The *Department of Political Studies and Public Administration* offers three graduate programs: *Master of Arts in Political Studies*, *Master of Arts in Public Administration* and the recently introduced *Master of Arts in Public Policy and International Affairs* (PPIA).

**Program in Public Policy and International Affairs**

The Master of Arts in Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) is open to graduates from various backgrounds who wish to pursue professional or academic careers in public affairs; as well as to mid-career professionals in Lebanon and the region who wish to deepen their knowledge of the field or acquire new ways of thinking and policy tools.

*The PPIA program has two central objectives:*  
1. Offer students the opportunity to deepen their conceptual, critical and practical knowledge of public policy and international affairs.  
2. Provide students with the necessary professional skills, tools and networks to lead careers in public affairs.

On successful completion of this interdisciplinary course of study, students will be able to:

- Explain fundamental theories and processes of public policy and international affairs  
- Apply techniques and methodologies in public and international policy research  
- Critically analyze key policy and international affairs issues  
- Demonstrate oral and written communication skills in public and international policy arenas  
- Formulate domestic and international public policy alternatives and arguments  
- Critically appraise the validity and limitations of domestic and international public policy theories and arguments

The program is centered on articulating public and international policy perspectives that are well contextualized in political, economic, social and even structural terms; incorporating the specificities and particularities of the Arab world and its many constituents; and linking academia to the policy practitioner. Furthermore, it strives to increase interaction and knowledge production within a South-South context – a dimension largely deficient in the Arab region.
Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships covering tuition are available for students in the PPIA program, in return for assisting faculty members in teaching and/or research for a specified number of hours per week in an academic department. Recipients are selected on the basis of academic record and departmental need and are therefore highly competitive.

Study Abroad

Graduate students interested in spending a semester abroad may explore the opportunities offered via the Office of International Programs.

Program Overview

The program prefers full-time enrollments. Students are required to complete the following as part of the intensive PPIA program:

- Core courses in Public Policy and International Affairs
- Elective courses in Political Science, Sociology, Economics in addition to other preapproved electives from a variety of fields
- Seminars/mini-courses
- A thesis or an internship + project

Credit for Experience

The PPIA program will facilitate internships in a wide range of public institutions available in the region to provide students with increased professional exposure and practical experience of policy-making in the Arab world. Internship placement may occur in governmental agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as in policy or research institutes (or think-tanks). Students may be placed in Lebanon or in other Arab countries, depending on availability and funding opportunities.

A one-semester internship will count for 3-credit hours (the maximum credits allowed for credit-for-experience within the PPIA program) towards the degree requirements, and may be either mandatory (for students opting for the non-thesis track) or optional (for students who select the thesis track). Students are expected to register for no more than 9 total credits during the semester in which they are interning.

Admission Requirements

Admission requirements to the program will follow AUB Graduate Studies Policies and PSPA departmental requirements. Bachelor degree holders from relevant fields of study are eligible to apply for admission into the PPIA program. Students should have a GPA of at least 80 or 3.0 and good recommendations to be considered for regular admission into the Public Policy and International Affairs Master’s program. Students with GPA above 75 and below 80 are considered for admission on probation. A minimum of one-year work experience is strongly recommended, and more is encouraged. GRE is not required. Visiting and exchange students are welcome.

The PPIA program organizes and hosts a number of events such as public lectures, closed-door discussions, book launches, and the like. Picture from a closed-door discussion with Samir Aita on October 28, 2015.
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Outside the Classroom

The PSPA Department and its PPIA Program offer a learning experience that goes beyond the classroom. In addition to the Department’s Brown Bag series and lectures, policy makers and scholars discuss contemporary political issues with students.

Graduate students also have the opportunity to attend lectures and events hosted at AUB that are relevant to their specific research interests. Many of these events are sponsored by research centers such as: the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI), the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (CAMES), and the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship.

Faculty profiles

**KARIM MAKDISI**
PPIA Program Director; Associate Professor of Political Studies, PSPA; Faculty Research Director of the UN in the Arab World Program, IFI
km18@aub.edu.lb


**NIKOLAS KOSMATOPOULOS**
Assistant Professor of International Affairs, PSPA/SOAM
nk106@aub.edu.lb

Anthropology of Politics, policy and political institutions; the ethnography of peacemaking, development and crisis resolution; the study of infrastructures of international security, solidarity and resistance; the Middle East and the Mediterranean Sea within the Global South.

**SARI HANAFI**
Professor of Sociology and Chair of SOAM
sh41@aub.edu.lb

Sociology of knowledge, politics of scientific research, political sociology and economic sociology of the Palestinian diaspora and refugees, sociology of migration, transnationalism, civil society, elite formation, transitional justice.

**WALEED HAZBUN**
Associate Professor of Political Studies
wh20@aub.edu.lb

International relations of the Middle East, US foreign policy, International Political Economy, global politics of tourism and aviation.

**TARIQ TELL**
Assistant Professor of Political Science
tt09@aub.edu.lb

Political economy, Middle Eastern monarchies, politics and the state in Jordan, development studies.
The PPIA program was conceived as the academic side of IFI, and is housed in IFI’s new Zaha Hadid building on the upper AUB campus. IFI’s experience, networks, and research work on a variety of issues related to public policy and international affairs in the Arab world constitute a great resource to the PPIA program’s course development and student research. More importantly, PPIA comes in harmony with the important role that IFI, as a research and policy institute, has attached to the study of the policy process, players, discourses, relations and structures in the Arab region. The PPIA program aims to develop and catalyze new experimental teaching, in coordination with IFI, through the interaction of current and new faculty members, graduate students, and organizations outside of AUB. PPIA students also benefit largely from IFI’s wide-reaching network and research/output undertakings. More importantly, IFI’s regular activities and events (conferences, book launches, closed-door discussions, and the like) and varied publications and reports serve to create real world educational opportunities for students, integrating and enhancing student research/outreach skills.

New-PPIA student orientation with opening remarks and welcoming by the Director of IFI, Dr. Tarek Mitri and PPIA Director, Dr. Karim Makdisi.

The PPIA program organized an end-of-semester event with the participation of all PPIA students and IFI staff.