

La Follette School of Public Affairs Graduate Programs Prerequisite Information

The La Follette School of Public Affairs expects applicants to show their strong interest in our programs by satisfying our [prerequisite courses](#) for the Master of Public Affairs (MPA) program and Master of International Public Affairs (MIPA) programs are below. We advise applicants that all prerequisites are complete or in-progress at the time of application.

You only need to have taken one of the courses in each category to satisfy each prerequisite. UW-Madison course equivalents are included so you can see the type of courses that satisfy the prerequisites for the MPA and MIPA programs. Unless they are current students on our campus already, we do not expect applicants to have completed the UW-Madison prerequisites below. You can use the [Transferology tool](#) to see which courses at your own institution are equivalent to the prerequisites at UW-Madison.

Not all institutions use Transferology and not all courses have direct equivalents. If your institution does not use Transferology or you do not find a direct equivalent, you can list courses that you have taken that closely match the content of the prerequisite courses. Please do not list courses that are not a close match. For example, a history of the United States course does not satisfy the introduction to American government prerequisite.

Master of Public Affairs prerequisites

A strong applicant has taken these courses or an equivalent and earned a grade of B or higher:

- An introduction to microeconomics course
 - At UW-Madison the course options are [Microeconomics 101](#) or [Agricultural and Applied Economics 215](#).
- An introduction to statistics course or a calculus course
 - At UW-Madison the course options are [Statistics 301](#), [Math 211](#), [Math 221](#), [Sociology 360](#), or [Psychology 210](#).
- An introduction to American government course
 - At UW-Madison this course is [Political Science 104](#)

Master of International Public Affairs prerequisites

A strong applicant has taken these courses or an equivalent and earned a grade of B or higher:

- An introduction to microeconomics course
 - At UW-Madison the course options are [Microeconomics 101](#) or [Agricultural and Applied Economics 215](#).
- An introduction to macroeconomics
 - At UW-Madison this course is [Macroeconomics 102](#)
- An introduction to statistics course or a calculus course
 - At UW-Madison the course options are [Statistics 301](#), [Math 211](#), [Math 221](#), [Sociology 360](#), or [Psychology 210](#).
- A comparative politics or international relations course
 - At UW-Madison the course options are [Political Science 120](#) or [Political Science 140](#).
- Three semesters of language study or a year or more experience of living abroad

What if I am missing one or more of the prerequisites courses?

Completing the prerequisite courses is one of the best ways to improve your chances of admission and ensure success in our programs. Prerequisites cannot be completed after starting the program. Steps you can take to complete the prerequisites and improve your chances of admission include:

1. Satisfying the prerequisites as an undergraduate student if you are still in the process of completing your undergraduate degree. Ideally these courses would be completed with grades by the time you apply, but you can take the courses in the spring semester of your final year and send the La Follette School your grades after they are posted. Rarely are applicants able to complete outstanding prerequisites during the summer before starting at the La Follette School in the fall.
 - If you are in the process of completing the prerequisites and applying to the program, please upload an unofficial transcript showing you are enrolled in one of these courses or add a note in the quantitative essay portion of the supplemental application.
2. If you have already graduated, we strongly recommend completing the prerequisites at a local community college or university or at an accredited online institution such as the [University of Wisconsin e-campus](#). Ideally these courses would be completed with grades by the time you apply, but you can take the courses in the spring semester during the admissions process and send the La Follette School your grades after the spring semester. Rarely are applicants able to complete outstanding prerequisites during the summer before starting at the La Follette School in the fall.
 - If you are in the process of completing the prerequisites and applying to the program, please upload an unofficial transcript showing you are enrolled in one of these courses or add a note in the quantitative essay portion of the supplemental application.
3. If you are unable to complete the prerequisites before starting at the La Follette School, your best chance of admission is to complete the prerequisites and then apply to the La Follette School during our next admissions cycle.
4. We do not require the GRE, but a strong GRE score can be used to show your quantitative aptitude if you are missing the prerequisite courses, although it is not a substitute.
5. If you think you have knowledge or skills from other activities or professional experiences that are related to the prerequisites, that can be shared in the quantitative essay portion of the supplemental application. You can also complete the training options listed below, but they are not a direct substitute for completing the prerequisites. Here are some examples of things applicants might share in the quantitative essay:
 - Khan Academy courses including [Algebra 1](#), [Microeconomics](#), and [Statistics and Probability](#). We would need to see proof of completion submitted with your application.
 - Related experience, i.e., Applicant worked as a legislative aide and gained knowledge of the legislative process which could help make up for a missing American Government prerequisite or applicant worked as a data analyst which could help make up for a missing statistics prerequisite.
 - [LinkedIn Learning](#) in microeconomics or statistics or taking courses or at the [Social Science Computing Cooperative](#) (available to UW-Madison students only)
 -

Reach out to admissions@lafollette.wisc.edu with follow-up questions.