

Michigan State University

MURP Strategic Plan 2018-2022

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

Program Values

Quality: We hold ourselves to the highest standards to achieve lasting influence.

Inclusiveness: We foster a culture in which all individuals are valued, respected and engaged so that diverse voices can enrich our work.

Engagement: We link with campus and external communities to leverage our strengths and collectively realize our shared goals.

Integrity and Ethics: We are honest, transparent and courageous in our discovery and dissemination of knowledge.

Creativity: We imagine innovative approaches to understand and improve the world.

Advocacy and Empowerment: We equip individuals and communities with the knowledge to make informed and just decisions.

Graduate Program Mission

The **mission** of the Urban & Regional Planning Program is to *prepare students to become leaders, innovative thinkers and policy makers in the planning profession*. This is addressed through three broad themes:

Teaching: To provide future leaders the knowledge, skills, and values to enable them to become effective planners and policy makers, and have a lasting influence in improving the quality of urban places and regions;

Research: To conduct and disseminate innovative research on emerging dimensions that improve the world and influence decision-making to plan for more equitable and sustainable communities; and

Outreach: To address community problems by linking knowledge and practice and lead individuals and communities to make informed and just decisions.

Goal 1: Prepare students to be professional planners through an advanced curriculum emphasizing core planning knowledge and leadership that contributes to advancing theory and practice.

	Measures	Timeframe	Results	Action
1.1 Continue to meet PAB standards on core curriculum requirements for knowledge, skills and values	Faculty review process for PAB core requirements	Ongoing	Curriculum meeting PAB expectations for BSURP	Monitor changes in PAB standards Annual review of curriculum, with appropriate changes implemented
1.2 Conduct ongoing gap analysis to improve curriculum and course offerings	Curriculum and courses serve PAB expectations for knowledge, skills and values	Ongoing	Courses meet PAB content guidelines	Evaluate results from student learning outcomes, alumni surveys and exit surveys Use outcome data to modify courses to meet and enhance expected results Supplement courses with workshops and training modules delivered by the Alumni Network or MAP
1.3 Explore new thematic areas and provide electives based on emerging trends and applications in urban planning	Identify emerging needs of the profession Seek faculty positions to meet emerging knowledge and skill requirements	Ongoing	Curriculum serves current and future needs of the profession	Explore opportunities to bring new expertise to the Program Consider creation of new electives, shared courses with other units, or training modules
1.4 Provide added opportunities for scholarship, leadership and engagement in the field	Engagement measures include conference presentations, publications, instances of leadership and	Ongoing	MURP graduates have the skills and tools necessary to be leaders in the profession	Promote scholarship including theses, publications and presentations at professional meetings

	students taking AICP exam			<p>MURP students take on leadership and editor roles for Practicum</p> <p>MURP students participate in the “Emerging Professionals” network sponsored by the Michigan Association of Planners</p> <p>Provide a refresher module on AICP through the Alumni Network or MAP</p>
--	---------------------------	--	--	---

Goal 2: Enhance the curriculum so that students acquire advanced communication and analytical skills to excel in the planning job market, with more opportunities for engaged and experiential learning.

	Measures	Timeframe	Results	Action
2.1 Assess standards and input received regarding curriculum needs.	Identify curriculum needs and gaps in current content	Ongoing	Updated curriculum that updates communication and analytical skills	<p>Alumni survey on professional skill needs</p> <p>Faculty review of curriculum</p>
2.2 Expose students to opportunities for professional development beyond the required curriculum.	<p>Participation in professional planning conferences and events</p> <p>Students engaged in undergraduate research opportunities and internships</p>	Ongoing	<p>Each URP student has experience participating in MAP and APA conferences</p> <p>More than ½ of students will have an internship</p> <p>Students will have applied research experience</p>	<p>Ensure funding for students attending MAP/APA conferences</p> <p>Link employers with students, especially through the alumni network</p> <p>Provide financial support and faculty mentoring</p>

				for student research
2.3 Provide students with the knowledge and experience of global trends and practice in urban planning	Global planning presence in the curriculum Students participating in study abroad programs	Ongoing	Global perspectives incorporated into curriculum and through student study abroad experience	Offer annual study abroad programs Provide funding for students on study abroad programs Collaboration with our global partners

