [here](#).

Maintaining International Student Status

Staff members in Northeastern University Office of Global Services (OGS) provide timely information to ensure that international students remain in compliance. Find updated and timely information on how best to maintain status every semester [here](#).

Registering for Classes

Registration for the next term begins during each semester. For information on when registration begins, please refer to the academic calendar. Prior to registration Policy School Administrator will send the School's course offerings for the upcoming semester to students in order to prepare for registration. Students will be able to register for at their indicated time slot on the StudentHub. For detailed instructions on how to register for classes please refer to the instructions [here](#).

University Withdrawal

Students wishing to withdraw from their program at Northeastern University are able to do so after meeting with their advisor. Students should review the financial implications of withdrawing from all classes on the [Student Financial Services](#) website. Then they may withdraw by completing a form located on the student hub.

Co-op

What is Co-op?

Co-op is a 4-to-6 month full-time employment experience that students can opt into while they are a graduate student at Northeastern, which allows them to gain practical and professional work experience related to their field of studies and interest. **Not all co-ops are paid experiences.** Before going on co-op, students must have completed at least two semesters of coursework, and meet eligibility requirements. These eligibility requirements include having a 3.0 cumulative GPA and at least one remaining course requirement before completing a co-op. Students will work with their Co-op Coordinator in searching for and preparing to go on co-op in the semester prior to going on co-op.

Co-op can extend your time in your degree program by a semester; however, with careful planning students can stay on track to graduate. Please see the sample academic planning schedules to see how co-op can fit into one of the Policy School's degree programs.

What is the process?

- Students must meet with the graduate program director or campus coordinator to discuss their interests and eligibility and to determine whether/how co-op fits within the curriculum.
- Students are required to complete a mandatory online information session. After completing the online info session, students will be prompted to submit the co-op Search and Work Agreement.
- Students complete two mandatory online workshops: one on resume writing and the second on interviewing. After they complete the online resume writing workshop, students schedule a meeting with their Co-op Coordinator to review their resume and goals for co-op. They can schedule a meeting in the advising section of the StudentHub portal.
- Students get approval from the Co-op Coordinator to begin searching for job postings.
- Students select jobs for which to apply, and employers choose whom they want to interview, and hire based on skills and qualifications necessary for the job. Once a student accepts a position, they cannot renege on the offer and must commit to working the full 6-month co-op for the employer.
- Student follows up with Co-op Coordinator and confirm registration for Co-op Work Experience course PPUA 6974 for 2 credit hours.

Student Resources

Academic Resources

Academic Calendar

Official start/end dates for semesters, breaks, registration, or drop deadlines. Updated annually.

Disability Access Services

Northeastern University and the Disability Resource Center are committed supporting all students who qualify under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* and the *Americans with Disabilities Act* so they can participate fully in the activities of the university. Contact Disability Access Services for information about the full range of accommodations and qualifications.

Global Student Success

Global Student Success supports international and multilingual students through services such as English language tutoring, academic, cultural, and professional workshops.

Graduate Student Government

Graduate Student Government represents our graduate students in Northeastern University policy and governance. The GSG also supports funding for student organization and individual student travel to conferences and other academic activity. (*Boston Only*)

Northeastern Student ID: Husky Card

The Husky Card is the official identification card at Northeastern University for students and alumni. It provides access to University facilities such as the library and gyms, free or discounted entrée to local museums, and other services.

Off Campus Engagement and Support

Off Campus Engagement and Support at Northeastern provides information about off-campus housing, renter's rights, and student off-campus responsibilities.

Office of Global Services

The Office of Global Services (OGS) is a resource to over 20,000 international students and scholars from 147 different nations across the world. They provide the professional expertise needed to maintain compliance through immigration, academic, and student employment experiences, including internship and co-op.

Student Resources

Academic Resources

University Ombuds for Graduate Students

Northeastern University's Ombuds for Graduate Students offers confidential, impartial, and informal advice to graduate students who have concerns related to their university experience. Visit the [Ombuds Contact page](#) to reach out.

