



Academic Year 2026-2027

**Master of Science in Public Policy and
Management (MSPPM)
Student Handbook Addendum**

Degree Programs Covered by this Handbook:

MSPPM 2: Two-Year Track

MSPPM 3: Three-Semester Track

MSPPM-DC: Washington, D.C. Track

MSPPM-DA: Data Analytics Track

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1. Introduction

This handbook provides specific information on the curriculum and program requirements for the Master of Science in Public Policy and Management (MSPPM) program. Heinz College also publishes a separate handbook which details College-wide policies and procedures pertaining to educational planning, program committee, teaching, scheduling and course credit, performance standards, academic standing, ethics and discipline, student privacy rights, and major forms and deadlines.

While this handbook is specific to your academic experience in the department, it is just one element of the Graduate Student Handbook Suite. There are several other resources within the suite that you should consult when needed:

- [Heinz College Handbook](#)
- [University-Wide Graduate Student Handbook](#) (Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs)
- [Carnegie Mellon Student Handbook](#)

2. MSPPM Program Outcomes and Competencies

Heinz College educates students for intelligent action. Its Master of Science in Public Policy and Management program prepares ethical leaders who analyze and implement policy; ground decisions in scientific evidence; create, transform, and manage organizations; and develop innovative solutions to important societal issues around the world.

We achieve that end through curricular and co-curricular activities that stress problem-solving and team-based learning within the Heinz community and in coordination with external partners.

At the completion of the Master of Science in Public Policy and Management program, students will be able to:

- apply leadership, management, and ethical principles or skills to analyze and address challenges or identify opportunities in public governance that support the public interest;
- use analytical, quantitative, and qualitative tools to understand, assess, and address public policy problems in applied, real-world settings;
- analyze and synthesize information, think critically, solve problems, and make evidence-based decisions;
- apply a public service perspective to problem-solving in government, for-profit, and non-profit sectors; and
- communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

3. Department Personnel

The staff listed below are directly associated with the MSPPM program. There is a robust team at Heinz College and CMU available to help you navigate your education, from financial aid and student services to disability services and more.

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4. Curriculum Requirements

Students will complete the MSPPM two-year program (including the DC and DA tracks) in four consecutive semesters, and the MSPPM three-semester program in three consecutive semesters, excluding the summer semester. The MSPPM curriculum is structured with a set of common core courses, a set of bin course requirements (MSPPM 2-year and 3-semester only), and free electives. To successfully complete the MSPPM program, students must complete the following:

- 192 units* of course credit (2-year programs) or 162 units of course credit (3-semester program), including:
 - All core courses (unless exempted)
 - Optional: Students may count a maximum of 36 units of graduate-level, degree-relevant courses outside of Heinz College to count towards the unit minimum.
- Bin coursework as applicable (see definition and requirements below),
- Approved internship between the first and second year
 - This is required for all program tracks other than the MSPPM 3-semester program, for which it is optional (note: international students will not qualify for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for a summer internship) .
- DC Track students are required to complete a Heinz Policy Fellowship during their second year in Washington, DC
- All other standards for graduation, including achieving a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00

Students who entered the MSPPM program **prior to Fall 2026** should follow the curriculum outlined in the handbook aligned with their program start date. For example, if your first semester as an MSPPM student was Fall 2025, please reference the handbook for Academic Year 2025-2026, which precedes this version. Archived handbooks can be found on the [Heinz College Current Student website](#).

**Note: Carnegie Mellon has adopted the method of assigning a number of “units” for each course to represent the quantity of work required of students. For the average student, one unit represents one work-hour of time per week throughout the semester. The number of units in each course is fixed by the faculty member in consultation with the college offering the course. Three units are the equivalent of one traditional semester credit hour.*

4.1. MSPPM 2 (Two-Year) Core Requirements

Students will take common core courses in the sequence shown below unless they are granted exemptions or obtain permission in advance from their Academic Advisor.

Please Note: Students will be pre-registered for the first semester of classes. Students will register themselves for the remaining semesters, in consultation with their Academic Advisor.

Fall Year 1 Courses		
No.	Course Title	Units
90-710 or 90-709	Applied Economic Analysis or Intermediate Economic Analysis	12
90-707 or 90-711 or 90-777	Statistical Reasoning or Statistical Reasoning with R or Accelerated Statistics (6 units)	12
90-713 or 90-714	Policy & Politics: An International Perspective or Policy & Politics in American Political Institutions	12
94-700	Organizational Design & Implementation	6
90-727	PPM Professional Seminar	0
	<i>Electives</i>	6
	Semester Units	48
Spring Year 1 Courses		
90-877	Strategic Communication for Public Policy and Management	12
90-723	Financial Statements and Analysis	6
90-728	Introduction to Database Management	6
90-722	Optimization and Decision Modeling for Policy	12
	<i>Electives</i>	12
	Semester Units	48
94-900	Summer Internship (Required)	0
Fall or Spring Year 2 Courses		
9X-XXX	Policy Domains*	12
9X-XXX	Policy Methods*	12

