UW-Madison La Follette School of Public Affairs

2019-2020 HIGHLIGHTS



Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Our mission is to train leaders and conduct research to inspire evidence-based policymaking and advance the public good.

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Director and Professor, Public Affairs and Political Science

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UnitedHealth Group

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Years from now, when we look back at 2020, we will undoubtedly remember this as a year of tremendous challenges. But at the La Follette School, we also will recall 2020 as a year of transformational growth and possibility.

These exciting times are fueled by the Kohl Initiative—a \$10 million gift from Sen. Herb Kohl to our school in 2019. Faculty research, student learning, and community outreach all benefit from the Kohl Initiative.

Thanks in large part to Sen. Kohl's generous gift, we are experiencing unprecedented growth in

faculty, students, course offerings, community partnerships, and staff. This report highlights the tremendous impact of the Kohl Initiative and the School's expansion.

We are truly honored by Sen. Kohl's commitment to the La Follette School and resolutely value our role as a convener of thoughtful debate and evidence-based research for moving our country forward.

On, Wisconsin!

Susan Webb Yackee

Director and Professor

Faculty

Susan Webb Yackee

Director and Professor of Public Affairs and Political Science

Menzie Chinn

Professor of Public Affairs and Economics

J. Michael Collins

Professor of Public Affairs and Human Ecology

Mark Copelovitch

Professor of Public Affairs and Political Science

Jason Fletcher

Professor of Public Affairs and Sociology

Lindsay Jacobs

Assistant Professor of Public Affairs

Gregory Nemet

Professor of Public Affairs

Lauren Schmitz

Assistant Professor of Public Affairs

Timothy Smeeding

Lee Rainwater Distinguished Professor of Public Affairs and Economics

Geoffrey Wallace

Associate Professor of Public Affairs and Franchics

Yang Wang

Associate Professor of Public Affairs

David Weimer

Edwin E. Witte Professor of Political Economy



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

4.9

OBJECTIVITY RATING

OF 2020 FAMILY IMPACT SEMINAR, AS RATED BY WISCONSIN LEGISLATORS

(1=poor, 5=excellent)

5TH

BEST GRADUATE SCHOOLFOR SOCIAL POLICY

U.S. News & World Report

\$10M

DONATION

FROM U.S. SEN. HERB KOHL

77%
INCREASE IN FACULTY
FROM 2018 TO 2020

19

GRADUATES IN 1ST CLASS
OF UNDERGRADUATE
CERTIFICATE IN PUBLIC
POLICY PROGRAM

58%

OF STUDENTS HELD
GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS
OR RECEIVED A FELLOWSHIP



OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS, AN AVERAGE OF 95% OF LA FOLLETTE SCHOOL GRADUATES HAVE FOUND EMPLOYMENT IN THEIR FIELD WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF GRADUATION.

FACULTY BOOKS PUBLISHED







Prof. Mark Copelovitch



240+ LA FOLLETTE SCHOOL ALUMNI AND FRIENDS SHARE THEIR TIME AND TALENTS WITH STUDENTS AS MENTORS, MOCK INTERVIEWERS, AND SPEAKERS



THROUGH ITS LEGISLATIVE
OUTREACH, LA FOLLETTE
SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS
ENGAGED WITH 51 OF
WISCONSIN'S 132 LEGISLATIVE
OFFICES.

TST ENDOWED CHAIR IN PUBLIC POLICY CREATED WITH ESTATE GIFT FROM MICHAEL (MA'82) AND JOANN YOUNGMAN



\$45M

EXTERNAL GRANTS TO LA FOLLETTE SCHOOL FACULTY SINCE 2010

La Follette School Student Association Officers, 2020–2021

Mitch McFarlane

President

Dana Neilsen

Vice President

Eric Mueller

Treasurer

Sarah Ebben

Secretary

Toni Sopukeeva, Indu Kilaru

Diversity and Inclusion Officers

Alyssa Dooley, Kelsey Gordon

Community Service & Outreach Coordinators

Genevieve Caffrey, Lew Blank

Social Coordinators

Seth Roca, Katie Pollock

Graduation Coordinators

Tamanna Akram, Anna Sucsy

Fundraising Coordinators



"As president of the La Follette School Student Association, I am particularly proud of our social events, our commitment to community service, and our work on diversity and inclusion. I want all students to feel welcome and build relationships that will last long after graduation."

