Urban and Regional Planning, M.S.

The M.S. in urban and regional planning is a two-year degree program fully accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board. It 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 environmental policy and planning, architecture, anthropology, public policy, geographic information science, business administration, economics, engineering, communication studies, finance, geography, education, marketing, political science, sociology, history, journalism, and English currently study in the school.

With an increasingly diverse student body and a low student-faculty ratio, the School of Planning and Public Affairs is committed to creating an environment that is inclusive and welcoming of all students. Approximately 26 full-time students and some part-time students are enrolled, and about 26 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. Students and faculty also collaborate in the second year capstone courses, URP:6209 Field Problems in Planning I and URP:6210 Field Problems in Planning II, to prepare plans and reports for communities throughout Iowa. This work is supported by the University's Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities, which was created by the School of Planning and Public Affairs.

Graduate students working toward a master's degree in urban and regional planning may elect to pursue one of the combined degree programs offered by the school in collaboration with the College of Engineering, the College of Law, the College of Public Health, the Department of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences, and the School of Social Work.