Goal 3: Attract and retain a large and diverse MURP student population				
	Measures	Timeframe	Results	Action
3.1 Achieve a reasonable program size and diversity	Number and diversity of MURP student body	Ongoing	Larger and more diverse student body	Recruitment strategy Development of promotional materials Seek graduate student funding
3.2 Improve student recruitment program	Promotion efforts to increase student applications	Ongoing	Larger and more diverse student body	Recruitment strategy Promote program at planning conferences and events Development of promotional materials Seek graduate student funding

Goal 4: Promote MURP faculty-student partnered research to advance planning for more equitable & sustainable communities

	Measures	Timeframe	Results	Action
4.1 Assess faculty productivity	Student involvement with grants, contracts, publications, reports, presentations and other scholarly endeavors	Ongoing	Students have research experience and understand research driven planning	Emphasis on productivity at annual evaluation and promotion/tenure and protecting time of untenured faculty
4.2 Promote advanced research skills	Faculty/student partnered research	Ongoing	Fund students for research and field work	Seek resources for applied research and outreach Identify/seek resources for student research such as short courses, software purchase, research expenses
4.3 Define specific research themes that leverage assets to position Michigan domestically and globally.	Involvement with cross-unit and cross-university collaboration on applied research, grants and contracts.	Ongoing	Increased courses and faculty in environmental sustainability, transportation, and Economic Development	Identify emerging fields and faculty expertise
4.4 Encourage student-partnered research through employment and assistantships.	Student assistantships, and funding for employment and state/national presentations	Ongoing	Student employment and contribution in school sponsored research and initiatives	Coordinate opportunities through faculty and student services

Goal 5: Foster a sense of community and inclusion within the School and among URP students, alumni and faculty.

	Measures	Timeframe	Results	Action
5.1 Work to enhance the diversity of our student body through efforts to create an environment of	Increased student diversity Create and promote events related to equity and inclusion	Ongoing	A student body reflective of our profession and geographic area	Establish a diversity and inclusion taskforce Targeted recruitment of underrepresented

inclusion and respect.				groups in Michigan and nationally Emphasize diversity and inclusion as a core Program value
5.2 Work to enhance the diversity of our faculty through efforts to create an environment of inclusion and respect.	Increased range of voices heard by students from URP faculty and guest speakers	Ongoing	Create an open and engaging environment for faculty and students from diverse backgrounds	Organize events that recognize the significance of diversity and inclusion in planning Invite speakers to represent different perspectives on planning
5.3. Foster an inclusive and active URP student organization.	Increase participation in URPSA Increase in URPSA sponsored activities	Ongoing	Better connected and in-tune faculty and student relationship	Articulate the value of URPSA and membership. Have a dedicated faculty liaison to URPSA
5.4 Effectively utilize alumni network and MAP to provide professional development opportunities for internships, job shadowing, interview skills and networking with MAP professionals	Increased alumni sponsored activities Increased support for social and professional events organized by the student association and the Alumni Group	Ongoing	Cultivate a strong local alumni group and local Chapter for student faculty and alumni networking and professional development. Better connections to MAP	Encourage students to participate in MAP activities such as MAP student conference, Young Professionals Network and other opportunities. Invite alumni to give guest lectures, keynote addresses, and participate in regular curricular activities

MURP Learning Outcomes

The URP program faculty view education from a constructivist perspective (Erwin, 1991), which assists students in learning how to obtain knowledge, in building upon student's existing knowledge, and in advancing students systematically with each course towards becoming a well-rounded planning scholar and practitioner according to the PAB criteria. As a planning program, the faculty take responsibility to know if, what, and how well students have learned taught material in a value-added way. As a learning-oriented faculty, we have implemented a student assessment rubric. Over the past three years (2014-2017), we have evaluated each student individually through formative assessment based on PAB required knowledge, skills and values annually (at the end of each spring semester). We also complete an entry (within the first three months of starting our program) and exit diagnostic (in our practicum) for a summative assessment. We initialized our student assessment during three planning sessions in spring 2014, during which faculty members worked together to create an assessment tool for the courses and the URP program. During fall 2017 and spring 2018, we modified our student assessment tool given the new PAB-criteria that now contain: KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ATTITUDES, COMPETENCIES, AND HABITS OF MIND. The new evaluation rubric came into effect in spring 2018. The program faculty defines assessment according to Dary Erwin (1991), "as the systematic basis for making inferences about the learning and development of students. More specifically, assessment is the process of defining (1), selecting (2), designing (3), collecting (4), analyzing (5), interpreting (6), and using (7) information to increase students' learning and development."

