

Master in Urban and Regional Planning

Program Overview

The graduate program in Urban and Regional Planning is part of the School of Planning, Design and Construction (SPDC) at Michigan State University. It is committed to preparing students for professional planning careers in both the private and public sectors. The graduate program is supported by faculty members with strong professional and academic backgrounds and a curriculum which seeks to develop both general knowledge and specific planning and skills. Current faculty research and teaching expertise covers a range of planning subjects including urban design; land use planning; land use law; housing; community, economic and real estate development; research methods; international development; transportation; environmental planning; and public policy.

The Master in Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) degree is a nationally accredited degree and the program admits students with a variety of academic backgrounds. Ideal students are those strong intellectual ability; good written and verbal communication skills; basic statistical methods and who have demonstrated a proven potential for leadership in the field of urban and regional planning. The goal of the graduate program in urban and regional planning is to prepare graduates to assume the responsibilities of citizens of a democratic society and to participate in professional planning practice. The curriculum prepares students to develop basic knowledge of the history and theory of planning; presentation techniques; legal and administrative procedures and their applications; and technical skills in survey, research, and analysis of the structure and growth of communities.

The primary goal of the MURP degree program is to facilitate the development of technical skills and intellectual qualities necessary for students to meet the broad and varied range of problems associated with urban and regional development. It is intended that, upon completion of graduate study, the student should be able to enter the profession as a competent practitioner and be able to learn and improve throughout his or her career so as to respond to the changing needs of society and the profession.

A student entering the graduate program in urban and regional planning is expected to concentrate, under faculty guidance, on studies that provide an optimum learning experience in applying the various principles, theories, techniques, and design skills of planning to specific field problems. Unlike undergraduates, whose studies are divided between liberal education and technical studies, the graduate student is immersed in significant planning studies. After graduation, the student should be capable of assuming responsibilities on an intermediate level of a professional planning operation. The master's program in Urban and Regional Planning has been accredited by the American Planning Association.

Joint Study

Because planners must synthesize and apply a large body of knowledge from many other disciplines, a joint study degree option is available to MURP students. The Urban Planning program maintains close relationships with many other departments and colleges on campus so that students wishing to specialize in a particular area of planning may take advantage of resources in other academic units.

Students have found that the diverse academic background provided by joint study has enabled them to pursue unusual and rewarding opportunities. The Master's Program Director should be consulted for specifics on how to set up joint study programs and what career paths might be pursued with each.

Samples of subject areas of informal joint study with URP are:

- Geography (cartography, remote sensing, geographic information systems, or location theory)
- Landscape Architecture (urban design)
- Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies (environmental)

Master's in Urban and Regional Planning/Juris Doctor Degree

The dual Master in Urban and Regional Planning and Juris Doctor degrees allow students with career interests in planning and law to complete both degrees in a four year period. Students must apply for admission separately with the Urban and Regional Planning major and the MSU College of Law, and be accepted to both degree programs. Admission decisions for each degree are reached independently. It is assumed that dual degree students will be full-time students to complete the degrees in a four year period.

Bachelor's/Master's Dual Enrollment

A senior at Michigan State University who is within 12 credits of graduation and who is admitted to a graduate program may be dually enrolled to graduate study while completing the requirements for a bachelor's degree. To be considered for dual enrollment, the student must complete a *Request for Dual Enrollment Status* form. An *Application for Admission to Graduate Study* must also be submitted.

Students dually enrolled as Bachelor's/Master's students are not eligible for graduate assistantships, other forms of graduate student financial aid, or those services and prerogatives normally reserved for graduate students. Such students will maintain undergraduate status until the baccalaureate degree has been awarded.

Program Components/Plan Options

In addition to meeting the requirements of the University and of the College of Social Science, students must meet the requirements specified below.

The Master's degree program includes a core series of URP courses totaling twenty-seven credits. Students undertake studies of actual urban situations, involving the basic processes of research, analysis, and implementation. These applied studies are complemented and reinforced by seminars in planning theory and principles, planning law and legal instruments, research methodology, planning process, and program implementation. These requirements are designed to provide essential knowledge and understanding to function as a planning professional. Each MURP candidate must complete all core course requirements unless a waiver has been granted by the faculty for special circumstances. These requirements are designed to provide essential knowledge and understanding to function as a planning professional.

