Design, Outcomes, and Lessons Learned from the Urban Institute Academy for Public Policy Analysis and Research Pilot Program

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# Table of Contents

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ........................................................................................................... 1

II. THE CHALLENGE .................................................................................................................. 2

   Addressing the Problem ........................................................................................................ 3

III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN ....................................................................... 3

   Input from the Policy Field .................................................................................................. 3

   Target Students ....................................................................................................................... 5

   Outreach and Recruitment .................................................................................................... 7

   Program Curriculum .............................................................................................................. 7

   Program Benefits and Accommodations .............................................................................. 9

   Creating Industry Support and Buy-in .................................................................................. 9

   Creating Job Networks ......................................................................................................... 11

IV. FOUR-YEAR OUTCOMES FOR THE PROGRAM ......................................................... 11

   Strong Student Interest ........................................................................................................ 11

   Fellows' General Outcomes ................................................................................................. 13

   Research Project Outcomes ............................................................................................... 15

   Program Design Outcomes ................................................................................................. 16

   Fellowship Research Products ........................................................................................... 17

   Career Outcomes ................................................................................................................ 17

   Fellows' Testimonies on Program Effects .......................................................................... 18

V. LESSONS LEARNED ........................................................................................................... 19

   Target Population Lessons ................................................................................................ 19

   Institutional Lessons .......................................................................................................... 20
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While minorities and persons from distressed communities are often the subject of social programs and policies, they are greatly underrepresented in the field of public policy research. The Urban Institute (UI) created the Academy for Public Policy Analysis and Research to add the voices and perspectives of researchers from diverse backgrounds to the field. The Academy's goal was to give promising minority students between their junior and senior years of college the skills and exposure crucial to obtaining highly competitive entry positions in public policy. The yearlong fellowship began with an intensive summer training program at the Urban Institute, followed by continued mentoring, a research conference presentation at the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, job and graduate school counseling, and publication of a research paper during the their senior year of college. The program included a diverse mix of elements: classroom training, individual research, and field trips. The unique multipronged approach of the Academy provided the Fellows with policy knowledge, technical skills, research training, career skills development, and exposure to policy research careers.

To date, the program has graduated three classes of UI Academy Fellows and the class of 2011 has completed the bulk of its training. Since its inception, the UI Academy has been a demonstrable success, drawing from a large and diverse applicant pool from universities across the country. Based on rigorous design and UI's sterling reputation, the program has attracted prestigious think tank, research institution, and graduate school partners. UI Fellows have gone on to jobs at leading research institutions, and many are in the process of obtaining graduate degrees in policy-related fields. Alumni report that the UI Academy was instrumental in giving them the skills, perspective, and networks for their early career success.

Although the Academy achieved its goals of raising the skill and knowledge level of our program participants, we initially underestimated the amount of staff time and institutional resources necessary to provide this type of intensive and comprehensive training. Targeted student selection, dedicated staff, institutional commitment, and sufficient resources were all crucial in providing a transformative educational experience for students.

The four years of the Academy yielded lessons in two broad categories: lessons about working with our target population and lessons for the institution.

Target Population Lessons

- Students needed a solid foundation of basic policy knowledge and skills to take full advantage of intensive training.
- Yearlong support of Fellows was key to providing the continued learning and connections for the optimal transition from college to careers and graduate school.
- Strong, highly involved, and supportive mentoring was critical to Fellows’ success and perseverance.
- Peer support and networks dramatically
enhanced Fellows’ learning and personal development. The learning community model strengthened and enriched every aspect of the program.

- The target population faces unique challenges, not all of which are academic. Program staff must pay special attention to ensure that these challenges do not prevent Fellows from optimizing their fellowship experience.

**Institutional Lessons**

- Institutional leadership support was crucial to ensure that this type of program is viewed as an important part of the organization and that the program receives adequate assistance and services.
- Stable funding is important for program efficiency and to allow for advanced planning.
- Reliance on partnerships greatly enhanced our ability to offer Fellows a well-rounded curriculum and a variety of real-world experiences and networks.
- Committed program staff was imperative to provide continuity and consistency of program supports.
- Program staff members needed to expand their definition of successful career outcomes to better accommodate Fellows’ skills and interests.

In January 2007, the Urban Institute began developing the Academy for Public Policy Analysis and Research in response to the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in the field. The program focused on increasing and improving the pool of entry-level researchers of color. The Academy is now completing its fourth year of operation. This report describes the program development and design, outcomes, and the lessons learned over its four-year existence. The report explores the motivation for the program, factors involved in the development and design of the program, and the outreach and curriculum design. It then details the experiences with the students during the program, and their early career outcomes. Finally, it lays out the lessons learned over the course of the program.

**II. THE CHALLENGE**

Minorities, especially those from underserved communities, are underrepresented in the field of public policy research—both in the think tank world and among the professoriate. The reasons for this are many and complex. At the same time, the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States is growing rapidly and inexorably, with the Census Bureau predicting that the United States will be a majority minority nation by 2050. As of 2011, people of color comprise approximately one-third of the U.S. population. Moreover, nearly half of the population under the age of 5 are ethnic minorities—25 percent of whom are Latino. This increasing diversity signals an even greater need to have researchers and analysts who can speak to public policy issues accurately and effectively.

While our current diversity, new immigrant inflows, and high minority birth rates add incredible strength and vibrancy to the U.S. society and economy, they also create policy challenges that local, state, and federal governments must be equipped to address. Having analysts and researchers who reflect this growing diversity, and who are sensitive to the unique challenges of underserved groups, will be an important part of properly integrating all groups into U.S. society and creating greater opportunities for upward mobility.

One of the key stages where the public policy field loses out on minority talent is at the entry level. Many students from underserved communities are at a serious disadvantage in entering the field, lacking exposure and connections to the policy research community, or not having obtained the technical skills or research experience needed for research jobs at prestigious policy institutions or graduate schools. Early career internships and research assistantships are pivotal to future success in the field. These positions allow for the acquisition of practical research skills, real-world
experience, and access to the professional networks that are crucial to advancement. Without access to these networks and early on-the-job training, many potential researchers of color are left out of the loop.

Another factor affecting the low levels of diversity among policy research staff is that many institutions are unaware of how to find skilled and experienced researchers of color. By relying on usual networks to recruit new talent, these institutions may miss opportunities to cultivate new relationships that could lead to a more diverse applicant pool.

Addressing the Problem

In our attempt to address the lack of minorities and individuals from underserved communities in the field of public policy research and analysis, we developed a three-pronged mission:

1. Build and nurture a pipeline of researchers from underrepresented communities for careers in public policy.
2. Address student gaps in policy knowledge, technical skills, career development skills, and exposure to policy careers.
3. Ensure that local research organizations are familiar with a pool of well-qualified young individuals of color.

To accomplish our ambitious program mission, the Urban Institute Academy for Public Policy Analysis and Research set out several goals. The primary goal was to give minority college students exposure to policy research issues and institutions and help them develop the technical skills that are crucial to obtaining highly competitive entry positions in the field. Given how competitive these jobs are, we chose to target promising college students who were already committed to careers in public policy, but who lacked technical skills and exposure to the policy world.

In addition to improving content knowledge and technical skills, the program had the goal of providing direct exposure to the public policy-making landscape. We wanted our program graduates to be well equipped to make strategic career decisions that fit their long-term career goals. By the end of the fellowship, the Fellows would have enough information to choose the public policy job and/or graduate program that offered the best match with their skills and interests—and have the resources and networks to successfully pursue their goals.

III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

Input from the Policy Field

Because our initial goal was for program graduates to work as research assistants in premier think tanks or advocacy organizations, we actively engaged the broader think tank community in developing the Academy curriculum. We wanted to ensure that we were teaching a broad enough skill set that Fellows would be attractive to a wide range of prestigious institutions. This input by the broader policy community allowed us to simultaneously tailor a training program to potential employers, create buy-in by these organizations, and build job networks for Fellows.