1) Defining We followed Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom et al., 1956) to update our learning goals (last revision to learning goals in 2014) for the undergraduate and graduate curriculum during our strategic planning meetings in 2017/2018. Our learning objectives now cover knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of mind, while we evaluate them through five competencies. We strive to educate our students graduating from our program as:

- Policy-oriented learners
- Knowledgeable planning practitioners
- Skillful professionals
- Innovative thinkers
- Ethically-driven team leaders

Our competencies reflect our MSU motto "Spartans will" and CSS goals for engaged learners.

Definitions used since spring 2018

GENERAL PLANNING KNOWLEDGE

Bloom's taxonomy	Undergraduate Learning Goals	Graduate Learning Goals
Knowledge: Identify and recall information.	Knowledge: Identify general planning knowledge concepts and local planning context of local communities.	Knowledge: Describe general planning knowledge concepts and local planning context of local communities.
Comprehension: Understand material organize and select facts and ideas.	Comprehension: Discuss the purpose and meaning of planning based on history, law, theory and the future of planning.	Comprehension: Explain and generalize the purpose and meaning of planning based on history, law, theory and the future of planning.
Application: Use facts, rules and principles and apply them to new situations.	Application: Apply general planning concepts to real-life scenarios, especially local communities.	Application: Investigate and interpret real-life scenarios in the profession applying the general planning knowledge acquired, especially local communities.
Analysis: Separate whole into component parts to understand.	Analysis: Compare and contrast different planning concepts across cultures, countries and communities.	Analysis: Compare and contrast different approaches to planning solutions across cultures, countries and communities.
Synthesis: Combine ideas to form a new whole, product of solution.	Synthesis: Combine theory, law and history in different communities into a consistent perspective on planning.	Synthesis: Create a coherent philosophy of planning using past experience applied to future needs for different communities.
Evaluation: Make judgments, opinions or decision with reference to criteria.	Evaluation: Assess the strengths and weaknesses of different planning solutions and create viable planning options, especially for projects assisting local communities.	Evaluation: Evaluate the efficacy of various planning scenarios and make appropriate recommendations for action, and create viable planning options, especially for projects assisting local communities.

PLANNING SKILLS		
Bloom's taxonomy	Undergraduate Learning Goals	Graduate Learning Goals
Knowledge: Identify and recall information.	Knowledge: Recall a variety of basic planning skills.	Knowledge: Identify and recognize planning techniques and methods of analysis.
Comprehension: Understand material organize and select facts and ideas.	Comprehension: Distinguish between various planning skills and summarize their differences and importance.	Comprehension: Estimate benefits and costs of solving problems using specific planning methods.
Application: Use facts, rules and principles and apply them to new situations.	Application: Apply planning skills learned through the curriculum to empirical situations where needed or appropriate, especially in different local communities.	Application: Employ appropriate methods to solve a variety of planning problems, especially in different local communities.
Analysis: Separate whole into component parts to understand.	Analysis: Inventory specific technical skills to understand the content and purpose for what they address.	Analysis: Appraise the assumptions and differences between learned planning methods and skills.
Synthesis: Combine ideas to form a new whole, product of solution.	Synthesis: Formulate effective planning outcomes suitable for local communities based on analysis & accepted techniques.	Synthesis: Prepare unique ways of combining existing techniques to solve complex problems of local communities.
Evaluation: Make judgments, opinions or decision with reference to criteria.	Evaluation: Assess the utility of solutions based on planning objectives supported by empirical data.	Evaluation: Discriminate between the effectiveness of common techniques used and predicted results of tool implementation.

