Master of Public Policy
“The Duke Sanford School offers a dynamic learning environment. Faculty and students collaborate through research and classwork to ask and answer big questions. You’ll gain a strong set of interdisciplinary skills as well as real experience in teamwork and leadership. Join us in a lifelong community of learners and doers.”

— Judith Kelley, Dean of the Sanford School of Public Policy
Join Our Close Community

- 65 to 80 students each year, small class sizes
- Top-quality teaching and one-on-one mentoring
- Almost all admitted students receive merit-based scholarships
- Individualized career counseling
- Deeply loyal alumni network

“Duke’s Sanford School of Public Policy and Durham combine to cover all bases for success in your MPP. You have a top-notch education in a location that is affordable, conveniently located, and has all the amenities of a larger city: a lively atmosphere, excellent cuisine, and opportunities for students to connect with creative leaders.”

- Ken Rogerson, Director of Graduate Studies, Master of Public Policy Program

Assistant Professor Jay Pearson, winner of a Richard Stubbing Award for Graduate Teaching and Mentoring, leads a seminar.

sanford.duke.edu
Launch a New Career

Top 10 Employers
Deloitte Consulting  
Booz Allen Hamilton Consulting  
Public Impact  
RTI International  
World Bank  
DAI  
U.S. Department of State  
Boston Consulting Group  
LMI  
N.C. Office of State Budget and Management

Career Search Assistance
- On-campus recruiting events  
- Job listings  
- Assistance with applications for prestigious fellowships  
- Career seminar in Washington, D.C.

Our Grads Have Choices: Public, Private, Nonprofit

MPP First Positions by Sector 2015-2019

“Graduates settled in jobs, further education, etc., within 6 months”

“The overwhelming feedback from internship supervisors is that our students stand out in their level of skill, knowledge and professional demeanor. Employers repeatedly ask for our students, and our strong alumni base leads the way for internship and job pipelines.”

- Donna Dyer, Assistant Dean for Career and Professional Development  
  MPA, NC State University; BA (Public Policy), Duke University

- Carmella La Bianca, Director of Employer Relations and Global Advising

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Internships & Practical Experiences

First-Year Consulting Projects
The consulting project helps MPP students gain experience with real-world clients and build teamwork skills. Students define a problem, frame a policy question, research policy options, undertake analysis, draw conclusions and present their recommendations to the client.

Internships
The two-year, full-time program includes a summer internship, allowing MPP students to field-test their analytical skills, make connections for their master’s projects and explore career paths. Our career services office helps students secure internships with employers across the country and internationally, such as:

- U.S. Department of the Treasury
- Deloitte Consulting
- International Finance Corporation
- NCGrowth
- Section 809 Panel
- Urban Institute
- International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development
- N.C. Department of Public Instruction
- U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

UN Secretary General Bahn Ki-moon shakes hands with Raphael Obonyo MPP’14 during his UN internship. Obonyo is co-founder of Youth Congress, Kenya, and was a representative to the World Bank’s Global Coordination Board on Youth and Anti-Corruption.

“’I interned at the U.S. Senate Budget Committee, working on a team seeking innovative ways to fix one of the processes affected most by gridlock—the budget and appropriations process. I could not have felt more prepared to tackle this issue. Every day, I was using the problem-solving and policy analysis skills I learned at Sanford. From writing memos to crunching numbers, I was able to fine-tune those skills and gain insight into how we can make government more effective and efficient.”
— Abby Zofchak MPP’19

“It has been tremendously satisfying to embark on a program evaluation process that I’ve learned about through our statistics classes. This work is perfect for my interests in education, labor, and social policy.”
— Connie Ma MPP’15, on her internship with Taiwan Fund for Children and Families
In the Classroom

Our core courses provide a strong foundation in economics, statistics, policy analysis, and the politics of policymaking throughout the domestic and international spheres. Sanford faculty experts develop and teach our core courses.

Students can choose electives from both within the Sanford School and from other departments at Duke and neighboring universities. Electives give students the flexibility to develop expertise in multiple policy areas and to concentrate in a policy subject.

