Appendix A
SPECIALIZATIONS FOR THE
INTERDISCIPLINARY M.A. IN EDUCATION POLICY (EPOL)

M.A. students will select a substantive specialization in consultation with their academic advisor. The specialization areas generally will be tied to students’ professional and academic goals. Although individualized and incorporating an element of student choice, the implementation of this requirement is guided also by the principles that students need to develop depth as well as breadth and that students should focus on areas in which the Department of Education Policy has a substantial concentration of expertise.

To help guide students, the department has developed specializations in four areas: Early Childhood Education, K-12 Education Reform, Higher Education Policy, and Law and Education Policy. Lists of courses that could be counted under these specializations are outlined below.

Students will also have the option of designing their own specialization, with the advice and approval of their advisor. Such specializations might focus on crosscutting themes in education policy (such as accountability, privatization, or diversity and equity), on special populations (such as P-20 education for students with disabilities), or on particular domains in the policy system (such as federal or state level policy).

For each specialization, students will take 4 courses (12 credits). If students choose Option A for the culminating project (a paper analyzing existing research or data) and do so through an independent study, this course will also count toward the specialization requirement. Similarly, if students choose Option B for the culminating project (a paper that presents original data resulting from fieldwork), they will typically enroll in EDPA 5515: Masters Fieldwork Seminar in Education Policy. This course will count toward the specialization requirement.

The five specialization options are as follows and are described on the pages following:

1. Early Childhood Policy
2. Higher Education Policy
3. K-12 Education Policy
4. Law and Education Policy
5. Self-Designed Specialization in Education Policy
EARLY CHILDHOOD POLICY

Rationale

The Early Childhood Policy Specialization is designed to provide students with a foundational knowledge of the policies that impact early childhood pedagogy, practice, workforce development, accountability, financing, and governance. Students will be exposed to the framing issues that contour early childhood policy as well as the ways in which early childhood policy is similar to, and distinguished from, K-12 and Higher Education policy. Having completed the specialization, students will be conversant with the major issues and policies impacting American (and potentially international) early childhood development and education.

Required Course

C&T 5050 Early Childhood Policy: Prologue to the Future

Optional Courses [6000 Level Courses Require Prior Approval of Professor]

C&T 4000 Disability, Exclusion, and Schooling
C&T 4113 Early Childhood Methods and Programs
C&T 4121 Early Childhood Teaching Strategies within a Social Context
C&T 4122 Issues in Parenthood and Education
C&T 4615 Young Children and Social Policy: Issues and Problems
C&T 5513 Seminar in ECE
C&T 5514 Seminar in ECE
HU DK 4021 Developmental Psychology, Infancy
HU DK 4042 Developmental Psychology, Childhood
EDPA 6013 Early Childhood Development and Education: Integrating Research and Policy Perspectives
EDPA 6027 International Perspectives on Early Childhood Policy
EDPS 5430 Policy Internship/Practicum
HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY

Rationale

This specialization will expose students to various disciplinary perspectives and key issue areas in higher education policymaking, while making students aware of the organizational breadth of higher education. The aim of the program of study is to prepare students for positions as policy analysts, policy advocates, and educational researcher and academics. Students will be exposed to how various disciplines (economics, law, politics, sociology, and history) have been applied to the analysis of higher and postsecondary education policy. Secondly, the specialization will address important policy issues in higher education, particularly securing higher and more equal rates of access to higher education, improving institutional impacts and ensuring greater and more equal student success, addressing stresses and conflicts concerning higher education finance and public and private provision, and discovering and applying effective mechanisms of public accountability. Finally, the specialization will contextualize these analyses by addressing not just selective institutions but also community colleges, the for-profit sector, and adult and continuing education.

Required Course

EDPA 4025 Higher Education Policy

Course Options

EDPA 4013 Education Policy and the Management of Instruction
EDPA 4048 Education Policy Analysis & Implementation
EDPA 4017 Topics in Higher Education Law
EDPA 5023 Policy Making for Effective High School to College Transition
EDPA XXXX Higher Education Accountability
EDPE 4058 Economics of Higher Education [MA version of current doctoral course]
EDPS 4030 Sociology of Organizations
ORLD 4050 Introduction to Adult and Continuing Education
ORLH 4031 Financial Administration of Higher Education Institutions
ORLH 5011 College Teaching and Learning
ORLH 4012 Community Colleges

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K-12 EDUCATION POLICY

Rationale

The K-12 Education Policy specialization prepares students for positions as policy analysts, advocates, and researchers; it also prepares students to bring policy expertise to their work as teachers and leaders in schools and school systems. In this specialization, students learn the perspectives and tools of policy analysis and the policy process; they examine policy-related dimensions of educational practice in K-12 education (including linkages to early childhood and post-secondary education); and they make connections between policy, practice, and the theories and frameworks of the social science disciplines of sociology (organization theory, social stratification, school effects), economics (resource allocation and efficiency), politics (public influence on education, impact of social movements, governance), and law (opportunities and constraints provided through legislation and litigation). Focus is directed on the roles of practitioners, leaders, policy makers, and researchers in the wider education policy process. Students can develop expertise in topics such as the impact of policy on teaching and learning systems; governance and organizational structures; standards, assessment and accountability systems; decentralization and privatization; legal and economic issues; and functions of education in the United States.

