

# Urban and Regional Planning

## Director

- Charles E. Connerly

**Graduate degrees:** M.A. in urban and regional planning; M.S. in urban and regional planning

**Faculty:** <https://www.urban.uiowa.edu/faculty-and-staff>

**Website:** <https://www.urban.uiowa.edu>

Urban and regional planning encompasses the development and implementation of public policies that improve the quality of life in cities and regions. Today's planners find themselves in demand for such diverse jobs as sustainability coordinator and planner, environmental analyst with a natural resources agency, land use planner, transportation planner, community development planner, community organizer, economic development planner, recycling coordinator, planning director, neighborhood planner, state legislative analyst, planning consultant, and nonprofit project manager or director.

## Related Certificate: Transportation Studies

The Transportation Studies Program offers the Certificate in Transportation Studies, which requires 18 s.h. of graduate credit. The program focuses on the varied and complex problems of transportation and on interdisciplinary approaches to addressing them. The Departments of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, and Geographical and Sustainability Sciences and the School of Urban and Regional Planning participate in the program.

The certificate is coordinated by the School of Urban and Regional Planning. See Transportation Studies for more information about the certificate.

## Programs

### Graduate Programs of Study

#### Majors

- Master of Arts in Urban and Regional Planning
- Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning

## Courses

### Urban and Regional Planning Courses

**URP:2013 Introduction to Sustainability** arr.  
Introduction to sustainability knowledge, skills, and habits as a means to shape one's vision of a sustainable citizen; emphasis on basic skills of literacy, applied math, and finding information; traditional sustainability knowledge areas related to society, economy, and environment; intersecting themes (e.g., informed consumerism, eco-economics, and livable environments). Same as BUS:2013, GEOG:2013.

**URP:3001 Planning Livable Cities** 3 s.h.  
Development of livable cities in the United States; economic, physical, environmental, and political forces that shape their growth; impact of planning, how it shapes the future of cities. Same as GEOG:3920.

**URP:3134 Regional and Urban Economics** 3 s.h.  
Theory of location and regional development; central place theory; why cities exist and trade with one another; models of land use patterns, rents; empirical tests of models; policy applications. Prerequisites: ECON:1100. Same as ECON:3640.

**URP:3135 Environmental and Natural Resource Economics** 3 s.h.  
Environmental and resource use problems; efficient mechanisms and other policies for environmental protection, management of common property resources. Prerequisites: ECON:1100. Same as ECON:3625.

**URP:3136 Development of Local and Regional Economies** 3 s.h.  
Theories, methods, and public policy in regional economic development; business and industrial locations; theories of regional growth and development; tools for regional economic analysis; technology and knowledge economy; globalization and trade; economic development finance and policy. Prerequisites: ECON:1100. Same as ECON:3610.

**URP:3142 Provost's Global Forum: Women's Health and the Environment - Going Up In Smoke** 1 s.h.  
Focus on several major dimensions of the cookstove problem: global and local costs, environmental and personal harms of continued use of traditional wood-burning cookstoves; historical, social, cultural, and symbolic elements of traditional cooking technology; challenges of developing durable, cheap, and easy-to-repair improved cookstoves; social, cultural, economic, political, and gender dimensions of technology change around cooking—a very personal and intimate aspect of daily life.

**URP:3350 Transportation Economics** 3 s.h.  
Overview of transportation markets—intercity, rural, urban; transportation modes—rail, highway, air, water, pipeline, transit; issues in finance, policy, planning, management, physical distribution, and environmental, economic, and safety regulation. Recommendations: ECON:1100 and ECON:1200. Same as ECON:3750, GEOG:3940.

**URP:3360 Urban Transportation** arr.  
Transportation in the urban market; urban transport modes, technologies, costs, pricing, and ways to develop and analyze urban policy in order to promote city livability and sustainability; development of urban transportation and transport operations in the U.S. and worldwide; urban transport policies, plans, and policy development processes; major urban transportation issues, investigation of possible means of attacking urban transportation issues. Prerequisites: ECON:1100. Same as ECON:3770.

**URP:4170 Megacities Seminar** 1-3 s.h.  
Global historical, political, economic, urban, and cultural aspects of megacity development; planning methods to address contemporary and emerging issues; critical analysis of peer-reviewed literature and computational simulations; topics include urban sprawl, poverty and inequality, economies, food scarcity, population growth, governance models, environmental and health concerns, sustainability.