We began by surveying several different think tanks and research centers to determine what kinds of qualities and skills they look for in their research assistants (RAs). The survey respondents were broadly representative of the public policy research community. This survey allowed us to (1) better target student recruitment; (2) develop the Academy curriculum to teach professionally desired skill sets, and (3) determine the extent of need to provide technical training, and with which software applications. We asked respondents a series of questions on application requirements, skills requirements, and experience requirements. We used the responses to inform the design of the Academy’s student eligibility and program curriculum.
Think Tank Survey Findings

Application and Experience Requirements

1. **Previous research experience and knowledge.** All of the think tanks that we surveyed considered having some previous research experience (work, internships, teaching assistantship, coursework) to be very important in their hiring decisions. They also found some degree of public policy knowledge to be important.

2. **Social sciences.** Most preferred a degree in the social sciences (economics, public policy, political science, or sociology) but would not exclude applicants from other fields if they had relevant research experience and demonstrated skills in the necessary areas.

3. **Competitive GPAs.** Of the approximately one-third of institutions that had a minimum grade point average (GPA) requirement, most required at least a 3.5 to consider the applicant.

4. **Methods skills.** Most did not require courses in research methods, statistics, or some demonstration of quantitative skills, but these qualifications provided substantial advantages.

Technical Skills Requirements

1. **Excel and PowerPoint.** Applicants needed to have facility with spreadsheet software such as Excel and with creating PowerPoint presentations.

2. **Statistical packages.** Use of statistical applications software such as SAS or STATA provided a strong advantage.
3. **GIS.** Use of geographic information systems software also provided an advantage, depending on the focus of the think tank.

4. **Data.** Familiarity with large, commonly used data sets was also a strong advantage. Database management skills were less important.

**Work Tasks**

In addition, we asked a series of questions about the usual types of work each organization assigned to new RAs. These questions assessed the need to conduct bibliographic searches, administer quantitative standardized surveys, perform qualitative analysis (focus groups, interviews, content analysis, etc.), perform quantitative analysis, prepare presentations, prepare graphic and statistical reports, give presentations, write up research results, and coauthor papers/reports. We focused our curriculum on ensuring that Fellows were proficient at performing the tasks that were reported as being done “Regularly” and “Occasionally.”

**General**

The findings from our survey led us to conclude that successful research assistant applicants need a wide-ranging complement of skills and knowledge at a minimum adequate level. Proficiency in one or two areas is not sufficient. Thus, the Academy adopted an approach that would ensure that the Fellows received broad-based knowledge of domestic social welfare policy, proficiency in the specific technical skills that RAs need, and applied research experience. In addition, our goal was to give Fellows the competitive advantage of having solid career skills such as presentation skills, and familiarity with how the think tank world works. We also supported the Fellows in building the beginnings of a professional network.

**Target Students**

We limited the program to 10 students per year so that we could focus on intensive and comprehensive supports tailored to each student’s skills and career goals. In addition, we decided to target only students who had clear aspirations of entering the field of public policy and were considering graduate school at some point in their career. These students would have the goal of applying to the Academy to acquire specific skills and knowledge for their future public policy careers.

Because our primary goal was to add diverse voices to the field of public policy, we restricted program eligibility to students from racial and
ethnic groups that are underrepresented in the field of public policy research. We also gave special consideration to minority groups that are disproportionately represented in distressed (or low-opportunity) communities that are often the focus of public programs and policies. Because the Academy Fellows were not Urban Institute employees and the program's goal was to provide educational enrichment, this did not present any legal issues. Moreover, the Academy prohibited the Fellows from working on any Urban Institute projects.

To support our effort to add diverse voices that can speak directly to challenges faced by low-income populations, we also gave special preference to students who were first-generation college students, from underserved neighborhoods, receiving financial aid, and who had attended public high schools. Among these groups, we gave additional preference to students from historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and tribal colleges.

The intensity and rigor of the planned summer curriculum necessitated that we recruit students with sufficient relevant college coursework to have the foundation of knowledge and skills to complete our program successfully. However, we also wanted to ensure that we were selecting students who actually needed the academic development and career exposure to progress in the field. We were very conscious of not picking students who already had enough research skills and experience that this program would only serve as resume padding. The selection committee strove to find the right balance—applicants for whom the program would make a defining difference in their career trajectories, but who could succeed in our challenging program. The resulting classes contained Fellows with a range of talents and skills levels. Program staff worked to accommodate the Fellows’ individual strengths and challenges.

After completion of the summer portion of the program, we wanted the Fellows to return to college better informed about the skills needed to achieve their career goals. We decided that students between their junior and senior years of college would be ideal. During their senior years, they could be strategic about the courses they would take and shore up any shortcomings before beginning their job search or applying to graduate school. As such, the program's initial application requirements were as follows:
• Between junior and senior years of college
• GPA over 3.0
• Major in social sciences
• Demonstrated commitment to social issues

Outreach and Recruitment

To reach our target students, we conducted outreach to university professors and policy researchers with a history of working on issues affecting people of color. Several of the people we reached out to routinely post our “Call for Applications” on university career center Listservs or job web sites such as Idealist.org. We also sent out notices through several professional associations, including the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) (over 1,500 members), the Urban Affairs Association, and the American Political Science Association’s Latino Listserv and Race, Ethnicity and Politics Listserv. As the program developed, our network of Academy alumni has also served as a strong recruitment force among their personal and academic networks.

Program Curriculum

Summer Program

The multipronged learning and exposure approach of the Academy provided our students with a mix of elements:

1. Policy seminars
2. Technical skills training
3. Guided research projects
4. Exposure to policy research careers through weekly field trips to visit VIPs at leading public policy institutions
5. Career development skills

The summer portion of the program was initially eight weeks long. We soon realized that eight weeks was not enough time to fit in all the training the Fellows needed at a reasonable pace. We decided that the summer portion of the program would benefit from an additional week, making it nine weeks. The ninth week allowed for an intensive three-day policy advocacy workshop and practicum at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Also, it created time for the Fellows to write blog posts on their research topics, which we posted to the UI web site. Most important, it permitted more work on guided research projects at UI with hands-on mentor support. It allowed Fellows’ projects to evolve on pace with their developing technical skills and policy knowledge.

1. Policy seminars

To enhance the Fellows’ content knowledge about U.S. domestic social policy, we created daily policy seminars. During each week of the program, we covered a different policy topic to ensure that Fellows are broadly familiar with both the current policy discussion and state of research on issues affecting low-income and underserved populations in the United States. Leading policy experts from the Urban Institute’s nine research centers conducted the daily policy seminars:

   Week 1: Introduction to Public Policy and the Think Tank World
   Week 2: Poverty and Income Policy
   Week 3: Employment Policy
   Week 4: Health Policy
   Week 5: Education Policy
   Week 6: Justice Policy
   Week 7: Housing and Neighborhoods Policy
   Week 8: Federal Budget and Tax Policy

2. Technical skills training

Based on the input we received from our think tank survey, we decided that SAS and ArcGIS were the two key statistical applications with which Fellows should have experience. Mondays through Thursdays, Fellows took classes in SAS and GIS. As a part of the hands-on SAS training, Fellows learned to manipulate data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey—one of the most widely used surveys in domestic social policy research. Fellows also attended the following seminars:
of their work to an audience of UI researchers and other invited guests—many from other local research institutions and think tanks. Audiences for the conferences range from 90 to 110 each year.

Appendix A shows the research project review schedule.

4. Exposure to policy research careers through weekly field trips to visit senior staff and VIPs at leading public policy institutions

Another prong of the program involves weekly field trips to prominent Washington-area policy institutions, featuring tours, lectures, and question-and-answer sessions with senior research and policy staff. A sample of past field trips includes Senate and House congressional offices, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Congressional Budget Office, DC Office of Court Supervision and Offender Services, Brookings Institution, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and Pew Hispanic Center.

