

Strategic Plan 2014-2019

Bachelors of Science in Urban and Regional Planning (BSURP)

Urban and Regional Planning Program
Michigan State University

Revised November 14th, 2014

Program Vision

Creating sustainable cities and communities through leadership, entrepreneurial creativity, social responsibility, and environmentally sustainable planning and policy.

The **mission** of the Urban & Regional Planning Program is to *prepare students to become practitioners in the planning profession*. This is addressed through three broad themes:

Teaching: To provide future practitioners the knowledge, practical skills, and values to enable them to become effective planners, and to improve the quality of urban places and regions;

Research: To conduct and disseminate research on the “theory and practice” of urban society to plan for more equitable and sustainable communities; and

Outreach: To address community problems by linking knowledge and practice, and facilitating mutual learning between community and university.

Program Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Provide students with a foundation in planning education practice through a curriculum emphasizing general and specialized knowledge, practice, technical skills, and core values of the planning profession.

Objective 1: Consult PAB list of required core knowledge, skills and values.

Objective 2: Conduct gap analysis between existing core list and PAB list.

Objective 3: Develop pre-/post-test (201/494) to assess student learning.

Measures: Take excerpt of AICP exam and test knowledge, skills and values; conduct focus groups to talk about what is planning to get individual assessments; interview/oral exam to measure verbal skills, critical thinking skills, etc.; jury reports on practicum; GPA of graduating students; and a technically written essay.

Goal #2: Enhance the curriculum with a thorough introduction of technical and practical skills applicable to the planning job market, with an emphasis on problem solving, technical writing, and oral presentation skills.

Objective 1: Assess standards and input received regarding curriculum needs.

Objective 2: Consider where suggestions can be incorporated into current curriculum.

Objective 3: Expose students to opportunities for professional development beyond the required curriculum.

Objective 4: Provide students with the knowledge and experience of global trends and practice in urban planning.

Measures: Survey instrument, survey responses, notes from strategic retreat; matrix showing suggested content against existing courses, updated syllabi and course descriptions; and list of gap content and matrix showing potential external sources, conversations with external sources.

Goal #3: Ensure BSURP curriculum completion within a reasonable time-frame.

Objective 1: Monitor graduation rates and identify critical factors that achieve satisfactory graduation rates.

Objective 2: Ensure timely completion by scheduling curriculum, prerequisites, and course load appropriately.

Measures: Program of BSURP degree completion, time to graduation under normal circumstances, GPA of graduating students.

Goal #4: Enhance and systematize addressing community problems by partnering knowledge and practice, facilitating mutual learning of university and community.

Objective 1: Develop a formalized mentoring program, in both traditional public and non-profit or private sector, and for both domestic and international students.

Objective 2: Improve service learning by ensuring that students are mastering it before reaching Practicum offering a variety of mechanisms to practice it (e.g., internships, guided studies where students are teamed with a community to read a master plan, identify a problem, and then bring solutions to the community).

Objective 3: Link URPSA with identification of internship/ job shadowing opportunities.

Objective 4: Host a research forum, such as with the MSU Institute of Public Policy and Social Research.

Measures: Participation within the program and in the community, evidence (narrative) of enhanced systematization.

Goal #5: Foster a sense of community among MSU URP students, alumni and faculty.

Objective 1: Foster an inclusive and active URPSA student organization.

Objective 2: Increase communication among students in the MSU URP community.

Objective 3: Develop a comprehensive communications plan for alumni.

Objective 4: Use relationships built with alumni to foster the creation of professional development opportunities.

Measures: Increased participation on social media sites; institutionalized student orientation; curriculum guide; increased student and alumni awareness of programmatic information; increased support from School, Dean, President; UP advisory group meets each semester; SPDC board has alumni representatives; communications plan and products; and updated website.