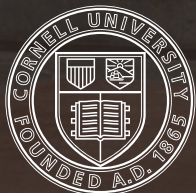


Cornell Institute  
for Public Affairs

# MPA



Cornell University





What sets us  
apart from other  
Master of Public  
Administration programs?

EXPERIENCE.

# EXPERIENCE

## world-class learning.



“The Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (CIPA) operates within the College of Human Ecology and our core faculty members are drawn from a variety of colleges across campus. This range of faculty leadership assures that our students benefit from the university’s depth and breadth of intellectual expertise. During their two years of graduate study, students take courses not just within Human Ecology but anywhere across the Cornell campus. There are also a number of off-campus study options.”

**Sharon Tennyson • CIPA Director**

Professor of Policy Analysis and Management • Editor, Journal of Consumer Affairs • PhD, Economics, Northwestern University

**There is nothing generic about the Cornell MPA degree—or our graduates. When you earn your degree from CIPA, you enter the job market with a sound foundation of core competencies, as well as expertise in an area of policy aligned with your career goals. This pays off when you begin your job search.**

- **Interdisciplinary MPA**

Our program allows you to take courses from programs and departments across Cornell, which is among the largest and most diverse of the Ivy League universities.

- **Unparalleled Flexibility**

We offer a broad range of concentration options built on foundational coursework.  
*See page 10!*

- **Cutting-Edge Research**

You will learn from distinguished Cornell faculty doing scholarship in policy areas relevant to your interests.

- **Networking Opportunities**

World leaders and dignitaries, decorated scholars and authors, leading CEOs and heads of NGOs are regularly featured at campus-wide lectures and CIPA-sponsored events.

# EXPERIENCE hands-on study.

Many courses include a practical component, challenging you to apply your knowledge and skills to real-world clients and situations.

- **Public Service Exchange & Capstone**

As a first-year student, you can gain introductory consulting experience through the Public Service Exchange. During your second year of study, the Capstone offers you the option of completing a rigorous, semester-long consulting project for either a domestic or international client.

- **SMART Program**

You may participate in other capstone-type courses offered on campus, such as the Student Multidisciplinary Applied Research Team (SMART) Program, which brings together students and faculty from diverse disciplines and pairs them with firms, organizations, or community groups located in developing countries. You travel to the country over winter break and then spend the spring semester completing a consulting project for your client.



- **Off-Campus Study**

CIPA offers you the option of studying off-campus for a semester and earning academic credit while completing an externship in Washington, DC or in New York City, or in one of three locations abroad — Rome, Italy; Kathmandu, Nepal; or Mysore, India.

- **Internships**

Most of our students undertake an internship in the summer between their first and second year. Because many of the most challenging and rewarding internships in the field of public affairs are unpaid, CIPA offers a competitive grant program to assist with expenses.

**Above:** Catherine Setiawan '16 meets with United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, during her summer internship at the UN. (photo provided)

**Left:** CIPA students completing a summer internship in Panama, receive a guided tour of the Panama Canal expansion project. (photo provided)





**Daniel Arukwe Johansen • MPA 2015**

Operational Information Management Officer • **UN World Food Programme**  
Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division • Rome, Italy  
CIPA concentration: Government, Politics, and Policy Studies

“One of the most pleasant surprises about CIPA was the true sense of community it fosters—one that emphasizes camaraderie over competition. Cornell is a challenging place, but this sense of being one “CIPA family” was key to why I enjoyed my time here so much!

At CIPA, I was able to combine practical experience with coursework taught by professors at the cutting edge of their fields. Through CIPA's affiliation with the Cornell in Rome program, I spent a semester working full time at the United Nations World Food Programme, while earning academic credit. There, I worked on some of the largest humanitarian emergencies in the world today, including the crisis in Syria—and I was able to see how the theory I learned at Cornell translated into practice. This externship helped me clarify what I wanted to do with my post-CIPA career, and it was an amazing opportunity to learn from true practitioners of multilateral public policy. Ultimately, this experience led to a full-time job offer.”



**“I spent a semester working full time at the United Nations World Food Programme, while earning academic credit.”**

# EXPERIENCE vibrant community.

You will value the diverse community of CIPA students, who come from around the globe and represent widely varied fields of interests, endeavors and experiences. CIPA has a long-standing reputation for fostering a culture of collaboration, openness, and genuine support and respect among students and faculty alike.

