

## **Notice of Intent, BS-Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

Degree: Bachelor of Science in Educational Policy Studies

Major: Educational Policy Studies

Department: Educational Policy Studies

School/College: School of Education

### **Fit with Institutional Mission, Strategic Plan, and Existing Program Array**

The proposed major in Educational Policy Studies will provide a rigorous study of education topics and concerns, presented from multiple academic and disciplinary perspectives. This major does not prepare students for teacher certification and licensure. Instead, the major will prepare students for work in educational and governmental agencies, non-governmental education organizations (both domestic and international), education-related think tanks and policy institutes, and out-of-school educational spaces. Students will also be well prepared for the study of educational policy at the graduate level.

The proposed major in Educational Policy Studies fits directly within the mission of the Department of Educational Policy Studies (EPS). EPS faculty are rooted in the disciplines of history, sociology, anthropology, politics, and comparative and international education, and they strive to guide their students in developing facility with these disciplines. The faculty provide an array of comprehensive and in-depth courses that promote critical and creative thinking within these disciplines and foster engagement with both contemporary and enduring issues of educational policy and practice. The intent to create the Educational Policy Studies major has been endorsed in EPS's recent (2014) Ten-Year Review. In fact, the external reviewers "strongly recommend[ed]" that EPS house this initiative, highlighting that the EPS faculty "has the precise blend of expertise for such a major...."

EPS courses link educational policy to other related domains of social policy, including human migration and immigration, health and welfare, employment and economic development, urban planning and cultural geography, political socialization and citizenship, and even educational diplomacy and international relations. Moreover, the department will tap into these issues by using interdisciplinary links to the UW-Madison's College of Letters and Science as EPS faculty are affiliated in the departments of History, Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology, and Geography. The major also has key curricular support from the Departments of Educational Psychology and Curriculum and Instruction.

Historically, EPS has been exclusively a graduate department, offering degrees at the master's and doctoral levels. At the same time, the department has always taught large numbers of undergraduates, especially in courses focusing on the history and sociology of education, as well as comparative and international education. The proposed undergraduate degree/major is a natural evolution of the department's mission to undergraduates.

The proposed BS-Educational Policy Studies degree aligns with the campus 2015-19 strategic framework, specifically in its connection to the Wisconsin Idea and the call to "leverage our distinctive interdisciplinary strength to address complex problems in the state and the world." The proposed major addresses at least three of the School of Education's 2015-17 strategic

priorities, reflecting our shared commitment to “produce high quality leaders for rapidly-changing learning environments at all levels,” “foster community engaged scholarship to enrich lives, transform communities and better the world,” and “promote equity and increase diversity.”

Our experience suggests that the new major will be especially attractive to students of color and other underrepresented undergraduate populations on campus—individuals who often express an intense interest in issues of inequality and social justice, and who, in general, seek opportunities to study these dimensions of educational reform among a critical mass of students with diverse but overlapping interests. Our undergraduate academic affairs office has reported a small but consistent interest among incoming freshmen students of color who want to study education policy. These students are a natural constituency for the proposed BS-Educational Policy Studies.

### **Program Need**

Student interest in educational policy as a topic of study is evidenced by the 210 students who have sought the Educational Policy Studies undergraduate certificate since 2006. Growing enrollments in the certificate program underscore the fact that there is a constituency for the major among UW-Madison undergraduates. Students at UW-Madison have also expressed interest in the topic of educational policy studies through their participation in EPS-linked Freshman Interest Groups (FIGs), where approximately 200 students have taken EPS FIG courses in the last four years. At the October 2015 campus “Majors Fair,” a number of students approached School of Education advisors asking whether we offered a non-teacher preparation educational policy studies major. Together, these and other indicators of student interest give us confidence that the major will be a desirable and valuable addition to the School and campus academic program array.

Students pursuing the BS-Educational Policy Studies will fill employment gaps in local and state level policy-making agencies and organizations such as the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; charter-school management organizations; school district policy and planning offices; community youth programming organizations; education-related think tanks; social-service organizations; workforce-development offices; philanthropic foundations; parent-based organizations for schools; as well as agencies and companies doing business in the realm of international education.

Currently, among the four-year institutions within the UW-System, only the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee offers a non-teaching education major. UW-Milwaukee’s program, “Educational Policy and Community Studies,” emphasizes adult education and training, youth leadership, and workforce development. The proposed BS-Educational Policy Studies major at UW-Madison will differ by focusing on the critical examination of educational policies, domestic and international, with in-depth consideration of the past and present contexts in which these policies emerge, develop, and change and are analyzed and discussed through various academic and disciplinary perspectives, notably history, sociology, anthropology, politics, and comparative and international education.

Just a few research universities in the United States offer similar educational policy studies programs. Northwestern University has a major in social policy that includes some educational content and Pennsylvania State University has a major in education and public policy. None of

these programs, however, combines the comprehensive, in-depth analysis of both domestic and global educational issues offered by the proposed UW-Madison degree.

### **Brief Program Description**

The Educational Policy Studies degree and major will provide programmatic structure for undergraduates seeking opportunities to investigate and to reflect upon educational policies and debates, as well as the social and political context in which educational policies are initiated and evolve. Students will be able to focus their interests by picking between a U.S. Concentration and a Global Concentration. By the end of this program, students will be able to analyze and understand

- the social, cultural, and/or historical contexts surrounding formal and/or informal education in the US and/or in a global context.
- educational policies in national and/or global contexts.
- the causes and consequences of educational inequality related to race, class, gender, and/or other dimensions.

Students will learn about education through literature covering a variety of disciplines, which may include history, anthropology, philosophy, sociology, and political science. Students will be able to interpret and discuss various education reform proposals, past and present, as well as understand the connections between education and other social institutions, including the justice system, health and social welfare system, migration and immigration, and labor and workforce. Students will also critically discuss and contribute to education-related debates in a local, state, national, and/or global context.

### **Resource Requirements**

The instructional and administrative resources for this new program will come from the existing resources of the Department of Educational Policy Studies. The department and its partnering departments (Educational Psychology and Curriculum and Instruction) will fully be able to offer all courses related to this major and degree program. Advising for the new major will be provided by the SoE undergraduate dean's office, Education Academic Services, whose director has confirmed that the unit has the capacity to satisfy the advising needs of this major.

### **EPS Department Faculty**

Bianca Baldrige, Assistant Professor  
Lesley Bartlett, Associate Professor  
Sara Goldrick-Rab, Professor  
Nancy Kendall, Associate Professor  
Stacey Lee, Professor  
Kathryn Moeller, Assistant Professor  
Adam Nelson, Professor  
Linn Posey-Maddox, Assistant Professor  
William Reese, Professor  
Amy Stambach, Professor  
Erica Turner, Assistant Professor

## Letters of Support

See Appendix for letters of support from the following:

- M. Elizabeth Graue, Sorenson Professor of Childhood Studies, Chair, Department of Curriculum and Instruction
- Eric Camburn, Chair, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
- David Kaplan, Chair, Department of Educational Psychology
- Stephanie Roberts, Director, School of Social Work
- Constance Flanagan, Chair, Community and Nonprofit Leadership, Associate Dean, School of Human Ecology
- Janean Dilworth-Bart, Chair, Human Development and Family Studies
- David T. Canon, Chair, Political Science
- James H. Sweet, Chair, History
- Maria Lepowsky, Chair, Anthropology
- Pamela E. Oliver, Chair, Sociology
- Alan Sidelle, Chair, Philosophy
- Soyeon Shim, SoHE Dean
- John Karl Scholz, L&S dean