Student Financial Services

Student Financial Services (SFS) will work with you to identify financial aid options that can help you make a Northeastern education affordable, including navigating the application process, applying for and receiving financial aid.

Student Hub

The Hub is a convenient one-stop-shop to check class schedules, maintain a planner and to-do list, connect with clubs and organizations, view financial information, pay bills, and access other Northeastern resources. Key services include:

Class Scheduling/ Course Registration

Canvas: access all your courses

Billing Information and Financial Services

Library Resources

Northeastern University offers on-campus library services in [Boston](#) and [Oakland](#), dedicated support to [Arlington](#), as well as full online services 24/7 to the [entire campus network](#). Policy School Library Specialists, Roxanne Palmatier and Kathy Herrlich, can meet with you online to support your academic research and course assignments. Take advantage of Northeastern's online research guide for our students: [**Public Policy and Urban Affairs research guide**](#). Northeastern's [**Research Data Services**](#) offers GIS, Data Visualization, and Data Management support for research projects. The Boston campus has [recording studios](#) available for student use.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is open year-round to assist students with their academic and professional needs, such as planning, researching, organizing, drafting, and revising your writing.

The Policy School Community Canvas

Our Community Canvas emails the latest announcements of events, webinars, and other opportunities for students. The web page is also an easy-to-navigate resource for basic info about Policy School people, academic programs, and research centers. You'll also find documents and links for frequently requested items such as graduation requirement checklists and internship and co-op forms. You'll find it on Canvas with your course classes. All students are automatically added—don't forget to accept the invitation!

Student Resources

Health & Wellness Resources

Active Minds

A student run group focusing on creating dialogue about mental health on campus through peer support, weekly meetings, and programming. Their website offers links to a diverse range of resources. This is a resource for Boston students. (*Boston Only*)

Cultural and Spiritual Life

Supports centers and engagement opportunities across the University.

- ☐ Asian American Center
- ☐ Center for Intercultural Engagement
- ☐ Center for Spirituality, Dialogue, and Service
- ☐ John D. O'Bryant African American Institute
- ☐ Latinx Student Cultural Center
- ☐ LGBTQA+ Resource Center

Find@Northeastern

Find@Northeastern offers 24/7 mental health and support/resources and referrals.

Headspace

Headspace offers hundreds of online meditations and exercises for mindfulness, sleep, stress reduction, and movement. Northeastern students are given free access to the entire Headspace library.

Emergency Assistance

NUPD provides emergency assistance and safety escorts on campus and in the surrounding areas.

Emergency: 617.373.3333

Non-emergency: 617.373.2121

Northeastern CARE.com

Northeastern Care.com works with graduate students to access family care benefits, including a searchable database of providers for family care needs, such as care for an elderly adult, child, home, pet, or tutoring, and backup for last-minute, in-home or in-center childcare, or in-home adult care.

Office of Prevention and Education

Promotes a safer, healthier Northeastern community by offering education, resources, and prevention initiatives focused on alcohol and other drugs, sexual violence, sexual health, and wellness. Staffed by licensed social workers, trained sexual assault counselors, and confidential resource advisors.

Student Resources

University Health & Counseling Services

UHCS's Boston-based medical care and mental health services are open to graduate students who have either enrolled in the Student Health Plan or have paid the student health fee. Graduate students can petition to access UHCS (for a flat fee). UHCS also initiates student Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA) requests and is a resource for information about immunizations and local health care referrals.

togetherall

A peer-to-peer mental health support community which is available online, 24/7, and is completely anonymous so you can express yourself freely and openly. Students can set up a togetherall account and get support today. The community is monitored by licensed and registered health practitioners to ensure your safety and anonymity.

WeCare

We Care works with any Northeastern University student, regardless of location, if they encounter a challenge that may impede their ability to move forward academically. They are knowledgeable about university policy and resources, so can guide you towards the resources that are tailored to your specific, difficult situation.

