

2012 – 2013 M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning Academic Assessment Plan

College of Design, Construction, and Planning
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Office of the Provost

*University of
Florida*

*Institutional
Assessment*

*Continuous Quality
Enhancement*

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Academic Assessment Plan for M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning

College of Design, Construction, and Planning

A. Mission

The University of Florida’s Department of Urban and Regional Planning strives to be a leading graduate program with excellence in planning education, research, and service for the citizens of the state, the nation, and the world. To realize this vision, our program mission is to conduct cutting-edge research to develop new theories, methodology and technologies for guiding the next generation of planning; to educate planners who will understand diverse needs of the population in the planning process and who will work with innovative technologies and planning methods to ethically create livable cities within sustainable environments; and to provide professional and public services to communities in Florida, the nation, and the world.

Situated in the College of Design, Construction and Planning, the Department supports the College’s mission by “critically assess[ing] ongoing processes of change in human settlements, engag[ing] students in projects intended to guide those processes, and bring new strategies and approaches to bear on work in the profession of . . . urban and regional planning. Underlying DCP’s educational philosophy is a commitment to advance applications of the principles of sustainability in the design, construction, planning . . .” The program advances the University’s mission by “offer[ing] broad-based, inclusive public education, leading edge research, and service to the citizens of Florida and the nation. The fusion of these three endeavors stimulates a remarkable intellectual vitality and generates a synthesis that is the university’s greatest strength.”

B. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

SLO Type	Student Learning Outcome	Assessment Method	Degree Delivery
Knowledge	Apply knowledge of human settlement, historical and contemporary practice, and policy and processes relevant to urban and regional planning concepts and theories.	Each master’s student will demonstrate knowledge through successful completion of foundation/core courses and the remaining curriculum in preparation for conceptualizing, drafting, and defending a thesis or terminal project on a topic in his or her area of expertise as measured by the student’s committee using a common rubric.	Campus/On-line
Skills	Apply oral, written, and critical thinking skills required of master’s students within their area of specialization.	Each master’s student will demonstrate skills through successful completion of foundation/core courses and the remaining curriculum in preparation for conceptualizing, drafting, and defending a thesis or terminal project on a topic in his or her area of expertise as measured by the student’s committee using a common rubric.	Campus/On-line

Professional Behavior	Display ethical behaviors, cultural sensitivity, teamwork, professional conduct and communication.	Students will demonstrate professional behavior through the Internship (measured through their supervisors' evaluations and the Internship Coordinator's review of student essays) and through Urban Planning Project otherwise known as studio (measured through a common rubric applied by faculty and practitioners).	Campus/On-line
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C. Research

The Department of Urban and Regional Planning (URP) offers an accredited Master of Arts in Urban and Regional Planning program that imparts the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for effective professional planning in diverse occupational and institutional settings. For those students capable of pursuing doctoral degrees, prepares them to earn advanced degrees as expected by the University of Florida's status as an AAU institution. Regardless of whether the student ultimately enters the profession or pursues an advanced degree, the program pairs each incoming student with a faculty advisor to guide them from the outset consistent with their educational interests. The student takes a series of core/foundation courses with faculty that require research papers and one that includes quantitative data analysis. In addition, during their second (for students entering in fall semester) or their third (for students entering in spring semester) semester, all students are required to take Planning Research Design. This course instructs students about selecting a thesis or terminal project topic, conducting a literature review, developing appropriate methodologies, analyzing the findings, and making recommendations based on this analysis. As part of the course, the student drafts a proposal that s/he submits to potential committee members among the URP Graduate Research Faculty to communicate their topic and secure their two committee members. These strategies provide a means for students to learn about conducting and drafting their research in preparation for the capstone of their graduate URP program their thesis or terminal project.

D. Assessment Timeline

Program M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning

College of Design, Construction, and Planning

Assessment	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3
SLOs			
Knowledge			
Apply knowledge of human settlement, historical and contemporary practice, and policy and processes relevant to urban and regional planning concepts and theories	Upon completion of each course	Thesis/Terminal Project Defense	
Skills			
Apply oral, written, and critical thinking skills required of master's students within their area of	Upon completion of each course	Thesis/Terminal Project Defense	

specialization			
Professional Behavior			
Display ethical behaviors, cultural sensitivity, teamwork, professional conduct and communication	Upon completion of Planning Administration and Ethics (URP 6061)	Upon completion of Urban Planning Internship (URP 6941)	Upon completion of Urban Planning Project (URP 6341)

E. Assessment Cycle

Use this Assessment Cycle template for your plan. Add or delete rows as needed to accommodate your SLOs.