- **Diverse Student Body**

About 60% of the student body is international, representing as many as 30 to 35 different countries at any given time. This eclectic mix of cultures and perspectives serves as a rich environment for collaborative learning.

- **Co-Curricular Organizations**

CIPA boasts a wide variety of student co-curricular organizations such as the Cornell Public Affairs Society (CPAS), Women in Public Policy (WIPP), and the Cornell International City-County Management Association (CICMA). You can gain leadership experience, while pursuing your specific policy interests.

- **Social Opportunities**

CIPA students value their friendships and their community. Picnics, lake cruises, bowling nights, sports teams, an annual talent show, a winter Gala, karaoke competitions, and post-colloquium drinks at Ruloff's are all a part of the CIPA social fabric.



**Above:** Students make the most of the photo booth at the 2014 CIPA Gala, a popular event held each fall that is planned by officers for the Cornell Public Affairs Society (CPAS) student organization.

**Below:** After a tiring morning at the Capitol, CIPA students relax and indulge in a group selfie (taken during the fall 2014 professional development trip to Washington, DC).



## Matthew Williger • MPA 2014

Foreign Service Officer • **US Department of State**  
CIPA concentration: International Development

“ I served as vice president of the Cornell Public Affairs Society (CPAS), traveled to Uganda as part of a Student Multidisciplinary Applied Research Team (SMART), spent a semester in Washington, DC, and participated in a number of consulting engagements including one with a top ten global financial institution. This was in addition to the remarkable coursework I undertook. I’m not sure that any other program could have given me such a rich and diverse set of experiences.

At CIPA, I never felt like a number. Faculty and staff were willing to work with and support me—they were invested in my success. The environment was tremendously engaging and community-oriented and it provided precisely the kind of graduate experience I desired.”

“**The opportunity to participate in and become part of a meaningful community is fundamental to what CIPA offers.**”





# EXPERIENCE

## career success.



Historically, 75 to 80% of our students find employment or go on to further graduate work within three months of study, and 90% within nine months.

- **Career Counseling**

CIPA's Office of Career Management offers you employment counseling, résumé review, interview coaching, and workshops on all aspects of the internship and career search process.

- **Networking Events**

Our annual employment and alumni events in New York City and Washington, DC are well-attended and offer valuable networking opportunities.

- **Alumni Mentors**

When you graduate, you will join one of the largest alumni networks in the world — with generous Cornell alums eager to open doors for you.



**Bobby Toth • MPA 2015**

Capital Budget Analyst • **New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development**

CIPA concentration: Economic and Financial Policy

“ Faculty and staff genuinely cared about my success at CIPA and were always willing to go the extra mile.

When I arrived at Cornell, I was certain about a career in public service, but I wanted to leave some room for exploration. CIPA allowed me to tailor my coursework, balancing a mixture of theory and hands-on experience, while still providing a solid foundation of skills and knowledge relevant to all public affairs professionals.

One of the highlights was my summer internship with the US Government Accountability Office (GAO). I was part of a team responsible for evaluating the US Navy's ship modernization plan. I helped design an audit plan and interview protocol using evaluation methodology skills I learned at CIPA.”

“CIPA allowed me to tailor my coursework, balancing a mixture of theory and hands-on experience...”





**Kelly Hughes Van Beveren • MPA 2014**

Communications Associate • **Achieve Inc.**

CIPA concentration: Social Policy

“ Good policy is essentially useless unless you can communicate it effectively. In my career, I hope to combine my passion for education policy with my affinity for writing and communication. Because of CIPA’s flexibility, I was able to explore issues in education policy through courses in the Law School, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, and the Department of Policy Analysis and Management.

CIPA offered the perfect balance of academic and practical exploration of the policy issues most important to me.”

**“ I gained real world experience through the CIPA Capstone, working with a school district to implement a communications rollout plan for a new initiative.”**

# EXPERIENCE your MPA at Cornell.

## OVERVIEW

Our two year MPA program offers you unparalleled flexibility in selecting your courses and professional engagement experiences.

CIPA provides a solid foundation in the fundamentals, specialized expertise in an area of your choosing, and the analytical skill sets you will need to succeed as a public affairs professional. In addition, you will be presented with multiple options for gaining practical, hands-on work experience in the classroom as well as in the field.

You will leave CIPA well-prepared for the next phase of your career—ready to compete as one of the best-of-the-best in the job market.