Career Resources

Employer Engagement and Career Design

In addition to on-campus services in Boston, students across all campuses can access online career advising and coaching, as well as assistance with employment search essentials such as resume writing, interviewing, and networking.

Policy School Professional Opportunity Board

Internship and job postings shared with us by employers and alumni.

On-Campus Job Opportunities

These Northeastern University web sites include on-campus employment:

- ☐ [Student Employment job listings](#)
- ☐ [NUworks](#)
- ☐ [Service Learning Teaching Assistantships](#)

The [Policy School Community Canvas](#) page posts internal paid research opportunities when available. Be sure to accept the invitation to join our Canvas to see these announcements.

Policy School Programming

Academic Planning Webinars

Academic planning webinars offer group advising and community engagement for each academic program.

Career Thursdays

Career Thursdays combine programming (ex. resume development, networking simulation, Effective cover letters, etc.) and opportunities for 1:1 meetings.

Coffee and Conversations

Facilitated by the Policy School Faculty and/or special guests, coffee and conversations provides a space to discuss current events and policy-related issues.

Director Dialogues

Director Dialogues provide the opportunity for a small group of students to meet with Maria Ivanova and discuss issues of interest, solicit feedback, and to get to know one another. Anyone can sign up to do a Director Dialogue!

Industry and Alumni Panels

Industry and Alumni Panels provides students with opportunities to learn about potential career pathways in fields reflecting the range of Policy School academic programs.

PhD Happy Hours

These Happy Hours give PhD students the chance to connect with one another. Faculty are also invited to attend.

Policy School Capstone Information session

This session provides students with critical information about all aspects of the Capstone program.

Policy School Town Hall

Town Hall meetings are open to all Policy School students to solicit feedback and receive information about upcoming programming and events.

The Northeastern Association for Public Policy Students

Northeastern Association for Public Policy Students (NAPPS) is a graduate student group founded by students in the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs that aims to provide a forum for students to come together, exchange ideas, and collaborate on professional development and a myriad of projects in a range of policy fields.

Contacts

Programs and Directors

BA in Human Services

Lori Gardinier

MA in International Affairs

Julie Garey

Master of Public Administration

Cristina Stanica, Program Director

Mark Henderson, Program Coordinator -
Oakland

Etai Misrav, Program Coordinator -
Arlington

Master of Public Policy

Cristina Stanica, Program Director

Mark Henderson, Program Coordinator -
Oakland

Etai Mizrav, Program Coordinator -
Arlington

MS in Engineering and Public Policy

Matthew Eckelman

MS in Environmental Science and Policy

Damon Hall

MS in Urban Informatics

Moira Zellner

MS in Urban Planning and Policy

Gavin Shatkin (on leave)

Serena Alexander, Interim Director

PhD in Public Policy

Dan O'Brien

Research Centers

Policy Innovation Hub

Dan O'Brien, Director

Kimberly Lucas, Civic Research Director

Affiliate Centers

· Boston Area Research Initiative ([BARI](#))

Dan O'Brien, Director

· Center for International Affairs and World Cultures
([CIAWC](#))

Mai'a Cross, Director

· [Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center for Urban and
Regional Policy](#)

Alicia Modestino, Director

· Global Action for Policy ([GAP Initiative](#))

Nishith Prakash and Silvia Prina, Co-Directors

· [Plastics Center](#)

Maria Ivanova and Aron Stubbins, Co-Directors

· [Social Impact Lab](#)

Rebecca Riccio, Director

Policy School Administration

Maria Ivanova, Director

Linda Kowalcky, Associate Director

Michele Rosenthal, Associate Director

of Student Experience and Graduate Co-op Success

Nick Pollard, Associate

Director for Finance & Operations

Beverly Ballaro, Manager of Communications Strategy
and Student Success

Brian Didio, Academic Program Administrator

Sharlene Juste, Associate Director of Student Services
& Recruitment, Arlington

Natalia Stone, Human Services Program Manager

Ruth Thermidor, Graduate Program Administrator