Students may choose between two degree options, Plan A (thesis) or Plan B (non-thesis). Students who elect to follow Plan A will take six hours of UP 899 Master's Thesis Research and write and defend a thesis. Students who opt to follow Plan B will take an additional six hours of approved elective credit and must pass a comprehensive examination.

Admission

To be admitted to the master's degree program, the applicant must have a bachelor's degree from a recognized university with an acceptable academic record. The field of undergraduate study is not critical for acceptance, but course requirements for collateral studies will vary according to individual undergraduate backgrounds. Each student's program is composed to fit particular needs in accordance with undergraduate training and any planning experience the applicant may have had.

Application deadlines for priority consideration of financial funding are:

- February 15 for Fall Semester Admission
- August 15 for Spring Semester Admission

Later applications are considered on a rolling basis.

Guidelines for Admission:

Successful entrants into our MURP program normally have:

- 1) A four year bachelor's degree with a minimum GPA of 3.0
- 2) A Graduate Record Exam (GRE) combined score of 297 for the verbal and quantitative sections; and an analytical writing score no less than 3.5.
- 3) All international applicants must submit scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The minimum scores accepted based on the version is:
 - a. Paper-based version: minimum average score of 580, with no sub-score below 52.
 - b. Computer-based version: minimum average score of 237, with no sub-score below 19.
 - c. Internet-based version: minimum average score of 92; no sub-score below 19 for reading, listening, and speaking; no writing sub-score below 22.

Completing the Application

- 1- Complete the MSU Online Application for Graduate Study found at <http://grad.msu.edu/apply/>
 - a. Apply for Major Code 7619 – Urban and Regional Planning
 - b. Submit \$50 Application Fee online
- 2- Submit Academic Statement- A concise academic statement of your plans for graduate study, your research interests, your career goals, and how MSU's graduate program will help you meet your career and educational objectives. This may be completed online in the application or submitted to SPDC directly with other application documents.
- 3- Submit Personal Statement- A statement about how your background and life experiences, including social, economic, cultural, familial, education, or other opportunities or challenges motivated your decision to pursue a graduate degree. This may be completed online in the application or submitted to SPDC directly with other application documents.
- 4- Submit resume or curricula vita

- 5- Provide official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. Transcripts **MUST** be in an envelope sealed by the college or university.
- 6- Provide three recommendations from references using the form found at this address:
<http://grad.msu.edu/apply/docs/recommendation.pdf>
 - a. References may attach a letter of support to this form if they so desire.
 - b. The reference should place the recommendation in a sealed envelope, place their signature across the label and return it to the applicant for mailing with application documents.
- 7- Have GRE scores electronically reported to MSU by ETS testing service
 - a. For reporting purposes use School Code 1465 (MSU) and Major Code 4402 (City and Regional Planning).
 - b. GRE scores should be from a test taken in the last three years.
- 8- International applicants must report scores from the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)
 - a. For reporting purposes use School Code 1465 (MSU).
 - b. TOEFL Scores should be from a test taken within the last 18 months, as the scores must be no more than 2 years old at the time of matriculation or entry to MSU.
- 9- After you have submitted your online application and paid the application fee, submit all other documents in one large envelope to:
MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction
ATTN: Graduate Program Secretary
Human Ecology Building
552 W. Circle Drive Room 102
East Lansing, MI 48824-1030

APPLICANTS FROM CHINESE UNIVERSITIES: Please arrange for a verification report of your university academic records with the **China Academic Degree and Graduate Education Development Center (CDGDC)**. The report must be mailed directly to the department to which you are applying by the CDGDC, rather than by you or any third party.

China Academic Degree and Graduate Education Development Center

Verification Division

B-17, Tongfang Scientific Plaza

No.1 Wangzhuang Road, Haidian District, Beijing, 100083, P.R.China

Tel: +86-10-82379480

Fax: +86-10-82378718 (24 hours)

Email: cqv@cdgdc.edu.cn

Website: www.chinadegrees.cn

Applicants Interested in Applying for 2 Graduate Programs

Michigan State University now permits concurrent applications for admission to two graduate programs, each with a separate application fee

Degree Requirements

In addition to meeting the requirements of the University and the College of Social Science, students must meet the requirements specified below.