Policy Concentrations

The following concentrations are offered, each with a global perspective:

- Environment and Energy Policy
- Health Policy
- International Development Policy
- National Security and Foreign Policy
- Social Policy
- Technology Policy

Dual Degree Options

Business (MBA-MPP)
Duke's top-ranked Fuqua School of Business or UNC-Chapel Hill's Kenan-Flagler Business School

Divinity (MDiv-MPP)
Duke Divinity School

Environment (MEM-MPP)
Duke's Nicholas School of the Environment

Law (JD-MPP)
Duke Law School, UNC-Chapel Hill Law School or NC Central Law School

Medicine (MD-MPP)
#8-ranked Duke School of Medicine

The Master's Project

A year-long policy research project, conducted with guidance from faculty advisors, is the capstone of the MPP degree. Recent MPs have included:

- Barriers to Opioid Addiction Treatment
- The Link Between International Religious Freedom and National Security: Ensuring a Safe America While Pursuing Our Ideals
- From Classrooms to Courtrooms: Are Judges Who Were Law Professors More Liberal?
- Adoption and Short-Term Impacts of Improved Cookstoves in Rural India
- Lost & Found: Shifts in Local Government Revenue When State Sources Decline

Associate Professor Nick Carnes (left) with students
Influential Faculty

“The Sanford School faculty aren’t just academics. Within a few moments of talking with any of your professors, you realize they are drawing on a vast wealth of actual policymaking experience.”
— Rob Lalka MPP’08, Professor of Practice and Executive Director, Albert Lepage Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Tulane University

“What’s different about the job guarantee is that it is universal and permanent. So it’s an option that would exist not only in times of massive unemployment, but also in times when the unemployment rate is lower.”
— Professor William A. “Sandy” Darity, Jr., NPR

“SANDY” DARITY researches income inequality and the racial wealth gap, and directs the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity. His job guarantee proposal, featuring a government job at a good wage with benefits, has gained the support of leading politicians, including Senators Bernie Sanders, Cory Booker and Kirsten Gillibrand.

“The main terrorist threat in the U.S. is not from Muslim extremists, but from right-wing extremists. Just ask the police.”
— Associate Professor of the Practice David Schanzer, The New York Times

DAVID SCHANZER is a leading voice in the national dialogue on security and terrorism. He directs the Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security. He served as staff director for the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security, and legal counsel to Senators Joseph Biden Jr. and William Cohen. He also held executive branch positions in the departments of Defense and Justice.

“These job losses are not just changing people’s calculations about job search or college, but actually really making them distressed.”
— Associate Professor Anna Gassman-Pines, WUNC-FM

ANNA GASSMAN-PINES researches low-wage work, family life and the effects of welfare and labor policy on child and family well-being in low-income families. Her work has been funded by grants from the National Science Foundation, the William T. Grant Foundation and the Russell Sage Foundation. She received the Dean’s Award for Excellence in Mentoring from the Duke Graduate School.
Alumni Leaders, Careers with Impact

“Sanford’s emphasis on teamwork is very important. My days are dynamic as I move between a number of topics, everything from beginning the day having breakfast with a key partner, to meeting with our team about the strategic planning process, to heading to board meetings. I’d challenge students to look at an opportunity not based on whether a position has status but instead on whether it will give them an opportunity to make an impact.”

—Jennifer Haygood MPP'01, Chief of Staff/Executive Vice President N.C. Community College System

“The analytical and communications skills you develop here are extremely valuable. As hard as it may be to believe, writing a great one-page memo can build a career, in and of itself.”

—Peter Kant MPP’96, Vice President for Federal Partnerships, SRI International

“Completing the dual degree program was the best decision I’ve ever made. Business school taught me how to analyze data and make decisions quickly and how to manage an organization. Policy school taught me how to analyze data and issues thoroughly and understand the reasoning and math behind the tools that are used in both policy and business. Because of the complementary nature of the programs, I am just as comfortable presenting in a company boardroom as I am conversing with PhDs who are generating the data that make the world go round.”

—Eric Nakano MPP/MBA’14, Business Relationship Manager, Wizeline, a technology development and consulting company
“At Sanford, you are educated to make a difference. My two years at Sanford were demanding in ways that I had never experienced until that point. For graduate students, their two years at Sanford will provide the foundation for a career path that few will be able to match. It will be useful in careers both inside and outside of government. The way the policy school taught me to think was helpful to me as a lawyer, in the White House, in sports representation and now in education.”