ATTITUDES		
Bloom's taxonomy	Undergraduate Learning Goals	Graduate Learning Goals
Knowledge: Identify and recall information.	Knowledge: Recognize ethical practices and planners' responsibilities in the context of diverse communities.	Knowledge: Relate ethical practices and responsibilities to diverse communities.
Comprehension: understand material organize and select facts and ideas.	Comprehension: Give examples of fair and just solutions to planning dilemmas and discuss impacts on diverse communities.	Comprehension: Interpret ethical dilemmas and defend possible solutions based on impacts on diverse stakeholders and their work/personal lives.
Application: Use facts, rules and principles and apply them to new situations.	Application: Illustrate and interpret an ethical planning scenario in a diverse community using the latest knowledge, skills, and information available	Application: Construct and solve an ethical planning scenario in a diverse community using the latest knowledge, skills, and information available
Analysis: Separate whole into component parts to understand.	Analysis: Compare and differentiate how planning processes and solutions affect diverse communities.	Analysis: Anticipate how planning processes and solutions affect diverse communities and critique each.
Synthesis: Combine ideas to form a new whole product of solution.	Synthesis: Creatively choose planning methods and cooperatively design planning processes to solve planning dilemmas ethically	Synthesis: Creatively design and cooperatively formulate and prepare planning methods to solve planning dilemmas ethically
Evaluation: Make judgments, opinions or decision with reference to criteria.	Evaluation: Persistently judge scenarios on best-practice and latest information	Evaluation: Persistently balance different stakeholder interests using latest information and best-practice knowledge and skills

HABITS OF MIND		
Bloom's taxonomy	Undergraduate Learning Goals	Graduate Learning Goals
Knowledge: Identify and recall information.	Knowledge: Describe key planning values and ethical guidelines based on the PAB code of ethics	Knowledge: Know the PAB code of ethics and recognize key planning values
Comprehension: understand material organize and select facts and ideas.	Comprehension: Give examples of ethical dilemmas and discuss possible solutions. Explain key planning values and distinguish when they would come into play.	Comprehension: Interpret ethical dilemmas and defend possible solutions. Suggest applicable planning values.
Application: Use facts, rules and principles and apply them to new situations.	Application: Interpret an ethical planning scenario incorporating perspectives of multiple stakeholders.	Application: Consider the input of multiple stakeholders when solving an ethical planning scenario.
Analysis: Separate whole into component parts to understand.	Analysis: Willing to consider the impact of choices on myself and others and able to compare and differentiate how habits of mind affect the planning process and outcomes.	Analysis: Analyze and weigh different options and able to predict how different values affect the planning process and outcomes.
Synthesis: Combine ideas to form a new whole product of solution.	Synthesis: Compile and compose various and different viewpoints to construct viable scenarios.	Synthesis: Recognize and accept own biases and perceptions and able to generate alternative scenario to own/initial solution
Evaluation: Make judgments, opinions or decision with reference to criteria.	Evaluation: Summarize ethically-grounded concepts including social equity, environmental values and growth and development even if it differs from own perspective	Evaluation: Able to change one's own perspective given evidence presented by others, but firmly grounded in PAB ethical code.

2) Selecting

Based on the learning goals, each URP instructor has designed learning objectives for their course, which ensures that the assessment of a course reflects the range, scope and emphasis on the instructor's goals for students learning and the material that was taught. Each course is integrated into the PAB criteria through our curriculum matrix.

3) Designing

The URP designed our assessment tool around authentic assessment (Wiggins and McTighe, 1998) given our planning program is practitioner-oriented and program goals focus on graduating students that are ready to take an advanced or senior position in the planning profession. The URP also paid particular emphasis on validity

(assessment accurately measures what it is designed to measure) and reliability (assessment will produce the same result consistently when repeated, or when assessed by multiple evaluators) of our assessment tools. With the centrality of the learning paradigm of Barr and Tagg (1995), we designed the URP curriculum around cooperative and collaborative learning.

4) Collecting

We hold the belief that the best evidence of students learning is based on their work, in addition to SIRS forms, self-reporting, grade distributions etc. Consequently, the URP strives to implement course-embedded assessments that provide immediate feedback to the instructor on how well students learn the material for each one of our courses.