The program is available under both Plan A (with thesis) and Plan B (without thesis) and is intended to take four semesters of full-time work. The student must complete 39 credits, at least 28 of which must be in courses numbered in the 800 and 900 series, and meet the requirements specified below:

Urban Planning core courses (27 credits)

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UP	424	Geographic Information Systems and Design Tools for Planning	3
UP	801	Concepts and Issues in Planning and Development	3
UP	814	Applied Research Methods for Planning and Development	3
UP	823	Urban Land Management and the Environment	3
UP	844	Planning Theory and Ethics	3
UP	854	Economics of Planning and Development	3
UP	865	Planning and Development Law	3
UP	894	Planning Practicum	4
UP	892	Research Seminar in Planning and Construction Management	2

Elective Requirements (6 credits)

Complete six credits of approved elective courses from a list of electives in consultation with the student's academic advisor. At least one 3-credit Urban Planning Special Topics course must be taken.

Additional Requirements for Plan A:

Six credit hours of UP 899 Master's Thesis Research

Additional Requirements for Plan B- Report:

1. Six additional credits in one or more courses approved by the student's faculty advisor/Master's Program Director. If the student has chosen to do a Plan B report at least three of these elective hours must be UP 898, Masters Research.
2. Pass a comprehensive examination.

Additional Requirements for Plan B- Exam:

1. Six additional credits in one or more courses approved by the student's faculty advisor/Master's Program Director. Pass a comprehensive examination.

A maximum of 9 transfer credits at the 800 level may be accepted toward the Master in Urban and Regional Planning degree. The time limit for completing the degree is six years from the first semester of enrollment in the program.

The MURP degree requires students to take a capstone course, UP 894 Planning Practicum, during their final year. This course creates the opportunity for students to work with communities to help them reach their goals and for the student to gain valuable and realistic, hands-on experience. While many of our other classes have opportunities for students to work with communities on a variety of projects, practicum is the only class that is solely dedicated to that purpose.

Practicum is a unique experience where students, guided by faculty, practicing planners, and community members, converge to complete a project that the community has requested. Practicum occurs every spring semester and must be completed by all students. The class of students is divided into groups. Each group is assigned a project to be completed within the semester. Typically, there are several meetings with community members, faculty, and other advisors. The students' final product is a comprehensive report and a presentation of the report to the group's client.

Suggested Course Sequence for Full – Time Students

First Year

Fall Semester

UP 801: Urban Planning & Development (*3 credits*)

UP 823: Urban Land Management and the Environment (*3 credits*)

UP 844: Planning Theory and Ethics (*3 credits*)

UP 892: Research Seminar in Planning and Construction Management (*2 credits*)

SUBTOTAL = 11 credits

Spring Semester

UP 424: GIS & Design Tools for Planning (*3 credits*)

UP 814: Applied Research Methods for Planning & Development (*3 credits*)

UP 844: Planning Theory and Ethics (*3 credits*)

SUBTOTAL = 9 credits

Second Year

Fall Semester

UP 854: Economics of Planning and Development (*3 credits*)

UP 800: Special Topics (*3 credits*)

UP 899 (for Plan A) or Plan B Elective (*3 credits*)

SUBTOTAL = 9 credits

Spring Semester

UP 894: Planning Practicum (*4 credits*)

UP 899 (for Plan A) or Plan B Elective (*3 credits*)

Approved Elective (*3 credits*)

SUBTOTAL = 10 credits

TOTAL = 39 credits

Elective Courses in Urban and Regional Planning

There are numerous credits allowed for elective courses, including those used to fulfill a concentration area or Plan B. The following elective courses in URP and various other departments are recommended:

- CE 448: Transportation Planning (*3 credits*)
- CMP 822: Legal Issues in Construction (*3 credits*)
- GEO 413: Urban Geography (*3 credits*)
- GEO 414: Geography of Transportation (*3 credits*)
- GEO 415: Location Theory and Land Use Analysis (*3 credits*)
- GEO 418: The Ghetto (*3 credits*)
- GEO 425: Problems in Geographic Information Science (*4 credits*)
- GEO 432: Environmental Ethics (*3 credits*)
- GEO 453: Metropolitan Environments (*3 credits*)
- GEO 454: Geography of Environment & Development (*3 credits*)
- GEO 802: Geospatial Technology (*3 credits*)
- GEO 816: The World System of Cities (*3 credits*)
- IDES 458: Housing Design and Planning (*3 credits*)
- LA 816: Design Scholarship Theory (*3 credits*)
- UP 400: Special Topics in Urban and Regional Planning (*2-4 credits*)
- UP 458: Housing and Real Estate Development (*3 credits*)
- UP 478: Urban Transportation Planning (*3 credits*)
- UP 800: Special Topics in Urban and Regional Planning (*2-4 credits*)
- UP 893: Internship in Urban and Regional Planning (*2-4 credits*)

Internship Program

When potential employers are screening applicants for a planning position, experience can be a crucial factor. One way for students to gain practical planning experience before they graduate is by doing an internship with a planning agency. Internships can offer students the opportunity to apply what they've learned in their coursework to practical, real-life situations. Internships can also enrich the student's understanding of the true nature of planning.

All of the forms necessary for enrollment for internship credits are available from the Student Service Center, 102 Human Ecology. The student must complete those forms prior to registering for UP 893.

The internship program is open to all MURP students who have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher in their coursework. Academic credit can be gained for the experience by enrolling for UP 893 in the semester during which the internship will be undertaken. A student may reenroll for up to a maximum of eight credits during fall, spring, or summer semesters. The number of credits registered for should reflect the following time commitments:

- 2 credits for 8 hours per week per semester
- 3 credits for 12 hours per week per semester
- 4 credits for 16 hours per week per semester

Finding an internship placement is the responsibility of the student. Announcements for internship opportunities are posted on the SPDC website. Students may also contact an agency directly to ask if the agency can accommodate an intern, or consult with their faculty advisor and/or other members of the faculty. Overseas internships may also be undertaken.

Steps for Receiving Course Credit for an Internship

In order to receive course credit for the internship, each intern must complete the following forms/reports in the order and according to the time schedule specified below. All forms are available from the graduate academic advisor.

1. Apply for the Internship

A student who is interested in participating in the internship program should complete the *Student Internship Application* by the end of the twelfth week of the semester prior to the semester in which he/she wishes to intern.

2. Interview/Speak with the Agency

Most agencies prefer to conduct an interview with a prospective intern. Applicants should expect to present a résumé, writing samples, and/or portfolio at the interview.

3. Intern-Agency Agreement

Once a student has obtained a placement, the *Intern-Agency Agreement* which requests information on the scope of the intern's responsibilities, number of hours, scheduling, etc., must be completed and submitted to the internship coordinator before registering for UP 893. The agreement is placed in the student's file.

4. Registering to Receive Course Credit for the Internship

Once a student has completed and received the internship coordinator's approval on the *Intern-Agency Agreement* form, he/she must register for UP 893 for the desired number of credits (2-4).

5. The Mid-Semester Internship Evaluation

The student fills out the evaluation form and submits it to the internship coordinator by the middle of the semester for which he/she is enrolled for the internship. This form is included in the internship packet.

6. Adhere to Agency Policies and Procedures and submit all necessary applications, agreements, evaluations, and reports on time.

7. The Semester Report

The semester report is a "reflection paper" of about 5-10 typewritten pages in which the student reflects on lessons learned during the internship. The primary purposes of this exercise are for the student: 1) to place the experience in a larger context, 2) to consider issues which go beyond day-to-day activities, and 3) to think about how the internship contributed to the student's professional education. In other words, the paper is to be a tool in helping the student to synthesize the internship experience and his/her overall professional goals.

The student can address a wide variety of topics in the semester paper. Some suggestions are: how the experience helped to shape the student's career goals; the effect of internal and external politics on the intern's job duties; the importance of the intern's job to the mission of the agency; the relationship of the agency with other agencies; the complementary nature of the student's prior coursework with the job duties; and the ideas on how the agency might improve its service delivery for the achievement of both organizational and societal goals.

To assist in the preparation, the student may find it useful to maintain a notebook of daily observations and reflections. This notebook need not be submitted with the other materials.

Special Requirements for Master's in Urban and Regional Planning/Juris Doctor Degree

Core and elective requirements for each degree must be met. The Urban and Regional Planning Program will accept nine (9) credits for transfer from the MSU College of Law as elective courses. The College of Law will accept nine (9) credits for transfer from the MURP degree. Transfer credits from the College of Law to the MURP degree must be approved by URP. The courses must be approved by the major professor/academic advisor. Credits taken prior to admission at Michigan State University College of Law will not be accepted for transfer. Transfer credits from MURP to the JD degree program are approved by the College of Law.

Special Requirements for Bachelor's Master's Dual Enrollment

Admission to graduate study must be approved before work in a graduate program is undertaken. The maximum time limit for dual enrollment is three consecutive terms. The student may earn no more than 12 credits of graduate level course work applicable to the student's graduate degree program and should carry no more than 16 credits per semester.

Required Academic Program of Study

Before the end of the second semester of study the student must submit an *Academic Program of Study* approved by the major professor/faculty advisor/Master's Program Director. Plan A and Plan B report students must also have the plan signed by all committee. The *Plan of Study* will be submitted to the Graduate Secretary and placed in the student's file. Any subsequent changes or amendments to the *Plan of Study* should follow the same procedure.

Advising and Guidance Committees

All students will be assigned a faculty advisor. Until a faculty advisor is assigned students will be advised by the Master's Program director. Students should consult with the advisor/Master's Program Director to discuss course requirements, concentration area electives, and general procedures. Ideally, each graduate student who opts to pursue a Plan A or Plan B report will have a faculty member identified to guide their research by the end of the first year of study. When a faculty member has been determined as the major professor, he/she will assist the student with elective course selection and research development. The student should also work with the major professor to form their Guidance Committee. The guidance committee for Plan A is composed of three regular faculty members, with the Chair and one other member from the student's major. The third member must be an approved MSU faculty member. Students who elect to do a Plan B report must have two committee members, both URP faculty.

Graduate students who wish to change their research advisor and/or committee members should see Master's Program Director for guidance. Ultimate approval for advisor and/or committee member changes rest with the Master's Program Director. On approval, it is the student's responsibility to submit a revised "Request to Change Academic Program of Study" to the Graduate Secretary.

Faculty Members Who May Serve as Major Professor or Guidance Committee Member

Dr. Peilei Fan, Associate Professor

Urban and Regional Planning

MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552. W. Circle Drive Room 201M

E. Lansing, MI 48824-1030

517.432.6517

FAX 517.432.8108

fanpeile@msu.edu

Research interests: international development and planning, high-tech industrialization, and Asia's urbanization

Dr. Roger Hamlin, Professor

Urban and Regional Planning
MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction
Human Ecology
552 W. Circle Drive Room 208A
E. Lansing, MI 48824
517.353.8743
FAX 517.432.8108
hamlin@msu.edu

Research interests: fiscal/regional planning and economic development.

Dr. Eva Kassens-Noor, Assistant Professor

Urban and Regional Planning
MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction
Human Ecology Building
552 W. Circle Drive Room 201E
East Lansing, MI 48824
517.432-8085
FAX 517.432.8108
kassens@msu.edu

Research interests: transport planning, urban planning and policy, international planning, disaster prevention, emergency preparedness, land use planning and policy, recreation and leisure studies, regional planning, and transportation safety

Dr. Zenia Kotval, Professor

Urban and Regional Planning
MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction
Human Ecology
552 W. Circle Drive Room 404
East Lansing, MI 48824
517.353-9362
FAX 517.432.8108
kotval@msu.edu

Research interests: economic development, community development, community development policy and applications

Dr. Rex L. LaMore, Director

Center for Community and Economic Development

Urban and Regional Planning

MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction

552 W. Circle Drive

East Lansing, MI 48824

517.353-9555

FAX 517.884-6489

lamore@msu.edu

Research interests: socially responsible institutional investment policies which support sustainable development, knowledge economy planning, community and economic development policies that create a sustainable and just society

