

GLOBAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) Major at SIPA

School Website: <https://www.sipa.columbia.edu/>

Global Affairs and Public Policy Department Website: <https://www.sipa.columbia.edu/sipa-education/undergraduate>

Location: SIPA Office of Student Affairs, 610 International Affairs Building

Telephone: 212-854-8690

Email: GAPP-SIPA@sipa.columbia.edu

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Prof. Tom Christensen, 1314 International Affairs Building, tjc2175@columbia.edu

Assistant Director of Academic Affairs for Undergraduate Studies: To be announced

Dean of Students at SIPA: Tsuya Yee, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, ty2466@columbia.edu

Advising Dean of Undergraduate Studies in SIPA Student Affairs: To be announced

The Study of Global Affairs and Public Policy

The Global Affairs and Public Policy major at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) provides students with the intellectual foundation and practical skills to study how societies identify problems, weigh evidence, debate ideas, and make collective choices about the common good. Combining multiple disciplines, including political science, economics, history, social psychology, and regional studies, and emphasizing skills such as analytical reasoning, interpretation of texts and data, and persuasive communication, the major cultivates an appreciation of how political systems, regional and historical contexts, economic frameworks, and individual leaders shape policymaking and problem-solving by governments, international organizations, and non-state actors. Students will have the opportunity to focus their elective studies in areas reflecting SIPA's faculty expertise, and will learn to analyze evidence from multiple perspectives, engage with theoretical frameworks and foundational texts, and practice civic discourse and argumentation.

The Global Affairs and Public Policy major is administered by the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and is open to students in Columbia College and the School of General Studies.

Student Advising

The Director of Undergraduate Studies oversees SIPA's undergraduate major in Global Affairs and Public Policy and is available to students during designated office hours. Students should generally consult the undergraduate academic affairs and student affairs advisers as their primary source of academic advising. The Director of Undergraduate

Studies serves as an additional resource for questions regarding the curriculum, academic planning, and opportunities within the major.

Major Declaration Process

Admission to the Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) major is determined through a lottery process due to limited enrollment capacity. The major is open to students in Columbia College and the School of General Studies.

Students who wish to declare the major must submit a lottery application during one of the application periods listed below.

Early Round

Eligibility:

- Columbia College juniors
- School of General Studies students who have completed at least 45 credits

Timeline:

- Application opens: December 1, 2026
- Application deadline: December 18, 2026
- Decisions released: By December 21, 2026

Regular Round

Eligibility:

- Columbia College sophomores and juniors
- School of General Studies students who have completed at least 45 credits

Timeline:

- Application opens: January 1, 2027
- Application deadline: March 2027 (date to be confirmed)
- Decisions released: Early March 2027, before Columbia's general major declaration process

Information Sessions

Information sessions, offered both in person and virtually, will be held during October and November 2026.

Additional Lottery Entry

Students who have completed at least one of the following courses before the lottery application deadline will receive one additional lottery entry (for a total of two entries):

- GAPP IA2110 Contemporary Debates in Global Affairs and Public Policy
- GAPP IA2150 Policymaking: Politics, Ethics, and Communication
- SIPA IA6700 Inside the Situation Room

Enrollment in the inaugural cohort is limited to 100 students. Admission through the lottery does not guarantee enrollment in particular courses beyond the requirements of the major.

Undergraduate Major Honors

Students pursuing the major who have achieved a major GPA of 3.6 or higher may apply to participate in a year-long Honors Seminar (3

credits per semester). Through the seminar, students will complete an honors thesis addressing a significant policy issue. Completed theses are reviewed by the Honors Faculty Advisory Board for consideration for Departmental Honors. No more than 10% of graduating majors may be awarded Departmental Honors.

The Director of the Honors Program will oversee the seminar and ensure that each student is paired with a faculty adviser with relevant subject-matter expertise. The Honors Seminar fulfills 6 of the 15 elective credits required for the major.

As an alternative, eligible students may pursue a year-long independent study (3 credits per semester) under the supervision of a faculty member approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Independent study projects may also be submitted to the Honors Faculty Advisory Board for consideration for Departmental Honors. A year-long independent study fulfills 6 of the 15 elective credits required for the major.

