

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Community and Regional Planning

Program Learning Outcomes

Experience of Iowa State University:
Highlights and Lowlights

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Intent: Two Frameworks

Teaching Centered Paradigm	Learner Centered Paradigm
Knowledge is transmitted from professor to students	Students construct knowledge through gathering and synthesizing information and integrating it with general skills of inquiry, communication, critical thinking, problem solving and so on.
Students passively receive information	Students are actively involved.
Knowledge can be demonstrated by performance on tests	Knowledge cannot be demonstrated outside its context of application – students must know how to use information in real life contexts
Assessment is used to monitor learning	Assessment is used to promote and diagnose learning
Desired learning is assessed indirectly through performance on objectively scored tests.	Desired learning is assessed directly through papers, projects, presentations and other products like those that they will be expected to produce in the future.
Culture is competitive and individualistic	Culture is cooperative, collaborative and supportive.
Not everyone can pass the test; faculty role is to distinguish between those that can and those that cannot pass.	Everyone ought to be able to learn to use knowledge effectively in a context; some may take more time to do so.

Adapted from Huba and Freed 2000.

History

- 2002: Intent: Respond to movement toward learning outcomes; increase faculty collaboration in curriculum review...
- 2002-2004: Action: University supported learning and training of faculty
- 2004: Development of Learning Outcomes
- 2004-2007: Curricular Alignment
 - Additional studio, field travel, portfolio, service electives, planning electives
- 2008: Accreditation Review
- 2008-2010: Graduate Curriculum
 - Reduced core requirements, new core classes, added capstone option to thesis/professional report

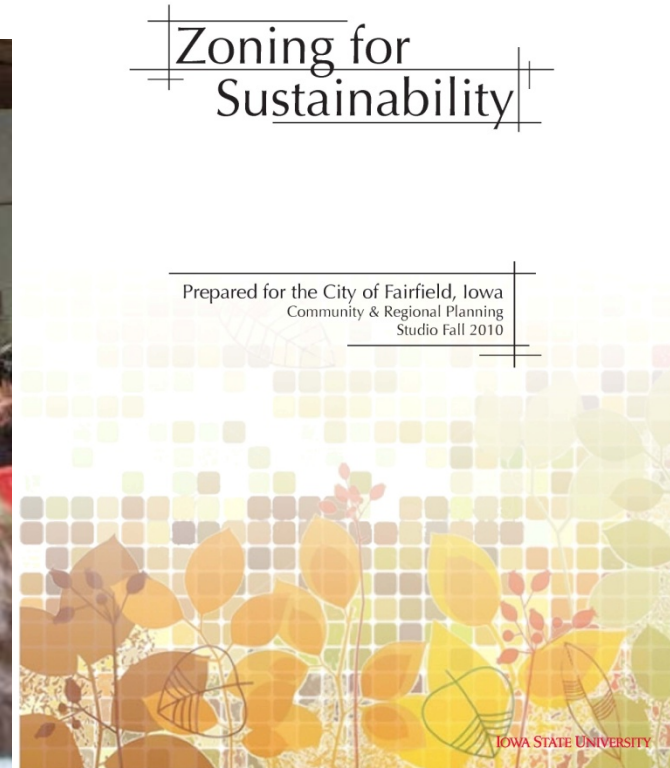
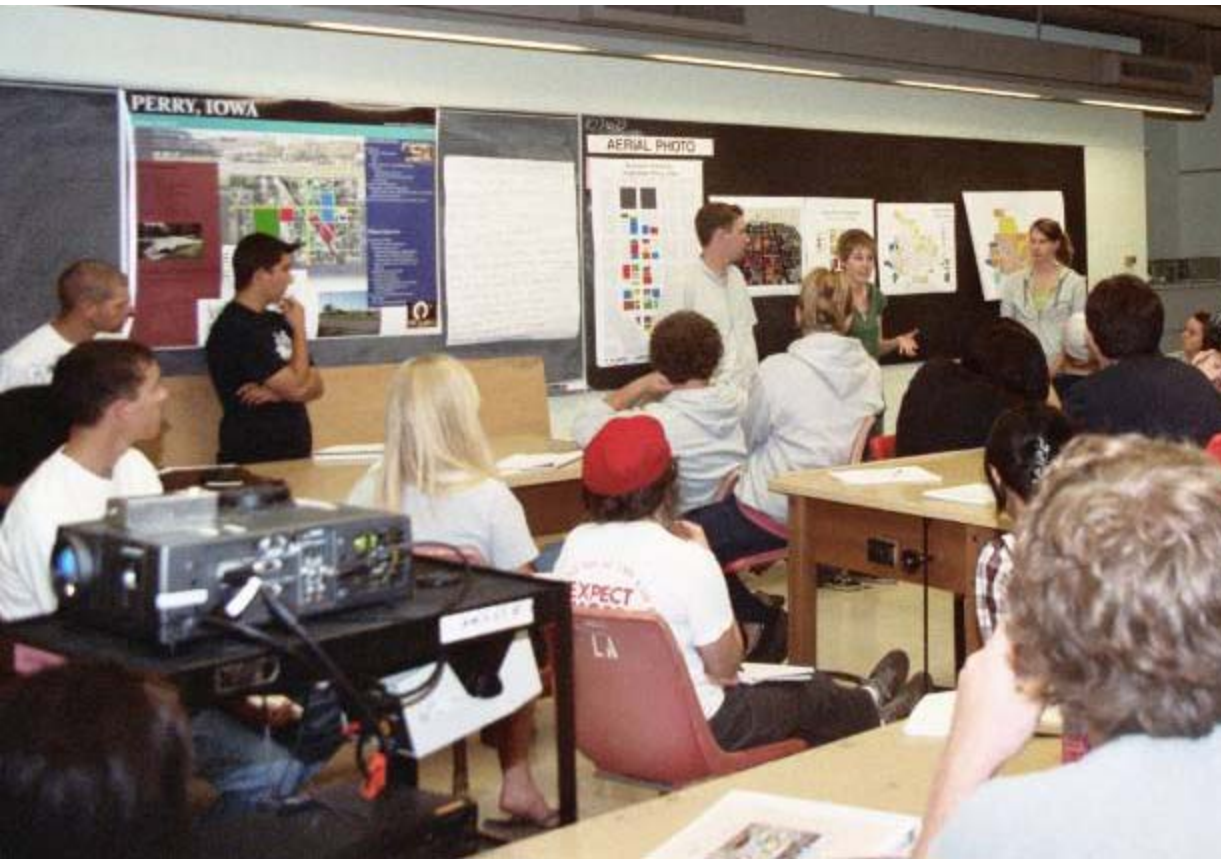
Program Outcomes - 2004

