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: http://urban.uiowa.edu/faculty-and-staff
Web site: http://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.

Graduate Programs of Study

• Master of Arts in urban and regional planning
• Master of Science in urban and regional planning

The Master of Arts and Master of Science are two-year degree programs fully accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board. Each is built on the premise that planners must be educated in methods of policy analysis and that there is a common body of knowledge, represented in the core curriculum, that provides a solid foundation for all specializations in the field.

A wide range of educational backgrounds provide good preparation for graduate study in urban and regional planning. Students with undergraduate majors such as geography, economics, English, political science, engineering, architecture, sociology, urban studies, and history currently study in the school. More than 50 full-time students and a few part-time students are enrolled. About half of them are women, and about 10 percent are international students.

The common core of courses and the design of the facilities allow students to get to know each other quickly. Students interact closely with faculty members in the classroom, in informal conversation, and while working on research projects.

Recent graduates of the school have taken positions with city, metropolitan, and regional planning agencies, state and federal government, nonprofit organizations, and private consulting firms. They work in all geographic regions of the United States and in countries around the world.

Graduate students working toward a master’s degree in urban and regional planning may elect to pursue one of the joint degree programs offered by the school in collaboration with the College of Engineering, the College of Law, the College of Public Health, and the School of Social Work. The school also participates in the Transportation Studies Program, which offers a graduate certificate. See “Joint Degrees” and “Related Certificate: Transportation Studies” below.

Master of Arts, Master of Science

The Master of Arts and Master of Science programs in urban and regional planning require 50 s.h. of graduate credit. The graduate curriculum is based on the philosophy that planners must develop the theoretical and analytic skills that will permit them to analyze social problems and evaluate public policies. Planners also must cultivate professional skills such as report writing, oral presentation, computer use, and team management in order to work effectively in various organizational and political environments.

Work for the master’s degree includes core courses, an area of concentration, electives, and capstone courses. A final examination is required for both degrees. A thesis is not required, although students may petition to write one. Students are encouraged to complete an approved internship or practicum.

All students must complete a minimum of 38 s.h. of planning courses (prefix URP). Students must earn a grade of B-minus or higher in all core and concentration area courses and must maintain an overall graduate g.p.a. of at least 3.00.

The M.A. and M.S. in urban and regional planning require the following work.

CORE CURRICULUM

The core curriculum helps students develop an understanding of the institutions—social, economic, political, administrative, and legal systems—that provide the context for policy analysis and that constrain public choices. It also promotes development of the ability to identify social goals and normative criteria for evaluating public policies, as well as the analytic skills to perform such investigations.

The core requires a total of 23 s.h., including at least 3 s.h. in an advanced economic methods course. The advanced economics methods course usually is taken during the first three semesters. Early core courses are drawn primarily from traditional disciplines, particularly economics and statistics, and include an introduction to land use planning and to theories and practice of planning. As students proceed through the curriculum, increasing emphasis is placed on the development of critical judgment and insight, achieved through the application of theory and methods to realistic planning problems and case studies.

The core curriculum includes the following courses; students may request a waiver of selected core courses on the basis of previous course work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URP:6200</td>
<td>Analytic Methods in Planning I</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URP:6201</td>
<td>Analytic Methods in Planning II</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>URP:6202</td>
<td>Land Use Planning: Law and Practice</td>
<td>4 s.h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>URP:6203</td>
<td>History and Theories of Planning</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>URP:6205</td>
<td>Economics for Urban Planners</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>URP:6208</td>
<td>Program Seminar in Planning Practice</td>
<td>1 s.h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>URP:6258</td>
<td>Modeling Dynamic Systems</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
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Advanced economic methods—at least one of these:
URP:6233 Financing Local Government 3 s.h.
URP:6290 Economic Impact Assessment 3 s.h.

CONCENTRATION AREA
Beginning in the second semester, students choose a concentration area and develop it by applying the concepts and skills developed in the core. Currently, the school's faculty and course offerings support five concentration areas: transportation planning, housing and community development, economic development, land use and environmental planning, and geographic information systems.

Students complete at least 9 s.h. of courses in their concentration area. Courses offered by other University departments and programs may supplement those offered by the School of Urban and Regional Planning.