Transfer Credit and Non-SIPA Course Policy

- No more than two courses may be double-counted toward another major, concentration, or program. Policies about double-counting courses to fulfill requirements in more than one major may be found here:
 - [Columbia College](#)
 - [School of General Studies](#)
 - Courses in Columbia College's Core Curriculum do not fulfill requirements for the Global Affairs and Public Policy major.
 - A maximum of three courses (nine credits) may be applied toward the Global Affairs and Public Policy major from outside SIPA, including transfer credit from other accredited institutions and courses taken in other Columbia departments or schools. No more than one AP course may be counted toward the major. All such credits require approval by the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) and may be applied to foundation or elective requirements as appropriate.
- Douglas Almond
 - Scott Barrett
 - Stephen Biddle
 - Daniel Björkegren
 - Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton
 - Thomas Christensen (DUS)
 - Caroline Flammer
 - Jeffrey Frieden
 - Ester Fuchs
 - Stacie Goddard
 - Martín Guzmán
 - Alexander Hertel-Fernandez
 - Jiyeon Kim
 - Patricia Kirkland
 - Joseph Lasky
 - Secretary Jacob Lew
 - Erica Lonergan
 - Tamar Mitts
 - Benjamin Orlove
 - Arvind Panagariya

- Gideon Rose
- Rumela Sen
- Alan Taylor
- Eric Verhoogen
- Alan Yang
- Keren Yarhi-Milo (Dean)

The School of International and Public Affairs Faculty Directory can be viewed at: <https://www.sipa.columbia.edu/communities-connections/faculty-directory>

GAPP Major Requirements

The Global Affairs and Public Policy major requires a minimum of 32.5 credits, consisting of foundational coursework, elective coursework, and a two-semester Senior Policy Practicum. Students must complete all required courses and satisfy the policies outlined below.

Foundational Courses (13 credits)

Students must complete the following foundational courses, which provide the analytical, economic, and policy foundations for the major:

- ECON UN1105 PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMICS
- GAPP IA2100 Contemporary Debates in Global Affairs and Public Policy
- GAPP IA2150 Policymaking: Politics, Ethics, and Communication
- One of the following quantitative methods courses:
 - GAPP IA2200 Intro to Quantitative Analysis for Global Affairs and Public Policy, or
 - GAPP IA2250 Analytical Tools for Global Affairs and Public Policy

Elective Courses (15 credits)

Students must complete at least 15 credits of approved elective coursework in global affairs and public policy. Electives may be selected from approved SIPA courses and other Columbia University offerings, subject to approval by the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Students may choose, but are not required, to organize their electives within one of the following suggested areas of study:

- Data Science for Policy
- Geopolitics and Diplomacy
- International Economic Policy
- Science, Policy, and Communication
- U.S. Policy and Public Affairs
- Regional Studies

Completion of a suggested elective area does not appear on the transcript or diploma.

Senior Policy Practicum (4.5 credits)

The Senior Policy Practicum provides students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills developed throughout the major to a real-world policy challenge through research, analysis, and professional practice.

Students complete a two-semester capstone experience consisting of:

- GAPP IA3998 Policy Practicum Preparatory Seminar, and
- GAPP IA3999 Policy Practicum in Global Affairs and Public Policy

Go here for the GAPP Major Planning Form

GAPP Required Courses

GAPP IA2100 Contemporary Debates in Global Affairs and Public Policy. 3.00 points.

This course examines many of the central concepts, theories, and analytical tools used in contemporary social science to understand and explain international affairs and public policy. The theoretical literature is drawn from different fields in the social sciences, including comparative politics, international relations, political sociology, psychology, and economics. The course is designed to enhance students' abilities to think critically and analytically about current problems and challenges in international politics, and the decision making processes for addressing them

Fall 2026: GAPP IA2100

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
GAPP 2100	001/14303	T Th 2:40pm - 3:55pm Room TBA	Gideon Rose	3.00	33/70

GAPP IA2150 Policymaking: Politics, Ethics, and Communication. 3.00 points.

This course examines how public policy is developed, debated, and implemented, with a focus on political institutions, ethical considerations, and effective communication. Students explore how policymakers navigate competing interests, institutional constraints, and moral dilemmas in designing and advancing policy solutions. The course emphasizes practical skills in policy analysis, including problem definition, evaluation of policy alternatives, stakeholder and institutional analysis, and strategic communication. Students produce professional policy writing, including memos and op-eds, and engage in discussion and critique of policy proposals. By integrating political, ethical, and analytical perspectives, the course prepares students to participate effectively in the policymaking process

Fall 2026: GAPP IA2150

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
GAPP 2150	001/14793	M W 11:40am - 12:55pm Room TBA	Patricia Kirkland	3.00	19/70

GAPP IA2200 Intro to Quantitative Analysis for Global Affairs and Public Policy. 3.00 points.