9X-XXX	Management*	6
	Systems Synthesis/Capstone (Final Semester)	12
	<i>Electives (more if exempt from core courses)</i>	54
Total Units		192
*Select from a pre-approved list of courses that follow		

4.2. MSPPM 3 (Three-Semester) Core Requirements

Fall Year 1 Courses		
No.	Course Title	Units
90-710 or 90-709	Applied Economic Analysis or Intermediate Economic Analysis	12
90-707 or 90-711 or 90-777	Statistical Reasoning or Statistical Reasoning with R or Accelerated Statistics (6 units)	12
90-713 or 90-714	Policy & Politics: An International Perspective or Policy & Politics in American Political Institutions	12
94-700	Organizational Design & Implementation	6
90-727	PPM Professional Seminar	0
	<i>Electives</i>	12
	Semester Units	54
Spring Year 1 Courses		
90-877	Strategic Communication for Public Policy and Management	12
90-723	Financial Statements and Analysis	6
90-728	Introduction to Database Management	6
90-722	Optimization & Decision Modeling for Policy	12
	<i>Electives</i>	18
	Semester Units	54
Fall Year 2 Courses		
9X-XXX	Policy Domains*	12
9X-XXX	Policy Methods*	12
9X-XXX	Management*	6

	Systems Synthesis/Capstone	12
	<i>Electives (more if exempt from core courses)</i>	12
	Semester Units	54
	Total Units	162
*Select from a pre-approved list of courses that follow		

4.3. MSPPM-DA (Data Analytics) Core Requirements

Fall Year 1 Courses		Units
90-710 or 90-709	Applied Economic Analysis or Intermediate Economic Analysis	12
90-777	Accelerated Statistics (mini-1)	6
90-819 or 95-888	Python Programming II (mini-1) or Data Focused Python (mini-1)	6
90-800	Exploratory Data Analysis and Visualization in Python (mini-2)	6
90-713 or 90-714	Policy & Politics: An International Perspective or Policy & Politics in American Political Institutions	12
90-727	PPM Professional Seminar	0
	<i>Electives</i>	6
	Semester Units	48
Spring Year 1 Courses		
90-877	Strategic Communication for Public Policy and Management	12
90-755	Optimization and Decision Modeling for Analytics	12
94-834	Applied Econometrics I (mini-3)	6
94-835	Applied Econometrics II (mini-4)	6
90-803	Machine Learning Foundations with Python	12
	Semester Units	48
94-900	Summer Internship (Required)	0
Fall or Spring Year 2 Courses		
90-838	Database Management for Policy Analytics	12
94-700	Organizational Design & Implementation (Fall only)	6
95-719	Accounting and Finance Analytics (Fall only)	6

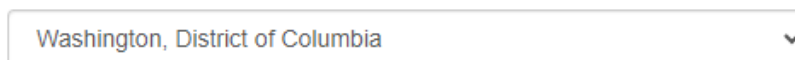
94-867	From Data to Action (Fall only)	6
	Systems Synthesis/Capstone (Final Semester)	12
	<i>Electives (more if exempt from core courses)</i>	54
	Total Units	192

4.4. MSPPM-DC Core Requirements

MSPPM-DC students have the same core and bin course requirements and summer internship requirement as MSPPM 2-year students, with the following additions/considerations:

- In the first year, DC students are required to take 90-897 Working the Policy Ecosystem in Spring in Pittsburgh in preparation for their DC year.
- PPM bin requirements are incorporated in the second-year required DC coursework so DC students don't need to track completion of bin requirements (See below for overview of bin requirements.). It is important to follow the [curriculum sequence](#).
- MSPPM-DC students also have the same required [summer internship](#). This can be waived if needed.
- MSPPM-DC students must complete a [Heinz Policy Fellowship](#) during the second year while in Washington, DC.
- MSPPM-DC students also have additional course options during their second year in Washington, DC. For the most up to date list of courses, use the [Schedule of Classes](#) to search for virtual courses or specific courses at the Washington, DC campus..

Teaching Location



Screenshot of teaching location selected in the online Schedule of Classes

4.4.1. MSPPM-DC First Year Requirement

MS-DC students need to successfully complete 102 units during their first year in Pittsburgh and maintain a QPA of 3.0 or higher in order to proceed to the second year in Washington. Students that fail a required core class or fall below the minimum QPA requirement will be advised to transfer into the Pittsburgh MSPPM two-year program to focus on the successful completion of coursework. This requirement reflects the limited amount of advanced coursework in DC, with core classes offered only in-person in Pittsburgh.

Students who fail a class or fall behind in classes while in DC may not be able to make up the work without returning to Pittsburgh to attend class or delaying graduation.

