

Preparing Future Planners: The view from the university

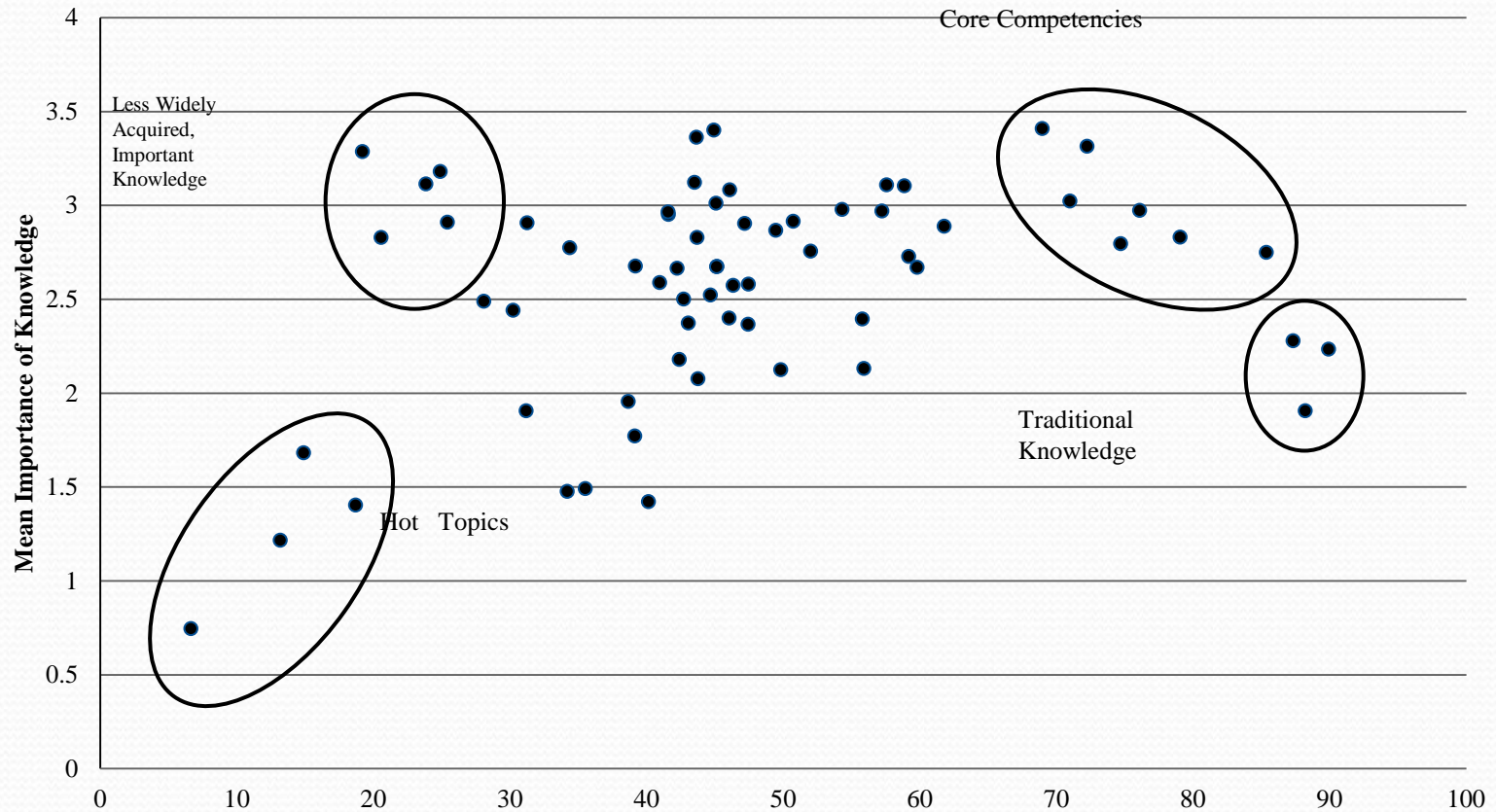
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Overview

- What we've been doing at the university
- Challenges ahead
 - On campus
 - In the community
 - What's distinctive about planning?
- What's next? Strengthening our strongest assets

Percentage of Master of Planning Grads Who Report Acquiring Knowledge by End of Program (2007 survey)



Anchor Points for Planning (in the academy) (Myers, et al. 1997)

1. A focus on improvement of **human settlements**
2. A focus on **interconnections** among distinct community facets
3. A focus on the **future** and pathways of change over time
4. A focus on identification of the **diversity of needs** and **distributional consequences** in human settlements
5. A focus on **open participation** in decision making,
6. A focus on **linking knowledge and collective action**

What's hot at the university today? (What can planning offer?)

- Interdisciplinary research and instruction
- “Sustainability” talk – very future-oriented
- “Community-based learning” at many campuses
(generating usable knowledge and/or understanding
how knowledge can be used)
- Applied nature of discipline-based research
- Importance of partnerships with community
organization, businesses, and government agencies
- Internationalization

What's "hot" in the community? (What can planning offer?)

- Sustainability (economic and environmental)
- Diversity of all shapes and colors
- Equity
- Gentrification
- Disaster planning or "resilience"
- New technologies (driver-less cars?)
- ???
- ????
- ??????

Does planning have an edge?

- Idealistic students, interested in others
- Critical thinkers – not happy playing with models and making them work better.
- Partners (community and the profession)
- Graduates have institutional home(s) – a market of jobs

Does planning have a special “value added”?

- Planners advocate for *place*: a certain *micro-ecology* and the functionality of *specific built systems* in support of *priority human needs* as part of larger systems and a long time frame. (The local is global)
- Planners advocate for broader participation in decision making not simply for moral reasons, but because it can lead to “better” decisions.
- Planners advocate for social justice because without it, war and other destructive actions will destroy all.
- Planner act as a bridge and catalyst among disciplines, and among public/private/community sectors.

Planning *can* have added value if we assume leadership:

- Leadership is "a process of social influence in which a person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task".

Source: Wikipedia: Chemers M. (1997). *An integrative theory of leadership*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

- “Leading from behind” - a leader...is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind.

Nelson Mandela (1994), *Long Walk to Freedom*.