Certificate in Public Administration and Public Policy

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The Program

The Certificate in Public Administration and Public Policy provides students with a basic understanding of government agencies, social services, and the policy making process. The certificate is a valuable educational and professional credential for workers in the public and non-profit sectors, and for students interested in government, interest groups and political decision-making.

Students gain insight into the structure of government, organizational theory and behavior, the major problems facing American cities and the policies designed to address them. The program enables students to develop and enhance advanced analytic, research, writing and presentation skills.

The certificate is ideal for workers in the public sector, or non-profit advocacy groups, who wish to acquire a better understanding of government agencies. The certificate provides a basic academic foundation for students interested in careers as policy makers and analysts, researchers and planning specialists, or journalists.

Admissions Criteria

Candidates for admission to undergraduate level certificate programs must possess a high school diploma or a High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma from New York State (also known as TASC or GED). Applicants are also required to write a personal statement.

Program Requirements

16 credits are required for the certificate. Students must complete 16 credits from the following courses:

PADM 201 - Public Administration (4 Credits)
Prerequisite: None
This course will examine the growth, structure, role, and methods of local and federal bureaucracies and their impact on American government and society. It will introduce students to the subject of bureaucracy in American government and will survey the major areas of study in Public Administration, including the context of public administration, the meaning of federalism and intergovernmental relations. In addition the course will address organizational theory and behavior, decision-making, leadership, policy implementation, budgeting, personnel management, performance management, legal and regulatory constraints, ethics and accountability. Students will become knowledgeable about the roles and functions of public agencies and will acquire a grasp of current issues and controversies concerning public bureaucracies and public policy.

PADM 211 - Government, Politics and the Policy-Making Process (4 Credits)
Prerequisite: None
This course will explore the policy-making process in a range of public institutions and will introduce students to the approaches, methods, tools and techniques of decision making. The role of conventional political institutions, as well as alternatives to conventional politics will be studied. In the process, students will identify official, as well as unofficial, political actors, including those in the executive, legislative and judiciary branches of government; social and political activists; the media; and the public. Finally, the course will examine several models of the policy-making process.

PADM 221 - Public Issues and Public Policy (4 Credits)
Prerequisite: None
This course will provide an overview of the major problems facing American cities and will examine the federal, state

and local policies that address urban poverty and inequality. Students will explore a range of economic and social policies, including: taxation; minimum wage; social security; immigration; education; the environment; crime; social welfare; discrimination; and civil rights. Students will also examine the political and intellectual debates over policy initiatives to regulate social and private life. Finally, students will discuss pluralist and elitist perspectives on public policy and policy debate. Readings will include diverse points of view and will often emphasize developments in New York City.

PADM 231 - Research Seminar on Public Policy (4 Credits)
Prerequisite: None
This course is a seminar in public-policy analysis, including full class sessions as well as supervised independent research. The seminar will focus on a single topic, such as health care, housing or criminal justice, which will change each semester. Using a task force model, students will survey the literature in the topic under consideration and work in teams to work on particular aspects of the social problem and policy. The task for each team is to identify, analyze and evaluate an existing policy or set of policies related to the selected topic. Students will develop criteria for evaluation and assemble data to support an argument concerning the viability and effectiveness of policies under examination. The goal for each task force is to recommend modifications or alternatives to existing policy that effectively address the needs and concerns of various constituencies and interest groups in the decision making process. During the term, task force groups will make oral presentations based on their research. Each group will present a final report that incorporates policy analysis and policy recommendations. In preparation for the task-force project, the seminar will provide an overview of the topic under examination and will review methodologies for policy analysis.