

A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning

Master of Urban Planning

The urban planning profession is concerned with the human and physical environments of cities and regions. A primary goal of the profession is to improve the quality of life in places—whether neighborhoods, cities, metropolitan regions, or rural settlements—anywhere in the world. Planners address a wide array of overlapping issues such as metropolitan sprawl and intergovernmental growth management; the relationships between land use and transportation systems; the relationships between economic development and environmental protection; open space and farmland preservation; and environmental justice. Planners find employment in all levels of government; in planning consulting and real-estate development; and the non-profit sector in organizations such as affordable housing developers or environmental advocacy groups.

Planners address critical urban challenges that reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the field such as uncomfortable, unsafe, or inequitably built environments, community powerlessness, and economic deprivation. Some work with local residents, neighborhood and community organizations, community development corporations, and nonprofit housing developers, in efforts directed toward securing decent affordable housing, improving job opportunities, increasing safety, and restoring or maintaining community stability. There is also opportunity for those interested in international work. Transportation planners develop transportation and traffic plans, forecast travel conditions and prepare transportation demand management programs for their jurisdictions.

SKILLS & ABILITIES

Study in the Urban & Regional Planning Program provides an understanding of cities and regions. An important component of the training is an increased understanding of the interrelationship between a region's social, economic, and political systems, and their spatial patterns. Skills from several disciplines must be integrated to solve urban and regional planning problems.

The skills developed in the study of planning may be applied to job responsibilities in a variety of areas, for example in planning for sustainable development, in urban design, and in transportation planning. A sampling of representative skills and abilities follows:

Quantitative & Analytical

Gathering and interpreting information
Seeing relationships among factors
Understanding spatial patterns
Generating/evaluating alternative plans
Applying financial planning strategies

Communication

Presenting to groups
Collaborating across disciplines
Preparing technical reports
Engaging others in dialogue
Explaining ideas to various groups
Listening to others

Organization/Project Development

Planning long-term projects
Designing/administering research projects
Coordinating project components
Maintaining records
Budgeting effectively
Developing survey research studies

Technical

Designing/using computer simulations
Understanding economic and legal issues
Evaluating neighborhood indicators
Developing master plan documents
Mapping and analysis of spatial data

OCCUPATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Graduates of the Urban and Regional Planning Program are able to use the skills and abilities acquired through their education as building blocks towards many occupations in both the public and private sectors. The following list of occupations corresponds to the sectors

Public Sector

Director, Community Development
City Planner
Transportation Manager
Consultant, World Bank
Brownfield Planner
Planning Director
Affordable Housing Specialist

Non-Profit

Project Manager
Land Use Planner
Executive Director
Policy Analyst
Program Administrator
Water Resource Specialist
Consultant
Land Preservation Specialist

Private Sector

Consultant, Economic Development
Real Estate Developer
Project Manager
Urban Designer
Finance Associate
Director of Marketing
Lead Transportation Engineer
Landscape Designer
Urban Economist

Academic/Research

Professor
Program Director
Policy Analyst
Research Associate
Director, University Facilities Planning

where Urban and Regional Planning Program graduates have obtained employment. This is a small sampling of the array of opportunities pursued by graduates of the Urban and Regional Planning Program.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

The Master of Urban Planning degree, formally accredited through the American Planning Association and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, takes a broad view of the scope of urban and regional planning. The core courses, about one-third of the credits, provide background for all areas of planning. Students choose to concentrate their studies in such areas as land use and environmental planning, housing, community and economic development, planning in developing countries, physical planning and urban design, and transportation planning. Because urban and regional planning is an interdisciplinary field, students are encouraged to choose related courses in other departments. The course of study normally requires two years (four terms/full-time) for completion. Students may pursue dual degrees with

a number of other schools and colleges. Pursuing graduate degrees jointly allows students to complete two degrees in less time that it would take to complete them separately.

There are a total of 48 credits required to obtain an M.U.P. degree. This includes 3 credit hours in each of Statistics, Public Economics (for people without background in these fields), Legal Aspects of Planning, Quantitative Methods and Planning Theory as well as at least 2 credits of Fiscal Planning and a 6 credit capstone or professional project. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of urban planning, at least 4 credits are required outside of the Urban and Regional Planning Program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about choosing a career, internships or job descriptions; and for library resources contact:

The Career Center
3200 Student Activities Building
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1316
(734) 764-7460

<http://careercenter.umich.edu>

For information about the concentration and degree requirements contact:

Urban and Regional Planning Program
2000 Bonisteel Blvd, Room 2208
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2609
(734) 763-3075

<http://www.tcaup.umich.edu/urp>