



Graduate School of  
Arts and Sciences



THE FLETCHER SCHOOL

TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Joint Doctoral Program in Economics and Public  
Policy Graduate Student Handbook 201**9**-20**20**

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## **Introduction**

The Ph.D. Program in Economics and Public Policy (EPP) is aimed at producing new scholars and policy-makers able to address critical issues centered on economic development, the rising demand for energy associated with economic growth, and the environmental and climate consequences of such progress. The program blends training in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics with an understanding of institutional detail and political economy, building upon the six core courses of the Economics MS program and a roughly equal number of classes from the Fletcher MALD program. This curriculum gives students the tools necessary to address questions in economic development, energy, and environmental policy within an interdisciplinary framework that is needed for policy effectiveness. Dissertation research under faculty guidance will further train students in the practice of independent and original scholarship. Such training is crucial to the development of independent scholars able to evaluate and advance policy.

Generating and sustaining economic development and growth have become central policy concerns both nationally and internationally. Yet addressing these issues successfully requires careful analysis that integrates theory and empirical investigation and that is cognizant of political and cultural conditions. The EPP doctoral program builds upon the joint strengths of the Arts & Sciences Economics Department and the Fletcher school to further collaborative research in these areas. The EPP degree program is uniquely defined by its integration of comparative and international political economy perspectives into the training of advanced economic methods.

Supported by prominent scholars in the Economics Department and the Fletcher School, this program combines expertise in analysis, modeling and empirical research techniques that are essential for policy formulation with the institutional and cultural expertise necessary for developing integrated policy proposals. Degree candidates will have the opportunity to work alongside scholars from both schools, who not only have established reputations for excellence in research, but also have played prominent roles in policy making at both the state, federal and international levels. More information on the program faculty can be found in section 7b.

This handbook is intended to provide guidelines for participation in the EPP Ph.D. program. Students should also familiarize themselves with Tufts policies and information relevant to all graduate students, covering topics including but not limited to the following: academic integrity; academic leave, withdrawal, and reinstatement; non-discrimination policy; registration and enrollment status; contesting a grade; tuition and other fees; health and accessibility services; graduate student activities; community standards; facilities; and press policy. This information can be found in the [Graduate School of Arts and Sciences handbook](#). Further information that may be helpful for students can be found at the following resources:

- [Fletcher Student Handbook](#)
- [Tufts Bulletin](#)
- [Tufts International Center](#)

## **Admissions Process**

Students apply through and are formally enrolled in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (GSAS), with a designation as a joint degree candidate. Admission to the program is overseen by a joint admissions committee, which is made up of Economics and Fletcher faculty, and chaired by a member of the program's steering committee.

### **Requirements**

Applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree are eligible to apply to the program. To be considered for the program, applicants must submit the following:

- Application form
- 3 Letters of recommendation
- Official academic transcripts from all accredited universities and/or colleges attended
- GRE test scores
- TOEFL scores (if applicable)
- Statement of purpose
- Writing sample

### **Deadlines**

Complete applications must be sent to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences by January 15 in the year preceding fall matriculation. Decisions are announced at the end of March. Students have until the end of April to accept or reject the offer of admission. Upon acceptance of admission, a deposit must be made.

Internal and external applicants follow the same process for admissions and enrollment. As detailed in [Credit Transfer](#), however, internal applicants have the potential to enter the program with advance standing.

### **Deferral of Admission**

Students may defer admission for a maximum of one year upon approval by the admissions committee.

## **Program Details**

### **Two-Year Program Requirements**

Students will spend the first two years of the program completing core and field coursework. They will choose to specialize in at least one of the following fields:

1. Development Economics;
2. Energy and Environmental Economics and Policy;
3. Comparative and International Political Economy.