**URP:4195 Public Transit Operations and Planning 3 s.h.**

Bus, light and heavy rail, and paratransit modes; transit operations, planning, modeling and optimization, transit agency economics, transit finance, and evolving transportation policy; skills essential to planners and engineers who intend to work for a either planning agency, transportation provider, or a transportation or planning consulting firm; individual and group projects involving transit operations. Requirements: undergraduate or graduate standing in engineering, or graduate standing in urban and regional planning. Same as CEE:4167.

**URP:4262 Transportation Demand Analysis 3 s.h.**

City planning procedures and traffic engineering techniques applied to transportation problems; trip generation, distribution, assignment, mode choice models; travel surveys, data collection techniques; arterial flow, intersection performance, parking; transit system analysis. Same as CEE:4176.

**URP:4750 Environmental Impact Analysis 4 s.h.**

In-depth exposure to the history and evolution of the U.S. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process; discussion of major court cases; ecological, economic, and political aspects of current environmental controversies; exposure to real-world scenarios that are crucial to understanding the EIA process in action; field trips to six or seven environmental control facilities in Iowa City and neighboring areas. Prerequisites: GEOG:1070. Same as GEOG:4750.

**URP:4752 Eight Generational Planning: Envisioning Cities for Year 2228 3 s.h.**

Star Trek tells us that Captain Kirk will be born in Iowa in 2228, what should cities look like in that year? Students envision and design great regenerative cities in the age of Anthropocene—the period we are in which features substantial human influence on climate and the environment; exploration of contemporary philosophies and urban strategies for sustainability, resilience, post-scarcity abundance, human well-being, social inclusiveness, and justice in an era of rapid changes in society, technology, climate, and environment.

**URP:5678 Application Simulation to Transportation 3 s.h.**

Transportation system management and traffic engineering; application of real-time simulation and visualization. Prerequisites: CEE:3763 or CEE:4763. Same as CEE:5678.

**URP:6200 Analytic Methods in Planning I 1-3 s.h.**

Methods used in planning and policy analysis; emphasis on application of statistical techniques and quantitative reasoning to planning problems; use of computers and data systems in planning analysis.

**URP:6201 Analytic Methods in Planning II 3 s.h.**

Integration of methods with the planning process; application of multiple regression, population estimation and projection, survey methods, time series analysis, industrial growth and change; presentation of results to decision makers and the public. Prerequisites: URP:6200.

**URP:6202 Land Use Planning: Law and Practice 4 s.h.**

Legal, social foundations of land use planning; comprehensive planning, zoning and subdivision review; legal aspects of land use, environmental planning; ordinance drafting; staff report writing; citizen participation.

**URP:6203 History and Theories of Planning 3 s.h.**

History of urban planning in America as a reflection of social and economic forces; alternative planning philosophies, roles, and ethical choices open to planners. Same as HIST:6203.

**URP:6205 Economics for Urban Planners 3 s.h.**

Principles of economics for planners; concepts and techniques of microeconomic analysis; income inequality; the role of government in the economy; tax and pricing policy; project evaluation; externalities.

**URP:6208 Program Seminar in Planning Practice 1 s.h.**

Planning process, roles of planners, professional ethics and standards.

**URP:6209 Field Problems in Planning I 3 s.h.**

Experience working on a two-semester project involving a current planning issue, usually for a client. Requirements: urban and regional planning graduate standing.

**URP:6210 Field Problems in Planning II 3 s.h.**

Continuation of URP:6209. Prerequisites: URP:6209. Requirements: urban and regional planning graduate standing.

**URP:6211 Community Outreach Practicum 1-3 s.h.**

Application of planning skills to community work by non-profit organizations in local area; urban planners contributing to their communities; community outreach.

**URP:6225 Applied GIS for Planners 3 s.h.**

Analysis of Census of Population data using GIS software; data and analytical needs of urban planners; coverage of GIS topics to plan functions of GIS and spatial analysis, varied GIS software in a planning organization; structure of the Census.

**URP:6227 Spatial Analysis in Planning 3 s.h.**

Databases, GIS, planning support systems; spatial model building and use of spatial statistics; applications to substantive problems in transportation, environment, housing, economic development. Recommendations: completion of an introductory GIS course.