4.4.2. MSPPM-DC Typical Sequence

Fall Year 1 Courses (Pittsburgh)		Units
90-710 90-709	Applied Economic Analysis or Intermediate Economic Analysis	12
90-707 or 90-711 or 90-777	Statistical Reasoning or Statistical Reasoning with R or Intermediate Statistics (6 units)	12
90-713 or 90-714	Policy & Politics: An International Perspective or Policy & Politics in American Political Institutions	12
94-700	Organizational Design & Implementation	6
90-727	PPM Professional Seminar	
	Fall Electives	6
	Total semester units	48
Spring Year 1 Courses (Pittsburgh)		
90-877	Strategic Communication for Public Policy and Management	12
90-722	Optimization and Decision Modeling for Policy	12
90-728	Introduction to Database Management	6
90-723	Financial Statements and Analysis	6
90-897	Working the Policy Ecosystem	6
	Spring Electives	12
	Total semester units	54
	TOTAL FIRST YEAR	102
94-900	Summer Internship (Required, but waivers can be requested)	0
Fall Year 2 Courses (Washington, DC)		
90-894	Federal Budget Policy (<i>fulfills Management bin</i>)	12
90-823	Program Evaluation (<i>fulfills Policy Methods bin</i>)	12
90-855	Leadership/Management Seminar: How Washington Works (<i>fulfills Management bin</i>)	3
90-884	Capstone (Systems Synthesis): Project Planning	3
90-899	Fellowship (in DC, M-Thurs, 30 hours per week, Sept – May) (<i>fulfills Management bin</i>)	12

90-879	Policy in Action I (<i>fulfills Policy Domain bin</i>)	6
	Total semester units	48
Spring Year 2 Courses (Washington, DC)		
90-824	Cost Benefit Analysis (<i>or other Policy Methods course</i>)	6
90-739	Systems Synthesis I (fall Planning and spring Capstone/Systems Synthesis)	12
90-889	Fellowship (in DC, M-Thurs, 30 hours per week, Sept – May)	12
TBA	Policy in Action II (<i>fulfills Policy Domain bin</i>)	6
	Electives: Spring	6
	Total semester units	42
	TOTAL SECOND YEAR	90
	Total Units	192

4.5. MSPPM 2-Year and MSPPM 3-Semester Bin Course Requirements

Beyond the core courses, MSPPM 2-year and MSPPM 3-semester students are required to take courses from each of the following bins: policy domains (12 units), policy methods (12 units), and management (6 units). Bin requirements for DC students are incorporated into the second-year required classes in DC; as such, DC students do not need to track bin requirements. The course list below is not exhaustive; please consult with your Academic Advisor if you are interested in filling a bin requirement with a course that is not included below.

Note: MSPPM-DA students do not have bin requirements, due to the specialized nature of their curriculum.

4.5.1. Policy Domain Courses (12 Units Required)

Courses in the Policy Domains bin are designed to provide you with an opportunity to explore the substantive aspects of policymaking within the context of different policy areas. The following courses count toward this bin requirement.

Course No.	Title	Units
90-702	Poverty Reduction and Social Policies in Developing Countries	6

90-703	Gender, Politics, and Policies in the US and Across the World	6
90-704	Poverty Reduction and Social Policies in the US	12
90-743	Local and Regional Economic Development	6
90-748	Real Estate Development	6
90-752	Rise of the Asian Economies	12
90-754	Elective Politics and Policy-Making	6
90-784	Affordable Housing Policy and Finance	6
90-789	Resilient & Sustainable Communities	12
90-798	Systems Analysis: Environmental Policy	12
90-805	Issues in Global Urbanization	3,6
90-808	US Energy Policy	6
90-810	Social Movements and Social Change	6
90-817	Education Finance and Policy	12
90-840	The Media & American Politics	6
90-843	Development Financial Tools for Sustainable Economic Development	3
90-860	Policy in a Global Economy 1: International Trade and Trade Policy	6
90-861	Health Policy	6
90-882	Behavioral Economics in Public Policy	12
94-705	Health Economics	12
94-806	Privacy in the Digital Age	6
94-845	Smart Cities: Growth and Intelligent Transportation Systems	6
95-743	Cybersecurity Policy and Governance	12

4.5.2. Policy Methods Courses (12 Units Required)

Courses in the Policy Methods bin deepen your understanding of both the tools and methods for policy analysis. The following courses count toward this bin requirement.

Course No.	Title	Units
90-730	Policy Analysis in Practice	12
90-745	Methods of Policy Analysis: Future of Work	6,12
90-747	Cost Benefit Analysis	6

90-749	Cost Benefit Analysis: A Capital Budgeting Approach	6
90-753	Spatial Data Science with ArcGIS Pro	6
90-783	Policy Innovation Lab: Public Interest Technology	6
90-822	Critical Analysis of Policy Research	12
90-823	Program Evaluation	12
90-834	Geospatial Health Systems	12
90-872	Using R for Policy Data Analysis	6
90-894	Federal Budget Policy	6
94-802	Geographic Information Systems	12
94-827	SAS for Public Policy	6
94-833	Decision Analysis and Multicriteria Decision Making	6
94-834	Applied Econometrics I	6
94-835	Applied Econometrics II	6

4.5.3. Management Courses (6 Units Required)

Courses in the Management bin are designed to equip you to lead and manage projects and organizations with a public policy lens. The following courses count toward this bin requirement.