In the first two years, all students must complete the following requirements:

- Passing grades in six core methods courses;
- Passing grades in six field courses. Core courses must be approved by the student's advisor.
- Passing grades in first year directed research seminar course;
- The completion and defense of a major research paper in the second year. This paper can be based on work from a field course or done through an independent study;
- Passing grades on qualifying exams for the students' chosen fields.

### **Course Offerings**

#### **Required Core Methods Courses:**

EC201: Statistics

EC202: Econometrics

EC203: Microeconomic Theory I

EC204: Microeconomic Theory II

EC205: Macroeconomic Theory II

EC206: Macroeconomic Theory II

#### **Field Courses:**

Students will take six field courses in the second year of the program. Up to two courses per semester may be taken at Boston-area schools. At least one course each semester must be taken at Fletcher. These courses should be chosen in consultation with each student's advisor. A course offerings booklet will be updated annually, summarizing appropriate courses for the second year.

#### **Directed Research Courses**

In the first year of the program, students will enroll in Research Seminars I and II. In these courses, students will be required to attend the economics department seminar series as well as complete written assignments.

In the second year of the program, students will enroll in a Second Year Paper Seminar focused on writing their year two papers. This course will include regular meetings with other students to discuss progress and share insights. Students will regularly present their research at various points in the writing process, exchange feedback with classmates, and present on a research method of their choice. The course professor and guest lecturers will cover various research methods and tools for enhancing students' year two papers.

#### **Applying for Doctoral Candidacy**

Following completion of the core methods and field distribution courses, students will apply for admission to doctoral candidacy. Students are not guaranteed admission to doctoral candidacy, and may be denied admission based on inadequate performance with regard to any of the preceding requirements. Students who do not proceed to doctoral candidacy will receive a joint

terminal master's degree in Economics and Public Policy to be granted by Fletcher and GSAS. Admission to Ph.D. candidacy will require the following:

- Successful completion of all two-year requirements and coursework, as described above;
- Commitment by a faculty member from Economics or Fletcher to serve as primary dissertation advisor;
- Preparation of a dissertation statement of intent.

### **Doctoral Requirements**

Following successful application for Ph.D. candidacy, students will go on to complete their dissertation. To apply for graduation from the Ph.D. program, students must have completed all of the following requirements:

- Completion of all two-year requirements and coursework, as described above;
- Successful defense of a dissertation prospectus within one year of passing field exams;
- Completion of written dissertation. The dissertation should be independent and original, and make a significant contribution to its relevant field;
- Successful defense of dissertation in a public forum and before full thesis committee.

### **Residency Requirements**

Each student must fulfill a one-year residency requirement. This will normally be fulfilled by the first year of the program, which is spent completing required coursework. For students who enter with advance standing, they may be required to fulfill the residency requirement during the research period of the program.

### **Administrative Requirements**

Students are required to meet with their advisor at the start of each semester to discuss their plan of study for the program and to ensure that they are taking courses that fulfill their degree requirements.

Students are required to prove satisfactory progress throughout the course of the program. In the first two years, students will do so by maintaining at least the minimum required grades for all relevant coursework. In the research period of the program, students must demonstrate satisfactory progress by presenting their work in various formal and informal settings. These may range from informal discussions of research ideas to formal research presentations.

### **Degree Timeline**

In total, this program is estimated to be a five-year degree for students entering with no prior master's degree. For students entering with a prior master's degree, time to completion will be three or four years depending on prior coursework and demonstrated competency in the program's core methodological requirements.

If students with a prior external MA/MS in economics passes out of all methods courses, then completion of field requirements can be accelerated in the first year. In such cases, the program should take 4 years.

Five years is the expected length of the program. To request an extension of degree time, students should fill out the following form: [asegrad.tufts.edu/current-graduate-students](http://asegrad.tufts.edu/current-graduate-students). They should only do so if they are confident that the extension will allow them to complete all program requirements.

