



Master of Public Policy 2016 Report

Tufts University's Department of Urban & Environmental Policy and Planning (UEP) offers a unique graduate degree program that is attractive to experienced mid-career professionals with at least 7-years of experience in the fields of urban and environmental policy and planning. The Master of Public Policy (MPP) program is designed to help mid-career professionals take the next steps in their career and life, [whether that is enhancing professional practice, pursuing a shift in career, or simply creating space for reflection and rejuvenation.](#)

The program enables students to broaden and deepen personal interests, policy knowledge, and professional skills. We are [a diverse, intimate and caring learning community](#), with 10-15 students in each cohort from an array of professional experiences and racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographic backgrounds. MPP students also enhance the vitality of UEP classes and benefit students pursuing the two-year Master of Arts (MA) degree at UEP.

ACADEMICS

MPP is a [flexible 1-3 year graduate degree program](#) designed to accommodate working professionals. MPP is a 9-credit program that can be completed in 1-year full-time, with options for students to complete in 2-3 years on a part time basis. MPP also offers flexibility for students to customize the program to suit their interests and work constraints needs.

MPP By the Numbers

- 129 have enrolled in the MPP since program began in 2002.
- Graduation rate = 86%
- Average program completion = 1.7 years. 44% completed in 1 year and 43% in 2 years.

Curriculum

UEP's [wide range of courses](#) offers MPP students the opportunity to strengthen their critical thinking, policy analysis, and communication skills; as well as improve their professional practice with courses such as Program Evaluation, Negotiations, Geographic Information Systems, Financial Management, and Philanthropy and Fundraising. A wide range of policy courses caters to various fields and interests, including Social Welfare, Housing, Community Development, Environmental Justice, Sustainable Communities, Food Justice, and Land Use.

There are 3 required core courses, including the MPP Seminar, Economics, and Quantitative Reasoning. Students can then customize their program with 6 elective courses, of which at least 4 need to be policy-focused. In addition to UEP, MPP students can take up to two courses from other Tufts departments and schools and one from other area universities.

Why Choose MPP?

MPP students benefit from [access to a vibrant network of other accomplished professionals, and the networks of distinguished faculty, students, and affiliated agencies at UEP and Tufts](#). They are able to establish close professional relationships and networks among faculty, affiliated agencies, and other students, and access and remain connected to these networks and faculty after graduation.

MPPers are attracted to UEP because of the length of the program, along with UEP's social justice and community oriented values and program focus, relevance of the course of study, program flexibility, geographical convenience, and affiliation with Tufts University. MPPers like the program size, quality and availability of faculty, reputation of the program/department, the opportunity for critical reflection about racism and classism, and the attention to creating sustainable and mission-driven programs and organizations.



Why Choose MPP?

Students value the opportunity to reflect on their practice. Assignments enable students to cultivate core competencies around substantive knowledge, critical thinking, research and data analysis, and leadership and management skills.



“I really benefitted from rich conversations with MPP peers who had so much practical experience, and we were able to share and think through what was working and what wasn’t working in our professional practice—wasn’t just talking theory—there’s a difference in being able to have conversations that aren’t just theoretical.”

- Martina Bouey, 2005-2006, Deputy Director, South Africa Partners, Inc., Boston

Who Comes to MPP

MPP is broadly known as a [social justice and community-oriented professional public policy program](#) whose graduates are contributing to diverse fields of policy and planning and the development of more just, inclusive, and sustainable communities.

MPP attracts [professionals from a wide range of social, urban, and environmental policy fields in the non-profit, public, and private sectors](#). MPP students have included public officials, agency heads, executive directors, and program staff from a broad range of planning, community development, and environmental organizations. MPP students come from diverse careers in community development corporations, advocacy organizations, government agencies, grassroots neighborhood groups, human service agencies, environmental organizations, public education, and more. A number of MPPers are coming from private sector careers and seeking to shift into the public and nonprofit sectors.



Who Comes to MPP

MPP By the Numbers

- 26% are over 45 years old when they begin MPP, with the median age being 37.
- 50% are people of color, 27% are Black, 14% Latino, and 9% Asian.
- 63% of MPP students are women.
- 61% of MPPers are enrolled part-time.

MPPers bring at least 7 years of relevant professional experience working on issues like affordable housing, neighborhood development, social welfare, sustainable communities, and environmental management.

As social movements for justice and sustainability grow in the face of ever more apparent racial and socio-economic inequalities, UEP's focus on these issues is particularly appealing to a diversity of prospective students. MPP students represent a high degree of racial/ethnic diversity, with almost half being people of color. There are also a growing number of international mid-career students, some of who come with the support of their governments.

The Neighborhood Fellows

MPP attracts [a diverse and accomplished set of urban community leaders of color](#) to UEP through the Neighborhood Fellows program. This full tuition scholarship was established in 2005 and has helped MPP recruit up to 5 accomplished urban leaders of color each year working in Boston and surrounding cities. Neighborhood Fellows have had deep experience and demonstrated significant leadership in urban communities. Neighborhood Fellows is an essential resource for attracting professionals of color to UEP, particularly Blacks and Latinos. Fellows account for nearly 75% of MPP students of color.

MPP Contributions to Tufts

The diversity of MPP students and the significant practical experience they bring *enhances the vitality of UEP classes, enriching the experience of UEP's MA degree students and the broader Tufts community.*

Virtually all MPP respondents in a recent survey valued the idea of contributing their expertise and knowledge to others at UEP and to Tufts as a whole. MPP students and alumni are regularly invited to be guests in other courses in order to promote more interaction with the MA students. For example, MPP students have given presentations in several UEP courses (such as required courses Foundations and Cities as well as other electives such as Child and Family Policy) and at the UEP Colloquium.

Name	Position upon entering MPP	Current Position
John Barros	Executive Director, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative	Chief of Economic Development, City of Boston
Melissa Colón	Associate Director, Gaston Institute, UMass Boston	Doctoral Student, Tufts Child Studies
Sarah Howard	Executive Director, Earthos Institute	(same)
Lilly Marcelin	Founder & Director, Resilient Sisterhood Project	(same)
Elaine Ng	Executive Director, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center	Strategic Planning Director, Special Education, Boston Public Schools
Alexandra Oliver-Davila	Executive Director, Sociedad Latina	(same)

MPP Contributions to Tufts

MPP students and alumni are [our greatest resource and best ambassadors, contributing a powerful career network to UEP's growing network of graduates.](#)

Most MPPers work in the urban, social, and environmental fields, predominantly in the Greater Boston area. There are, however, growing numbers establishing themselves in other parts of the U.S. and their home countries. MPPers are, in short, already part of the broader network of "practical visionaries" and embedded in the fields where UEP graduates work and where UEP students seek internships, Field Projects, thesis ideas, and future job opportunities. Just looking at the last five years, we find an impressive set of leaders entering the MPP program.



“Most MPPers like myself... brought a lot of real life experience to the class. Faculty really saw us as resources and not as competition and threat to their authority, and [had an attitude of] ‘hey, we have some really talented people in the class, speak up!’”

- Bob Terrell, 2010-2012, Executive Director, Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston