BROOKINGS
Executive Education

Master of Science in Leadership

In a volatile, uncertain world, vigorous leadership in the top ranks of government is critically important. As a public leader, you are on the frontlines, facing today’s challenges head on. You are charged with keeping our governing institutions vibrant and strong. You have sworn an oath to the Constitution — and, accordingly, are responsible for fulfilling the Founding Fathers’ call “to form a more perfect Union.”

Service is a calling. Your calling. You embrace a purpose-driven life and define success by your ability to make the country a better place for the American people.

A higher degree of leadership

Imagine a graduate program that encourages you to think more, be more and lead more. Brookings Executive Education’s Master of Science in Leadership (MSL) program helps you achieve — and often exceed — your career aspirations. You acquire tools to reengineer outdated processes, rekindle employee commitment, reaffirm agency values and revitalize performance. As a result, the program prepares you to help transform your organization.

Robert S. Brookings — founder of the Brookings Institution and longtime benefactor of Washington University in St. Louis — believed in the power of public service as a force for good, vehicle for positive change and foundation for solving societal problems. His objective was to educate a select corps of public leaders for the tough work of government. In 1916, Robert S. Brookings helped establish the first private organization dedicated to the fact-based study of national public policy. A century later, Brookings Executive Education carries his vision forward in its MSL program.
Partners in excellence

In 2009, the Brookings Institution partnered with Washington University to create Brookings Executive Education.

Both partners have sterling reputations. Experts consider the Brookings Institution the premier think tank in the country, if not the world. U.S. News & World Report ranks Washington University No. 18 nationwide and the 10th best university for U.S. military veterans.

But the whole of Brookings Executive Education is greater than the sum of its parts.

The MSL program combines the institution’s command of government and public policy with the university’s knowledge in leadership, management and strategy. No other graduate degree offers you the same blend of expertise — or better prepares you to excel as a public leader.
The STAR Power of Papers

In the MSL program, written assessments increase your STAR power.

Stop, Think, Act, Reflect (STAR): The four-step model — taught in MSL courses — improves learning, decision making and performance outcomes. STAR also serves as the framework for required MSL written assessments. In the assessments, you describe how you reduced class concepts to practice.

“STAR encourages you to pause and reflect on situations from multiple perspectives, which discourages you from jumping to solutions and solving the wrong problems,” says Jackson Nickerson, professor of strategy at Washington University in St. Louis.

“Think of the written assessments as action-learning projects,” says Fran Johnston, Brookings Executive Education instructor and co-founder of the Teleos Leadership Institute. “The papers establish a cycle of behavior, practice and reflection that makes it more likely you will continue to apply class content. Consequently, assessments increase the likelihood for the successful implementation of new thinking and tools and provide a substantial ROI for your organization.”

A MSL student compares the paper-writing process to a leadership learning laboratory.

“The assessments compel you to experiment with multiple concepts, approaches and tools in the most-practical setting imaginable: your own agency,” he says. “As a result, you discover what tools deliver the best results for your organization.”

Learn more about the STAR power of papers at www.brookings.edu/the-impact-of-assessments.
Competency based curriculum

Think of the MSL curriculum as a springboard to the Senior Executive Service or a senior-level position at your agency. Courses focus on the U.S. Office of Personnel Management’s Executive Core Qualifications, a solid framework for your career advancement.

Class content incorporates research from Brookings Institution scholars and faculty from the university’s Olin Business School and is immediately applicable to your agency challenges. The goal is to make you a results-driven leader, with models and methods for more effective decision making and problem solving.

Brookings Executive Education continues to fine-tune its award-winning MSL curriculum.

Policy courses were added to the curriculum in 2018. Designed to shift the way you view the world, they provide an overview of global regions and the challenges and opportunities they present. Policy courses also provide insider perspectives on the legislative and executive branches of government and the mechanics of policymaking and implementation. In short, these courses equip you to navigate the political environment for the benefit of your organization.

Brookings Executive Education is adding Cutting-Edge Competencies, a new category of courses, to the MSL curriculum. Cutting-Edge Competencies integrates new management research from Olin. The classes focus on data analytics, operational excellence, organizational agility and leadership foresight — 21st century proficiencies not captured in U.S. Office of Personnel Management qualifications.
A mission driven community

What defines the Brookings Executive Education community? A belief in strong democratic institutions and ideals. A desire to challenge the status quo. A commitment to inclusion and equal opportunity. And optimism about government as a whole.

