 

Department of Education Policy and Social Analysis

Teachers College, Columbia University

**Education Policy Program**

**Program Study Guide**

**Teachers College Major Code: EPOL**

**Degree and minimum point requirements: M.A. (33 points)**

**For incoming Summer/Fall 2024 students**

***Program Description***: The Education Policy Program aims to build a cadre of education policy experts whose deep grounding in a range of educational policy issues is matched by their understanding of the policy process and the tools of policy analysis. The Masters of Arts (M.A.) degree offered by the Education Policy Program is focused on the preparation of policy analysts, policy advocates, and education researchers. The program develops students’ knowledge and skills by drawing on interdisciplinary policy studies, the social science disciplines of economics, history, law, politics, and sociology, and substantive content on policies and practice in early childhood education, K-12 education, higher education, and law and education.

Courses are offered in a traditional schedule during the fall, spring, and summer terms. Up to 12 points can be completed at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences or other divisions of Columbia University. Students must consult with their academic advisor before making any substitutions for required courses.

***Culminating Requirement:*** Students entering in summer or fall 2024 will write a reflective essay on what they have learned through their Education Policy M.A. program. The reflective essay represents an opportunity for students to consolidate what they have done in separate classes and present a comprehensive and critical assessment of the core ideas and skills they have encountered; the intellectual, professional, and personal changes they have experienced; and their ideas and plans for the future. The reflective essay will be assessed as Pass or Fail by the student’s advisor, and students may be asked to revise the essay until it is acceptable. Criteria for the assessment will be: evidence of substantive engagement with program content and efforts to synthesize important ideas; evidence of describing and reflecting on specific experiences and insights from the degree program in the essay (rather than simply describing general impressions or ideas); evidence of a thoughtful comparison of current thinking with perspectives held at the beginning of the degree program; and evidence of careful attention to writing quality.

***Breadth Requirement****:* All Teachers College students must complete a prescribed number of points outside of their program and department. For this degree program, all students need to complete a minimum of 6 points in Teachers College courses that are outside of the program (Teachers College courses that do not carry an EDPA prefix).

***M.A. Program Transfer Credits:*** Students **may not** transfer points from a previous degree or institution into this degree program.

***Expectations for Satisfactory Progress:*** Students are expected to make satisfactory progress toward the completion of degree requirements. It is the policy of the Department of Education Policy and Social Analysis (EPSA) that all students must enroll in at least three credits per term (fall and spring) until their program is completed. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted under special circumstances, and students must contact their advisor about this. Program faculty will annually review each student’s progress. They will also inform students if there are concerns about students’ satisfactory progress. If a student is performing below expectations he/she may be required to complete additional course work. The program will provide a plan and timeline for remediation so students know the expectation for them to continue in the program. If satisfactory progress is not maintained a student may be dismissed from the program.

***(Beginning in the Fall 2018 term, all students who enroll in a degree program must register for courses beginning with their initial term of entry and continuing each fall/spring term until their degree requirements have been met. Please talk to your advisor about the ways you can meet the continuous enrollment requirement. For the full text of the continues enrollment policy see*** [***https://goo.gl/esMBDK***](https://goo.gl/esMBDK)***.)***

***Services for Students with Disabilities:*** The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Access and Services for Individuals with Disabilities for information about registration (301 Zankel Bldg.) Services are available only to students who are registered and submit appropriate documentation.

***Statement on Academic Conduct:*** A Teachers College student is expected to refrain from any conduct, including cheating, plagiarizing, or purchasing documents submitted for academic evaluation, that calls into question his/her academic and/or professional probity. Decisions regarding academic evaluation in all aspects of students’ work at the college, including course work, certification examinations, clinical or field experiences, and preparation of dissertations, are within the sole jurisdiction of the faculty concerned, including as appropriate, the department or program staff members. Disciplinary actions (e.g., reprimand, suspension, or dismissal) in cases of academic misconduct can be imposed by the Vice Provost or the Committee on Student Conduct.

***Resolution of Student Academic Program Concerns:*** Any student who has a concern regarding an academic matter may seek assistance. The procedure for resolving academic program concerns (see note of grade correction process below) begins with either the faculty member (if the concern is related to a course) or the student’s advisor. If the student is not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved at this first level, or if speaking with the faculty member presents a conflict of interest for the student, the student should proceed to speak with the Program Coordinator in the area in which the academic concern resides. If the student is not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved through the Program Coordinator, the student should proceed to speak with the Chair of the academic department in which the academic concern resides. If the student is still not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved through the Department Chair, or if speaking with the Department Chair presents a conflict of interest for the student, the next step is to contact the Office of the Vice Provost. At any stage of the process, students are welcome to seek the advice and guidance of the Ombudsman, who is charged with attempting to informally resolve student dissatisfaction of an academic nature on a completely confidential basis.

***Grade Correction Procedure:*** The instructor for a course has the responsibility for setting the requirements for a course and making an evaluation of students’ work. Once a grade has been given, the instructor is not free to change the grade unless the instructor indicates to the Registrar that an error was made in the original grade transmitted. If a student believes that an error has been made, he/she must take the initiative in bringing about the necessary correction prior to the conclusion of the semester immediately following the semester in which the course was taken. The normal procedure for effecting a correction would be through direct discussion between the student and the instructor. If redress cannot be attained through such discussions, the student may next appeal to the department chairperson of the department offering the course. If resolution cannot be attained through appeal, the student may next appeal to the Dean. In situations where the student feels that such an appeal process might not be in the student’s interest, counsel and assistance can be sought from the Office of the College Ombudsman and the Office of the Vice Provost (more at [Teachers College Policies and Procedures](https://www.tc.columbia.edu/catalog/policies/)).