This course provides an introduction to statistical methods for analyzing data in global affairs and public policy. Students learn how to summarize and visualize data, understand probability and sampling, and conduct basic statistical inference, including hypothesis testing and regression analysis. Using real-world datasets and applied examples, the course builds practical skills in interpreting quantitative evidence and assessing how data inform policy debates and decisions. No prior background in statistics is required. Emphasis is placed on developing confidence in quantitative reasoning and the ability to critically evaluate empirical claims in policy contexts

Spring 2027: GAPP IA2200

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
GAPP 2200	001/10168		Alan Yang	3.00	0/100

GAPP IA2250 Analytical Tools for Global Affairs and Public Policy. 3.00 points.

This course introduces the core research methods used in the study of global affairs and public policy, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches. Students learn how to design research, collect and analyze data, and evaluate evidence across a range of methodologies such as case studies, interviews, surveys, and basic statistical analysis. The course emphasizes how different methods can be combined to address complex policy questions. Students develop the ability to critically assess research and design feasible research proposals that integrate multiple forms of evidence. By the end of the course, students are equipped with foundational tools for rigorous analysis and evidence-based policymaking

Spring 2027: GAPP IA2250

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
GAPP 2250	001/10169		Rumela Sen	3.00	0/100

ECON UN1105 PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMICS. 4.00 points.

Corequisites: ECON UN1155

Corequisites: ECON UN1155 How a market economy determines the relative prices of goods, factors of production, and the allocation of resources and the circumstances under which it does it efficiently. Why such an economy has fluctuations and how they may be controlled

Spring 2026: ECON UN1105

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
ECON 1105	001/12825	M W 8:40am - 9:55am 501 Schermerhorn Hall	Sunil Gulati	4.00	172/220
ECON 1105	002/12826	T Th 2:40pm - 3:55pm 309 Havemeyer Hall	Waseem Noor	4.00	177/280
ECON 1105	003/12828	M W 2:40pm - 3:55pm 301 Pupin Laboratories	Lilia Maliar	4.00	111/220

Fall 2026: ECON UN1105

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
ECON 1105	001/13291	M W 8:40am - 9:55am Room TBA	Sunil Gulati	4.00	91/220
ECON 1105	002/13290	M W 2:40pm - 3:55pm Room TBA	Prajit Dutta	4.00	118/189
ECON 1105	003/13460	T Th 2:40pm - 3:55pm Room TBA	Waseem Noor	4.00	43/250

Senior Policy Practicum

GAPP IA3998 Policy Practicum Preparatory Seminar. 1.50 point.

The Policy Practicum Preparatory Seminar is the first course in a required two-course sequence for the Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) major. Offered in the fall semester, this seminar prepares students for the spring Policy Practicum by introducing the objectives, expectations, and professional skills needed to complete a client-based policy consulting project. Working in teams under the guidance of a faculty advisor, students develop the foundation for their Practicum project through project planning, client engagement, and team management. Students are introduced to their client organization and faculty advisor, establish team roles and norms, design a preliminary project methodology, and develop a detailed work plan that outlines project objectives, research strategies, deliverables, milestones, and timelines. The seminar also provides training in project management, professional communication, and collaborative problem solving. Students are evaluated on their participation and the successful development of a comprehensive project work plan that clearly defines the project's objectives, methodology, division of responsibilities, operational roles, and implementation timeline in preparation for the spring Policy Practicum

GAPP IA3999 Policy Practicum in Global Affairs and Public Policy. 3.00 points.

The Policy Practicum is the culminating academic experience for students in the Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) major. Working in small teams under the guidance of a faculty advisor and in collaboration with an external organization, students apply the knowledge and analytical skills developed throughout the major to address a contemporary public policy or management challenge. Through interdisciplinary research, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and engagement with practitioners, students develop evidence-based policy recommendations that respond to the needs of their partner organization. The course emphasizes critical thinking, collaborative problem solving, research design, professional communication, and ethical engagement while providing students with the opportunity to integrate theory and practice in a substantial applied policy project

Electives

With the guidance of the Director of Undergraduate Studies, students select electives across SIPA's areas of expertise, including data science for policy, geopolitics and diplomacy, international economic policy, science policy and communication, regional studies, development and governance, and U.S. social and public policy.