Course No.	Title	Units
90-736	Public Finance	12
94-719	Budgetary Planning and Analysis	6
94-800	Negotiation	6
94-801	Acting for Leadership and Communication	6
94-811	Strategy Development	6
94-813	Project Management	6
94-814	Evidence-Based Management	6
94-822	Organizational Change	6
94-837	Leading with Equity & Inclusion	6
94-838	Advanced Project Cost Management with Power BI	6
94-854	Developing as a Leader	6
94-865	Data Analytics for Decision Making	6
94-869	Conflict Resolution	6
94-883	Applied Ethical Analysis	6

4.6. Non-Heinz Graduate Courses Counting Towards Your Degree

To fulfill the unit/elective requirements for graduation, you may take relevant graduate-level courses outside of Heinz College. You can take a maximum of 36 units of graduate-level, degree-relevant courses outside of Heinz College to count towards your 192 (two-year programs) or 162 (three-semester program) unit minimum.

If you wish to count a course(s) outside of Heinz towards your degree, you must have Academic Advisor approval, and you must submit a [General Petition form](#) prior to the start of the course.

5. Number of Units per Semester

5.1. Normal Courseload Expectation for MSPPM Students

Students typically take between 48–54 units per semester, though the exact number of units will vary by track and individual student. To make normal academic progress, students are expected to take the following minimum number of units:

- MSPPM 2-year and DA track: 48 units per semester (192 units total)
- MSPPM DC track: varies; 48 units in each fall semester; 54 units in Spring 1; 42 units in Spring 2 (192 units total)
- MSPPM 3-semester track: 54 units per semester (162 units total)

5.2. Unit Increase Policy

First semester MSPPM students will have a maximum of 48 units. Starting with their second semester, this will be raised to 54 units for all students who are in good academic standing, generally defined as maintaining a cumulative grade quality point average of at least a 3.0. Students who are placed on warning or academic probation may have their unit increase reversed and an advising hold placed until they have met with their Academic Advisor.

Students who feel prepared to take on additional academic challenges beyond the standard course load may request a unit increase. They can do so by submitting a [General Petition Form](#), available on the Heinz College Current Student Website, to their Academic Advisor.

5.2.1. Requirements

Students demonstrating strong academic performance with a **3.5 Cumulative Quality Point Average (CQPA)** or higher may request (for advisor approval) an

increase up to to 60 units. Any increase requests above 60 units will require additional approvals and are not guaranteed. Please contact your Academic Advisor.

Students who need to retake a course may be approved for a unit increase in order to make up the course and stay on track for graduation, regardless of their CQPA.

5.2.2. Timeline for Increasing (Optional) Additional Units per Semester

First Semester: First semester MSPPM students will have a maximum of 48 units. Unit increases are permitted only for students selected to participate in 90-700 Heinz Journal (3 units).

Second Semester: All MSPPM students in good standing will be able to enroll in up to 54 units for their second and subsequent semesters automatically. Requests to increase to 60 units will be processed only after first mini grades are posted and the 3.5 CQPA requirement has been met.

Future Semesters: Students with a CQPA of 3.5 or higher may be approved for up to 60 units after mini grades are posted; approved increases take effect the week after registration opens for the following semester.

6. Capstone Project (Systems Synthesis) Coursework

Students must complete a minimum of 12 units of a capstone (Systems Synthesis) or an approved project-based course to fulfill degree requirements. Capstone projects are team-based, faculty-advised experiences that allow students to tackle degree-relevant challenges, working with a client from a real organization. Projects typically require a combination of technological, economic, social, and policy analysis knowledge and skills, and are often sponsored by public or nonprofit organizations. Students work collaboratively in teams with support from a shared faculty advisor, benefiting from a structured and standardized experience that includes guidance on project scoping, team management, and client engagement.

MSPPM students generally complete the standard capstone project in their final semester. This timing is designed to ensure students are best prepared to integrate and apply the full range of skills developed across the program to date.

In the semester preceding the capstone, students will participate in a structured process to be matched with a capstone project aligned with their interests and career goals. Teams are designed to leverage students' complementary skill sets, while providing opportunities for professional growth.

6.1. Capstone (Systems Synthesis) Course Alternatives

While the standard capstone is completed in the final semester, MSPPM students (excluding those in the DC track program) may choose to fulfill the capstone requirement by enrolling in an approved 12-18 unit project-based course. Students pursuing this option must notify their Academic Advisor and Program Director by the published deadline. Deadlines and accompanying guidance will be communicated in advance and will align with the academic calendar, occurring early in the fall term for fall projects and prior to spring registration for spring projects. Students must adhere to these deadlines, as communicated by their Academic Advisor and Program Director.

Approved **Fall semester** alternatives include:

- 94-891: Lean Innovation Lab (12 units)
- 90-719: EPP Physical Technical Systems I (12 units)
- 45-996: Corporate Start-Up Lab (12 units, application required)
- Other approved project courses offered by Heinz College on an occasional basis with Program Director and Academic Advisor approval

Approved **Spring semester** alternatives include:

- 94-891: Lean Innovation Lab (12 units)
- 90-720: EPP Physical Technical Systems II (12 units)
- 45-996: Corporate Start-Up Lab (12 units, application required)
- Other approved project courses offered by Heinz College on an occasional basis with Program Director and Academic Advisor approval

[Physical Technical Systems projects](#) are run jointly with the Department of Engineering and Public Policy and with the Department of Social and Decision Sciences (12 units).