5. Career development skills

To further prepare Fellows with the skills necessary to obtain positions at premier research institutions and graduate schools, we created a series of seminars and practical skills-building exercises:

- Human Resources Seminars—Resume and cover letter review, interview tips, job application skills
- Getting into Graduate School
- The Role of Research Assistants in Research Institutions
- Graduate School Fairs
- Mock Job Interviews with UI Staff

Appendix B shows the full summer 2011 program schedule.

6. Senior-year program

Academy support continued through the Fellows’ senior year. Over the course of the academic year, the mentor teams and the program director
helped the Fellows to finalize their research projects and prepare for their post college careers. Before the Fellows left Washington, DC, the director met with them individually to discuss their short- and long-term career goals. Most of the Fellows altered or refined their career goals on the basis of their Academy experience. The Academy director assisted each Fellow with crafting a senior-year strategy to put them in the best position to obtain their desired job or graduate school admission. As a part of this discussion, the director encouraged the Fellows to use their newly acquired skills to become research assistants to professors at their respective universities, and to build on their summer research to turn their projects into senior theses. Where appropriate, UI research staff helped the Fellows craft thesis research plans and make connections with university faculty who could help guide the work. UI staff also helped lay the groundwork for Fellows to obtain future research jobs by setting up informational interviews and forging connections with universities where the Fellows wish to apply.

Over the years of the program, the senior-year follow-up program became a large and crucial part of the Academy’s success. After the third year, we removed “Summer” from the program name in order to reflect the full complement of services that we provided to our Fellows.

APPAM
The Fellows attended the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Research conference each November. The Academy hosted a poster session for the students Fellows to display and present their research. Prior to the conference, UI research staff helped the Fellows students to prepare their research posters, and to rehearse for the presentations. This type of high-profile exposure helped the Fellows to become competitive candidates for entry-level research positions. The Fellows also had the opportunity to attend the conference sessions and gain exposure to top-level social policy research and to network with research professionals in their fields of interests.

Policy Briefs
By the end of the fellowship year, most Fellows produced a policy brief/research paper based on their project under the continued guidance of their UI research mentors and Academy staff. We published these research papers on the Academy web site. The Fellows frequently used the papers as a basis for their senior honors thesis and as writing samples for job and graduate school applications.

Program Benefits and Accommodations
The Academy was free of charge to the Fellows. The Academy paid for their airfare to and from Washington, D.C., paid for university-based dormitory housing, and provided a $4,000 living stipend. The Academy also provided travel expenses and hotel accommodations for the APPAM conference. Because our program targeted low- to moderate-income students, providing these benefits ensured that financial need would not limit students’ ability to participate in the program. We did not want students to opt for other internships or positions that would provide an income but not career experience. Many of our Fellows have noted that without the financial support provided by this program, they would not have been able to participate.

Creating Industry Support and Buy-in
Throughout its existence, the Academy had considerable support from prestigious research institutions. The intention from the program’s inception was to capitalize on UI’s extensive networks in the policy community.

Think Tank Advisory Consortium
Building on the original survey respondents, we put together a Think Tank Advisory Consortium. This Advisory Consortium agreed to be available to provide advice and support for a number
of Academy activities. Before each summer, this involvement included being available to advise on student recruitment efforts, review and make recommendations on program curriculum, and give general program guidance when requested. During the summer, the Advisory Consortium researchers give seminars and presentations, host visits at their institutions, and occasionally provide a setting for special events. The founding Think Tank Advisory Consortium members were as follows:

- **Abt Associates**: Mary Joel Holin, vice president, social & economic policy
- **Brookings Institution—Economic Policy Group**: Jeff Kling, research director
- **Brookings Institution—Metropolitan Policy**: Alan Berube, research director
- **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities**: Robert Greenstein, executive director
- **Child Trends**: Marty Zaslow, vice president for research and senior program area director
- **Economic Policy Institute**: Lawrence Mishel, president
- **Mathematica Policy Research**: Mary Moore, senior vice president and director of research
- **MDRC**: Fred Doolittle, vice president and director of policy research and evaluation

**Advisory Board**

In 2009, we were able to recruit a distinguished Advisory Board to help with our fundraising efforts and to serve as an additional source of advice for our program development:

- **Angela Glover Blackwell**, chief executive officer and founder, PolicyLink
- **Robert Greenstein**, executive director, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
- **Bruce Katz**, vice president, The Brookings Institution
- **Dr. Kilolo Kijakazi**, senior program officer, Ford Foundation
- **Dr. Manuel Pastor**, director, Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, University of Southern California
- **John powell**, executive director, Kirwan Institute of Race and Ethnicity

**George Washington University**

We also enhanced our graduate support from George Washington University’s (GWU) Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration. In 2009, GWU reached out to us to have a special graduate fellowship for Academy alumni. GWU’s Trachtenberg School has agreed to provide full tuition to one Academy Fellow to attend its Master in Public Policy program each year, assuming they meet all other application requirements. One of the Class of 2010 Fellows received this fellowship and entered the program in fall 2011.

**Brookings Institution and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities**

The Brookings Institution and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities were two of our strongest program partners, providing seminar speakers and hosting VIP field trips. Also, Brookings lent in-kind support by providing a research mentor for one of the Class of 2011 Fellows. For the 2011 program, the Center on Budget assisted in developing a policy advocacy workshop with the Academy’s executive director.

**University Advisory Consortium**

We created a University Advisory Consortium whose members agreed to be available to advise on student outreach, review the program curriculum, present lectures to Fellows, and host Fellows’ visits. They also agreed to be available to discuss their graduate school programs and their requirements, in hopes that Fellows would eventually apply for advanced degrees at their institutions. The following were the founding University Advisory Consortium members:

- **Georgetown University**: represented by Harry Holzer, professor of public policy

- **George Washington University:** represented by Joseph Cordes, professor of economics and director of the School of Public Policy and Administration
- **Howard University:** represented by William Spriggs, professor of economics and chair the Economics Department (now assistant secretary for policy, U.S. Department of Labor)
- **Johns Hopkins University:** represented by Sandra Newman, director and professor of public policy, Institute for Policy Studies

**PPIA Affiliation**

We also created an affiliation with the Public Policy and International Affairs program (PPIA), a university-based program with similar goals. This affiliation meant that our program alumni would be able to connect to the considerable networks and benefits of this highly successful program. Each year Academy Fellows participate in the PPIA public policy graduate school fair, which attracts more than 20 top graduate public policy programs and many employers. PPIA also assists the Academy with its outreach and recruiting efforts by distributing our program announcement to its applicant list. And, because of our differing application deadlines, the PPIA director sends the Academy call for applications announcement to PPIA applicants.

**Creating Job Networks**

Think Tank Advisory Consortium members agreed to encourage Fellows to apply for research assistant jobs at their organizations as they approached completion of their undergraduate degrees. In addition, members of the Think Tank Advisory Consortium agreed to participate in surveys and structured interviews for program and curriculum development purposes. Over the four years of the program to date, the director cultivated relationships with several more organizations, including the Congressional Budget Office and the National Academy of Social Insurance, that were looking to recruit strong minority applicants. In addition, the director set up informational interviews for Fellows with key staff at policy institutions during the summers and during the APPAM conferences. These interviews helped the Fellows create contacts and job networks well ahead of the time when they needed to apply for positions.

**IV. FOUR-YEAR OUTCOMES FOR THE PROGRAM**

**Strong Student Interest**

There was fairly consistent interest in the program from its inception. The Academy web site received approximately 32,000 to 40,000 hits per year, resulting in a range of 100 to 200 completed applications for the 10 available slots each year. Each year, the applicant pool was very diverse in its racial/ethnic composition, research interests, private/public school backgrounds, and socioeconomic backgrounds. As a result, were able to be highly selective.