—Michael Sorrell MPP’90/JD’94, President, Paul Quinn College, one of “World’s 50 Greatest Leaders” (Fortune magazine)

“It’s trying to figure out how you work this issue into bilateral diplomacy that’s already established on very complex issues. How do I figure out how to not supersede something like nuclear policy but still show that anti-human trafficking is in your interest to work on?”

—Andrea Wilson MPP/MBA’12, Foreign Affairs Officer, Human Trafficking, U.S. State Department (far right) spoke at Sanford about her work with Judith Kelley, Amy Pope JD’11, and Ambassador-at-Large for Human Trafficking Susan Coppedge PPS’88.

“Distrust the sound bite or talking point that is not backed up by objective evidence or reliable analytics. Seek to raise the level of dialogue to insure that fair, substantive and multi-layered analyses drive our public policy outcomes.”

—Danny Werfel, MPP’99, Partner and Managing Director, The Boston Consulting Group, Chair, MPP Alumni Advisory Board, former Acting Commissioner of the IRS
**Bass Connections**
This Duke-wide initiative creates interdisciplinary project teams to tackle complex problems.
Bassconnections.duke.edu

Madhu Vulimiri gives her Bass Connections presentation.

“Bass Connections allowed me to research policy challenges facing the N.C. Medicaid program by interviewing legislators, Medicaid officials and health care executives. Ultimately, this project sparked my interest in state health policy and led me to intern at the N.C. Office of State Budget and Management.”

—Madhu Vulimiri MPP’18, Margolis Scholar in Health Policy & Management

**Sanford Board Leadership Initiative**
The Sanford Board Leadership Initiative (SBLI) places MPP students on local nonprofit boards as non-voting members. This popular program has a competitive application process.

“The opportunities that Sanford allows me, being in communities and helping out the leadership board initiative, to see policy in action while we’re still in school—that’s both rewarding and very impactful.”

—Martine Aurelien MPP’18 was a leader of the SBLI and served on the board of the Thomas Mentor Leadership Academy in Durham.

**Duke Interdisciplinary Social Innovators:**
Do good, be humble, have fun

CREATE SOLUTIONS • “We were at Dame’s Chicken and Waffles, where all good ideas start,” remembers Danny Heller MPP’14. PhD student Jen Shen “drew a flowchart that had engineers, business people and policy people, with an arrow pointing to good ideas.” Duke Interdisciplinary Social Innovators was born.
Global Reach

Hertie School of Governance Exchange Program, Berlin, Germany

The Sanford School offers a fall semester study abroad exchange program with the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, Germany for second-year MPP students. One of Europe’s leading public policy schools, Hertie focuses on graduate education in governance. Courses are taught in English.

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Summer School for Future International Development Leaders

UDAIPUR, INDIA • “If you want to help those in poverty, you need to experience the hardships firsthand,” says Professor Anirudh Krishna. MPP students work on a project team with an Indian graduate student and an early career staff member from an NGO.

Duke Program on Global Policy and Governance

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND • “Thanks to the reputation that the Duke program has cultivated, we were treated to intimate dialogues with diplomats, ambassadors, and high-ranking officials from prominent NGOs,” said Adrian Evans-Burke MPP’12, Analyst, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. The unique program combines coursework and internships with unparalleled access to global policy experts at leading international organizations, including UNDP, WHO, and WTO.
Life in Durham

Durham, N.C. ‘Where Great Things Happen’

Durham, Chapel Hill (home of UNC) and Raleigh, the state capital, are collectively known as North Carolina’s Research Triangle. With a population of 2 million people, and three major state universities in addition to Duke, the Triangle is home to high-powered scholarship and an entrepreneurial spirit.

Fullsteam, Durham’s first craft brewery, was founded by Sean Lilly Wilson MPP/MBA’00 after leading a successful “Pop the Cap” campaign to change state law on beer.
Sanford students have opportunities to learn from leaders who are shaping the future. Policymakers, politicians and other dignitaries regularly speak to Sanford students in classes, small-group lunches and public lectures.

U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley speaking at Duke in Page Auditorium with Professor Peter Feaver.

Student Groups
Bridging Communities
Duke Interdisciplinary Social Innovators
Energy and Environment Club
MPP Student Council
National Security Student Group
Sanford Board Leadership Initiative
Sanford Journal of Public Policy
Sanford Pride
Sanford Running Club
Women in Policy
The Sanford School provides merit-based scholarships to all admitted MPP students who are not receiving full funding from outside sources. The merit-based awards include tuition scholarships and/or teaching, research or staff assistantships. The school also has tuition fellowship agreements with several partners, including AmeriCorps, City Year, the Peace Corps, Teach for America and the Yellow Ribbon programs.

