

Baker School FAQs

What degrees do you currently offer?

Undergraduate:

- Bachelor of Science in Public Affairs (BSPAf)*
- Accelerated Masters in Public Administration (4+1)*
- Accelerated Masters in Public Policy (4+1)*
- Minor in Public Policy Analytics
- Certificate Programs

*These degrees are currently awaiting final approval by the UT Board of Trustees and THEC and are expected to be launched before Fall 2024. Undergraduate applicants should apply to the Bachelors in Public Administration in the Haslam College in the 2023-24 application cycle.

Graduate:

- Masters in Public Administration (MPA)*
- Masters in Public Policy (MPP)*
- Online Masters in Public Administration, for working professionals*
- Online Masters in Public Policy, for working professionals*
- Joint Juris Doctorate and Masters in Public Administration (JD-MPA)*
- Joint Juris Doctorate and Masters in Public Policy (JD-MPP)*
- Certificate Programs

*These degrees are currently awaiting final approval by the UT Board of Trustees and THEC and are expected to be launched before Fall 2024. Graduate applicants will apply to the Masters in Policy and Public Administration in the 2023-24 application cycle.

What is public affairs?

Public affairs is an interdisciplinary field that combines public administration, public policy, economics, political science, communication, and data analytics.

What is public policy?

Public policy is “what governments choose to do, or not do” (Dye 1972), about issues identified as public problems. At its core, public policy is a problem-solving enterprise focused on addressing the most pressing challenges facing our communities.

What can I do with a public affairs degree?

A public affairs degree is the first step toward a meaningful career in public leadership. Graduates frequently work in political campaigns, government agencies, non-profit organizations, or think tanks. Many students choose to pursue advanced study in law, journalism, and other social science fields.

Why should I choose the University of Tennessee for my public affairs degree?

Established in 1794, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is the flagship campus in the state of Tennessee. The Baker School builds upon the long tradition of the University and the legacy of former U.S. Senator, White House Chief of Staff, and U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Howard H. Baker Jr. to ensure that students receive a high-quality education in public affairs.

The Baker School network extends to all levels of government and all around the world. Baker students have the opportunity to meet routinely with public leaders visiting the Knoxville campus and to learn from respected

experts in policy fields like the environment, energy, national security, foreign affairs, health, education, and more. Internships and travel study opportunities extend the network well beyond campus.

Graduates of the Baker School become part of a network of individuals who are deeply committed to integrity and civility in public service.

What are the admission requirements for your degree?

Undergraduate:

The Baker School follows the UT admissions standards and timelines, so please visit the [admissions website](#) to learn more information about the university requirements. Students interested in the new Public Affairs major (to launch in Fall 2024, subject to THEC approval) should apply to the Haslam College's Public Administration major. Students accepted into the Public Administration major will be automatically offered admission to the Baker School. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to reach out directly to the [admissions team](#).

Graduate:

Students seeking admission to the new MPP/MPA must be admitted through the University of Tennessee Graduate School and into the current MPPA program. In addition, students must hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent and must submit a personal statement and a resume or curriculum vitae. Applicants who do not have a degree from an accredited U.S. institution must supply a GRE score. A composite score of 302 on the verbal and quantitative parts of the GRE is desired but not required. An overall average of 3.00 for undergraduate courses is desirable.

Do you offer any online or distance learning courses?

Yes, subject to THEC approval, the Baker School will offer a fully online, asynchronous Masters in Public Administration degree program for working professionals starting in Fall 2024 and in Fall 2025 for the Masters in Public Policy degree. Interested prospective students should reach out to the Graduate Student Coordinator, Zoe Carihfield, at zcarihfie@vols.utk.edu.

What dual degree and double major options are available?

At the undergraduate level, the Baker School offers an accelerated degree (4+1) for students who want to complete their masters degree in five years. At the graduate level, the Baker School offers a joint-degree program with the College of Law for students to earn a Juris Doctorate (J.D.) along with their Masters in Public Administration (MPA) or Masters in Public Policy (MPP) degree, subject to final THEC approval.

Students interested in adding a major or minor from another academic unit should reach out to BakerStudents@utk.edu to discuss their options and develop a plan with the Baker School advising team.

What professional development opportunities are available at the Baker School?

The Baker School offers a range of professional development programming and opportunities for students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. These opportunities include Baker Experience internships in local, state, and the federal government, as well as the Washington Fellows and Japanese Ambassadors programs, which allow students to experience the inner workings of domestic and international policymaking. Students may also obtain positions working at the Baker School as research assistants with the Center for Energy, Transportation, and Environmental Policy; Center for National Security and Foreign Affairs; or the Institute for

American Civics. The Baker School takes a great deal of pride in the accomplishments of its students and alumni and is committed to providing meaningful co-curricular activities to ensure their success.

How should I go about getting more information?

If you have not already, we encourage you to complete our [Request for Information Form](#). This will ensure that you are receiving the latest details on the Baker School and prompt members of our staff to follow-up with you. If you have specific questions, please feel free to email us at bakerstudents@utk.edu.

What financial aid opportunities are available?

<https://onestop.utk.edu/financial-aid/>

I am currently enrolled at another institution. What are my options for transferring to UTK?

Students interested in transferring from other institutions are encouraged to fill out our [Request for Information Form](#). At the undergraduate level, students with fewer than 30 credit hours can easily transfer to the Baker School starting in Fall 2024. Students with an anticipated graduation date of Spring 2027 or later can be accommodated with the upcoming curriculum.

To see transfer admissions information, please visit: <https://transfer.utk.edu/admissions/>.

I am currently enrolled at UT. What are options to switch my major?

Undergraduate Students:

Undergraduate students with fewer than 30 credit hours can switch their major to the Baker School starting in Fall 2024. Students with an anticipated graduation date of Spring 2027 or later can be accommodated with the upcoming curriculum. If you are interested in learning more about how your courses will transfer, please fill out the [Baker School Internal Transfer Interest Form](#).

Graduate Students:

Graduate students will need to apply directly to the degree or certificate program of interest. If you have questions about this process, please complete the [Masters of Public Policy and Administration Inquiry form](#).

How can I visit the Baker School?

Undergraduate Students:

If you are interested in visiting the Baker School to learn more, please sign up for an in-person meeting at <https://govols.utk.edu/portal/bakerappointments>. If you would like to schedule a virtual meeting, please email BakerStudents@utk.edu.

Graduate Students:

If you are interested in visiting the Baker School to learn more about graduate student opportunities, please email the Graduate Student Coordinator, Zoe Crihfield, at zcrihfi@vols.utk.edu.