

February 2, 2022

To: Dean Shernita Lee, Assistant Dean and Director, Office of Recruitment, Diversity, and Inclusion - Graduate School

CC: Mehrzad Bouroujerdi, SPIA Director, Ralph Hall, SPIA Associate Director

**RE: Masters of Public and International Affairs (MPIA), School of Public and International Affairs, compliance with the Diversity and Inclusion Requirements**

This memo describes the ways that the Masters of Public and International Affairs (MPIA), School of Public and International Affairs, will comply with the Diversity and Inclusion Requirements from the Graduate School.

The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2017-18A requires that students meet the following guidelines:

1. The Virginia Tech Principles of Community as they apply to the valuing of human diversity and inclusion.
2. The impact that personal actions and words have on self, others, and the communities— university, national, and global—in which we live; issues of privilege, bias, power, prejudice, and discrimination; concepts of multiple personal, social, and cultural identities.
3. Available avenues of redress and our shared responsibilities as active by-standers.
4. The process of individual introspection required both to understand one's own forms of implicit or unconscious bias and to create inclusive environments.

Graduates of the MPIA Program will meet these objectives in the following ways:

1. Complete the following core courses, which critically engage issues of inclusion and diversity in the course content and theme:
  - a. GIA/UAP 5004 Power and Policy in the US. Social science theory and research on the distribution of power in the US, especially as it shapes important national policy outcomes. Institutional and class bases of power will be examined, including membership on corporate boards and in policy-shaping think tanks. Implications for democracy in society will be drawn.

- b. GIA 5504 Discourse Analysis. Origins, major variants, and critical uses of discourse analysis in cultural studies, semiotic methods, policy analysis, and organizational communication techniques also are considered.
  - c. GIA 5404 International Politics. Theories of international organizations and relations among nations focusing on research in foreign policy formulation and implementation, international integration, conflict resolution, and global political economy.
2. The MPIA handbook defines the objectives of the program as follows:

*Provide students with extensive critical awareness of classical, social, modern, ethical, and cultural thought to reveal the fundamental values and perennial issues contested in governance, and of the struggles by women, racial minorities, workers, religious groups, consumers, nationalist movements, and others to articulate alternative moral/ethical frameworks, which examine disparities caused by work, race, income, gender, and culture, for interpreting and evaluating political discourse in governance and international affairs*
3. Available channels for redress will be written into our Graduate Handbook, the relevant portions of which are quoted below:

Complaints about professional misconduct (integrity and civility) are concerns of both the targets of those complaints and of the department. As such, they are not appropriate topics of informal discussion alone. Students giving voice to complaints of misconduct should, in a timely fashion, initiate processes in which the department and the targets of the complaints would have opportunities to respond. Students can initiate such processes by sharing complaints with departmental or university authorities, as listed below.

Relevant offices include:

- GIA program chair — discussion of concerns about graduate student integrity and civility within the department, all of which remain in confidence other than sexual harassment/assault, mention of which must result in a phone call to the Human Resources Title IX coordinators, as noted below.
- SPIA chair — discussion of concerns about faculty conduct, all of which remain in confidence other than sexual harassment/assault, mention of which must result in a phone call to HR Title IX, as noted below.

- Graduate Student Ombuds — discussion of any concerns related to treatment by others, including officials, in the university, all of which remain in confidence other than sexual harassment/assault, mention of which must result in a phone call to Human Resources Office, Title IX
- Dean of Students Office — reports of concerns about student conduct, including disruption, threats, incivility, and harassment
- Graduate Honor System — reports of violations of academic integrity.

For **confidential** discussions of issues of civility, you may contact:

- The Women's Center's Counseling staff (concerns about gendered conduct, sexual assault, sexual harassment)
  - Cook Counseling Center
4. Attend the Graduate School Orientation Session and workshops for incoming MPIA students, which includes information University resources on inclusion, diversity, and equity and meeting with ombuds representative.
  5. Opportunities to attend guest speaker series on topics of diversity and inclusion. For example, this year we had a guest speaker series organized through our Multicultural Cities class.
  6. Opportunities to be involved in and join the SPIA DEI committee, which will help further implement programmatic and curricular changes related to diversity across the school.