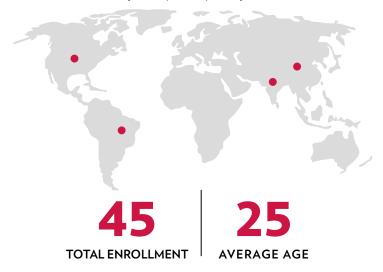
- Mitch McFarlane President

2020 ENTERING COHORT

In fall 2020, 45 students enrolled in the La Follette School's master's degree programs. In addition to domestic and international degrees, the School offers combined degrees and certificate programs in several fields of study. The Accelerated Program allows select undergraduate students to jumpstart their graduate studies.

10 STATES AND 3 COUNTRIES

(BRAZIL, CHINA, INDIA)



35 MASTER OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MPA),
10 MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MIPA),
6 STUDENTS IN DUAL, DOUBLE, OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS,
10 ACCELERATED STUDENTS



Emma Cleveland (MIPA '20)

"At the La Follette School, I am free to choose electives that fit my needs and interests in programs all over the university. I've taken classes in the Departments of Life Sciences Communications and Planning and Landscape Architecture, the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, and the School of Human Ecology. Each of these classes has offered a unique perspective on policy issues and has allowed me to network with people from a variety of areas."



Lauren Jorgensen (MPA '20) Rhodes Scholarship finalist

"After completing my terminal degree, I want to work for a salient agricultural-research organization that has tangible influence on food policy—such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food & Drug Administration, or International Food Policy Research Institute."

NEW UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Launched in fall 2019, the La Follette School's Undergraduate Certificate in Public Policy program has grown from two courses and 50 students for the 2019-20 academic year to 16 courses and 157 students for 2020-21.

Given the increasing complexity in every realm of public policy, students in the certificate program gain analytical, writing, critical-thinking, and other skills that are in demand by more and more employers in almost every sector.

The certificate program is ideal for students seeking careers related to key domestic and international issues such as health policy, criminal justice, education, energy, environmental studies, finance, transportation, and poverty. It also prepares students to be engaged citizens, ready to use their talents to improve the world around them.



Major areas of study: Letters & Science, Human Ecology, Agricultural & Life Sciences

Certificate program graduates admitted into Master of Public Affairs program—Haley Barwick, William Keenan, Christopher Thone

Student Impact

Continuing Undergraduate Certificate students admitted to La Follette School Accelerated MPA program—Tessa Reilly, Evan Steck

Kohl Summer Scholarships—Caryla Domski (The Borgen Project), Claudia Sheldon (City of Janesville)



Required introductory courses for students in the Undergraduate Certificate in Public Policy program focus on how state and federal funding is spent, how public problems develop, and why programs succeed and fail. Students learn about the various approaches to policymaking, how to apply basic policy concepts to practical real-world cases, how to assess and interpret empirical analyses of policies, and much more.



"The Certificate program provides an accessible track to gain the competencies needed in the policy world, namely writing, research, analysis, and persuasion. I hope the certificate will help me strengthen global relationships founded on human dignity, freedom from fear, and people-powered economic development."

> - Michael Sauer, 2nd-year Certificate program student



"Before the Public Policy Certificate program, going to graduate school seemed intimidating. However, my La Follette School professors and advisors were genuinely interested in my success. There were many ways to engage outside of the classroom with social and networking events. This preview of the positive learning environment encouraged me to apply."

> - Hayley Barwick, Certificate graduate, 1st-year MPA student



"Pursuing a public policy certificate helped me broaden the scope of how I see it is possible to achieve real change. The courses required significant research and writing, and they helped me understand the convolutions of healthcare policy and housing policy, which was a focus of my research. I am forever grateful for the opportunity to pursue this certificate."

- Amy Shircel. Certificate graduate, AmeriCorps VIP Fellow



"These students are going to go on to do great things. They are going to be part of our legacy and part of Senator Kohl's legacy."

> - Associate Professor Geoffrey Wallace, Kohl Chair in Undergraduate Education



"Our democracy is being threatened by bitter partisanship, and the La Follette School is poised to lead by example fostering cooperation, respectful discourse, and service to others. The School's commitment to be a convener of thoughtful debate and evidencebased research provides a critical path for moving our country forward."

- U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl

"Student interest in public service on campus is incredibly high: UW-Madison students want to change the world and make it a more equitable place, and they frequently see public policy as the solution."

> - La Follette School Director and Professor Susan Yackee

KOHL INITIATIVE

In one short year, the Kohl Initiative has made a tremendous impact on the La Follette School. The Kohl Initiative—created with a \$10 million gift from former U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl—was announced May 12, 2019, during the School's graduation ceremony in the Wisconsin State Capitol.