Dr. Patricia Machemer, Associate Professor

Urban and Regional Planning

MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 404

East Lansing, MI 48824

517.353.9047

FAX 517.432.8108

machemer@msu.edu

Research interests: landscape planning and management, land cover change, growth management, participatory design

Herbert P. Norman, Jr., Specialist/Teacher

Urban and Regional Planning

MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 302E

517.353.0677

FAX: 517.432.8108

normanh@msu.edu

Research interests: land use planning, advocacy planning, neighborhood planning, smart growth, sustainable development, international applications in planning land use planning, advocacy planning, neighborhood planning, smart growth, sustainable development, international applications in planning

Dr. Eric Strauss, Professor

Urban and Regional Planning
MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction
Human Ecology Building
552 W. Circle Drive Room 201H
East Lansing, MI 48824
517.353.8715
FAX 517.432.8108
strausse@msu.edu

Research interests: urban regeneration for large cities in North America, Europe and Northeast Asia, land use planning for smaller communities, legal control of urban development to achieve open space preservation

Dr. Mark Wilson, Professor

Urban and Regional Planning
MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction
Human Ecology Building
552 W. Circle Drive Room 113
East Lansing, MI 48824
517.353.9056
FAX 517.432.8108
wilsonmm@msu.edu

Research interests: Information technology, knowledge and global information society; Michigan's nonprofit sector: planning for mega-events- World's Fairs and the Olympics

Academic Performance

Students will receive a written evaluation of their academic progress, performance, and professional potential at least once an academic year. This evaluation will assist students to define their strengths and weaknesses so that the student can work on improvement of weaker performance areas (refer to *Graduate Students' Rights and Responsibilities*).

College of Social Science guidelines state that the accumulation of grades below 3.0 in more than two semester courses of three or more credits each removes the student from candidacy for the degree. It is imperative that a student contact the Master's Program Director if a grade less than 3.0 is earned for a course.

In addition, the *MSU Academic Programs Catalog* found at <http://www.reg.msu.edu/read/UCC/Updated/gradedmasters.pdf>, states "Michigan State University is committed to high academic standards and expects all graduate students to excel in their particular majors. A 3.0 cumulative grade point average for all courses counting toward the master's degree is the minimum University standard." The College of Social Science and the Urban and Regional Planning major adhere to the University's minimum standard. A student in danger of falling below the overall GPA of 3.0 may be removed from degree candidacy.

Code of Ethics and Student Regulations

The Urban and Regional Planning Program expects undergraduate majors and graduate students to adhere to the codes of responsibility as covered in the *MSU Spartan Life Student Handbook*, and the *AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*.

Refer to the *MSU Spartan Life Student Handbook*, PART III Regulations, for specifics at: <http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm>; and <http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/default.pdf>. Section A of the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct contains statements of aspirational principles that constitute the ideals to which urban and regional planners (including planning majors) are committed. Section B contains rules of conduct to which urban and regional planners (including planning majors) are held accountable. The AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct is found on the American Planning Association website at: <https://www.planning.org/ethics/conduct.html>.

Thesis Defense and Final Oral Examination

Plan A

Plan A thesis requires completion of a research-based thesis (six credits of UP 899).

Graduate students enrolled in the Plan A option are required to pass an oral examination in defense of the thesis. MURP faculty have the option in the defense to also cover coursework the student has completed. The Graduate Secretary will schedule the defense with approval from the student's thesis committee chair. A minimum of three regular faculty members will be present at the thesis defense.

Graduate students pursuing the Plan A thesis option must follow all guidelines defined by The Graduate School. Refer to <http://grad.msu.edu> for specifics on Plan A thesis requirements and formatting

Plan B- Report

Plan B is administered by the School and guidelines stated in this handbook. The Plan B is NOT within governance of The Graduate School. Students who choose the Plan B Report option will write a Report and defend it in a Final Oral Examination (follow formatting instructions for Plan A Thesis). The Plan B report must be submitted to each guidance committee member well ahead of the last day of classes of the semester in which the student plans to graduate. A bound copy of the report or electronic copy, according to faculty preference (with all corrections made) should be given to each guidance committee member, and an electronic PDF copy to the School of Planning, Design and Construction (submitted to the graduate secretary). In addition, the student must comply with all university requirements regarding Plan B submittals and graduation.