**URP:6228 GIS for Local Government 1 s.h.**

Development, maintenance, and operation of an enterprise-wide Geographic Information System (GIS); implementation of a parcel-based data system model common to government entities; practical experience using data for land-use planning analysis.

**URP:6229 Practicum 5 s.h.**

Full-time internship of at least five months with a planning-related organization. Requirements: urban and regional planning graduate standing.

**URP:6233 Financing Local Government 3 s.h.**

Financing of local government infrastructure through property taxes, bonding, impact fees, pricing, tax increment financing; institutional alternatives—downtown improvement districts, special districts, homeowners' associations; fiscal disparities and regional finance. Prerequisites: URP:6205.

**URP:6235 Geodatabases and GIS 1 s.h.**

Geodatabase implementation in the management of large GIS data sets. Prerequisites: URP:6225.

**URP:6242 Planning and City Administration 1 s.h.**

Relationship of planners and other local government personnel; how planning fits into city management; city management view of local political process, provision of city services, finance and budgeting, human resources, intergovernmental relations, how meetings are run, dealing with the public.

**URP:6243 The Land Development Process 3 s.h.**

How land is developed; analysis of site suitability, preparation of subdivision plan, site plan review, development approval process, infrastructure and site preparation, negotiating local development politics; field trips. Prerequisites: URP:6202.

- URP:6245 Growth Management** 3 s.h.  
Causes and consequences of urban sprawl, shortfalls in conventional land use planning; local and state growth management policies, techniques of policy implementation, positive and negative impacts of such policies; Smart Growth; emerging challenges. Prerequisites: URP:6202.
- URP:6249 Sustainability Seminar** 1 s.h.  
Focus of increasing interest for planning students and practicing planners; involves environmental effects, economy, social justice; discussion and investigation of sustainability practice applied to local and regional efforts of public and private entities; greater awareness and understanding of the effectiveness and resource requirements of local activities addressing sustainability; presentations by the instructor, local tours, guest lectures.
- URP:6253 Designing Sustainable and Healthy Cities** 3 s.h.  
Principles and practical elements of urban design for sustainable and healthy cities; general urban design background for policy makers and planners; impacts of urban design for environmental sustainability and for community health and well-being; physical, mental, social, and environmental health as they are affected by urban form, air and water quality, green spaces and climate change impacts.
- URP:6256 Environmental Policy** 3 s.h.  
Environmental policy formation and politics; comparative international perspective on the United States' experience.
- URP:6257 Environmental Management** 3 s.h.  
Environmental best management practices for sustainable management of natural resources; open space and habitat protection, prairie and wetland restoration, water supplies management, natural hazard mitigation, farmland protection.
- URP:6258 Modeling Dynamic Systems** 3 s.h.  
Nonlinear dynamics in human-environment relationships; quantitative modeling of global environment processes; environment modeling for policy and land use planning; introduction to fundamentals of linked global-scale environment processes from a systems perspective, focus on historical and contemporary role of human activities in altering flows of energy and mass within the Earth system; hands-on simulation and group games to understand feedback loops in complex systems, with applications to land use, water, climate, ecosystems, and nutrient cycles across time and spatial scales; emphasis on quantifying effects of policies and planning on environmental change.
- URP:6260 Transportation Policy and Planning** 3 s.h.  
Institutional setting for transportation planning, evolution of domestic transportation policy, international influences, transportation modes and markets, current sources of transportation planning information, emerging policy issues.
- URP:6264 Transportation Planning Process** 2-3 s.h.  
Technical issues, political interface, citizen involvement, intermodal questions, public versus private roles; review and critique of transportation plans.
- URP:6265 Planning Sustainable Transportation** 2-4 s.h.  
Theories and methods of exerting public control over passenger and freight transportation; social and environmental regulation; effects of changing finance, regulation, and pricing policies, including privatization, tolls, impact fees. Same as GEOG:6264.
- URP:6266 Transportation and Land Use Planning** 3 s.h.  
Policies and interactions between transportation and land use; location theories and practices; transportation infrastructure, land use, travel behavior modeling; current policies that influence travel behavior and urban form.
- URP:6268 Freight Transportation Planning** 3-4 s.h.  
Freight transportation planning in the United States; surface modes, primarily trucking and rail, as well as trade-offs in bulk movements by inland waterways and pipelines; comparison with recent developments in policy, planning, and practice for surface transportation in other developed economies (e.g., Europe).
- URP:6269 Transportation Program Seminar** 1 s.h.  
Transportation finance, safety and economic regulation, planning processes, management, government policy issues at federal, state, and local levels.
- URP:6271 Housing Policy** 3 s.h.  
Recent housing policy initiatives at federal, state, and local levels.
- URP:6273 Community Development in the Upper Midwest** 3 s.h.  
Examination of issues, challenges, and possible solutions confronting small-to-medium sized towns, typically under 50,000 people, in Iowa and elsewhere in the Upper Midwest (Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota); students and faculty partner with an Iowa community to develop ideas and plans for community revitalization.
- URP:6277 Affordable Housing Finance** 3 s.h.  
Financing development or rehabilitation of affordable housing; low-income housing tax credits, the housing finance system and current regulatory issues, mortgage discrimination, improving financing for rental housing.
- URP:6278 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness I** 3 s.h.  
Operational and financing aspects of nonprofit management; mission and governance of organization; strategic planning for effective management, including finance, budget, income generation, fund-raising. Same as HMP:6360, LAW:8751, MGMT:9150, RELS:6070, SPST:6010, SSW:6247.
- URP:6279 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness II** 3 s.h.  
Qualities for leadership of nonprofit organizations, including relationships with staff and volunteers; relationship of nonprofit and outside world; marketing, public relations, advocacy strategies for nonprofits. Requirements: for LAW:8752—LAW:8751; for HMP:6365—HMP:6360 or MGMT:9150. Same as HMP:6365, LAW:8752, MGMT:9160, RELS:6075, SPST:6020, SSW:6248.
- URP:6280 Planning for Disaster Mitigation and Recovery** 2-3 s.h.  
Types of disasters that communities face; what role planners play, what role should they play; importance of hazard mitigation and planning for post-disaster recovery; where planners' unique skills play the most significant roles in aiding a community to redesign a safer future.
- URP:6282 Grant Writing** 1-2 s.h.  
Same as SSW:6282.
- URP:6290 Economic Impact Assessment** 3 s.h.  
Economic impact and growth analysis, including economic base, income expenditure, input-output analysis; use of economic impact analysis in a cost-benefit context; industrial location and mobility theory with statistics applications. Prerequisites: URP:6205.

