

Strategic Plan 2014-2019

Masters in Urban and Regional Planning (MURP)

Urban and Regional Planning Program
Michigan State University

Revised November 14th, 2014

Program Vision

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

The **mission** of the Urban & Regional Planning Program is to *prepare students to become practitioners in the planning profession*. This is addressed through three broad themes:

Teaching: To provide future practitioners the knowledge, practical skills, and values to enable them to become effective planners, and to improve the quality of urban places and regions;

Research: To conduct and disseminate research on the “theory and practice” of urban society to plan for more equitable and sustainable communities; and

Outreach: To address community problems by linking knowledge and practice, and facilitating mutual learning between community and university.

Program Goals and Objectives

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.

Objective 1: Consult PAB list of required core knowledge, skills and values.

Objective 2: Conduct gap analysis between existing core list and PAB list.

Objective 3: Develop pre-/post-test (801/894) to assess student learning.

Measures: Take excerpt of AICP exam and test knowledge, skills and values; conduct focus groups to talk about what is planning to get individual assessments; interview/oral exam to measure verbal skills, critical thinking skills, etc.; jury reports on practicum; GPA of graduating students; and a technically written essay.

Goal #2: Enhance the curriculum in advanced technical and practical skills applicable to the planning job market, with an emphasis on research, analysis, and critical thinking skills.

Objective 1: Assess standards and input received regarding curriculum needs.

Objective 2: Consider where suggestions can be incorporated into current curriculum.

Measures: Survey instrument, survey responses, notes from strategic retreat; matrix showing suggested content against existing courses, updated syllabi and course descriptions; and list of gap content and matrix showing potential external sources, conversations with external sources.

Goal #3: Attract and retain a large and diverse MURP student population that meets PAB criteria in terms of size and diversity.

Objective 1: Achieve a reasonable program size and diversity.

Objective 2: Improve student recruitment program.

Measures: Program size, graduate student race demographic information, percent minority students, percent foreign students.

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

Objective 1: Assess faculty productivity.

Objective 2: Consider mechanisms to increase productivity.

Objective 3: Define specific research themes that leverage assets (e.g., focus on positioning Michigan globally, involve more outreach faculty on grants, look for cross-unit and cross-university collaboration on research and grants).

Objective 4: Encourage student-partnered research through employment and assistantships. Source and secure funding for student assistantships

Measures: Productivity (grants, papers), productivity boosting plan, clearly communicated research themes that are publicly available, collaborations.

Goal #5: Foster a sense of community among MSU URP students, alumni and faculty.

Objective 1: Foster an inclusive and active URPSA student organization.

Objective 2: Target communication and professional opportunities around focus areas

Objective 3: Develop a comprehensive communications plan for alumni.

Measures: Increased participation on social media sites; institutionalized student orientation; curriculum guide; increased student and alumni awareness of programmatic information; increased support from School, Dean, President; UP advisory group meets each semester; SPDC board has alumni representatives; communications plan and products; and updated website.