Areas of Focus



Train future leaders



Expand outreach



Create impactful research

Impact to Date

PARTICIPANTS INAUGURAL POLICY FORUM

NEW FACULTY

MANNY TEODORO **ROSS MILTON**

NEW STAFF LISA ELLINGER, MARIE KOKO, BONNIE MACRITCHIE

KOHL CHAIR IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR GEOFFREY WALLACE

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES OFFERED: 2 IN 2019-20 16 IN 2020-21

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TAUGHT: 50 IN 2019-20 157 IN 2020-21

Goals

- Educate more students
- Support undergraduate public policy internships
- Increase partnerships with nonpartisan organizations
- Host conferences on critical policy topics
- Teach more high-demand classes
- Expand faculty research and faculty-student collaboration
- Increase the School's visibility

LA FOLLETTE FORUM: HEALTH POLICY.



The day-long forum concluded with a keynote by Mia Keeys of the American Medical Association, right.



One of the six panel discussions focused on strategies to increase patient knowledge and improve access to affordable healthcare services in Wisconsin. Tim Stumm of Wisconsin Health News, left, moderated the discussion. Panelists from left to right were Tito Izard (Milwaukee Health Services); Kirsten Johnson (Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department); Mia Keeys (American Medical Association); and Gwyn Pauley (UW–Madison).



One of the six panel discussions focused on housing as a social determinant of health. Panelists from left to right were Marah Curtis (UW-Madison); Nina Gregerson (Public Health Madison and Dane County); Christina Orr (Milwaukee VA Medical Center); and Ellen Sexton (United Healthcare Community Plan of Wisconsin). Rosamaria Martinez of the Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, Milwaukee, moderated.

25% of attendees from outside madison area

47 CITIES REPRESENTED

25% of SPEAKERS WERE PEOPLE OF COLOR

113 ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

8 LEGISLATIVE OFFICES REPRESENTED

20 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES REPRESENTED

329 ATTENDEES

20 STUDENTS ATTENDED



"The opportunity to have events like the La Follette Forum is paramount to our success in generating effective public policy going forward."

- Dr. Veronica Gunn, Milwaukee



"This health policy forum clearly demonstrated the La Follette School's role as a convener on critical policy topics, which seems more relevant than ever as we navigate the current global health crisis."

- Director and Professor Susan Webb Yackee

OCT 6 LA FOLLETTE FORUM CLIMATE 2021 LA FOLLETTE FORUM POLICY

KOHL RESEARCH COMPETITION

Created in 2016, the Herb Kohl Public Service Research Competition supports nonpartisan faculty-led research that informs critical public policy and governance debates and advances evidence-based decisionmaking. It also provides learning opportunities for graduate students to work alongside faculty as project assistants and expands the School's outreach activities.

Kohl Award Impact



YEARS



AWARDS



STUDENTS



FACULTY

2019 AWARD RECIPIENTS



Capitalizing on UW-Madison's Social Genomics Initiative

Jason Fletcher **Professor of Public Affairs** and Sociology



Leading the U.S. Administrative State, 1964-2018

Susan Webb Yackee **Professor of Public Affairs** and Political Science

New faculty receive funding

In 2020, the Kohl Competition provided research support for the following new faculty members: Christine Durrance, Morgan Edwards, Philipp Koellinger, Reed Lei, Ross Milton, Sam Trejo, and Mariel Barnes.



The Impact of Medicare Part D on Retirement Plans

Yang Wang Associate Professor of **Public Affairs**



"I pursued my master's degree at the La Follette School because of the opportunity that was provided to me to do research. I wanted to contribute and give back. I could not have afforded graduate school—much less have such a fantastic experience—were it not for the funding from the Kohl Initiative."

-Amy Fottrell (MPA '20)



The Fund for Wisconsin Scholars: Effects on Labor Market Outcomes and Take-up of Means-Tested Benefits

Barbara (Bobbi) Wolfe **Emeritus Professor of** Public Affairs, Economics, and Population Health Sciences

2020 AWARD RECIPIENT



"One of the most valuable things about the Kohl Competition was the opportunity to collaborate with people from other disciplines."

-Dan Spika (MPA '18)

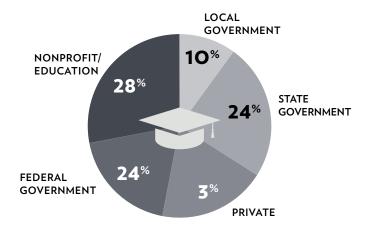


Climate Change Analysis and Policy

Greg Nemet Professor of Public Affairs

RECENT GRADUATES

Over the past three years, an average of 95 percent of La Follette School graduates have found employment in their field within 6 months of graduation.