**URP:6295 Economic Development Policy** 3 s.h.

Analysis of policies and programs at national, regional, state, and local levels that address problems of economic growth, development, decline.

**URP:6297 Economic Development Finance** 3 s.h.

Business financial statements and evaluation of loan proposals; small business finance including financing working capital, fixed assets, and real estate; economic development agencies and institutions; and case studies of economic development financing. Prerequisites: URP:6205.

**URP:6305 Readings** arr.

**URP:6315 Independent Study in Planning** 1-6 s.h.

Research and analysis of a special planning problem; opportunity to apply knowledge in area of specialization.

**URP:6320 Introduction to Graphic Communications** 2 s.h.

Visual communication techniques through use of print and digital media; how to graphically convey concepts and information to a variety of audiences; basic design principles to build a foundation in graphic communication; relationships between various software packages; advantages and shortcomings of various digital tools; development of professional graphic media that is beautiful and effective.

**URP:6325 Thesis: Urban and Regional Planning** arr.

**URP:6330 Developing Graphic Content** 1 s.h.

Skills necessary to develop graphic content utilized by professionals in the field of urban and regional planning; students learn to use programs such as SketchUp, LayOut, Google Earth, and Lumion; produce maps, diagrams, experiential perspectives, renderings, and other visuals; and convey a variety of ideas pertaining to the urban environment.

**URP:6335 Internship** 2 s.h.

Work in a planning or related agency or nonprofit organization.

**URP:6400 Sustainable Development: The Kerala Experience** 3 s.h.

Exploration of student interests in social entrepreneurship, global health, microfinance, cultural production, environmental sustainability, or other development issues in India; varied disciplinary perspectives (i.e., public health, business, social work, geography, art); student work with Indian NGOs employing a diverse variety of techniques to address social problems such as child labor, health care for the poor, illiteracy, and disability services. Winter session.