Two scholarships cover full tuition, fees and living expenses:

**The Terry and Laurie Sanford Family Fellowship** is awarded to outstanding student leaders committed to addressing disparities affecting underserved communities. It is made possible by a gift from the family of the school's founder.

**The Helen F. “Sunny” Ladd Fellowship in Education Policy** is for students with a strong background and interest in education. Professor Emeritus Ladd is a former director of the MPP program and a leading education policy scholar.

### 1st Sanford Fellow: Maurice Baynard

Maurice Baynard MPP/JD’21 worked with autistic children in the Minneapolis Public Schools and then for several law firms in Chicago. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, he is studying education and law as a dual degree student.

### 1st Ladd Fellow: Lee Foster

Lee Foster MPP/MBA’21 taught high school math in Charlotte, N.C., through Teach for America. She graduated from the University of Kentucky with a major in economics and marketing, and is interested in education equity.

The fellowships were created by Kristin Carlucci Weed PPS’02 in honor of her father, Frank C. Carlucci III.
Getting In

Is Our Program Right for You?
The Sanford School's two-year, professional Master of Public Policy (MPP) program prepares students for careers as analysts, managers and leaders in various levels of business, government, and nonprofit organizations in the United States and around the world.

MPP or MPA? In recent years, the two degree programs have begun to look similar. However, policy analysis is at the heart of the MPP curriculum, which typically includes economics and quantitative courses. MPA coursework at universities across the country often puts greater emphasis on management, public organizations and budgeting. The Sanford School offers the MPP degree. It also offers a mid-career Master of International Development Policy and a PhD in Public Policy.

Scholarships
The Duke MPP program is among the very few that offer a merit-based scholarship to nearly all admitted students. Scholarships range from partial to full tuition, and teaching or research graduate assistanships may also be awarded.

In addition, through agreements with the Duke MPP program, these partners may provide tuition funding for qualified applicants:
- AmeriCorps Educational Program
- Charles B. Rangel Fellowship Program
- City Year Fellowship Program
- Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation
- Institute for International Public Policy (IIPP)
- Paul D. Coverdell Fellows Program (Peace Corps)
- Teach for America Educational Program
- Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program
- U.S. Military Academy Teaching Position Agreement
- Yellow Ribbon Military Veterans Program

Who Can Apply?
Diversity is a core value at Sanford. We seek applicants from diverse academic, professional, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

Factors that influence admission:
- Undergraduate academic performance and courses taken
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores
- English and writing skills
- Statement of purpose
- Relevant work experience (2+ years preferred after completion of the undergraduate degree)
- Faculty and employer evaluations

Prerequisite coursework: Prior to matriculation, students are required to complete both basic statistics and micro-economics at an accredited academic institution and achieve a grade of B or better.

GRE Option
Beginning with the Fall 2021 application, GRE score submission will be optional. Students may, if they choose, submit GRE scores (or GMAT/LSAT scores) for consideration in the application process, but it is not required.

Seeing is Believing
We strongly encourage prospective students to:
- Visit our campus. Engage with our supportive, close-knit community and explore Duke's beautiful campus. Please complete the Visit Request Form at least two weeks before your projected arrival date: sanford.duke.edu/admissions/mpp
- Attend an in-person or virtual recruiting event. View our schedule online: sanford.duke.edu/admissions/mpp/recruiting
- If admitted, attend our Open House in late March or early April.

Apply Online
All materials, including official GRE and TOEFL scores, must be received by January 5 at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. A completed application includes:
- Electronic Application
sanford.duke.edu/admissions/master-public-policy/how-apply
- Transcript(s)
- GRE (optional)
- TOEFL/IELTS (non-native English speakers who are not U.S. citizens or Permanent Residents)
- GMAT (MPP/MBA applicants only)
- LSAT (MPP/JD applicants only)
- Three (3) letters of recommendation
- Statement of Purpose: 1,500-word limit
- Resume: 2-page limit
- Video Essay (Strongly Recommended): 1-minute limit

FAQs? Visit our website
sanford.duke.edu
“We will not flinch from change; we will lead it. We will not shy away from challenge; we will welcome it.”

— Terry Sanford

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