[Corporate Startup Lab \(CSL\)](#) is hosted by Carnegie Mellon University's Swartz Center for Entrepreneurship, in collaboration with the Tepper School of Business. Enrollment in CSL is not automatic; students must complete an application and selection process, and admission is competitive. Fall applications typically open in late spring and close by mid-late summer (June–August), while Spring applications open in late fall and close in December.

6.2. Registration for Capstone (Systems Synthesis) Coursework

Students completing the standard capstone project do not need to register for 90-739: Systems Synthesis or 94-739: Capstone Project. Heinz Academic Services will automatically enroll eligible students shortly before the start of their final semester. Students intending to complete an approved alternative project-based course must inform their Academic Advisor and Program Director by the stated deadlines to opt out of this process.

6.3. Development of Capstone (Systems Synthesis) Projects

Students seeking to propose a capstone project should arrange an initial meeting with the MSPPM Program Director and/or the Director of Partnerships and External Engagement to discuss the potential project. Next, the student may engage the prospective client or partner organization to meet with the Program Director and/or the Director of Partnerships and External Engagement. These meetings will help to assess the suitability of the proposed project and establish shared expectations regarding key elements including project scope, timeline, and data access and sharing.

Only after these preliminary discussions, and if the project is deemed appropriate, will students be invited to submit a formal proposal using a template provided by the College.

The proposal should include, to the extent possible:

- A brief description of the system or problem to be studied
- The proposed client or partner organization
- The types of potential improvements or policy alternatives to be considered
- The data to be used and plans for how the data will be obtained
- The anticipated analytical methods or approaches
- An assessment of the project's feasibility within a one-semester timeframe
- The name(s) of proposed faculty advisor(s), if known

7. Professional Seminar Course

Full-time Heinz College students in their first academic year will take a program specific Professional Seminar. This seminar is intended to equip the next generation of leaders in Public Policy and Information Systems with a comprehensive professional toolkit. By bridging academic rigor with strategic career development, this seminar empowers students to navigate the complex intersection of people, policy, and technology. Through active engagement and self-reflection, students will craft a unique professional narrative that prepares them to drive impact in the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Students will receive impactful guidance from the academic advising and career advising teams, blended with sessions led by program directors, providing a holistic approach to student professional development.

8. Independent Studies for Student Research

As explained in the [Heinz College Handbook](#), Independent Study courses allow for one-on-one interaction between a professor and a student. To receive approval for an independent study course, you must submit an [Independent Study Contract](#) to the faculty advisor and your Academic Advisor accompanied by a memorandum which describes the plan for this independent study course and includes the number of units to be earned, the deliverables of the independent study (i.e., a paper or series of papers, etc.), and grading criteria.

If participating in an Independent Study, MSPPM students are generally expected to submit 25-30 pages for a 12-unit Independent Study, and 12-15 pages for a 6-unit Independent Study.

9. Concentration Areas

As an MSPPM student, you may declare a concentration. Developing depth in a particular field or application area can be a valuable complement to your degree. Concentrations offer a way to focus your academic experience around a specific domain, helping you build expertise and stand out in the job market.

Concentrations require that students complete a minimum of 36 units from courses relevant to the concentration area. These units must be earned through approved coursework that aligns with the academic and professional focus of the chosen concentration.

Heinz College offers a diverse set of concentration areas that reflect emerging trends, interdisciplinary challenges, and evolving career pathways in public policy, technology, and management. Current concentration areas include:

- AI Management
- Energy and Environmental Policy
- Health Policy
- International Policy
- Nonprofit and Public Management
- Public Interest Technology
- Social Policy
- Technology Governance, Cybersecurity, and Privacy Policy

- Urban & Regional Economic Development
- U.S. Politics and Policymaking

Students can also design and develop their own concentrations with the assistance of their Academic Advisor or Program Director. Students should consult with their Academic Advisor for a current list of eligible courses for concentrations other than the College-wide AI Management concentration, which is listed below. Students should also refer to current course schedules for the most up-to-date information.

To declare a concentration, students must submit the [Concentration Declaration Form](#) available on the Heinz College website. This form can be submitted at any time after the decision to pursue a concentration—there is no need to wait until all coursework is completed. If a course substitution becomes necessary during the program, Academic Services can assist with updating your academic record.

Upon completion of the concentration and graduation requirements, Heinz College will issue a certificate of concentration to accompany a student's degree. Questions regarding concentrations may be directed to the program's [Academic Advisor](#) or [Heinz Academic Services](#).

9.1. AI Management Concentration

To maximize the impact AI can have while minimizing its risk of harm, the world needs leaders who understand the entire AI life cycle and steer the technology toward the greater good. The purpose of this concentration is to build aptitude in operationalizing and governing AI systems. This concentration can be a differentiator in the job market and in your career.