## **Coursework Policies & Details**

### **Minimum Grades & GPA**

Progression through the program will require that students maintain good academic standing. This includes earning passing (B-) marks in all courses. A student may have one grade that is lower than a B- and remain in good academic standing; however, this grade will not count for credit and the student may retake the course only once. Furthermore, a student may only have one incomplete (I) that remains incomplete longer than one semester. Acceptable performance in the program also requires passing field exams in students' chosen fields.

If a student is not in good academic standing, they will be officially notified. Dismissal may occur following a review and vote of the steering committee; students will be kept informed of all proceedings. Students may appeal a decision of dismissal within ten days of receiving its notification; an exception to the dismissal may subsequently be granted by the student's academic dean. If an exception is granted, the student will meet with the program director to develop a strategy and timeline to return to good academic standing.

### **Incompletes**

A student who is unable to complete the work of a course by the end of the semester, due to extenuating circumstances, may request an Incomplete from the instructor. This request must be submitted before the due date of the required coursework. If the Incomplete is granted, the student must complete all coursework and the instructor must submit a grade within six weeks after the start of the following semester (excluding the summer semester). It is at the instructor's discretion to shorten this deadline. It is further at the instructor's discretion to decide whether there will be a grade penalty for late work. Upon receiving permission from the instructor, it is the student's responsibility to obtain an incomplete form and submit for approval to the Registrar's Office before the deadline set by the instructor.

If the student does not complete the coursework by the agreed upon deadline, they will receive a permanent Incomplete. Students may attempt to petition for an extension of their deadline by writing a letter to their Academic Dean explaining the request, accompanied by a letter of support from the instructor.

If a student receives two or more Incompletes in a given semester, notification will be given to the student's advisor and academic dean.

## **Course Withdrawal**

A course from which the student has withdrawn prior to the drop deadline (found on each semester's Academic Calendar) will not appear on the student's transcript. Students may also choose to withdraw from a course after the official drop deadline. To do so, students must file a Request for Late Withdrawal with the Registrar's Office. A withdrawal code of "W" will be recorded on the student's transcript. Requests for Late Withdrawal submitted after the final meeting of the class must be endorsed by the course instructor or the Academic Dean. Classes for which a student has received a "W" do not count for credit.

## **Independent Study Courses**

Independent study courses give students the unique opportunity to work one-on-one with faculty in order to pursue an in-depth topic that is of great interest to the student and not offered by current course offerings. Students must find their own faculty advisor for independent study, and must remember that faculty members are not obligated to agree to serve as advisor for the independent study. Faculty advisors for independent studies must be within the Tufts Arts & Sciences Economic Department or Fletcher School faculty.

A total of no more than two independent study courses may be taken in fulfillment of non-core field distribution requirements. No more than one independent study course may be taken for a given field. The Program Committee must approve of any independent study course prior to it being counted towards a field requirement. To register for an Independent Study course, students should complete the required form and submit it to the Registrar prior to enrollment.

## **Credit Transfer**

Students may be permitted to transfer credits and gain advance standing by in the program in the following ways:

- If students have completed a Tufts MS in Economics, they are exempt from the six core methods courses;
- If students have taken courses that fulfill their field course requirements as a part of either the Fletcher MALD program or the Tufts MS in Economics program, they may be exempt from part or all of the field course requirement;
- If students have completed an external MA/MS, they may request exemption from each of the core methods courses. The program Director will grant to deny such exemptions on a case-by-case basis after consulting with the relevant Tufts faculty and following review of the student's prior course work.

Students are recommended to make transfer of credit requests at the beginning of their graduate program, and may do so through [SIS](#).

## **Dissertation Guidelines**

### **Advising Committee**

Each student will have a dissertation committee, consisting of four faculty members, one of whom is the primary advisor. The primary advisor, or committee chair, is typically a full-time, tenure-track faculty member within the program. At least three members of the committee, including the primary advisor, must be faculty within either the A&S Economics Department or Fletcher. A fourth external member of the dissertation committee will serve as reader, subject to approval by the Program Committee. This external member is a faculty member who is outside of the A&S Economics Department and Fletcher School.

### **Dissertation Prospectus**

The dissertation prospectus must be completed in the third year of the program, and its successful defense is necessary for progression in the doctoral program. A prospectus allows students to demonstrate that their research idea will culminate in a satisfactory dissertation. There is no required length for the prospectus, though it should contain the following information:

- A proposed title;
- Names of four committee members;
- Problem statement detailing the scope of the research question;
- Literature review describing other work on the issue and how this question relates to the existing body of literature, as well as explaining the proposed study's expected contribution to the field;
- Detailed statement describing the specific research hypotheses to be investigated/tested, analytic framework and theory, as well as expected findings;
- Description of proposed methodology;
- Statement concerning nature and availability of data;
- Statement concerning feasibility of the proposed study, as well as the student's relevant capabilities.

There are three outcomes of prospectus defense. First, a student may pass and move onto the completion of their doctoral dissertation. Second, a student may fail; this will serve as a strong indication that the student should not continue with their doctoral candidacy. Third, the committee may request additional information or work in order to ensure that the research will culminate in a satisfactory dissertation.

### **Dissertation Requirements**

A Ph.D. dissertation is a body of independent and original research that makes a significant and new contribution to the relevant field. There are two possible types of dissertation. The first is a book comprised of multiple chapters, prefaced by an abstract. The second is comprised of three separate papers, with an executive summary linking the three. In the first format, only one of the book chapters may be co-authored; in the second format, only one paper may be co-authored.

The dissertation must be presented in good literary form. Details on the proper formatting of dissertations can be found in the [GSAS handbook](#), though some exceptions will be made for dissertations made up of separate papers. It is recommended that the Reference Librarian of the

Ginn or Tisch libraries be consulted before final submission of the dissertation to ensure proper adherence to all formatting and citation requirements.

## **Defense**

All doctoral candidates in the EPP program must defend their dissertation prior to completion of their degree. The dissertation defense consists of two parts:

1. Student formally presents research at a public event. Tufts community and invited guests may attend, and the student answers questions from the audience;
2. Student defends dissertation to dissertation committee in a closed session.

Each student will arrange the date and time of their defense with their committee. Defense should occur several weeks before the deadline for its submission, to allow for any necessary revisions. It is the student's responsibility to distribute copies of the dissertation to the dissertation committee prior to the defense.

At the end of a successful defense, committee members sign a [Certificate of Fitness](#) form.

## **Submission**

The [Approval of Dissertation for Submission](#) form will be signed by the committee chair upon approval of a final draft for publication. Original hard copies of both the Certificate of Fitness form and the Approval of Dissertation for Submission form must be submitted to the Graduate Student Services by the published deadline (see current year's [GSAS handbook](#)); online submission is also required. The electronic copy will undergo a final format review. With the electronic copy, the student must include a statement detailing their place and date of birth, an outline of their formal education, a list of degrees or honors received, and a list of published writings.

All dissertations submitted in partial fulfillment of degree requirements will be made available for use on Tufts owned websites. This includes publication on the Tufts Digital Library, which is an open access website. To delay access to the public, an embargo may be requested for six months, one year, and up to a maximum of two years. This embargo must be supported in writing by the program director.

## **Additional Policies & Resources**

### **Cross Registration**

Full-time students may cross-register for courses at the following schools: Harvard Graduate Schools; Boston College; Boston University; and Brandeis University. Cross registration is subject to the approval of the host school course instructor, the GSAS Registrar, and the host school Registrar. Cross registration is not permitted for the summer semester. Please note that

courses offered during the January term at Harvard are considered spring term courses and are credited toward the student's spring term enrollment. EPP students may take up to four courses in total for credit outside of Tufts. Information on how to cross-register may be found here:

<http://fletcher.tufts.edu/~media/Fletcher/Academics/Cross%20Registration%20Postings/Cross%20Registration%20at%20Harvard%20Instructions.pdf>.