SIPA IA6700 Inside the Situation Room. 3.00 Points.

Prerequisite: Course Application. In an era increasingly defined by geopolitical competition, it is more important than ever for future policymakers to understand why and how foreign policy decisions are made. Inside the Situation Room, co-taught by Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton and Dean Keren Yarhi-Milo, employs insights from diverse academic fields—including political psychology, domestic politics, and international relations—and the direct experience of high-level principals in the room to understand the key factors which underpin a nation's most crucial decisions. This course allows students to engage with a range of case studies and examine decision-making in a variety of historical and contemporary contexts, from the search for Osama bin Laden, to the “red line” in Syria, to negotiating with Iran. Students will be taught how to analyze and understand the complex interplay between individual psychology, domestic politics, public opinion, bureaucracy, the international environment, and other factors which feed into decisions about foreign policy—from crisis diplomacy to the use of force, signaling and perception, intelligence and its analysis, the deployment of other instruments of statecraft, and more. Through this course, students will think carefully and analytically about how leaders and other actors view the world, how they arrive at their decisions, and how various social, political, and psychological factors shape the policies they devise to promote their interests abroad. For more information, visit: <https://www.sipa.columbia.edu/situationroom>

Term	Section	Call Number	Instructor	Times/Location
Fall 2026	001	13238	Lincoln Mitchell, Keren Yarhi-Milo	W 1:10pm - 2:50pm Room TBA

SIPA IA6701 Inside the Situation Room - Discussion. 3.00 Points.

Required Discussion Section For Inside the Situation Room

Term	Section	Call Number	Instructor	Times/Location
Fall 2026	001	13239	Lincoln Mitchell	M 10:00am - 11:50am 402 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	002	13240	Lincoln Mitchell	M 1:10pm - 3:00pm 402b International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	003	13241	Lincoln Mitchell	T 10:00am - 11:50am 501b International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	004	13242	Lincoln Mitchell	T 1:10pm - 3:00pm 402b International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	005	13243	Lincoln Mitchell, Carlos Vargas- Ramos	M 7:10pm - 9:00pm 402 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	006	13244	Lincoln Mitchell, Carlos Vargas- Ramos	T 7:10pm - 9:00pm 501b International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	007	13245	Jayne Schlesinger, Lincoln Mitchell	Th 1:10pm - 3:00pm 501a International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	008	13246	Lincoln Mitchell, Jayme Schlesinger	T 1:10pm - 3:00pm 402 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	009	13247	Lincoln Mitchell, Jayme Schlesinger	T 3:10pm - 5:00pm 501 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	010	13248	Kyle Evanoff, Lincoln Mitchell	F 10:00am - 11:50am 402b International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	011	13249	Lincoln Mitchell, Kyle Evanoff	F 1:10pm - 3:00pm 402 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	012	13250	Kyle Evanoff, Lincoln Mitchell	F 3:10pm - 5:00pm 402b International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	013	13251	Lincoln Mitchell, Cybele Chester	Th 10:00am - 11:50am 418 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	014	13252	Lincoln Mitchell, Cybele Chester	Th 1:10pm - 3:00pm 823 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	015	13253	Cybele Chester, Lincoln Mitchell	Th 3:10pm - 5:00pm 418 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	016	13254	Lincoln Mitchell, Garrett Hinck	T 3:10pm - 5:00pm 418 International Affairs Bldg
Fall 2026	017	13255	Garrett Hinck, Lincoln Mitchell	T 5:10pm - 7:00pm 402 International Affairs Bldg

POLS UN3871 CHINA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS. 4.00 points.

This course will review and analyze the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China from 1949 to the present. It will examine Beijing's relations with the Soviet Union, the United States, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Third World during the Cold War, and will discuss Chinese foreign policy in light of the end of the Cold War, changes in the Chinese economy in the reform era, the post-Tiananmen legitimacy crisis in Beijing, and the continuing rise of Chinese power and influence in Asia and beyond. This lecture course will analyze the causes and consequences of Beijing's foreign policies from 1949 to the present. Students must register for a mandatory discussion section

Spring 2026: POLS UN3871

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3871	001/16863	T Th 8:40am - 9:55am 428 Pupin Laboratories	Thomas Christensen	4.00	99/110