

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (PHD)

Public Administration (PhD) Website (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/>)

NYSED: 08379 **HEGIS:** 2102.00 **CIP:** 44.0401

Program Description

Interdisciplinary. Flexible. Powerful.

Through theoretical and methodological training, NYU Wagner's doctoral students learn how to produce insights required for effective and equitable public and nonprofit programs and policies. Our program is interdisciplinary, just like our faculty, so students can draw on economics, political science, sociology, psychology, organization studies, and other fields. What's more, it is flexible, allowing students to design a plan of study that takes advantage of the many courses offered at NYU Wagner and NYU's other graduate schools.

We encourage students to study the questions that drive them, while providing the guidance necessary to have the greatest impact. And, we emphasize research and teaching experience. Students have many opportunities to participate in research projects with individual faculty or through our affiliated research centers, as well as opportunities to lead classes as teaching colleagues and instructors.

Students interested in conducting research in these areas are encouraged to apply:

- Education policy
- Health policy
- International development
- Management
- Public finance and financial management
- Public policy
- Urban policy

The program prepares graduates for careers at academic institutions, in think tanks, research firms, and research units of public, quasi-public, and private organizations, as well as for other positions with substantial responsibilities for the supervision and administration of research.

Admissions

Admission to the PhD program requires the following:

- Online Application
- Personal Statement
- Writing Sample
- Curriculum Vitae
- Letters of Recommendation
- Transcripts
- Standardized Test Scores
- Application Fee
- Supporting Documentation (optional)

See PhD Application Checklist (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/admissions/degree-checklist/phd/>) for admission requirements and instructions specific to this program.

Program Requirements

Seventy-two (72) credits are required for the doctoral degree with a GPA of 3.3/B+ or better average. At a minimum, 32 credits of coursework must be completed at NYU Wagner and/or other graduate divisions of NYU. Of these 32 credits, at least 16 must be other than the Core or introductory level courses. In most cases, students may transfer up to a maximum of 40 credits of relevant coursework from their Master's program. Note that the courses to be applied to the PhD must be approved by the Doctoral Program Director.

Course	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
PHD-GP 5902	Research Methods	4
PADM-GP 2172	Advanced Empirical Methods	3
PHD-GP 5905	Qualitative Research Methods	4
PHD-GP 5910	Doctoral Research Colloquium I	2
PHD-GP 5911	Doctoral Research Colloquium II	2
Theoretical Framework Module (3 courses, 4 credits each)		12
Research Methodology Module (2 courses, 4 credits each)		8
Electives		
Other Elective Credits		37
Total Credits		72

Additional Program Requirements

Preliminary Qualifying Examination (PQE)

The PQE is an essay exam constructed to assess the student's capability to design a research proposal based on a research problem scenario presented to them. It also tests the capacity for clear and logical expository writing. The PQE does not examine specific substantive knowledge from any given course; instead, it relies on the student's general knowledge and the appreciation of the logic of applied social science research.

The PQE is scheduled in the spring semester and must be taken during the first year of matriculation.

Fields of Study

Students choose two fields of study and must pass a Comprehensive Exam for each field at the end of the second year of study.

- A core doctoral field (Management (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/fields/management/>) or Public Policy (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/fields/policy/>))
- Another established field or a customized field. For this field students have three options:
 - a. Choose another core field
 - b. Choose one of the existing specialty fields: Education Policy (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/fields/education/>), Health Policy (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/fields/health/>), International Development (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/fields/international/>), Public Finance and

Financial Management (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/fields/finance/>), or Urban Policy (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/fields/urban/>)

- c. Develop a customized (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/degrees/doctorate-public-administration/fields/customized/>) field (subject to approval by the Wagner School Doctoral Board)

Fields of study are defined by a coherent body of knowledge: concepts and theories, research, and professional literature. A field is more than just a cluster of courses. However, coursework does contribute to identifying theoretical and substantive bases of a field. Further, fields are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they tend to overlap, even though each field represents a distinctive set of intellectual concerns expressed in theories, topics, approaches and research emphases.