We made a concerted effort to have each of our classes reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of underrepresented minorities in public policy research. Despite these efforts, our applicant pool of minority males remained far smaller than that of minority females—especially for African Americans. We conducted special outreach to minority males, Native Americans, and Asian applicants with national origins that are overrepresented among refugee populations (Hmong, Laotian, Cambodian, etc.).

Our efforts to recruit more Native American applicants were quite successful. During the program’s second year, the Academy formed a partnership with the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). This resulted in a substantial increase in the number and quality of our Native American applicants. Both of our joint UI-NCAI Academy Fellow alumni are now graduate research fellows in NCAI’s Policy Research Center.

We also made considerable efforts to increase the number and quality of applicants from HBCUs.
During the Academy’s first year, the applicants from HBCUs did not meet minimum qualifications. We increased our outreach to these schools to attract quality applicants. In each subsequent year, we have had at least one HBCU student. Two of the ten students in the 2011 class are HBCU students.

**Fellows’ General Outcomes**

**Technical Skills**

To tackle our goal of having the Fellows learn and apply statistical applications programming during a short period, we focused the assignments on analysis of issues they cared about. To further concretize their learning, we designed the SAS class exercises to match the policy theme of each week. For example, during the Poverty and Income dynamics week, Fellows learned how to calculate poverty rates by family size and calculate changes in poverty rates with different forms of social assistance. During the Housing and Neighborhoods Policy week, Fellows learned to do calculations by metropolitan areas and census tracts.

**Policy Learning**

One major hurdle to training policy-savvy Fellows is explaining the complexity of the public policy field, how it works, and who are the actors and institutions involved. Most students arrived with a passion for their issue areas, but with fairly one-dimensional or misinformed assumptions of the causes of social problems and how policy change happens. The daily policy seminars and VIP field trips enabled the Fellows to gain a real-world, nuanced understanding of social domestic policy. The senior researchers who led the Academy seminars were able to unpack complex issues by describing their research in detail and why it mattered to the policy discourse. Because these were issues that the Fellows cared about, they had a greater inherent understanding of the intricacies of the policy issues and research approach used to examine them. Through discussions of issue framing, research variable choice, measurement, findings, research limitations, and policy implications, Fellows were better able to apply a critical frame to their own research.

By the time they went on the field trips to other leading policy institutions at the end of each week, Fellows were well versed in the content and particular language of each policy area. As a result, they were able to have serious and informed discussions with high-level officials. Often, these discussions took the form of having the policy experts reflect on their own careers and where they felt they had made the biggest policy impact. The conversations often went beyond learning about policy substance and content to deeper matters such as the limitations of research and analysis in the policy discourse, and the role of politics, public opinion, and values.

By the end of the summer, these conversations helped Fellows crystallize their thinking about the role they wanted to play in the policy discourse, and the many paths they could take to effect change in the public sphere. They had a much better sense of the policy world and could be much more savvy and purposeful in planning their careers.

**Research Communication Skills**

In addition to learning to discuss complex research and current issues with researchers and high-level policy stakeholders, the Academy focused on having the Fellows communicate their own analyses in different forms to varied audiences. One major area of emphasis was helping Fellows give oral presentations of their research. Each week, Fellows presented progress on their projects to the program director and their peers using PowerPoint. By the sixth week, we required the Fellows to rehearse their final presentations for critique of presentation style as well as content. By the program’s end-of-summer research conference, Fellows were able to present well-defined research goals, explain complex methodology clearly, discuss complex and nuanced research findings simply, explain caveats and research limitations, and discuss policy implications in a compelling manner. We also made sure they were comfortable presenting to large research audiences. In addition to ensuring
that they achieved mastery of their own subject matter, we made sure they were comfortable with presenting from a dais on a research panel, using microphones, and speaking from a podium.

We also prepared Fellows to discuss their research at a poster during the APPAM annual research conference. We helped them prepare their research posters and gave them guidance on how to present in this type of forum. Once we arrived in the conference city, we conducted dress rehearsals ahead of the actual session. The Fellows learned to describe their research briefly but with enough detail to invite questions. They also learned to deftly field in-depth questions from experts. Each year several of the poster session attendees remarked on how polished the Fellows were and often mistook them for doctoral candidates rather than undergraduates.

To build on the goal of having the Fellows learn to communicate to different policy audiences and meet the Fellows' expressed interest in advocacy research, we developed two new program components during the Academy's fourth year—student blog posts and a rapid response policy analysis exercise aimed at influencing public officials.

In a nod to new media strategies, the Fellows all wrote blog entries based on their research topics. Because their research projects would take several months to complete, the blog posts helped Academy staff guide the Fellows in clearly framing the policy challenge in advance of completing the data analysis. This exercise proved to be of tremendous value in crystallizing the Fellows' understanding of the policy challenge and moving their research forward. In addition, it obliged them to communicate clearly and compellingly why their chosen issue should be of concern to policymakers. This exercise required the Fellows to condense their work into an easily digestible product for a broad public audience that may be unfamiliar with the issue. The Urban Institute’s Communications team edited the final versions of the blog posts. These products were posted to the Urban Institute’s Metrotrends web site as the “New Voices” series at http://blog.metrotrends.org/2011/08/voices-public-policy-research/.

For the second major program enhancement, we added a three-day workshop and practicum on evidenced-based policy advocacy. This workshop was codeveloped and run by one of our strongest think tank partners—the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP). As part of the workshop, the Fellows jointly authored a rapid response policy piece under a tight deadline. This workshop began with a half-day session with CBPP staff members who presented on different topics related how to write an effective policy advocacy brief. On day two, the Fellows drew on the previous day’s lesson to research and write a three-page policy brief on a surprise topic of national importance. The CBPP team and Academy director provided the Fellows with some data and other background information. The Fellows had to work as a team to compile additional data and make a compelling case to public officials. They had four hours to submit their draft, to simulate real-world deadlines. On day three, we returned to CBPP for a feedback and discussion session. CBPP staff provided extensive edits and detailed critiques of the Fellows’ brief, including assessing the effectiveness of visual presentation of their quantitative analysis. The Fellows edited the brief on the basis of this feedback.

Professionalism, Attendance, and Work Environment

A major goal of the Academy was for the Fellows to learn to manage in a real-world work environment. The program’s director was intentional about setting a tone that balanced strong guidance and direction with high expectations and clear boundaries in an overall environment that was supportive and affirming. We found that we needed to adjust this balance with each class.

While all of the Fellows had tremendous promise, they varied greatly in maturity levels (to be expected of 20- to 21-year-olds). In addition, this was the first experience in a professional work setting for many of them. Establishing clear rules and boundaries with consequences for noncompliance early in the summer was crucial.
We strictly enforced the program’s punctuality, daily attendance, and dress code policies. Initially, on-time attendance was a problem for a few Fellows. For classes and seminars, Fellows had to be in their seats 10 minutes before the speaker’s arrival. In addition, the program adopted a strict mobile device policy. During seminars, classes, and field trips, mobile devices were to be kept in silent mode and not visible. Fellows adjusted to these policies within the program’s first three weeks, but consistent enforcement was necessary to maintain the standards. Tying stipend payments to fulfillment of program requirements also proved to be a successful way of motivating Fellows to treat the program as they would a job. In year three we added a financial incentive for Fellows that was tied to the completion of their research papers.

Another new area for the Fellows was learning to interact with their research mentor teams. Outside of class sessions, Fellows managed their own time and learned to do what was necessary to keep on pace with their research projects. We found little need to enforce program hours. Most of the Fellows were so motivated to excel in their projects that they insisted on doing far more extensive projects than necessary. They routinely worked on their projects well into the evening hours.

Most important, we made it a priority to create a supportive and welcoming environment. From their first day in Washington, DC, we made sure Fellows would feel a part of the UI family. Each Fellow was housed in a research center filled with people with similar career interests. The Fellows also had UI e-mail addresses, phone extensions, and offices. The program staff and mentors had open door policies so that Fellows felt encouraged to reach out if they needed help with any aspect of their experience. Moreover, the strong personal bonds forged over the course of the program gave UI staff the standing to help Fellows manage personal and professional obstacles.

