

New Murphy Institute Leader Connects to Public Policy

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The strength of interdisciplinary programs at Tulane University and at the Murphy Institute helped draw the institute's new director, Steven M. Sheffrin, to New Orleans from a long academic career at the University of CaliforniaâDavis.



Steven M. Sheffrin is the new director of the Murphy Institute, which oversees the undergraduate program in political economy and the Center for Ethics and Public Affairs. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Now Sheffrin is looking forward to leading "a true interdisciplinary program at the Murphy Institute and its affiliates." Newly arrived on the Tulane uptown campus, he has assumed the directorship of the institute that longtime Tulane faculty member Rick Teichgraeber has held since 1984.

Sheffrin, who before coming to Tulane was professor of economics at the University of CaliforniaâDavis and the founder and director of its Center for State and Local Taxation, believes that the training and research opportunities that the Murphy Institute provides to students and faculty are invaluable.

"While many in academia talk about crossing intellectual boundaries, few actually do, and Tulane has established a strong reputation in interdisciplinary teaching and research," he said.

Sheffrin would like to expand the [Murphy Institute](#) to include research and teaching in public policy.

"This means working with a variety of different groups," Sheffrin added, "starting with interested parties in the broader Tulane community and reaching out locally to New Orleans and Louisiana and to national organizations to develop public policy connections. I will be looking for opportunities to make these connections."

Two other things also helped draw Sheffrin to Tulane and New Orleans ? his "great respect for the strong administrative leadership on the campus and its willingness to make difficult choices when necessary" and his interest in the "vibrant culture of New Orleans and the new challenges that the city and region face."

Sheffrin, who joined UCâ€ˆDavis in 1976, served as department chair of economics and dean of the Division of Social Sciences. He is the author of 10 books including *Rational Expectations* and *Property Taxes and Tax Revolts: The Legacy of Proposition 13*.