Plan B- Exam

Plan B is administered by the School and guidelines stated in this handbook. The Plan B is NOT within governance of The Graduate School. Plan B requires that the student take and successfully pass a comprehensive examination. This examination is written by the MURP faculty and administered by the School. The exam is given during both Fall and Winter Semesters. Students may take the exam during any semester they choose but, due to the cumulative nature of the test, it is strongly suggested that students wait until the fourth semester of study to do so. The student must be registered for at least one hour of credit during the semester in which they take the Comprehensive Examination. Since the examination is not given in Summer semester, students who plan to graduate during the Summer should take the exam in advance.

Certification for Graduation

The student must apply to graduate by completing an Application for Graduation (available at <http://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/GradApp/GradApp.asp>)

Check this web site for specific application deadlines. When the Office of The Registrar receives the student's application, a Degree Certification form is forwarded to the School. The Master's Program Director will review the Academic Program of Study in the student's file to determine if the student has fulfilled the requirements and may be certified for graduation. The Associate Director then formally approves or denies the certification.

In addition, students who fall below an overall GPA of 3.0 may be removed from degree candidacy.

Checklist for Full-time Students

First Year

Fall Semester

- ____ Meet with the assigned faculty advisor/Master's Program Director to discuss your *Academic Program of Study*
- ____ Register for fall and spring semester courses
- ____ Meet with the assigned faculty advisor/Master's Program Director toward the end of the semester to confirm your spring semester schedule

Spring Semester

Plan A Master's Thesis students:

- ____ Go to The Graduate School web site:
<http://grad.msu.edu/thesisdissertation/formattingguide.aspx> and download a copy of the "MSU Thesis/Dissertation Formatting Guide".
- ____ Consult with UP 892 professor, and other faculty concerning a proposed thesis topic and for suggestions of a major professor no later than March 1.
- ____ Define the thesis topic and complete a first draft of the thesis proposal in conjunction with the major professor.
- ____ Select the guidance committee in consultation with the major professor.
- ____ Submit Academic Program of Study (with guidance committee signatures) to the Graduate Secretary.
- ____ The thesis proposal should be approved by the guidance committee no later than the end of spring semester of the first year of study.

Plan B Master's Research students:

Note that the Graduate School has no involvement with Plan B option.

- ____ Submit Academic Program of Study (with Plan B committee signatures) to the Graduate Secretary no later than the last week of classes.

Summer Semester

- ____ Begin research and data collection for the thesis (Plan A)

Second Year

Fall semester

_____ Consult with the faculty research advisor (Plan A) and the Graduate Academic Advisor prior to the enrollment period for spring semester.

_____ Check to make sure all coursework, research, and students records (for potential “university HOLDS”), so that graduation will occur in a timely manner.

Plan A Master’s Thesis students

_____ Enroll for UP 899.

_____ Continue with research and writing

Spring semester

Plan A- Thesis students

_____ Apply for Graduation on-line at:

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/GradApp/GradApp.asp>

_____ Enroll for UP 899 if needed (required total of six credits).

_____ Continue with research and writing.

_____ Consult with thesis committee to determine the date and time for the thesis oral examination, following Graduate School guidelines.

_____ Contact the Graduate Secretary to formally schedule the thesis oral examination (SPDC faculty and students are invited to attend the defense).

_____ Submit a bound copy or electronic (check with faculty member for preference) of the final thesis to each committee member.

_____ Submit the final thesis as instructed at <http://www.grad.msu.edu/etd/> to the Graduate School by the stated Graduate School deadline, after the thesis committee has approved.

_____ Submit an electronic copy of the final thesis to the graduate secretary and one bound or electronic copy to the major professor (check with professor for preference). Note that degrees are not certified until a copy of the final thesis is submitted to the graduate secretary or major professor.

Plan B- Master’s Research students

NOTE that the Graduate School has no involvement with Plan B Paper.

_____ Apply for Graduation on-line at:

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/GradApp/GradApp.asp>

_____ Register for and successfully pass comprehensive exam. See the graduate advisor for details specific to the semester.