Research Project Outcomes

Even for Fellows who had taken research methods and statistics courses, there was a high degree of variation in both skill level and conceptual understanding of how to do applied policy analysis and research. Many assumed they already knew the results of their research projects before starting their analyses. A good deal of our work was to help them unlearn these conceptions. Throughout the program we strove to clarify how the field works; what applied research is; how applied research is conducted; what skills are needed to succeed in the field; how applied research is used in policy discussions; and the importance of data and using them properly. These lessons greatly informed the Fellows’ progress on their own projects.

The Fellows chose to examine complex research topics that were highly relevant to the current policy discourse. They focused on issues affecting people of color, and low-income individuals and communities. Their research topics included education policy, health policy, opportunity in urban neighborhoods, vulnerable populations, and justice policy. Over the course of the program, the mentors and program staff helped Fellows refine and develop these topics and turn them into manageable original research projects.

One powerful and unexpected benefit of the research projects was the creation of strong peer learning communities. While it was an intention of the program design to have the Fellows learn from each other during the weekly research project review sessions, these discussions evolved into one of the most profound program contributions. The program director worked to set a standard for research project critiques that, while direct, was careful, kind, and free of ridicule. We made sure that the Fellows understood that this was not criticism in the pejorative sense. This feedback would not only make a valuable contribution to strengthening their work, it was an important and necessary part of being a researcher. As the Fellows became more comfortable receiving constructive criticism from their peers, they began to meet informally to provide each other with additional support and feedback outside of program hours. Because of the close ties among the group, the Fellows often let us know when one of their peers was struggling with a project or a personal difficulty. They would even suggest ways we could assist.
Fellows continued to seek each other out during the school year for job and graduate school advice. This networking has also occurred across program classes. Fellows have reached out to Academy alumni with similar interests and professional aspirations. For example, we now have a network of several Fellows who have participated in Teach for America. Having fellow Academy alumni to refer to for advice and counsel with the application process helped build on the Academy’s existing supports. We made strengthening these peer connections across classes a program focus. To support this development, after the third year of the program, we instituted formal weekly Fellow-led peer review and support sessions.

One important tone-setting convention that allowed this level of peer intimacy and collaboration to flourish was the program’s strict adherence to a “no competition” and “no cliques” rule. Competitive or supercilious behavior was strongly discouraged. Program staff actively encouraged and rewarded cooperation and peer support. Staff did this partly through a combination of team-building activities (scavenger hunts and service projects) and conscientious rooming and classroom seating patterns.

Below is a sample of student research project titles. A complete list of research projects is in appendix C.

- Parental Characteristics and the Academic Performance of Second Generation Immigrants
- Medicaid Expansion and Child Health Outcomes
- Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act
- Racial Disparities in Drug Court Processing and Outcomes
- Educational Outcomes of Children Relocated through HOPE VI
- Evaluation of California’s Attempts to Address Its Native Achievement Gap in the K-12 System
- Race and Socioeconomic Status in the Diagnosis of Learning Disabilities in Connecticut’s Public Schools

Program Design Outcomes

While we wanted to target students who needed extra research experience, we discovered that more than a basic background of policy knowledge and analysis is necessary to impart the complex and multifaceted program lessons in such a short time frame. During the first year of the program, we did not require the Fellows to have experience with research methods, statistics, or economics. As a result, our first class had a high degree of variation in skill levels and conceptual understanding of the statistics and methods required for our program and their projects. This lack of background knowledge created tremendous amounts of additional work for mentors and Academy staff to keep all of the Fellows on pace in SAS class and on their research projects. Both mentors and Academy staff had to contribute many additional hours of time to ensure that Fellows’ research projects were up to program standards. While we succeeded in helping all of the Fellows produce credible and rigorous empirical analyses, it was clear that the level of effort required of program staff would not be sustainable in future years.

To balance the inherent tension between the program need for adequately prepared students and the program mission of selecting students for whom the Academy would be a transforming experience, we made changes in three areas. First, we tightened our requirements to ensure that Fellows had sufficient knowledge to succeed in the program without excessive hand-holding from mentors. Second, we added supports and guidance for students prior to the program’s start. Third, we expanded the program to a full year.

We decided to add the requirement that students have some experience in research methods, statistics, or economics. Even among the Fellows who had taken research methods and/or statistics courses, there was still a high degree of variation
in skill levels and conceptual understanding. Many were unclear about how to apply their quantitative analysis skills to the public policy questions they cared about. To ensure sufficient content knowledge, we also restricted eligibility to students who had declared majors in the social sciences.

In addition, to ensure that students were further along in their thinking about their research projects, we required program semifinalists to begin fleshing out their research plans as a condition of acceptance. To facilitate this process, the program director created a research plan template to help the students translate the policy issue outlined in their personal statement into a viable plan of analysis. The students were encouraged to ask their professors for assistance, or email the Academy director if they needed assistance. This process helped the students think through their proposed projects in concrete terms. By deconstructing the policy problem in a systematic manner, the students were able to make meaningful progress on determining what they could realistically accomplish in a summer, before arriving at the Academy.

The approved research plans served as the basis for the phone interview with the director of the program. The research plans helped us to create better mentor pairings and to gauge student familiarity with the policy topic and available data. This gave the student and mentors team at least five weeks do additional preparatory work and research and allowed motivated students to make measurable progress on their research projects before arriving at the Academy.

Academy staff had their share of learning to do as well. In the program's original design, Fellows were to complete their data analysis and research paper during the eight-week summer program—all while learning SAS and GIS programming and advanced research methods. Academy staff quickly realized that the amount of ground that the Fellows needed to cover made completing a quality research paper during this compressed time frame highly improbable and unduly stressful for all parties involved. The director decided to allow Fellows to complete their research over the course of their senior year under the continued guidance of their Academy mentors. During the summer, Fellows would focus solely on learning the skills necessary to complete their analysis and preparing their research presentations.

These broad changes greatly enhanced the preparedness of our Fellows and the quality of work they were able to produce. Putting these controls in place also allowed us to create some flexibility in the curriculum and research project design to accommodate the varying skill levels that still existed.

Fellowship Research Products

By the 2011 program, Fellows generated five discrete products by the end of the fellowship year. These products were

- Blog posts
- Research presentation PowerPoints
- Joint policy advocacy exercises
- Research posters
- Research papers

Career Outcomes

After Fellows graduate from our program, we keep track of their career progress. We also track the feedback we receive from them either formally through surveys or informally through e-mail updates. We consistently hear from Fellows that our program increased their policy knowledge, research skills, exposure to careers, technical abilities, and confidence. After graduation from college, approximately half of our Fellows went on to work as research assistants or work with community programs. Thirty percent entered policy-related graduate programs for either masters or doctorates, and another 13 percent went into teaching—mostly with Teach for America.
Early Career Choices, 2008–2010

- Undergraduate 7%
- Community Education/Outreach 10%
- Teaching 13%
- Graduate School 30%
- Research Assistant 40%

A selection of the institutions where the Fellows were subsequently employed or attending graduate school is as follows:

- The Urban Institute (3)
- American Institute for Research
- Teach for America (4)
- University of Michigan (PhD in political science—fully funded)
- New York University (MA in sociology of education)
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus Fellowship
- National Congress of American Indians
- Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship
- George Washington University Master of Public Policy (full fellowship)
- Office of White House Counsel

Fellows’ Testimonies on Program Effects

While the core curriculum was common for all Fellows, the Academy strove to provide an individualized experience—tailored to building on each Fellow’s strengths and shoring them up in areas of challenge. Any program summary of Fellows’ experiences would fall far short of describing their journey. In order to describe the extraordinary strides that each Fellow made over the course of the program, we decided to rely on their own voices. The stories of two of these journeys follow.

