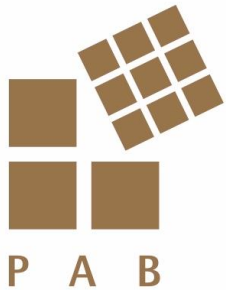


# Innovation in Planning Education and Accreditation

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APA Conference, New Orleans



Planning  
Accreditation  
Board

# Facilitators

**Bruce Knight, FAICP** - PAB Chair

Planning and Development Director, City of Champaign

**Connie Ozawa, Ph.D.** - PAB Vice Chair

Professor, Portland State University

**Alex Lieber, AICP** - Chair of PAB Innovation & Communication Task Force  
Planner, AKRF, Inc.

**Ed Goetz, Ph.D.** - PAB Member

Professor, University of Minnesota

**Zenia Kotval, Ph.D., FAICP** - PAB Member

Professor, Michigan State University

# Planning Accreditation Board

Mission: *To promote excellence among planning programs and ensure high quality education for future urban planners.*

- ▶ *8 Board Members, appointed by APA, AICP and ACSP*
- ▶ *72 master's and 17 bachelor's degrees at 78 North American Universities*

# Accreditation and Innovation

*PAB Goal: Promote and encourage a culture of innovation in program content and delivery (PAB's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan)*

# Exercise 1:

## Emerging Trends and Innovation in the Profession and the Academy

- 1) How is the profession evolving? What are the new challenges professionals face?
- 2) What are some innovations in the profession or new skills that are perhaps not supported or being effectively taught in planning schools?

# How is the profession evolving? What are the new challenges professionals face?

- ▶ Availability of new data sets need for more computer skills for data analysis
- ▶ Challenges: political climate, fake news, scope of global warming, lack of resources, pace of change, public vs. private sector
- ▶ Gap between those that are marginalized & possibility to use technology as a bridge to bring people together, diversity and cultural competency skills
- ▶ Research methods, building on practice
- ▶ Social media, impact on quality of life of planners
- ▶ Lack of clear communication across different departments
- ▶ Long term planning vs. processing
- ▶ Literature based on physical planning, need for more literature in other areas
- ▶ Fundamental planning knowledge, curriculum lists ever increasing, identifying core competencies vs. specialty or technical skills

# What are some innovations in the profession or new skills that are perhaps not supported or being effectively taught in planning schools?

- ▶ Old skills, observations & community relationships left behind to the ease of computer based tools
- ▶ Critical thinking and reflecting the data understandably to the public
- ▶ Student experimentation to real world applications
- ▶ Outcome oriented to make planning more effective
- ▶ Student motivation and university resources

## Exercise 2: Defining Culture of Innovation

- 1) What is a culture of innovation?
- 2) Have planning programs been able to adapt and evolve to meet the market demands, technological innovations, and community transformations?



# What is a culture of innovation?

- ▶ Market and innovation oriented, need to center equity, how outcomes are defined, who are we innovating for? Social component needs to be included
- ▶ Changes in universities, do more for less and maintain integrity, where is higher education moving?
- ▶ New technology to do the same thing more effectively
- ▶ Innovate around disruptions, short term planning with lack of vision
- ▶ Economic literacy impacts learning in the classroom
- ▶ Competing timelines between faculty tenure, undergraduate, masters, Ph.D students, each with different interests and research goals, Need to foster research skills and identify interests early

Have planning programs been able to adapt and evolve to meet the market demands, technological innovations, and community transformations?

## Exercise 3:

How can the Academy and Profession work together to support innovation?

- 1) How do we link innovation in the field with innovation in academic planning programs?
- 2) Identify strategies and partnerships to foster innovations in the profession?

# How do we link innovation in the field with innovation in academic planning programs?

- ▶ Incentives differ by type of program, pursuing innovation might mean not getting published
- ▶ Involve professional planners in teaching or visiting the classroom
- ▶ Improve and educate the community
- ▶ Department of Doing, how to address the gaps? Not using technology may be the answer
- ▶ Legislature limits in different states, what are the workarounds?
- ▶ How to operate in a political system and be effective
- ▶ Understanding the market of practice, be crafty

# Identify strategies and partnerships to foster innovations in the profession?

- ▶ Create venues for discussion without agenda to build relationships
- ▶ Opportunity for coursework to include how to work with political challenges and mediate with different viewpoints/priorities
- ▶ How we facilitate conversations

## Group Discussion:

What could/should be innovation in curriculum that would support emerging trends in practice? How can PAB promote and encourage this innovation in curricula?

What could/should be innovation in curriculum that would support emerging trends in practice? How can PAB promote and encourage this innovation in curricula?

- ▶ The divide between public policy, public administration and finance
- ▶ Exposure to other cultures
- ▶ Open up access to planning education and diversify the profession
- ▶ Communicating the curriculum in an attractive way
- ▶ Core competencies taught across less semesters
- ▶ Community college pathways
- ▶ Online teaching can reach different student groups
- ▶ Educational accountability in relation to innovation, bureaucratic frameworks
- ▶ Flexibility vs. rigidity, free up time for creative people to be creative