Course Options

EDPA 4013  Education Policy and the Management of Instruction
EDPA 4025  Higher Education Policy
EDPA 4033  Comprehensive Educational Opportunity
EDPA 4046  School Finance: Policy and Practice
EDPA 4048  Education Policy Analysis & Implementation
EDPA 4899  Federal Policy Institute
EDPA 5016  Educational Equality: The Role of Law
EDPA 5023  Policy Making for Effective High School to College Transition
EDPA 5030  Social Science, Education Policy, and the Courts
EDPA 5086  The Role of the Courts in Education Reform
EDPA 5880  School Law Institute
EDPE 4050  Economics of Education
EDPE 4055  Resource Allocation in Education
EDPP 4040  American Politics & Education
EDPP 5041  Politics of Centralization and Decentralization
EDPP 5042  Urban Politics and Education
EDPS 4030  Sociology of Organizations
EDPS 5022  Sociological Analysis of Educational Systems
C&T 4004  School Change
C&T 4078  Curriculum and Teaching in Urban Areas
C&T 5050  Early Childhood Policy: Prologue to the Future

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LAW AND EDUCATION POLICY

Rationale

This course of study is designed for individuals interested in education policy who wish to focus on the interactions of education law, policy, and practice. It serves, among others: (a) aspiring and current policy analysts, researchers, advocates, and educators interested in learning about the law and its impact on education policy and practice; and (b) aspiring and practicing attorneys and advocates wishing to supplement their legal expertise with knowledge about education, research, and policy. This specialization is strongly interdisciplinary, integrating insights from law, policy, social science research, and education practice.

Students in this specialization can study a variety of law-based education-reform initiatives that aim to promote educational equality and equity, such as reducing segregation and concentrated poverty, ensuring that every student has access to an adequate and comprehensive education, serving English learners and students with disabilities, and preventing discrimination against GLBTQ students and staff. They can also investigate recent reform initiatives such as privatization and choice, NCLB, and testing and accountability for students and teachers. There will be opportunities as well to explore issues of law, policy and practice that arise within schools and classrooms, such as curriculum, teacher evaluation, and student assignment.

Required courses (at least three of the following)

EDPA 4033 Comprehensive Educational Opportunity
EDPA 4086 Law and Education: Regulation, Religion, Free Speech, and Safety
EDPA 4017 Topics in Higher Education Law
EDPA 5016 Educational Equality: The Role of Law
EDPA 5030 Social Science, Education Policy, and the Courts
EDPA 5086 The Role of the Courts in Education Reform
EDPA 5880 The School Law Institute

Other course options

In consultation with their academic advisors, students may also take additional course work relevant to their interests in law and education, including but not limited to:

EDPA 4025 Higher Education Policy
EDPA 4899 Federal Policy Institute
EDPE 4055 Resource Allocation in Education
EDPP 5041 Politics of Centralization and Decentralization
EDPP 5042 Urban Politics and Education
EDPP 5045 Race, Ethnicity, and U.S. Educational Policy
C&T 4004 School Change
C&T 5050 Early Childhood Policy: Prologue to the Future

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SELF-DESIGNED SPECIALIZATION

Students will also have the option of designing their own specialization, with the advice and approval of their advisor. Such specializations might focus on crosscutting themes in education policy (such as accountability, privatization, or diversity and equity), on special populations (such as P-20 education for students with disabilities), or on particular domains in the policy system (such as federal or state level policy).

Students should first discuss with their advisor what the focus or theme of their specialization will be and whether it is of sufficient breadth and relevance to justify a specialization as versus just an independent study. Once this has been sufficiently clarified, students should then develop a candidate list of courses – these can include courses outside the Department of Education Policy and Social Analysis – that fit the focus or theme. This list will then be reviewed by the advisor, and the advisor and student will sign off on a statement that includes the following:

1. The focus or theme of the specialization
2. The list of courses from which the student will be choosing, with a designation of which four courses are most likely.
3. How the student will be meeting the culminating requirement for the M.A. degree.