Students may combine two concentration areas. Examples of combined areas are environmental and economic development planning, and transportation and community development planning. Students also may design other concentration areas, subject to faculty approval. For example, they may specialize in health services planning with appropriate course work in the Department of Health Management and Policy or Occupational and Environmental Health, or in human services planning with courses in the School of Social Work.

CAPSTONE COURSES
Students complete the following two capstone courses, usually during the third and fourth semesters. Students who complete a practicum are exempt from this requirement.

URP:6209 Field Problems in Planning I 3 s.h.
URP:6210 Field Problems in Planning II 3 s.h.

INTERNSHIP
Students are encouraged to complete an internship in a planning agency or related organization. To earn 2 s.h. of credit for the internship, students must submit a brief paper summarizing and evaluating their experience. Internships usually are paid staff positions and are completed during the summer between the first and second years or during the academic year.

PRACTICUM
An extended internship, consisting of at least five months of full-time employment in a planning-related organization, may qualify as a practicum. A practicum generally takes place during summer after the first year and into the fall semester of the second year. It carries 5 s.h. of credit and substitutes for the internship and the capstone courses.

THESIS
A thesis is not required, although students may petition to write one. Students may register for up to 6 s.h. of thesis credit. In addition, they may take up to 8 s.h. of readings to develop a thesis topic and prepare a literature review.

FINAL EXAM
A final examination is required for all M.A. and M.S. students. An oral exam constitutes the final exam for students who do not write a thesis.

TYPICAL MASTER’S DEGREE SCHEDULE
First semester:

Second semester:

URP:6200 Analytic Methods in Planning I 3 s.h.
URP:6202 Land Use Planning: Law and Practice 4 s.h.
URP:6203 History and Theories of Planning 3 s.h.
URP:6205 Economics for Urban Planners 3 s.h.
URP:6208 Program Seminar in Planning Practice 1 s.h.

Electives and area of concentration courses 6-9 s.h.

Third semester:

URP:6201 Analytic Methods in Planning II 3 s.h.
Economic methods core course 3 s.h.
Electives and area of concentration courses 3-6 s.h.

Fourth semester:

URP:6210 Field Problems in Planning II 3 s.h.
Electives and area of concentration courses 9 s.h.

Joint Degrees
The School of Urban and Regional Planning participates in several joint degree programs, in which students work toward an M.A. or M.S. in urban and regional planning at the same time they work toward another degree. Joint degree programs enable students to earn both degrees in less time than it would take to earn the two degrees separately. The following joint degree programs are available:

Joint B.S.E. in civil engineering/M.A. or M.S. in urban and regional planning; see Bachelor of Science in Engineering and Civil and Environmental Engineering (College of Engineering) for information about the Bachelor of Science in Engineering.

Joint J.D./M.A. or M.S. in urban and regional planning; see College of Law for information about the Juris Doctor.

Joint M.H.A./M.A. or M.S. in urban and regional planning; see Health Management and Policy (College of Public Health) for information about the Master of Health Administration.

Joint M.S. in occupational and environmental health/ M.A. or M.S. in urban and regional planning; see Occupational and Environmental Health (College of Public Health) for information about the Master of Science in occupational and environmental health.

Joint M.S.W./M.A. or M.S. in urban and regional planning; see Social Work (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences) for information about the Master of Social Work.

Requirements for each joint degree program can vary, but urban and regional planning requirements in each program include completion of at least 38 s.h. in School of Urban and Regional Planning courses (prefix URP), with all core, capstone, and required courses; 9 s.h. of a concentration; and the master's degree final examination. In all cases, joint degree programs require at least 60 s.h. of credit.
Students who wish to enter a joint degree program must apply to each of the two degree programs separately; they must be admitted to both programs before they may be admitted to the joint program. Contact the admissions coordinator at the School of Urban and Regional Planning for more information about joint degree programs.

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, which is administered by the Graduate College and the University's Public Policy Center. See Transportation Studies (Graduate College) in the Catalog for more information about the certificate.

Admission

Admission to the School of Urban and Regional Planning is open to students from any undergraduate major or concentration area.

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College.

Admission is based on Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores (verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing), letters of recommendation, previous academic performance, and a written statement of purpose. International applicants whose first language is not English are required to submit official TOEFL scores.