The AI Management concentration coursework includes 18 units of foundational courses and 18 units out of approved electives for a total of 36 units. In addition, students will be encouraged to do a capstone project related to AI to solve a real-world problem. For approved courses, please consult with your Academic Advisor and refer to the Heinz College course catalog. The below course listing can also serve as a helpful guide.

Foundational Courses (18 units)

Course No.	Title	Units
95-891	Introduction to Artificial Intelligence	12
94-703	Demystifying AI	6
94-879	Fundamentals of Operationalizing AI	6
94-885	Responsible AI: Principles, Policies, Practices	6

Approved Electives (18 units required)

Course No.	Title	Units
94-816	Generative AI: Applications, Implications and Governance	6
94-812	Applications of NL(X) and LLM	6
94-844	Generative AI Lab	6
93-830	Disruptive Technologies in Arts Enterprises	6
95-767	AI Security	6
94-881	Managing Analytics Projects	6
94-889	Machine Learning for Public Policy Lab	12
95-828	Machine Learning for Problem Solving	12
94-815	Agent-Based Modeling and Digital Twins	6
94-888	Tech Strategy	6
95-851	Making Products Count: Data Science for Product Managers	6
94-717	Systems Thinking & Discrete Event Simulation	6
94-829	Advanced AI and Business Strategy	6
94-866	Design Thinking	6
90-769	Critical AI Studies for Public Policy	6
94-830	AI, Ethics and Humanity	6
94-894	AI & Emerging Economies	12

9.2. Energy and Environmental Policy Concentration

This concentration blends policy expertise with technical insight through a unique partnership between Heinz College and Carnegie Mellon's College of Engineering [Energy Science, Technology and Policy \(EST&P\)](#) master's degree program. Addressing the climate crisis and managing the transition to sustainable energy systems are among the most urgent policy challenges of our time. This concentration equips students with the analytical, technical, and managerial skills needed to craft effective responses to environmental risks and energy demands.

Students in this concentration examine climate change, energy markets, and resilience planning from a policy and governance perspective, with an emphasis on evidence-based decision making and cross-sector solutions. They gain practical tools to design, implement, and evaluate policies that promote sustainability, resilience, and innovation.

Graduates of this concentration are equipped to lead across government, nonprofit, and private sectors, advancing policies that balance economic growth with environmental stewardship and resilience.

9.3. Health Policy Concentration

Health systems are central to the well-being of individuals and communities, yet they face ongoing challenges in cost, access, quality, and equity. The Health Policy concentration prepares students to analyze, design, and lead policies that strengthen health systems at local, national, and global levels.

Students in this concentration explore the structure of health care systems, the economic and political forces that shape them, and innovative approaches to improving outcomes. They learn to apply rigorous analytical methods and policy frameworks to issues such as insurance design, financing, public health infrastructure, and the integration of new technologies in care delivery.

Graduates of this concentration are prepared for careers in government, health organizations, nonprofits, and international agencies, where they will contribute to building healthier, more equitable, and more sustainable systems of care.

9.4. International Policy Concentration

Globalization, shifting geopolitical dynamics, and economic development challenges continue to reshape the international landscape. The International Policy concentration provides students with the analytical frameworks and conceptual tools needed to understand and engage with the most pressing global policy debates.

Students explore the drivers of globalization and their impacts on trade, investment, and development, while also examining the political, strategic, and social dimensions of international affairs. Courses emphasize comparative and cross-national perspectives, preparing graduates to navigate complex international systems and design policies that foster stability, equity, and sustainable growth.

Graduates of this concentration are prepared for careers in international organizations, government agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector, where they will address global challenges in economic development, security, diplomacy, and governance.

9.5. Nonprofit and Public Management Concentration

Mission-driven organizations play a critical role in addressing societal challenges, delivering public services, and fostering innovation. This concentration prepares students to lead effectively in the public and nonprofit sectors by building expertise in financial decision-making, ethical leadership, and strategic management. Students learn to design impactful programs, engage stakeholders, and navigate complex policy environments. The curriculum emphasizes evidence-based decision making, cross-sector collaboration, and values-driven leadership.

Graduates of this concentration are equipped to lead nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and philanthropic institutions, driving mission-focused initiatives that strengthen communities and promote the public good.

9.6. Public Interest Technology Concentration

As technology rapidly transforms society, questions of ethics, governance, and equity are increasingly urgent. The Public Interest Technology concentration prepares students to examine how technological innovation can advance the public good.

This concentration emphasizes technology expertise defined broadly, encompassing the capabilities to create, apply, study, and use new technologies, together with an understanding of the ethical, legal, policy, and societal dimensions of technological change. Students develop the ability to evaluate emerging technologies, anticipate risks, and design policies and strategies that align innovation with public sector challenges..

Graduates of this concentration are equipped to work across sectors—government, nonprofits, advocacy, and industry—bridging the gap between technology and the public interest while advancing solutions that are innovative, ethical, and equitable.

9.7. Social Policy Concentration

Public policy has the power to shape opportunity, reduce inequality, and improve lives. The Social Policy concentration provides students with a deep understanding of how policies can be designed and implemented to improve outcomes in areas such as poverty alleviation, health care, education, gender equity, and economic opportunity.