Postgraduation career statistics, Class of 2019



"Policies are a reflection of the value system you hold, and embedded in the investments we make are judgments of who is deserving of services. In our current system, many people fall through the cracks. Policies should meet families' needs, and applied policy research should work to build evidence to help policymakers and practitioners make this a reality."

-Kassandra Martinchek (MPA '19)

Urban Institute



"Faculty expertise was one of the first things I looked at when applying to schools, and the La Follette School far exceeded my expectations. I especially liked the wide breadth of expertise among the internationally focused faculty. This, coupled with its location in my home state, drew me to the school."

-Nikolai Kapustin (MIPA '19)

 $Wiscons in \ Department \ of \ Health \ Services$



"Graduate school was incredible in helping me find new areas of interest and connecting me with professionals and peers who have been instrumental in setting me on a path that I am confident about."

-Mikhaila Calice (MPA '19)

PhD student, Life Sciences Communication, UW-Madison

Where recent graduates are working

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- City of Davenport (lowa)
- City of Kansas City (Missouri)
- Ramsey County (Minnesota)
- Skagit County (Washington)
- Milwaukee County

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- U.S. Government Accountability Office
- ullet U.S. Department of Justice
- Congressional Research Service
- U.S. House of Representatives
- U.S. Department of Transportation
- Millennium Challenge Corporation

STATE GOVERNMENT

- Wisconsin Department of Children & Families
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- Wisconsin Department of Revenue
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau
- Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau
- Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau
- California Public Utilities Commission
- Texas Legislative Budget Board
- Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
- Montana Legislative Audit Division
- Colorado Springs Department of Corrections
- Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity

NONPROFIT/EDUCATION

- Clean Wisconsin
- Council of State Governments
- United Way Minnesota
- Wisconsin Policy Forum
- Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
- Urban Institute
- Citizen Action of Wisconsin
- Education Analytics
- Cordis
- Uplift Education

PRIVATE SECTOR

- Grant Thornton LLP
- ICF International, Inc
- Phoenix Pharmacy Wholesale
- Price Waterhouse Coopers
- Graphika Inc
- Agricultural Bank of China

2020 GRADUATION AWARDS



PENNIMAN PRIZE:

Hayley Young (MPA, MPH) for the best paper demonstrating the School's writing and analytic tools, The Regulation of Dietary Supplements in the United States, nominated by Associate Professor Yang Wang.



PIORE PRIZE:

Laura Bunn (MIPA) for the best paper in science and public policy, Addressing Data Privacy Laws, nominated by Professor Grea Nemet.



DIRECTOR'S AWARD:

Eleanor Pratt (MPA) for her outstanding academic record and her initiative and professionalism as a La Follette School student.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Moved by boy's sacrifice, student launches scholarship



Just a few years ago, Muhammad Shayan was pulling down a good salary and living comfortably as an engineer in his native Pakistan. But on his daily commute, he witnessed extreme poverty around him—people living in mud shacks, barely surviving.

"I faced a basic moral question every day," he said. 'What should I be doing to help the disadvantaged'?"

He started a scholarship fund in honor of a young student who gave his life trying to stop a terrorist suicide bomber from entering his school in the village of Hangu and joined a nonprofit organization that helps people in underprivileged communities.

This led him to the La Follette School's Master of Public Affairs program in 2019, and he intends to return to Pakistan to put his education into practice. "I realized that, long-term, public policy was the way I could best address social issues," he said.

Physician expands public policy perspective with MPA



Like everyone across the globe, Dr. Allison Couture (MPA '20) had her world turned upside down when COVID-19 struck. Couture had a unique vantage point: as a master's degree student at the La Follette School and as a practicing doctor.

Early in the pandemic, health systems like UW Health had to limit nonessential services; many cut physicians' pay. "The pandemic is really highlighting how our insurance and healthcare systems are poorly optimized," Couture said.

That's where her master's degree in public affairs (MPA) comes in. "Without my La Follette School classes, I would have a harder time understanding why this was happening and would not feel able to have an informed conversation," said Couture, who received the 2018 Brenton Scholarship.

The flexibility of the La Follette School's curriculum allowed Couture to take courses in several UW-Madison departments, including the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the Department of Economics. The School's core courses laid the groundwork for her to thrive in them.

"I think I'm a very good communicator; that's why primary care is a good fit for me," Couture said. "But healthcare is a capitalist system, so if you want to sit at the table, you have to know how to talk about dollars and cents."