Applicants should submit an application form, GRE General Test scores, TOEFL score (for students whose first language is not English), recommendation letters, statement of purpose, and transcripts. For fall admission, applications should be submitted to arrive early in the year (preferably by January 15), although applications are accepted until July 15 (April 15 for international students). Applications for spring admission should be received by October 1 and no later than December 1. Fall admission is strongly preferred. Students applying for financial aid should submit their materials by January 15.

Financial Support

Students in the School of Urban and Regional Planning receive financial support from the program primarily from teaching or research assistantships and from contract or grant-funded assistantships. Assistantships typically require 10 hours of work per week under the direction of a faculty member. A few full or partial tuition scholarships also are available.

Students initiate applications for financial support, and awards are made on the basis of merit, experience, and interests. Assistantships may be renewed for a total of up to four semesters.

Students applying for financial support are encouraged to submit application materials and requests for support by January 15. Students who apply after that date are considered only as remaining funds permit. Financial support usually is not available for students beginning the program in the spring semester.

Courses

**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 and ECON:1200. 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 and ECON:1200. 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. Recommendations: introductory microeconomics. Same as ECON:3610.

**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 GEOG:3940, ECON:3750.

**URP:4150 Water Resource Economics** 3 s.h.
Common world water scarcity and water quality issues; economics that provide valuable insights and tools and help contribute solutions to problems; surface water allocation, ground water allocation, surface water quality issues derived from point and nonpoint source pollutants, and water demand; linear and nonlinear programming, cost-benefit analysis, regression analysis (emphasis on maximum likelihood estimation), and cost avoidance techniques.

**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.
Environmental impact assessment methodologies; emphasis on cost-benefit-risk, cost-effectiveness and incremental analysis, and overlay and graphic techniques; optimal resource use, system simulation; field trips to local environmental control facilities. Prerequisites: GEOG:1070. Same as GEOG:4750.

URP:6063 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:6763.

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 2-3 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:6216 Conflict, Negotiation, and Planning 3 s.h.
Conflict within communities, and planners' responses; networking, negotiating, mediating, coalition building, consensus building; case studies, role playing.

URP:6222 Urban Design for Non-Designers 3 s.h.
Principles of urban design and the importance of good, well thought out urban design; background in urban design for policy planners and non-designers; past, present, and future of urban design.

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.
Data bases, GIS, planning support systems; spatial model building and use of spatial statistics; applications to substantive problems in transportation, environment, housing, economic development. Prerequisites: URP:6225.

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:6230 Virtual Reality and Urban Development 3 s.h.
Creation of terrain models from DEMs and CAD-based site plans, panoramas, incorporation of existing and proposed buildings into virtual reality models; use of VRML and presentation strategies, including digital movies.

**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; case studies. 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 Healthy Cities and the Environment** 3 s.h.
Foundations of environmental planning for healthy cities and communities; how urban form, air and water quality, and natural hazards affect environmental planning and health.

**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; environmental 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 3 s.h.
Community Development Corporation involvement in housing and neighborhood revitalization; infill housing development and preservation; comprehensive community development initiatives.

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.

URP:6279 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness II 3 s.h.

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:6284 Green Building and LEED 1-2 s.h.
Preparation to earn LEED Green Associate professional credential; introduction to green building concepts and strategies as they relate to the United States Green Building Council’s (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.

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 Community Development Finance 3 s.h.
Financial statements and small business finance; local revolving loan funds for small businesses; evaluation of loan proposals; community development agency financing of commercial redevelopment; case studies of community development lending. 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:6335 Internship 2 s.h.
Work in a planning or related agency or nonprofit organization.

URP:6337 Poverty, Planning, and Public Policy 3 s.h.
Interconnectedness of causes of poverty; operation and outcomes of federal and state antipoverty programs; impact of local planning policies and programs on low income population; ways in which planners in public agencies or advocacy organizations can work to alleviate poverty.

URP:6400 Eco-Sensitive, Low-Cost Housing: The Kerala Experience 3 s.h.
Though quality housing is a basic human need, families worldwide don’t have it; significant socioeconomic, physical, and financial problems; scale of housing shortage greater in developing countries where governments and nonprofits are forced to devise ingenious, eco-sensitive, lower-cost development techniques; opportunity to visit India and learn about many such innovations; challenges of economic development, environmental protection, culture, politics, and uneven geography of opportunity in a developing country.