The customized field option is available under special circumstances and upon consultation with the student's advisor.

Comprehensive Examinations

Comprehensive Examinations are the second and final set of exam requirements for the PhD degree. In these examinations, students are expected to demonstrate their capacity to analyze and assess critically the major concepts, theories, and research in each of their chosen fields and their ability to present these perspectives in a well-documented, cogent, clear and logical manner.

- Both comprehensive exams must be taken in the 2nd year of study.
- The comprehensive exams may not be waived.
- Students who do not pass on their first try must retake the failed exam before the beginning of the third year of study.
- Except under unusual circumstances, students who fail any of the fields twice will be terminated from the doctoral program.

Third-Year Paper

In the third year, students are required to demonstrate the knowledge and proficiency gained from their theoretical framework and research methodology modules (and other coursework) by completing a research paper under the guidance of two faculty members.

Dissertation

A dissertation is the result of a scholarly investigation on a topic or problem conducted independently by the candidate under the general guidance of a faculty committee and chaired by a primary advisor. The committee plays a key role in guiding the candidate's proposal, research, and writing. To facilitate the advisory process, the candidate selects his/her faculty committee on the basis of common intellectual interest on the dissertation topic. Two additional external readers are added later in the process, in consultation with the Doctoral Program Director, to participate in the defense. Ultimately, what constitutes a dissertation is the result of an agreement between the student, the chair, and the committee members.

Sample Plan of Study

Course	Title	Credits
1st Semester/Term		
PHD-GP 5902	Research Methods	4
PADM-GP 2172	Advanced Empirical Methods	3
Theoretical Framework Module (Course 1 of 3)		4
Research Methodology Module (Course 1 of 2)		4
Credits		15

2nd Semester/Term		
PHD-GP 5905	Qualitative Research Methods	4
Theoretical Framework Module (Course 2 of 3)		4
Research Methodology Module (Course 2 of 2)		4
Elective		4
Credits		16
3rd Semester/Term		
PHD-GP 5910	Doctoral Research Colloquium I	2
Theoretical Framework Module (Course 3 of 3)		4
Elective		4
Elective		3
Credits		13
4th Semester/Term		
PHD-GP 5911	Doctoral Research Colloquium II	2
Elective		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Credits		14
5th Semester/Term		
Elective		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Elective		2
Credits		14
Total Credits		72

Learning Outcomes

In the first year of study, students:

- Learn foundational skills in research methods, including:
 - Advanced statistical methods, focusing on causal inference
 - Qualitative research methods
- Develop the capability to design a research proposal for a given scenario, including:
 - Articulating the research question and hypotheses
 - Presenting a conceptual framework or causal model
 - Describing the methodology, data collection, measures, and interpretation of potential findings
 - Discussing limitations of the proposed design
- Build capacity in specific content areas of interest, including relevant literature, theory, methods, and empirical evidence

In the second year, students develop further competency in:

- Advanced methodological skills, including innovative research techniques and interdisciplinary approaches
- Theoretical frameworks in social science
- Synthesizing scholarly literature to support an original argument
- Independent critical evaluation of literature, including conceptual frameworks, study designs, data analyses, and conclusions

In subsequent years, students engage in independent research and gain proficiency in:

- All aspects of conducting a scholarly investigation, including:
 - Formulating policy relevant research questions that address limitations of existing knowledge
 - Theoretical framing and review of existing literature
 - Applying sound research designs to specific questions
 - Collecting and analyzing data

- Interpreting results
- Describing limitations and policy implications
- Expository and analytical writing skills
- Oral communication skills

Policies

NYU Policies

University-wide policies can be found on the New York University Policy pages (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/nyu/policies/>).

Wagner Policies

Additional academic policies can be found on the Wagner academic policy page (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/graduate/public-service/academic-policies/>).