### **Academic Resources**

Students will be assigned an advisor upon their entry into the EPP program. This advisor will meet regularly with the student to help them plan their course of study and facilitate their success in the program. After the first year of the program, students will choose a faculty advisor. Students are welcome to remain with their first-year advisor if the match is deemed optimal. A student may change their advisor at any point submitting the applicable form. This is most likely to happen in the case of the student identifying a new advisor who better matches their research or career interests.

Complete information on academic resources at Tufts available to graduate students may be found in the **GSAS handbook**. This includes, but is not limited to, information on campus libraries and collections, research support services, and teaching support. Tufts Technology Services (TTS) provides a variety of technology resources to help each student achieve their academic objectives. A full list of these services can be found at [it.tufts.edu](http://it.tufts.edu).

For any students struggling with the writing components of the program, assistance is available through the Academic Resource Center (ARC) at Tufts. The ARC also provides support related to time management, study strategies, and public speaking. More information can be found [here](#).

### **Travel Policy**

Students from the EPP program who make the decision to travel for their research must adhere to the Tufts policies on student travel. For any program-affiliated travel, Tufts provides free international medical and travel insurance. More information on these services can be found at [Tufts Travel Insurance](#). Prior to any travel abroad, students must register their travel with the [Tufts Travel Registry](#). This will automatically enroll them in the insurance coverage. Students traveling to any country with a State Department warning must first submit their travel through the [Tufts Travel Review](#).

Students can apply for travel funding from various sources at Tufts; however, there is no guarantee that this funding will be available for all students. Each student should confer with their advisor regarding applying for travel and research funds.

### **Human Research**

Any student who engages in human research in any capacity (research related to coursework, related to dissertation, or any other research agenda), must go through an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The approval of research from the IRB is mandatory for any research that falls under the category of Human Subjects Research (HSR).

HSR is defined as “an individual about whom an investigator conducting research obtains data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or identifiable private information.” If your research does not fall under this definition, it is excluded from the IRB requirement.

Once research is determined to fall under the HSR definition, it must be determined whether this research is exempt from review, expedited, or subject to full review. Researchers must submit an application form to the IRB at Tufts to request the appropriate level of review (including applications for exemption). If research is not exempt, the researcher will go on to complete the necessary IRB procedures to receive research approval. Full details on this process, as well as all necessary materials, can be found [here](#).

### **Financial Assistance**

The EPP Ph.D. program will provide competitive funding to attract highly qualified students. That funding will begin when a student starts the new program and be comprised of a combination of fellowship money and compensation for teaching assistant and research assistant work. At least one semester of work as a teaching assistant will be required of each student. It is anticipated that such funding will extend for five years for students who enter the program *de novo*. However, because eligibility for such funding does not begin until a student officially enters the program, those students who enter the program from existing master’s programs in either the Economics or Fletcher program will not receive stipends until their first semester after admission to the new doctoral program *per se* (expected to be in the Fall).

Additional details regarding funding policies for Tufts Ph.D. programs can be found in the [GSAS handbook](#).

### **Career Planning**

While students are responsible for their own job search, there are numerous supports available at Tufts. Students can find useful support and services from both the [Fletcher Career Services](#) and [Tufts Career Center](#). These resources include job search services, networking resources, and career coaching.

EPP students are encouraged to join the Tufts Career Networking Group on LinkedIn to connect with alumni to learn more about careers, employers, and industries.

### **Graduation**

Degrees are awarded 3 times each year, in August, February, and May. Students are responsible for applying for graduation through SIS and submitting a hard copy Application for Graduation to the Graduate Student Services. Students must also complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates, found online at <https://sed-nces.org/>.

University-wide commencement ceremonies are held once per year, in May. Students who receive their degree at another time during the year may participate in the following May’s commencement ceremony. Further information on commencement and diploma pick-up can be

found in the **GSAS handbook**.