Students pursuing this concentration examine the drivers of poverty and inequality both in the United States and globally, explore the role of social movements in advancing change,

and apply insights from behavioral economics to craft policies that are both effective and equitable. Courses emphasize comparative analysis, critical thinking, and evidence-based strategies for addressing complex social challenges.

Graduates of this concentration are prepared to lead efforts in government, nonprofits, advocacy organizations, and international agencies to design and advance policies that expand opportunity, promote equity, and foster social change.

9.8. Technology Governance, Cybersecurity, and Privacy Policy

The rapid evolution of digital technologies is reshaping how governments, businesses, and society operate—bringing enormous opportunities alongside complex risks. The Technology, Privacy, and Security Policy concentration equips students with the expertise to navigate these challenges and craft forward-looking policy solutions.

Students in this concentration explore the intersection of technology, governance, and public interest, developing skills to address pressing issues such as cybersecurity threats, data privacy, emerging innovations, and the regulation of wireless and digital systems. Courses emphasize both technical understanding and policy analysis, preparing graduates to bridge the gap between technologists and policymakers.

Graduates of this concentration are prepared for impactful careers in government, industry, consulting, and the nonprofit sector, where they will drive the development and assessment of policies that foster security, innovation, and public trust in the digital age.

9.9. Urban and Regional Economic Development

Cities and regions drive innovation and opportunity, yet they also face complex challenges in housing, transportation, sustainability, and equity. The Urban and Regional Economic Development concentration equips students to design and implement strategies that promote inclusive and sustainable growth at the local, regional, and state levels.

Students in this concentration build expertise in urban policy, planning, housing, and smart city design, while gaining the analytical and management tools needed to support thriving economies and resilient communities. Courses integrate practical policy analysis with forward-looking approaches to urbanization and mobility.

Graduates of this concentration are prepared to lead in government, planning agencies, nonprofits, and consulting, advancing policies and strategies that strengthen communities, expand opportunity, and promote sustainable urban and regional development.

9.10. U.S. Politics and Policy Making

Public policy in the United States is inseparable from politics. This concentration equips students with the knowledge to analyze how political institutions, actors, and strategies shape policy outcomes, while developing the practical skills to navigate the policy ecosystem.

Students examine presidential powers, congressional dynamics, federal budgeting, and the broader policymaking process, gaining both critical insight and applied experience. Courses combine theoretical analysis with hands-on engagement, preparing graduates to lead in legislative affairs, political strategy, and public administration.

10. Summer Internship and MS-DC Fellowship

MSPPM students (except for MSPPM three-semester and MS-MBA students) are required to spend the summer following their first year in the program gaining professional experience in management and analysis by working in a public agency, non-profit organization, private firm, or other organization. Your internship duties must have significant educational value.

Your internship will train you in ways significantly different from classroom instruction. By working in a professional environment, you will solidify the knowledge gained in your Heinz College coursework, refine career interests, and establish personal networks that might lead to later career opportunities. You may pursue paid or unpaid internships.

Students are responsible for securing a suitable internship. The [Mary Beth and Miles Reidy Career Center](#) aids in this search through counseling, workshops on resume preparation and interview skills, and listings of potential internships. Students are strongly encouraged to make appointments with their Career Services advisor to discuss their search and are encouraged to come to workshops that cover the essential skills for finding the right internship.

International students are required to consult with the [Office of International Education](#) for eligibility for work authorization before starting or seeking an internship. International students will benefit from proactively reviewing OIE guidance regarding off-campus [work authorization](#). Off-campus work authorization processing times can take several weeks or months, and

international students will benefit from starting the off-campus work authorization process as early as possible.

10.1. Internship Requirements

- Students must attend an internship information session hosted by the Career Center in their first year spring semester to learn more about specific internship requirements and support offered by the Career Center
- The internship duration is a minimum of 300 hours and is to be completed in the summer between your first and second year only
- Students may only count one internship toward the requirement, unless otherwise approved by the Career Center
- The internship must be reported to the Career Center no later than June 30th in the summer between first and second year
- Students must complete the online Heinz Internship Extension Course administered by the Career Center via Canvas and complete required assignments in order to pass the Internship Course. (Note: Students will be automatically enrolled.)
- Students must notify their Career Advisor of any significant changes in their internships, such as duties, length, location, hours of work, etc.

The Canvas Course includes a module to report the internship. The internship will be verified by the students' Career Advisor and then approved.

Once the internship has been approved, students will be registered for the zero-unit internship course. Students will not receive academic credit for the internship, but it will be reflected on their transcript as a course with Pass/No Pass grade. If a student plans to exempt the internship and meets the requirements, they will need to complete the [Petition for Course Exemption](#).

Once the student has started their internship, they will receive a survey to complete, verifying their supervisor's contact information as well as a skills evaluation.

At the end of a student's internship, their Career Advisor will request that their supervisor complete an evaluation form about their internship performance. Students are also required to complete an evaluation survey about the internship experience and how the role aligned with the educational goals of the program.

If you do not successfully complete an eligible internship along with the supervisor verification and survey, you will not fulfill your internship requirement necessary for graduation.

10.2. Heinz Policy Fellowship for D.C. Track Students

All MS-DC students are required to secure and complete a two-semester Heinz Policy Fellowship during their second year in Washington DC working for a public agency, non-profit organization, or private firm. Students will work a four-day work week (Mon-Thurs, approximately 30-32 hours per week depending on how your employer counts hours.) Your Heinz Policy Fellowship duties must have significant educational value.

The Heinz Policy Fellowship is only available to DC Track students who are in their second year and in Washington, DC.

10.2.1. Securing a Heinz Policy Fellowship

Students are responsible for securing a suitable Heinz Policy Fellowship. Students should work closely with their Heinz Career Center advisor on their Heinz Policy Fellowship search. The Career Center also provides general assistance in Pittsburgh through counseling, workshops on resume preparation and interview skills, and listings of employment opportunities. You can make an appointment at any time to meet with your Career Advisor to discuss your situation. You are also encouraged to attend Career Center workshops that cover the essential skills for finding the right position.

10.2.2. Heinz Policy Fellowship Standards

All MSPPM-DC track students are expected to satisfactorily complete a Heinz Policy Fellowship as an integral part of the degree program. Minimally, this requires the equivalent of 28 weeks of employment (approximately 30-32 hours per week) in a technical, managerial, or administrative position with a satisfactory evaluation by your supervisor. Students should also complete the related 12 unit Fellowship Course offered in both the Fall and the Spring semesters in DC.

Before beginning the internship, students must complete the online Internship Reporting Form that can be found on the [Heinz Career Services website](#). The Heinz Policy Fellowship will be verified with the students' supervisors and then approved. You will not be permitted to graduate if you accept or begin work at a Heinz Policy Fellowship which does not meet Heinz standards.

During the course of the Heinz Policy Fellowship, the MS-DC Executive Director will contact your supervisor periodically to discuss your progress. The Director may also get in touch with you to discuss the fellowship and any problems that arise. You must notify the MS-DC Executive Director of any significant changes in your fellowship, such as length, location, hours of work, etc.

At the end of the Heinz Policy Fellowship, Heinz DC will request that your supervisor complete an evaluation form about your performance. Heinz DC also will ask you for a self-evaluation of how your Heinz Policy Fellowship fulfilled the educational goals of the program and a short description of the employing organization, including a list of contact names, tasks, and responsibilities you cultivated while in their employ. Based on the supervisor's evaluation, the periodic contacts with the supervisor and you, and your self-evaluation, the Director will advise the Masters Committee if you have satisfactorily completed the Heinz Policy Fellowship requirement. If you do not successfully complete an eligible Heinz Policy Fellowship you will have to complete one before you can graduate.

The Career Center encourages you to notify them of job opportunities within your Heinz Policy Fellowship organization which might be available for future Heinz School graduates or interns. Heinz DC and the Career Center will maintain these descriptions for reference by both first and second year students.

10.2.3. Start Date for Heinz Policy Fellowship

Students are required to have an approved Heinz Policy Fellowship by the start of their second academic year (first day of classes for the fall semester in DC). An approved Heinz Policy Fellowship is one that has a job description and has been reported and approved via the Career Center online reporting form. Students without a formal Heinz Policy Fellowship in place by the start of their second year will not be allowed to attend classes in DC, and will be advised to transfer to the two-year program in Pittsburgh and complete their degree there.

Given that many positions in Washington require security clearances, students may not be able to start on time. In the event that this occurs, students should immediately inform the MS-DC Executive Director of their expected start date which should begin no later than November 1st of the fall semester. Students unable to start their Heinz Policy Fellowships, or find and commence an alternative position by November 1st, will be allowed to complete their first semester in DC but will then be

required to return to Pittsburgh to complete their last semester there. While waiting for security clearances, students will be required to find a suitable volunteer or work study position until the start of their approved Heinz Policy Fellowship.

10.3. International Student (F-1/J-1) Internship and Fellowship Considerations

- **F-1 Status Students:** You must apply for [Curricular Practical Training](#) (CPT) employment authorization for your summer internship if your degree program requires you to complete a summer internship. CPT authorization is required regardless of whether the internship is paid or unpaid. Processing CPT may take up to two weeks and you cannot begin employment until you receive authorization. Guidelines, forms, and instructions can be found at [Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\) - Office of International Education - Office of Enrollment Management - Carnegie Mellon University](#).
- **J-1 Status Students:** You will need to apply for and obtain [Academic Training](#) before beginning your internship or fellowship. If your program sponsor on your DS-2019 is Carnegie Mellon University, follow these [steps](#) to obtain your Academic Training. If your program sponsor is another entity (such as Fulbright), you must contact the entity to understand the steps to receive your Academic Training.
- The summer internship for three-semester MSPPM students is optional; however, students are encouraged to seek internship opportunities. MSPPM 3-semester international students in F-1 status do not qualify for CPT if they decide to do an internship and must apply for pre-completion OPT if they wish to participate in an internship opportunity.