## FOUNDATION COURSEWORK

**{9 courses}** To develop a strong foundation of cross-disciplinary knowledge for working within the broad domain of public affairs, CIPA students all take coursework in the following three complementary subject areas:

- **Administrative, Political and Policy Processes**  
— *how public affairs are conducted*
- **Economic Analysis and Public Finance**  
— *how public affairs are financed*
- **Quantitative Analysis**  
— *how options and results in public affairs are evaluated*

## CONCENTRATION COURSEWORK

**{5 courses}** The CIPA program offers eight areas of concentration. You will choose not only a concentration, but also the sub-specialties or combinations of specialized knowledge needed to achieve your personal goals within one of these areas. According to your own objectives, you will formulate a study plan (five concentration courses) to prepare you for work in your chosen field:

- Economic and Financial Policy
- Environmental Policy
- Government, Politics and Policy Studies
- Human Rights and Social Justice
- International Development Studies
- Public and Nonprofit Management
- Science, Technology and Infrastructure Policy
- Social Policy

## COLLOQUIUM

**{1 course}** You will participate in a weekly colloquium every semester you are on campus. These forums will allow you to engage with invited speakers on domestic and international policy and other public affairs issues.

## PROFESSIONAL WRITING / ANALYSIS QUALIFICATION

In the public affairs profession, you will need a high level of expertise in both analysis and written communication.

At CIPA, there are several ways you can improve your skills and demonstrate professional competency in these areas:

- **Capstone project.** You may undertake a rigorous, semester-long, pro bono consulting project for real clients in public agencies or nonprofits, culminating in a written report.
- **Professional report.** Some students who undertake a summer internship expand on their experience by enrolling in a semester-long independent study or directed reading course, culminating in a more complete professional report that is useful to the client and others.
- **Thesis.** Writing a master's thesis is another option, particularly appropriate for those who plan to go on for a PhD.







## Qualifications for Admission

- Our Admissions Committee rigorously evaluates applicants on the basis of potential for academic success at Cornell, as well as demonstrated commitment to a career in public service.
- We look for applicants who will serve as change-makers across the global public, private, and nonprofit sectors—highly capable professionals who think creatively and are passionate about confronting some of the world’s most challenging public policy issues.
- Our MPA requires strong analytical abilities and quantitative skills. While a background in the social sciences is helpful, the breadth of public affairs as a field of study and practice invites interest from an expansive range of professional fields, including the arts, business, engineering, and the natural sciences.

### OFFICIAL APPLICATION MATERIAL

#### Documents needed to complete your application:

- Cornell’s online Graduate School **application**.
- **Transcripts.** Copies from all colleges and universities previously attended.
- **GRE scores.** Cornell University Code is: 2098 and the Public Affairs Department Code is: 2204. *Note:* CIPA does NOT accept GMAT or LSAT scores in lieu of GRE scores.
- Three (3) **letters of recommendation**.
- Current **résumé**.
- **TOEFL scores** (required only for applicants for whom English is a second language). Please refer to the Admissions section of the CIPA web site for a complete listing of minimum scores. *Note:* Cornell University does NOT accept the international English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam in lieu of the TOEFL.

#### Statement of Purpose (500 words max.) addressing these points:

- Detail why you are applying to the program.
- Include personal and/or professional experiences that have led to your interest in Cornell’s MPA program.

- Describe your future goals and explain how you would put an MPA graduate education to use.
- Include examples of volunteer work, positions of responsibility, and any other life experiences that have contributed to your interest in public affairs.

#### Essay (1,000 words max.) covering the following:

- Briefly describe an area of public affairs to which you would like to make a contribution.
- Discuss what you would like to see accomplished in this area.
- Explain how you would go about initiating, supporting and sustaining changes in this area so as to enhance public well-being and public services.

#### Online Interview:

- Once ALL application material has been received, you will be asked to complete an online interview. You will receive an e-mail containing login information and detailed instructions.



## Cornell University College of Human Ecology

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### FOLLOW US



[www.cipa.cornell.edu](http://www.cipa.cornell.edu)

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### LEARN MORE

Thank you for your interest in CIPA. We invite you to learn more. Follow the blogs of some of our current students on the "Student Life" section of our web site. Explore the CIPA Facebook page. Make a campus visit and discover first-hand what makes the CIPA EXPERIENCE so unique.

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### ON THE COVER

Each year, CIPA sponsors professional development, networking, and career events in both Washington, DC and New York City. In the fall of 2015, CIPA students explored the heart of Washington, DC, prior to the start of a day-long event.

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