My experience with the Academy has had a huge impact on my career path. Most notably, it has helped me get a job, and provided me with a network of talented and diverse peers from around the country that will serve me in numerous ways for the entirety of my career.

During a job interview for a position in a political office of the USDA, my interviewer dug deep into the specifics of my research project. He was very impressed with the research experience I had gained from the Academy. He commented on how it made me stand out from the rest of the field and was his primary reason for hiring me. The experience I gained from that job has given me a great advantage toward my goal of helping to create a healthy and productive Indian Country after I finish law school. Without the Academy I would not be in the same position to succeed as I am today.

Another benefit of the Academy that cannot be overlooked is the network of friends and colleagues that have stayed with me since I was in the program in 2008. I have kept in touch both personally and professionally with many of my former classmates, and count them among my friends today. Thanks to Lynette’s great work in keeping the alumni involved, I have also gotten to know subsequent classes and shared my experiences with them. The network also includes mentoring relationships. Lynette had put me in touch with a researcher from the National Congress of American Indians who helped me get my project started. As a result, I would later take a class he taught at American University, and he remains someone I discuss my career plans with to this day.

Keegan Bordeaux, Class of 2008
Participating in the Urban Institute Academy has overall been a unique and enriching experience for me. Growing up in Chicago, I always had an interest in policy issues that pertain to distressed urban neighborhoods. However, I had limited resources to explore them. As a junior in college at Howard University, this research fellowship provided genuine mentoring, research skills training, and networking opportunities that were integral in helping me refine my personal academic interests and create a pathway for my future career goals. The daily SAS training in particular directly aligned with my major college course curriculum and even went a step further in regards to showing me how to practically apply quantitative analysis to issues that are important to me. It was also very inspiring to have the opportunity to work with fellow driven students from various backgrounds that share the same passion for social policy as I do. The relationships that I formed with other fellows continue to be important as we each matriculate through school, network, and share information with each other both personally and professionally.

The extensive mentoring that I received provided support and increased my knowledge base of the wealth of opportunities that are available in the field of public policy. This mentoring evolved after the summer portion of the fellowship as I continued as an academic intern in the Urban Institute’s Metropolitan Housing and Communities Center. My mentors provided on the job training for me and helped cultivate my analytical skills. They took a sincere interest in helping me transition through my senior year of college and gave me the opportunity to apply what I learned over the summer to various projects that research assistants were working on. In this way the research that I had the opportunity to conduct over the summer served as a platform for further research exploration and career development. In reflection, due to this fellowship I have a greater sense of focus and direction pertaining to what types of research based advocacy careers I will pursue. Most importantly, I feel confident that I know exactly how to navigate through graduate school and achieve these goals.

Kelsey Lyles, Class of 2011

V. LESSONS LEARNED

The first four years of the Academy yielded lessons in two broad categories:

1. The challenges of training and mentoring our target population
2. Lessons for the institution implementing the program

Target Population Lessons

1. Students need a solid foundation of basic knowledge and skills to take full advantage of this type of intensive training.

While we were able to achieve considerable success raising the skills, knowledge level, and employability of our Fellows, we initially underestimated the amount of work and staff commitment that we needed to achieve our program goals. Over the course of the program, we tightened student eligibility criteria, lengthened the program, and added several new program components and supports. Specifically, these changes included requiring some experience with research methods, statistics, or economics, and restricting eligibility to students who had declared majors in the social sciences.

2. Yearlong support is key to provide the continued learning and connections for the optimal transition from college to careers or graduate school.

During the program’s first summer, the leadership quickly learned that an eight-week summer
program—no matter how comprehensive—was not enough. While the summer program allowed us to lay a solid foundation of research skills and policy knowledge, we needed to invest far more time and support to maintain and build on these new skills and knowledge than the summer alone would allow. We modified the program in midsummer to add a senior-year follow-up component to continue our mentoring relationships, assist with conference presentations, support the completion of a rigorous research paper, and generally assist with the transition from college to careers or graduate school.

3. Strong, highly involved, and supportive mentoring was critical to Fellows’ success and perseverance.

Helping the Fellows take their broadly conceived research topics and transform them into defined research questions that could be analyzed empirically over the course of a summer took great patience and thoughtful effort. This was not something that could be accomplished without strong topical expertise and a commitment to sensitively guiding each project according to the Fellow’s interests, abilities, and learning pace. The learning outcomes and research projects achieved by the Academy cannot be produced without sufficient time, care, and attention by mentors. This has to be hands-on. The mentor pairings worked best when the Fellows and mentors form strong personal bonds that allow for continued support past the summer portion of the program.

4. Peer support and networks dramatically enhanced Fellows’ learning and personal development. The learning community model strengthened and enriched every aspect of the program.

One powerful and unexpected benefit of the Fellows' research projects was the creation of strong peer learning communities. This model reinforced the lessons through participatory and collaborative learning. The learning community ultimately helped to forge stronger bonds between the Fellows and program staff and led to better program outcomes.

5. The target population faces unique challenges, not all of which are academic. Staff must pay special attention to ensure that these challenges do not prevent Fellows from optimizing their experience.

While the skills, exposure, and practical experience provided by the Academy are necessary to future career success, some of the Fellows needed additional support. Many of them had little exposure to professional settings and relationships and needed to learn how to manage in professional environments without experiencing stigma and discomfort. We often had to focus on the basics of professionalism, such as e-mail communication, behavior and dress, navigating relationships with mentors, responsiveness and follow-up, and networking.

In addition, many of our Fellows had limited personal and financial resources to deal with serious challenges when they occurred. Program leaders must be prepared to be patient and persistent in following up with students. The program functioned better when relationships with Fellows were not solely professional. Trust and personal relationships were key to the program’s success. Often Fellows felt comfortable confiding in program staff for help on a myriad of issues that extended beyond the program’s designed scope. In these instances, staff members had to be prepared to provide additional supports and resources. We believe it was partly these efforts that kept the program rate completion at 100 percent.

Institutional Lessons

6. Institutional leadership support is crucial to ensure that programs are viewed as an important part of the organization and to ensure that the program receives adequate assistance and services.

The support of the Urban Institute was key in the program’s success and image. Having key leadership participate in program events sent a strong message to Fellows as well as research and support
staff about the program’s value to UI. Showing this level of support on an institutional level was key not only in helping to recruit internal research staff as mentors and morning seminar speakers, but also in recruiting outside organizations for field trips or as presenters. In return, it is important that those who support the program be valued and recognized. At the end of each summer, mentor and support staff members were recognized in front of the UI president and staff during the Research Conference and Closing Ceremonies.

Coordinating the Academy required a considerable amount of institutional nonresearch support, including substantial coordination with other offices within the Urban Institute, such as information technology, communications, accounting, and administrative support services teams. Initial setup proved logistically challenging in a research institution not traditionally geared to provide intensive education support for college students.

7. Stable funding is important for program efficiency and to allow for advanced planning.

This type of in-depth and comprehensive training program is expensive. It requires committed professional staff with expertise in policy research. The Ford Foundation funded the first three years of the program. The Ford and MacArthur Foundations funded the fourth year jointly. Funding for each year was not guaranteed, which created considerable difficulty in program continuity and strategic planning. Having a consistent funding source would have allowed for greater program infrastructure development and building in efficiencies, which could help to keep annual costs down. To ensure the program’s survival, Academy staff spent much valuable time in fundraising mode, which detracted greatly from the efficiency of the program’s operation.

8. Reliance on partnerships greatly enhanced our ability to offer Fellows a well-rounded curriculum and a variety of real-world experiences and networks.

Collaboration with other policy institutions and universities allowed us to leverage strengths that we would not have been able to attain on our own. While the Urban Institute has extremely strong research staff, some of our Fellows’ interests extended beyond the type of policy analyses that Urban Institute researchers conduct. Our partnerships with organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians, the Brookings Institution, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, PPIA, and George Washington University enabled us to provide exposure and resources that we might have been able to provide internally at UI. For example, in year four we instituted a policy advocacy seminar in conjunction with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Recognizing the need to expose Fellows to other types of research organizations or policy-related fields has been key in our ability to serve our Fellows.

