Williams
Center for Development Economics

MASTER’S IN POLICY ECONOMICS
Williams College has been one of America's most prestigious universities for more than 200 years. Though a majority of Williams students pursue bachelor's degrees (this is why Williams is called “college” in the US naming tradition), Williams offers two highly specialized master's programs, one in economics through the Williams Center for Development Economics (CDE). Since 1960, the CDE master's degree has been a powerful catalyst for the futures of more than 1,300 graduates from 110 nations.

#1
National ranking for last 17 years among liberal arts colleges in US News & World Report

Founded in 1793, Williams is the second oldest college in Massachusetts (after Harvard)

Top twenty ranking annually for the last decade by Forbes Magazine among 4,298 universities and colleges in the US

WHO WE ARE

REMARKABLE RESOURCES, UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITIES

FUTURE POLICY MAKERS

For six decades, the CDE has prepared practicing economists from middle and low income countries to become policy makers. Scores of CDE graduates have risen to the highest levels of public service in their nations. CDE alumni posts include prime minister, minister, central bank governor, permanent secretary, ambassador, and many others.

Where will the CDE take you?
Each graduate follows a different path, but the strong analytical and writing skills honed at the CDE are critical to navigating your transition from staffer to prominent policy maker. CDE graduates remain engaged with the program long after graduation, with many referring future applicants.
EXCEPTIONAL CLASSMATES

Up to 30 motivated CDE fellows (master’s degree participants) enroll each year for an unforgettable experience. During the ten month CDE program, sharing knowledge and learning from talented classmates is crucial. CDE fellows bring distinct experiences, perspectives, and challenges from their own countries. In and out of the classroom, the CDE program encourages exchange, debate, and collaboration among classmates. The intellectual and personal bonds created in the program often remain strong long after leaving campus.

SELECTED CDE ALUMNI

Goh Chok Tong CDE ’67 former Prime Minister, Singapore

Rosalia de Leon CDE ’91 National Treasurer, the Philippines

Mosharraf Bhuiyan CDE ’92 Senior Secretary and Chairman, National Board of Revenue, Bangladesh

Elsie Sia Kanza CDE ’00 Senior Director, Head of Africa, World Economic Forum, Tanzania

Gelardina Prodani CDE ’09 Secretary General, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Albania

Abdoulaye Magassouba CDE ’11 Minister of Mines and Geology, Guinea

5 average years of public sector work experience before enrollment

30 average age of fellows enrolling for years 2014 through 2019

20+ nations represented each year

21 countries have active CDE alumni groups
The CDE curriculum provides a broad and deep understanding of core economic principles and how to apply them to current policy issues in specific economies.

**Course requirements include:**
- August orientation course
- 4 required courses in the first semester (September through December)
- 1 January elective course
- 3 second semester elective courses plus 1 writing-intensive course with a mentoring professor—either an independent research project or a policy tutorial with a series of policy briefs

**Other Learning Opportunities**
Outside experts come to speak at Williams frequently on topics of interest to CDE fellows. CDE fellows also benefit from trips to policy institutions in Washington, DC, and New York City.

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**The CDE’s integrated and intense learning environment provides a unique and exciting experience much like my hobby of chess—a game of strategy and complexity, yet fun. The cosmopolitan nature of the CDE class further ensures that after completing the program we have wide networks of alumni almost everywhere in the world with whom we share many of the same development challenges and can connect with instantly.**

Godfrey Kabera, CDE ’11
Director General, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Rwanda

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**The CDE offered me a unique educational experience through extremely invested professors. It also introduced me to lifelong friends across the world, who reached highly respectable positions in the governments of their countries and whom I continue to interact with and learn from every day. After Williams, I went on to become the first Lebanese Rhodes Scholar allowing me to pursue a PhD at the University of Oxford.**

Diala Al Masri, CDE ’15
PhD candidate, University of Oxford, Lebanon

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**Enrolling in the CDE in 1986, with the benefit of extensive financial assistance from Williams, has been invaluable for me, both professionally and personally. I was taught to rigorously analyze facts and policies, to never stop thinking about the world around me, and to do so with honesty and integrity. Nearly 30 years after I was afforded the opportunity to graduate from the program, the CDE remains a wonderful program, able to transform the lives of students from around the world. The quality and value of the program to foreign students of economics are unparalleled.**

Ana María Rodríguez-Ortiz, CDE ’87
Vice President, Inter-American Development Bank, Colombia
CDE professors combine academic strengths in economics with practical work experience in policy institutions and research relevant to aspiring policy makers. Many have extensive experience in low and middle income countries, often with international financial institutions.

The overall student to faculty ratio at Williams is 7:1 with professors making a commitment to being available. At the CDE, you will see professors in class, in office hours, at meals, and around town.

**CDE Teaching Assistants**

Talented teaching assistants provide support to current CDE fellows. Selected from recent graduates of the CDE program, the teaching assistants deeply understand the coursework and are ready to work closely with fellows to ensure success.
An entire network of interesting people, student services, clubs, sports, and excellent facilities awaits you on campus. The historic CDE building has been a “home away from home” for decades of CDE fellows, with classrooms, study rooms, a dining room, and recreational rooms. Individual accommodations are next door in the modern CDE residence hall.

Funding
The CDE offers financial aid to admitted students based on demonstrated need. In the past three years, 100% of CDE fellows have received full or partial scholarships to fund their studies. Funding concerns should never prevent anyone from applying to the CDE.