Assessment Cycle for:

Program M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning
Planning

College of Design, Construction, and

Analysis and Interpretation:

March – May

Program Modifications:

Completed by August 31

Dissemination:

Completed by September 30

SLOs	Year	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
Content Knowledge							
Policy, Theory, and Research Methods			X	X	X	X	X
Skills							
Oral, Written, and Critical Thinking Skills			X	X	X	X	X
Job Placement			X	X	X	X	X
Professional Behavior							
Display ethical behaviors, cultural sensitivity, teamwork, professional conduct and communication			X	X	X	X	X

F. Measurement Tools

Our URP faculty assess student performance in our courses through a variety of internal direct means including exams, papers, presentations, and debates. All students must complete a thesis (on-campus students) or terminal project (on-line students) as an internal direct means to assess their performance in the program, including their knowledge and skills. The URP GRF are working on putting together a formalized rubric to assess these capstone products, although the student's planning knowledge, oral, written, and critical thinking skills are all tested as part of the written and oral exams associated with the thesis or terminal project defense. Our accrediting body, the Planning Accreditation Board, now requires us to track employment rates (external direct measure) one year after graduation, and we began doing so for our 2011 graduates, with reporting beginning in 2012. Regarding the URP 6061 course, successful completion (internal direct measure) is measured through a range of assignments. The Internship or URP 6941 assesses student performance via the employer filling out an intern evaluation form that the intern,

employer, and internship coordinator all sign (external direct measure) with the intern also completing a written report for the Internship Coordinator’s review (internal direct measure). For URP 6341, we are currently working on developing common studio learning outcomes and assessment rubrics, although each class is typically reviewed by a combination of faculty and practitioner juries (external and internal direct measures).

G. Assessment Oversight

Here, list the names and contact information of those who oversee the assessment process in your program. Add or delete rows as needed.

Name	Department Affiliation	Email Address	Phone Number
Kristin Larsen	Urban & Reg. Plng.	klarsen@ufl.edu	392-0997, ext. 433
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Joseli Macedo	Urban & Reg. Plng.	joseli@ufl.edu	392-0997, ext. 461
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Figure 1. University of Florida Graduate/Professional Program Assessment Plan Review Rubric

Related resources are found at <http://www.ua.assessment.edu>

Program:		Year:			
Component	Criterion	Rating			Comments
		Met	Partially Met	Not Met	
Mission Statement	Mission statement is articulated clearly.				
	The program mission clearly supports the College and University missions, and includes specific statements describing how it supports these missions.				
Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Assessment Measures	SLOs are stated clearly.				
	SLOs focus on demonstration of student learning.				
	SLOs are measurable.				
	Measurements are appropriate for the SLO.				
Research	Research expectations for the program are clear, concise, and appropriate for the discipline.				
Assessment Map	The Assessment Map indicates the times in the program where the SLOs are assessed and measured.				
	The Assessment Map identifies the assessments used for each SLO.				
Assessment Cycle	The assessment cycle is clear.				
	All student learning outcomes are measured.				
	Data is collected at least once in the cycle.				
	The cycle includes a date or time period for data analysis and interpretation.				
	The cycle includes a date for planning improvement actions based on the data analysis.				
	The cycle includes a date for dissemination of results to the appropriate stakeholders.				

University of Florida Graduate/Professional Program Assessment Plan Review Rubric, continued

Component	Criterion	Rating			Comments
		Met	Partially Met	Not Met	
Measurement Tools	Measurement tools are described clearly and concisely.				
	Measurements are appropriate for the SLOs.				
	Methods and procedures reflect an appropriate balance of direct and indirect methods.				
	The report presents examples of at least one measurement tool.				
Assessment Oversight	Appropriate personnel (coordinator, committee, etc.) charged with assessment responsibilities are identified				