The MSL program attracts talented professionals from a range of federal agencies. The atmosphere is collaborative, inside and outside of the classroom. You share successes and failures, learn from one another and develop lifelong friendships.

The high caliber of the Brookings Executive Education faculty enhances the quality of the community. Instructors are known for their research; excellent teaching; and expertise in the fields of government, business and policy.

Faculty, students and staff say they are proud to be part of a community that has the courage to drive change and the conviction to uphold traditions that have guided the country since its founding. MSL community members dare to lead — which means they are committed to making a difference for their agencies and the nation.
From Active Duty to Executive Service

Washington University is a proud supporter of the Post 9-11 GI Bill® and a full participant in the Yellow Ribbon Program. Veterans can use GI Bill benefits to cover MSL program tuition. Currently, more than half of MSL students are veterans.

Military Friendly® surveys colleges and universities on their investments in veterans and active-duty military personnel. Olin is one of the schools that has been included on Military Friendly’s top 10 award list.

DOUG BROWN

For more than 20 years, U.S. Army Col. Doug Brown has led people and organizations during periods of war and peace. He has served as a brigade executive officer in Iraq, battalion commander at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington state and branch chief at the Pentagon.

Brown enrolled in Inside Congress, his first Brookings Executive Education course, in 2016. Impressed by the content, he went on to earn his Certificate of Public Leadership and MSL degree.

“I’ve taken all the Brookings lessons to heart to be the most-effective leader I can be,” he says. “MSL courses taught me to step back, reflect on my actions and work to turn values into behaviors in a government environment.

“Building respect, communication, accountability and trust isn’t always easy. I’ve learned to be less reactionary and more strategic. Now, I’m better able to balance a compliance-based approach to leadership with a commitment-based approach. As a result, I’m seeing positive changes in employees’ day-to-day conduct and the quality of our inputs and outputs. These improvements have had a ripple effect on morale.”
Doctors Pursuing a Master’s

Knowledge is power — especially when it comes to making the country work better for the American people.

Many midlevel and senior-level government professionals have earned an advanced degree in their field of expertise, including more than 69 percent of members of the Senior Executive Service. MSL students are no exception. In fact, several of them hold a doctoral degree or more than one graduate degree.

So what motivates these highly educated individuals to enroll in the MSL program?

No other graduate program provides the same combination of government, public policy, management and leadership expertise — or more fully prepares students to excel as public leaders.

“An MSL degree enables me to actually accomplish what my other degrees prepared me to do: solving wicked problems for my stakeholders,” says Dr. Kathleen Hartman, aquaculture program leader for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services. “Now, I’m able to get my people to move with me on strategic objectives. In the case of my organization, that means producing healthy animals and creating a competitive edge for global trade.”

Hartman expects to complete her MSL degree in May 2021, along with many colleagues who have become her “lifelong friends.”

“The people in my MSL courses are the most-amazing individuals I’ve ever met. They’re intelligent, caring and values-based. It’s wonderful sitting in class with students who are so committed to public service.”
A Degree of Distinction

The Daring to Lead residency at Washington University in St. Louis is a great way to begin the MSL program. (But you may begin the program with any Brookings Executive Education course.) In addition to the residency, you attend 27 two-day classes at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., then return to St. Louis for the capstone.

• Degree conferred by top-ranked Washington University in St. Louis
• Courses focus on the Office of Personnel Management’s Executive Core Qualifications
• Classes taught by Olin faculty, Brookings Institution scholars, and former U.S. government officials and military officers
• Format that fits your busy lifestyle; two-day open enrollment courses taught during workdays; no evening or weekend classes
• No exams
• Rolling admissions; apply when time is right for you
• Classes conducted at or near the Brookings Institution conveniently located in the heart of Washington, D.C. (with exception of weeklong residency and two-day capstone held in St. Louis)

Requirements

• Thirty credit hours required for graduation; these hours must be completed within six years of enrollment
• Seven credit hours of core courses must be taken within first two years in the program:
  - Daring to Lead
  - Ethics in Action
  - Problem Solving Through Critical Thinking
  - Strategic Thinking
  - Visioning and Leading Change
  - Leading Innovation and Creating Value
• Required five- to seven-page paper for each MSL class; assessments demonstrate how you applied content and documented your leadership development

Note: You may be eligible to receive class credit from leadership and policy courses you have already taken at Brookings Executive Education. To learn how to convert past courses into credit hours contact registrar@brookings.edu.