9. Committed program staff is imperative to provide continuity and consistency of program supports.

Dedicated program staff members who are deeply committed to the program mission was crucial to the program’s success. In the initial years, the program required two full-time researchers during the summer months. Many of the program innovations came about by working closely with the Fellows and discovering how they learn, what lessons stuck, and what motivated them. The Fellows responded because they knew that program staff was fully invested in their success. In addition, a fully dedicated and focused program staff allowed for greater flexibility within the broad program. It allowed for accommodations to the program design based on the class needs/dynamics, which differed substantially from year to year.

10. Program staff members needed to expand their definition of a successful career outcome to better accommodate Fellows’ skills and interests.

Expanding our notion of what qualified as a public policy research career helped us to refine our curriculum and better support Fellows with diverse
interests. When the program was conceived, the goal was to nurture a pipeline of students who would go on to work in highly quantitative research and analyst jobs at institutions such as the Urban Institute MDRC, Brookings, or CBPP. However, typically, a third of each class was interested in public policy careers as program administrators or program developers. While some of their chosen career paths did not require statistical programming and analysis skills, to advance to leadership levels, they did require a sophisticated understanding of public policy and required that the applicants be informed consumers of research and analysis. To accommodate these additional career paths, we dedicated several seminar sessions to program design and evaluation, community needs assessments, and qualitative research approaches.

Endnotes

1 For the fourth year we added a ninth week with the theme Evidenced-based Policy Advocacy.
2 Some students completed senior theses in place of, or in addition, to an Academy paper.
## APPENDIX A: RESEARCH PROJECT REVIEW SESSIONS

**UI Academy 2011**  
**Research Project Review Sessions**  
**Thursdays 1:30-5:30 (Room 7B)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Thursday Power Point</th>
<th>End of week assignment/outline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>6/16</td>
<td>Introduce your topic: 1) policy problem - why does this matter?/ why is this a public policy problem and 2) conceptual framework - (7 mins. each)</td>
<td>Identify and access at least 5 important resource materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>6/23</td>
<td>Introduce your research question: Illustrate why this is a policy priority with data - present 2-3 tables/graphics accompanied by bullet points. (up to 10 mins. each)</td>
<td>Complete one page of bullet points on policy problem for review by LAR (preliminary exec summary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>6/29*</td>
<td>Discuss research approach/methods/data (up to 10 mins. each)</td>
<td>Expand/refine bullet outline on policy problem (Add lit search information) Add data and methods bullets to outline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>7/7</td>
<td>Present descriptive analysis I (10 mins. each)</td>
<td>Add bullets on descriptive analysis/ finalize tables/graphs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>7/14</td>
<td>Present descriptive analysis II (10 mins. each)</td>
<td>Add bullets on descriptive analysis/ finalize tables/graphs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>7/21</td>
<td>Present preliminary findings (up to 10 mins. each)</td>
<td>Add bullets on preliminary findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>7/28</td>
<td>Rehearse complete presentation (5 mins. each)</td>
<td>Revise bullets to incorporate multivariate analysis/ finalize tables/graphs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>8/4</td>
<td>Rehearse complete presentation (5 mins. each)</td>
<td>Add bullets on conclusions/policy/implications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>8/11</td>
<td>Rehearse complete presentation (5 mins. each)</td>
<td>Present research at research conference/closing ceremonies</td>
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## Week 1 – Intro to Public Policy

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<tr>
<td>9:15–10:45</td>
<td>Welcome and Overview (Lynette Rawlings and Ashley Williams)</td>
<td>Research and Analysis for Public Decision Making (Margery Turner)</td>
<td>UI and the Think Tank Environment (Robert Reischauer)</td>
<td>Public Policy, Program Administration, and Federalism (Olivia Golden)</td>
<td>Field trip prep</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00–12:30</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>Center on Budget and Policy Priorities 10:30 - 12:00 Susan Steinmetz Senior Vice President for Program Management and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30</td>
<td>OPENING LUNCH (meet mentors)</td>
<td>LUNCH (lunch w/ mentors- suggested)</td>
<td>Lunch Series Program Q &amp; A (Lynette Rawlings and Ashley Williams)</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>Lunch 12:15 - 1:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–3:00</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Guided Research Review/ Discussion: Introduce your topic: problem statement and why this is a problem needing public attention (power point) (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00–5:30</td>
<td>Writing for Research and Analysis I (Margery Turner)</td>
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## Week 2 – Poverty, Income, and Employment (IBP)

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<tr>
<td>9:30–10:45</td>
<td>Poverty, Income, and Mobility (Austin Nichols)</td>
<td>Safety Net Programs I - Social Insurance and Means Tested Cash Benefits (Pamela Loprest)</td>
<td>Safety Net Programs II - Noncash/Work Supports SNAP, Child Care, and Medicaid (Sheila Zedlewski)</td>
<td>Asset Building in Low-Income Communities (Signe-Mary McKernan)</td>
<td>Field trip prep</td>
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| 11:00–12:30   | SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso) | SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso) | SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso) | SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso) | US Department of Health and Human Services (David Harris - Asst. Secretary for Planning and Evaluation)
| 12:30–1:30    | LUNCH                                | LUNCH                                              | Lunch Series: UI Information Systems (Nancy Minter) | LUNCH                                               |               |
| 1:30–3:00     | Writing for Research and Analysis II (Margery Turner) | Reading and Research                               | Reading and Research                                 | Reading and Research                                 |               |
| 3:00–5:30     | Reading and Research                 |                                                    |                                                      | Guided Research Review/Discussion: Describe research question. Illustrate with data why this is a policy public policy concern (power point) (Lynette Rawlings) |               |