Read more: lafollette.wisc.edu

STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

Alumna seeks to even the playing field for all people



As the La Follette School's Class of 2020 graduation speaker, Shireen Ohadi-Hamadani reflected on her grandmother's life and envisioned a more just and equitable society.

Her grandmother was defined by a life of poverty, Ohadi-Hamadani said. "She lived on a reservation, she was assimilated, and at a young age she was sent to an Indian boarding school where she was not taught to read and write but to be a homemaker and to be a maid."

Through personal perspective and her work to promote self-determination in the Navajo Nation, Ohadi-Hamadani experienced the importance of effective governance on people in vulnerable populations. Her desire to protect people like her grandmother led Ohadi-Hamadani to the La Follette School.

As future policymakers, researchers, and leaders, La Follette School alumni have the responsibility to ensure a more just and equitable society, said Ohadi-Hamadani, who now works for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. "It's up to us to make sure that we can even the playing field for all people."

Alumnus brings financial modeling expertise to Regents



As one of the newest members of the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents, Kyle Weatherly (MPA '06) of Milwaukee brings deep experience in financial modeling, which he learned by doing regressions at the La Follette School.

"Even though it wasn't fun at the time," he said, "doing regressions by hand helped me understand the model and its weaknesses."

The La Follette School also taught him how to communicate ideas concisely, work under a time constraint, and approach problems from an analytical perspective, he said.

Weatherly is the founder and CEO of Frontdesk, which provides short-term apartment rentals across the United States. He also is a principal of Vliet Street Capital, a member of the Board of Directors for 88Nine Radio Milwaukee, and the former president of Solaris Inc., a medical compression manufacturer.

During these uncertain times, leadership will require agility, responsiveness, and good judgement, said Weatherly, who was appointed by Governor Tony Evers on June 1, 2020.

Read more: lafollette.wisc.edu

Staff

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Lisa Ellinger (MPA '03)

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Lisa Hildebrand

Communications Director

Marie Koko

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Andrew Lambert

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Marjorie Matthews

University Services Associate

Mary Michaud

Faculty Associate

Brittney Mitchell

Outreach Specialist

Heidi Normandin (MA'98)

Legislative Outreach Director

Mo O'Connor

Senior Student Services Coordinator

Megan Stritchko (MPA '09)

Administrator

David Wright-Racette

Student Status Examiner Senior

NEW FACULTY 2020-2021

Our newest faculty members have knowledge in broad and niche policy areas in the domestic and international arenas.



Christine Durrance, Associate Professor of Public Affairs

Policies to reduce opioid overdose deaths; maternal and infant health; substance use, violence, and other risky behavior; antitrust/competition law and policy, and licensing healthcare professionals.



Tana Johnson, Associate Professor of Public Affairs and Political Science

International relations, delegation and institutional design in global affairs, and national government control of international organizations.



Jon Pevehouse, Professor of Public Affairs and Political Science

Regional trade agreements, U.S. foreign policy, human rights institutions, exchange rate politics, international relations and politics, and social media role in current events (e.g., mass shootings, immigration, elections).



Morgan Edwards, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs

Climate policy, impacts of human energy use on climate, phase out of coal power plants, energy technologies, upgrading natural gas systems, and emissions reductions



Philipp Koellinger, Professor of Public Affairs

Using genetics in social science research; effect of genetic variations on educational attainment, mental health and attitudes, economic behavior, and health outcomes; and using social policy to mediate genetic predispositions to produce better life outcomes.



Manuel Teodoro, Associate Professor of Public Affairs

Design, implementation, and evaluation of local policy, racial and socioeconomic inequities in water policy and management, municipal utilities, utility rate equity and affordability, public management, and innovation in government bureaucracy.



Dena Garcia, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs

Race/ethnicity, involvement of racial/ethnic minorities in participatory budgeting, and urban families' access to and use of public benefits.



Reed Lei, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs and Political Science

Economic growth and politics in China, infrastructure investments and public finance (largely in China), and state-business relations.



Sam Trejo, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs and Sociology

Mediators of educational outcomes (i.e., lead in water, genetics); school shootings and impacts on communities; and how social, environmental, and genetic factors combine to shape human development.



Sarah Halpern-Meekin, Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, and of Public Affairs

Influence of government policies on low-income families' finances; EITC; prime-age men out of the labor force; and effect of onagain/off-again relationships on the lives of parents and children.



Ross Milton, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs

Economics, public finance, state and local taxes, and local education funding.

Thank you!

- ... for providing financial support for scholarships, research, and professional development
- ... for participating on policy, career, and other panel discussions
- ... for assisting students with fellowships and employment applications
- \dots for serving as mentors, mock interviewers, and networking partners

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