5) Analyzing

As a program, the URP moved from a norm-referenced assessment (a test in which a student's performance is compared to that of a norm to assign a grade) to a criterion-referenced assessment (an assessment in which the results determine a student's progress toward mastery of the competency. We expect mastery from our students upon graduation). This gave us the advantage of measuring student achievement relative to the learning goals we had set.

6) Interpreting

We place a strong emphasis on knowing our students. The URP use rubrics as our tool that lay out the expectations for the program and each competency based on the PAB criteria. With the rubrics, we trace each student's progress towards mastering the competencies, whereby the competencies represent an accumulate of knowledge, skills, attitudes and habits of mind. To note here is that rubrics encourage student to think critically; rubrics also level the playing field, facilitate communication, provide timely feedback and help refine our teaching method immediately and permanently (Ambrose, 2010).

Assessment matrix used since spring 2018

- Policy-oriented learners
- Knowledgeable planning practitioners
- Skillful professionals
- Innovative thinker
- Ethically-driven team leader

Student:		Unacceptable	Acceptable	Good	Exemplary
URP competencies	Policy-oriented learner	Unwilling to learn planning knowledge, skills, values, habits of mind, and attitudes.	Learns willingly about the planning profession and its applications to policy when instructed.	Has self-motivated drive to learn to benefit the planning profession and advise policy-makers.	Eager to learn beyond lessons taught in the classroom to apply the most recent planning knowledge, skills, habits of mind, and attitudes as a professional planner and policy-maker
	Knowledgeable planning practitioner	Unfamiliar with the basic purpose and meaning of planning, planning skills and planning values.	Shows an awareness of the fundamental planning knowledge required for the planning profession.	Demonstrates broad planning knowledge and is able to use it in different hypothetical scenarios.	Efficiently and confidently applies appropriate planning knowledge to solve complex planning problems.
	Skillful professional	Can not identify the range of skills planners use in their profession.	Shows familiarity with the wide range of planning skills planners use in professional settings.	Effectively applies planning skills in professional practice.	Critically examines various planning skills before applying them to contemporary planning issues.
	Innovative thinker	Unable to link planning knowledge, skills, and values to planning practice.	Can combine knowledge skills and values to recognize planning trends.	Able to analyze and describe trends affecting the planning process using a combination of knowledge skills, values, and habits of mind.	Eager to predict trends and propose innovative planning solutions given the knowledge, skills, and values taught in our program.
	Ethically-driven team leader	No recognition of ethical conflicts and values and unable to lead a team.	Able to identify and define professional values and ethics while recognizing the skills a team leader must possess.	Able to honor and apply professional ethics in most instances while leading teams.	Able to efficiently apply professional ethics in various ethical dilemmas every time while leading teams efficiently.

7) Using

The URP program uses the student assessment outcomes continuously to improve the program. For example, we update our courses and our alumni hold workshops on topics in which students lack behind in making sufficient progress in mastering their competencies. For example, in spring 2018 our alumni held a workshop on public engagement and governance; in our 2017 student assessment review, we had identified “governance and participation” as the topic in which many students had not achieved mastery. We also review our assessment tools at our annual strategic meetings and align our curriculum to any learning objectives or goal changes based on updates to our strategic plan. As a program, we will continue to conduct exit surveys, measure student outcomes on an annual basis and update our assessment tools to reflect the latest scholarship on teaching and learning.

Citations used in this Section:

- Ambrose, S.A., Bridges, M.W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M.C., and Norman., M.K. (2010). "How Learning Works." San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
- Barr, R., and Tagg, J. (1995). "From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education." *Change* (November/December 1995):12–25.
- Bloom, B.S., Engelhart, M.D., Furst, E.J., Hill, W.H., and Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*. Handbook I: Cognitive domain. New York, NY: David McKay Company.
- Costa L.A., and B. Kallick (2000), *Habits of Mind: A Developmental Series*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in Alexandria, VA.
- Erwin, T.D. (1991) *Assessing student learning and development: a guide to the principles, goals and methods of determining college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Publishing
- Wiggins, G., and McTighe, J. (1998). "Understanding by Design." Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.