Master Leadership and Policy

Demonstrate your mastery of leadership in the public domain by earning a Certificate in Policy Strategy as part of your master’s program.

Choose four political-savvy courses on topics such as the legislative process, budget process and regulatory process. Also select one external-awareness elective course from a group of offerings that address global challenges and opportunities.

These courses explain the policymaking process, identify geopolitical and macroeconomic trends, and provide strategies for your agency’s success in an unpredictable world.

For more information, go to www.brookings.edu/master-of-science-in-leadership/curriculum.

A flexible, convenient format

Like most professionals, you have a busy life, with many demands on your time — and your personal finances.

The MSL program’s flexible format allows you to take classes at your own pace and on your own schedule (as long as you meet all the requirements). MSL courses are held on weekdays. You do not attend class at night or on weekends. The location also is convenient. With the exception of the two residencies, all courses are taught at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.

The program does not have a yearly tuition fee or an annual student fee. You pay for MSL courses as you take them. Go to www.brookings.edu for the current credit-hour rate and residency tuition.

The application process

Apply online at www.brookings.edu/master-of-science-in-leadership/admissions. (No application fee is required.) You must submit the following materials:

• Your application
• Official university transcripts
• Your resume
• A personal statement
• A letter of recommendation from your supervisor

After Brookings Executive Education receives these materials, a member of the Admissions Committee will schedule a phone interview with you.

For more information, contact registrar@brookings.edu.
Pursue the degree as an Executive Fellow

For an increasing number of public leaders, Brookings Executive Education’s Executive Fellowship program has become an on-ramp for the MSL program. They complete nearly a third of their degree requirements during the nine-month fellowship, learning with — and from — a mission driven cohort that serves as a career-long professional network.

“I was fascinated by the fellowship courses and wanted to take my learning to the next level,” says former fellow Richard Johnson, who plans to complete his MSL degree in May 2020. “The additional classes are helping me look at my organization with fresh eyes. I’m applying the content to make our programs more inclusive and practical.”

“I love my job, and I wanted to get better at it,” says another former fellow. “The fellowship kickstarted my ability to achieve strategic and interpersonal goals. MSL classes allow me to add skills and deliver the leadership my stakeholders need.”

In the Executive Fellowship program, participants develop new ways of thinking, acting and leading that enable them to streamline their agency’s operations and better motivate their employees.

The fellowship program’s research-based curriculum is grouped into five four-day sessions. Participants can apply nine credit hours from the fellowship courses toward the MSL program. Organizations benefit from a discount in tuition fees as well as from enhanced individual and organizational performance.

Note: The 2019/2020 Executive Fellowship cohort will have an MSL option that includes the Daring to Lead residency, held at Washington University in St. Louis.

For additional information, contact registrar@brookings.edu.
When Mary Ellen Joyce discusses the mission and values of the MSL program, she often draws on John Quincy Adams. “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader,” Adams said.

Similarly, Joyce encourages MSL students to “think more, be more and lead more.”

The associate dean and executive director of Brookings Executive Education says the nation needs leaders who can rise to the challenges of a changing world and tackle big, intractable problems that only government can solve. In other words, the country requires exactly the type of executives the MSL program develops.

“Brookings Executive Education attracts ‘the best and brightest’ in government, which creates a one-of-a-kind network,” she says. “Learning is robust and reciprocal. Class discussions are spirited. Students learn from their instructors and program peers, and their instructors and peers learn from them.

“Although the word transformational is overused, it truly describes what happens in the program. I witness MSL students’ evolution all the time. They enter the program as accomplished professionals and exit as remarkable leaders with a reenergized passion for government.

“As a taxpayer, I’m gratified by their commitment to the commonweal. But, as a citizen, I’m overjoyed. This is what Alexander Hamilton meant by ‘energy in the executive’ and what John F. Kennedy intended when he referred to public service as a ‘proud and lively career.’”

Theodore Roosevelt’s “The Man in the Arena” speech about “daring greatly” serves as motivation and affirmation for MSL students. “They are women and men who dare greatly in their work for the American people,” she says.
BROOKINGS Executive Education
MS Leadership

Reimagining the power of public service

Brookings Executive Education and Washington University encourage and give full consideration to all applicants for admission, financial aid, and employment. The university does not discriminate in access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, veteran status, disability or genetic information. Inquiries about compliance should be addressed to: Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, Washington University in St. Louis, Campus Box 1184, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130.