Planning Generalist: Reflective Practice

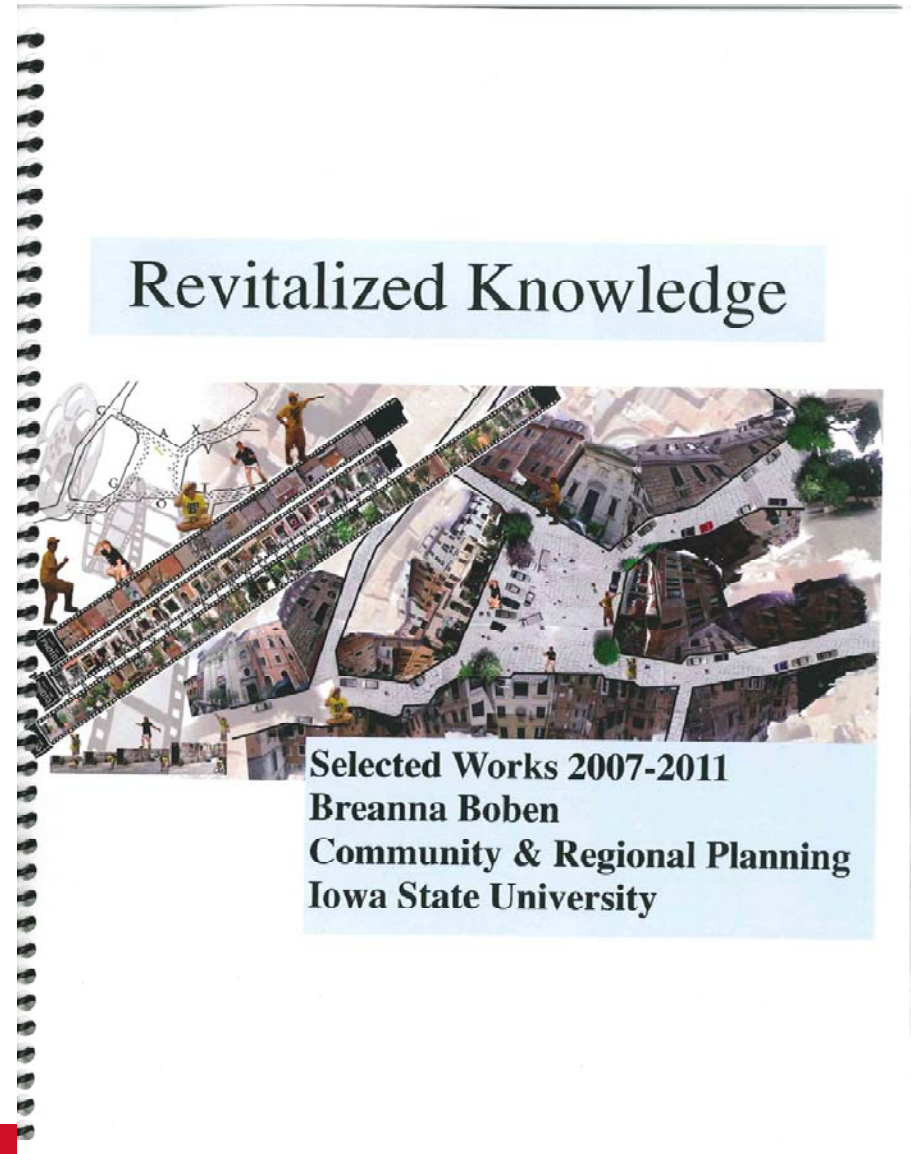
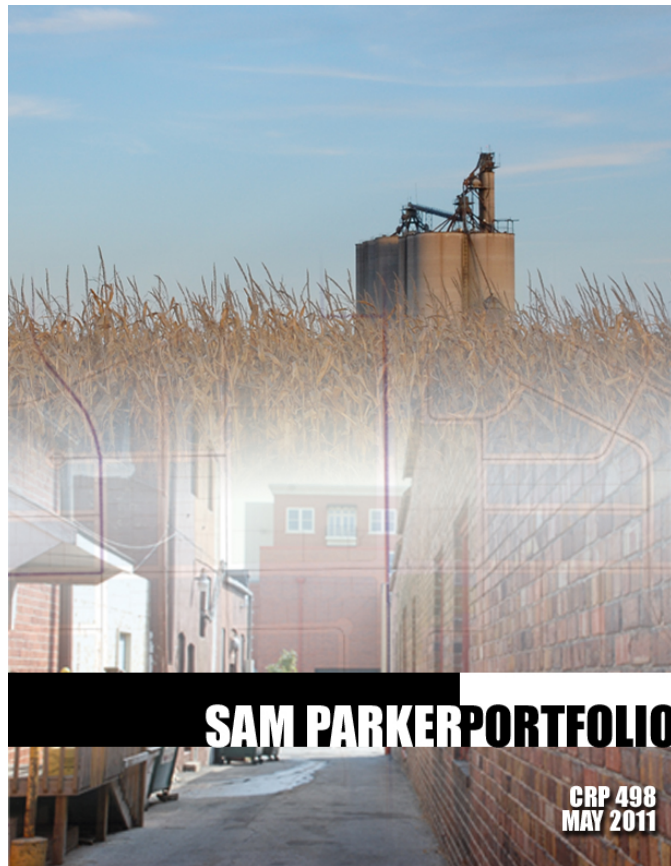
Graduates of the Community and Regional Planning program at Iowa State University will be skilled in understanding community problems and issues; applying appropriate planning processes; developing comprehensive plans for local governments, counties, or regions; and offering sound implementation strategies...

1. Graduates will be able to critically examine community problems and issues, select and apply an appropriate planning process and collaborate in leading the development of a local comprehensive plan and public policies.
2. Graduates will be able to maintain a working knowledge of plan implementation techniques including the ability to understand and apply local zoning ordinances.
3. Graduates will be able to maintain a working knowledge of how the legal and policy context affects local and regional planning: state enabling legislation, state land use policy, and federal and state judicial systems.
4. Graduates will be able to develop and implement a citizen participation plan for existing program evaluation or plan development.

Outcome Assessment (informal): Open (to other faculty and practitioner) Studio Reviews



Outcome Assessment (increasingly formal): CRP 498: Portfolios



Outcome Assessment: CRP 498 – Self Assessment

Learning Objective

4.2.1. An understanding of human settlement and how it relates to planning based on knowledge of the relevant concepts and theories from:

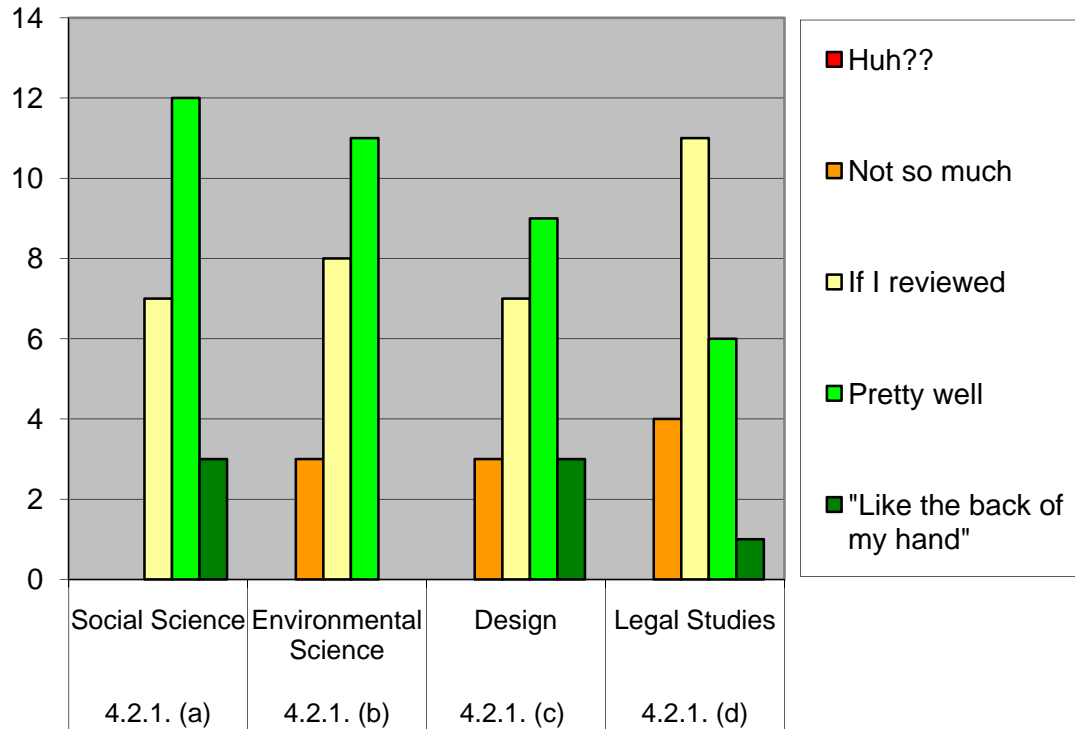
Elements

4.2.1. (a) social sciences (history, economics, sociology, political science, anthropology, psychology, geography) including knowledge of the social and

Achievement Level -- "I know" or "I can do"

Huh? ?	Not so much	If I reviewed	Pretty well	"Like the back of my hand"

Understanding of Human Settlement



Outcome Assessment: Exit Interviews - 2003

Strengths

- Faculty members have "real world" experience that they incorporate into their courses.
- Faculty members are able to meet with students outside of class and provide individual assistance when needed.
- Students can take a CRP course their first semester in the program.
- The curriculum is flexible enough to allow you to pick courses in areas where you are most interested.
- Small classes allow for more interaction and discussion...

Things to work on

- Students stated that they don't know how to do a comprehensive plan or capital improvement plan.
- More Opportunities to Apply Learning:
- More opportunities to better understand what CRP is and what planners do:
- GIS: More and earlier
- Want more Inter-disciplinary Studios led by CRP Faculty:
- Students' perceptions of skills learned in studio:
- Requirements need to be revisited:
- Sequencing:
- Students Want More "Community"
- Role of Advising
- Not enough differentiation between undergraduate and graduate requirements.

Picking a planning related specialty is

Exit Interviews 2011

Best

- People
- field work/field travel
- smallness of program
- above average teachers
 - go out of way to help
 - familiarity
 - easygoing

Room for Improvement

- **More hands on work**
- Design connections
- Required internships
- **CRP as a profession**
(marketing)/overview of curriculum (curriculum roadmap)
- **Reduce overlap in course content**
- More on-line management of courses
- **262/362 room conditions**
- Core orientation
- Restrict rendering in computer labs.

Highlights of the Experience (to date)

- Incremental increases in review of student work: e.g. studios, learning portfolios
- Incremental shift in curriculum alignment to outcomes e.g. addition of studios, “service” courses, planning electives, core
- Increasing (but not universal) collective thinking about courses and curriculum



“Low” Lights

- Dependency on faculty commitment
 - “Agreement” vs “Implementation”
 - Turnover/Institutional Memory
- Assessment difficult
 - “Extra” work (studio reviews, portfolio reviews, alumni surveys, etc)
 - Simple metrics?
- Engagement
 - Ideal: Alumni/Employers involved in outcomes
 - Alumni/Practitioners “Outcomes will be hard to measure!”

(A few) Thoughts

- Learning outcomes are here to stay
- Learning involves student responsibility, not only program responsibility.

	% Classes	Hours/Week on	% Class Readings	% time texting			
Column1	Attended	Assignment	Read	/facebooking	in class	Job Hour	R&R Hour
Min	65%	3	0%	0%	0	5	
Max	100%	20	100%	70%	30	42.5	
Mean	84%	9.38	48%	14%	10.56	22.66	
Mode	75%	6	50%	5%	0	40	

- Good but sporadic and difficult to implement (and getting harder)
- Need better/easier means of post-graduate tracking (beyond APA and AICP)