## Week 3 – Low-Wage Employment Policy (LHP)

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<tr>
<td>11:00–12:30</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>US Department of Labor (William Spriggs - Assistant Secretary for Policy 10:30 – 12:00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>Lunch 12:30 – 1:30</td>
<td>UI Academy Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30</td>
<td>Writing for Research and Analysis Pt. 3 (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>White House Domestic Policy Council (Racquel Russell - head of the Mobility and Opportunity Team 2:00 – 3:00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00–5:30</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guided Research Review/Discussion: Present descriptive analysis (power point) (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
<td>Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB) Room 485</td>
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### Week 4 – Health Policy (HP)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Monday (7/4)</th>
<th>Tuesday (7/5)</th>
<th>Wednesday (7/6)</th>
<th>Thursday (7/7)</th>
<th>Friday (7/8)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:30</td>
<td>UI Academy Holiday</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>Field Trip prep U.S. House of Representatives 11:00 - 12:00</td>
<td>Wendell Primus: Senior Policy Advisor to Nancy Pelosi on Budget and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:00</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Guided Research Review/ Discussion: Discuss refined research approach/methods/data (power point) (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
<td>Lunch in Capitol Cafeteria 12:15 – 1:30</td>
<td>Capitol Hill tour 1:30 - 3:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00–5:30</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Guided Research Review/ Discussion: Discuss refined research approach/methods/data (power point) (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
<td>Lunch in Capitol Cafeteria 12:15 – 1:30</td>
<td>Capitol Hill tour 1:30 - 3:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Week 5 – Education Policy (EPC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Monday (7/11)</th>
<th>Tuesday (7/12)</th>
<th>Wednesday (7/13)</th>
<th>Thursday (7/14)</th>
<th>Friday (7/15)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:45</td>
<td>Measuring Performance: Issues in Accountability and Testing, Motivation for NCLB (Austin Nichols)</td>
<td>Urban Schools: Student Performance, Reforms, Teacher Quality and Achievement Gaps Issues (Jane Hannaway)</td>
<td>Promise Neighborhoods (Jennifer Comey)</td>
<td>Latinos and the 2010 elections: Participation and Leadership; (Mark Lopez – Associate Director Pew Hispanic Center)</td>
<td>Field trip prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:30</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>US Senate 11:00 – 12:30 David J. Johns Senior Education Advisor Senator Tom Harkin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30</td>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong></td>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong></td>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong></td>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong></td>
<td>Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30</td>
<td>Reforming Troubled Public Agencies (Olivia Golden)</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Lunch 1:00 – 1:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00–5:30</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Guided Research Review/ Discussion: Discuss refined research approach/methods/data (power point) (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
<td>PPIA Graduate School Fair Katzen Arts Center - American University 2:30 - 4:30</td>
<td>Lunch 1:00 – 1:45</td>
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### Week 6 – Justice Policy (JPC)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Monday (7/18)</th>
<th>Tuesday (7/19)</th>
<th>Wednesday (7/20)</th>
<th>Thursday (7/21)</th>
<th>Friday (7/22)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:30</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy)</td>
<td>SAS/Data Analysis Class (Peter Tatian and Randy Rosso)</td>
<td>Introduction to GIS - Pt. I (Justin Resnick)</td>
<td>Introduction to GIS - Pt. I (Justin Resnick)</td>
<td>The Montgomery County Corrections Department - Pre-Release Center 10:30 – 12:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>Lunch Series: Race/Ethnicity, Opportunity, and Public Policy w/ I4RC (Margery Turner) (90 minutes)</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>Guided Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30</td>
<td>Research Methods / Career Skills: Human Resources Session (Dawn Dangel and Amanda Cooper)</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Guided Research Review/ Discussion: Present preliminary findings (power point) (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00–5:30</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
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<td>Guided Research</td>
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### Week 7 – Housing and Neighborhoods Policy (Metro)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Monday (7/25)</th>
<th>Tuesday (7/26)</th>
<th>Wednesday (7/27)</th>
<th>Thursday (7/28)</th>
<th>Friday (7/29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:45</td>
<td>Role of Place in Public Policy: Neighborhood Effects, Access to Opportunity (Alan Berube – Brookings Institution)</td>
<td>Regionalism (Rolf Pendall)</td>
<td>Public Housing Reform: HOPE VI and Mobility Programs (Susan Popkin)</td>
<td>Housing Discrimination (Margery Turner)</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:30</td>
<td>Introduction to GIS - Pt. II (Justin Resnick)</td>
<td>Introduction to GIS - Pt. I (Justin Resnick)</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Field trip prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30</td>
<td>Research Methods Series: Data Analysis and Place - (Peter Tatian)</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Latinos and the 2010 elections: Participation and Leadership. Mark Lopez, Associate Director 1615 L Street, NW Suite 700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00–5:30</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guided Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
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## Week 8 – Federal Budget Priorities and Low-Income Tax Policy (TPC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Monday (8/1)</th>
<th>Tuesday (8/2)</th>
<th>Wednesday (8/3)</th>
<th>Thursday (8/4)</th>
<th>Friday (8/5)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:30</td>
<td>SAS Help / Mentor Guided Reading and Research</td>
<td>SAS Help / Mentor Guided Reading and Research</td>
<td>SAS Help / Mentor Guided Reading and Research</td>
<td>SAS Help / Mentor Guided Reading and Research</td>
<td>Congressional Budget Office 11:00-2:00 Senior analyst speaker and lunch w/ Douglas Elmdorf - Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00–5:30</td>
<td>Patricia Foxen: Associate Director of Research National Council of La Raza</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Guided Research Review / Discussion: Rehearse presentations (5 mins. each) (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
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## Week 9 – Policy Advocacy and Research Conference Prep

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Monday (8/8)</th>
<th>Tuesday (8/9)</th>
<th>Wednesday (8/10)</th>
<th>Thursday (8/11)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:30</td>
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<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>12:00 – 3:00 Research Conference and Closing Ceremonies</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30</td>
<td>Research Methods Series: Micro simulation: An Introduction (Jefferey Rohaly)</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td>Guided Research Review (2 hours) Rehearse complete presentation (6 mins. power point) (Lynette Rawlings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00–5:30</td>
<td>Reading and Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4:00 – 5:30 Wrap up and check-out procedures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C: FELLOWS’ RESEARCH TOPICS

Year 1

Lavada Berger: School District Leadership and Student Outcomes

Keegan Bordeaux: Native American Residential Location and Public Service Delivery

Jessica Compton: Racial Inequality, Financial Literacy and Asset Accumulation

Vanessa Cruz: Parental Characteristics and the Academic Performance of Second Generation Immigrants

Jonay Foster: Medicaid Expansion and Child Health Outcomes

Parfait Gasana: Factors Associated with Demand for Public Transportation in Urban Areas

Thomas Gonzalez: State Accountability: Measuring Student Achievement under the NCLB Incentive Structure

Dontá Harris: HOPE VI in DC: Change in Neighborhood Home Prices and Crime Rates

Phuong Huynh: Gentrification and Affordable Housing in City Heights, San Diego

Ariana LaBarrie: Racial Disparities in Juvenile Sentencing

Blanchi Roblero: Bilingual and Immersion Programs, and the Educational Attainment of Newly Arrived LEP High School Students

Year 2

Victoria Allison: Relationship of Teacher Race and Student Educational Outcomes

Angel Banks: State TANF Policy Changes under the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005

Wendy Bermudez: School and Housing Segregation Patterns in Bronx, New York

Lamont Cobb: Universities in Distressed Communities and the Well-Being of Residents in Surrounding Neighborhoods

Kyle Coleman: Student Achievement in Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools

Brian Howard: Gila River Indian Community Economic Development Using Water Appropriations

Jose Loya: Subprime Loans and Foreclosures in Latino Neighborhoods in Providence, RI

Mandi Martinez: Cost Benefit Analysis of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act

Enrique Valencia: Civic Engagement among Latinos in the US

Dianna Williams: WIC and Breastfeeding Rates and Nutrition Choices Among Women

Year 3

Rossana Espinoza: Factors of the Latino Student Educational Experience and how they Associate with College Enrollment
Reed Frye: Relationship between the Supply of Single Room Occupancy Housing and Homelessness

Jose Martin Gonzalez: Socioeconomic Characteristics of Remittance Senders

Chantal Hailey: Education of Children Relocated through HOPE VI

Linnea Lassiter: Relationship between Punitive School Safety Policies and Neighborhood Segregation

Alex Maza: Racial Disparities in Drug Court Processing and Outcomes

Jose de Jesus Pesina: Financial Incentives for College Attendance in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Jewels Rhode: Environmental Influences Associated with County Level Variation in Child Obesity Rates

Tiffany Smalley: Culturally Affiliated Items and Human Remains that are Potentially Subject to Repatriation under the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

Laura Zapata: Implications of Enforcement-Only Immigration Policies in Tennessee

Year 4

Camille Apodaca: The Effectiveness of Different Rehabilitation Program Models in Recidivism Prevention among the Previously Incarcerated

Marlene Castro: Analyzing the Effectiveness of State Standardized Testing Systems for the Race to the Top Education Reforms

René Crespin: Measuring the Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Effects of Head Start on Hispanic Children

Blythe George: Comparing Different Ways California has addressed its Native Achievement Gap in the K-12 system

Kimberly Johnson: The Effects of Racial/Ethnic Diversity in the Academic Setting on Minority Student Test Scores

Kelsey Lyles: The Effects of Involuntary Subsidized Housing Relocation on Residents’ General Health Status and Access to Health Services

Zachary Murray: Examining Models for Improving Healthy Food Access in Food Desert Communities

Krystle Okafor: Neighborhood Usage and Equity in the Capitol Bikeshare Program

Javier de Paz: Access to Academic Support Services for Under-served English Learners in Oakland High Schools

Bradley Pough: Race and Socioeconomic Status in the Diagnosis of Learning Disabilities in Connecticut’s Public Schools