

STUDENT MANUAL

School of Planning and Public Affairs

The University of Iowa

2021-22 Academic Year

SELECTED DEADLINES

2021-22 Academic Year

August 23-27	Add, drop, or change existing registration on MyUI.
August 27	First semester course waiver requests due.
August 30	Change of Registration Forms must be processed at the Registrar's Service Center beginning today.
September 3	Last day for graduate students to register late, add courses, or change S-U status.
September 7	\$100 late registration fee charge in affect. Must have dean's approval to register.
October 1	Summer internship papers due to advisor for course credit in the fall semester.
October 1	Summer internship evaluation forms with employer's signature due to administrative services coordinator for fall credit.
October 1	Deadline for degree applications for December graduation.
October 12	Plans of Study Summary Form and final exam requests for Dec. graduates due in Graduate College.
November 1	Plan of Study/MyPlan, Area of Concentration form, and Progress Self-Evaluation must have been approved by advisor.
November 1	Deadline for first-year students to submit Application for Transportation Certificate .
November 8-19	Spring early registration
November 9	Last day for graduate students to withdraw or drop courses. Last day to submit work to faculty for removal of incompletes.
November 29	Final exam reports due in Graduate College.
December 6	Single thesis deposit due in Graduate College.
December 17	Deadline for advisors to put signed summer internship evaluations into the student electronic files.
January 18-24	Add, drop, or change existing registration on MyUI.
January 25	Change of Registration Forms must be processed at the Registrar's Service Center beginning today.
January 31	Last day for graduate students to register late, add courses, or change S-U status.
February 1	Fall and summer semester internship papers due to advisor for credit in the spring semester.
February 1	Fall and summer internship evaluation forms with employer's signature due to administrative services coordinator for spring credit.
February 1	\$100 late registration fee charge in affect. Must have Dean's approval to register.
February 21	Two-page student paper for URP oral exam due to examining panel
February 25	Deadline for degree applications for May graduation.
February 25	Deadline for second-year students to submit Transportation Certificate Completion form.
Feb. 28-Mar. 11	Final oral examinations for May URP graduates.
March 8	Plans of Study Summary Form and final exam requests for May graduates due in Graduate College.
March 28	Two-page student paper for MPA oral exam due to examining panel
April 1	Plan of Study/MyPlan, Area of Concentration form and Progress Self-Evaluation must have been approved by advisor (for students who began in Spring semester).
April 1	Deadline for advisors to put signed Fall and summer internship evaluations into the student's file
April	Fall early registration (date not available at time of publication)
April 4-8	Final oral examinations for May MPA graduates
April 12	Last day for graduate students to withdraw or drop courses. Last day to submit work to faculty for removal of incompletes.
April 15	Spring semester and academic year internship papers due to advisor (for May graduation).
April 15	Spring semester and academic year internship evaluation forms with employer's signature due to administrative services coordinator for spring credit.
April 19	Final exam reports due in Graduate College.
April 26	Single thesis deposit due in Graduate College.
May 13	Deadline for advisors to put signed spring semester and academic year internship evaluations into the student files.
May 13	Graduate College Commencement - 7:00 p.m. at Carver Hawkeye Arena

PREFACE

The purpose of this student manual is to provide answers to questions that could arise during a student's period of study in The School of Planning and Public Affairs (SPPA) at the University of Iowa. It includes information on a wide range of students' potential concerns and questions and provides a detailed explanation of program requirements and applicable policies. This manual should be consulted whenever questions on these matters arise.

This manual should allay any doubts and prevent possible misconceptions about students' obligations and rights. Any questions not answered by the manual should be referred to a student's advisor or to the School Director. SPPA faculty and staff stand ready to assist students in any way we can.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF POLICIES

The policies contained in this manual are effective and binding for all students in the school who commence their studies during the 2021-22 academic year. Students who enrolled in a prior year are normally bound by the policies that were in effect at the time they entered the program. They should refer to the **Student Manual** for the year they entered the program, during their entire period of enrollment. All relevant versions of the Student Manual are available on the SPPA website under [Current Students](#).

When policies involving students change, students already enrolled have the option to continue under the previous policies (in place when they joined SPPA) or to follow the new ones. Such policies include those pertaining to areas of concentration, final examinations, theses, and academic performance. Any questions about which policies are applicable, or what options exist for a student entering the School at any specific time, should be addressed to the student's advisor or to the director.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SELECTED DEADLINES	I
PREFACE	I
EFFECTIVE DATE OF POLICIES	I
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND JUSTICE	5
SPPA’S PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY	5
NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT	7
NON DISCRIMINATION IN THE CLASSROOM.....	7
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS.....	7
BRINGING FORTH A COMPLAINT	8
STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING	9
ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	9
COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES	10
POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT	12
COPING WITH GRADUATE STUDY, STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES.....	13
POLICY ON SMOKING.....	14
GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION	15
ORIENTATION, PLAN OF STUDY/MY PLAN AND ADVISING.....	15
BEST PRACTICES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS AND THEIR ADVISORS	17
CREDIT FOR COURSES TAKEN PRIOR TO ENROLLMENT	19
UNDERGRADUATE COURSES TAKEN FOR GRADUATE CREDIT.....	21
ASSISTANTSHIPS.....	22
GRADING AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	24
<i>Minimum Grades</i>	24
<i>Incomplete Courses</i>	24
<i>Cheating and Plagiarism</i>	26
<i>Student Appeals Procedure</i>	29
<i>Committee on Progress</i>	30
<i>Conditional Status</i>	30
FINAL EXAMINATION	31
SPPA RESOURCES	32
CAREER ASSISTANCE	32
FACILITIES.....	34
<i>Computer Facilities</i>	34
<i>Student Use of Equipment, Supplies and Drafting Room</i>	36
<i>Personal Effects</i>	37
STUDENT TRAVEL	38
<i>SPPA Support for Student Travel</i>	38
<i>UI Sources of Support for Travel</i>	40

JIM HARRIS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	41
STUDENT ORGANIZATION AND INPUT	42
SCHOOL OF PLANNING AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS STUDENT ASSOCIATION.....	42
STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES.....	42
REPRESENTATIVES IN CAMPUS-WIDE ORGANIZATIONS	42
SPPA STUDENTS CAN RUN FOR POSITIONS IN THE VARIOUS COMMITTEES OF THE UI GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT GOVERNMENT WHICH ADVOCATES FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS.....	42
EVALUATIONS OF COURSES BY STUDENTS	43
EXIT SURVEY	43
MASTER OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING.....	44
URP VISION/MISSION STATEMENT	45
THE PLANNING PROGRAM.....	45
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	46
CURRICULUM: OVERVIEW AND REQUIRED COURSES	47
<i>Required Courses</i>	47
<i>Waiver of Core Course Requirements</i>	48
<i>Grades in Required Courses</i>	49
ELECTIVES OUTSIDE OF AREAS OF CONCENTRATION.....	50
AREAS OF CONCENTRATION.....	51
<i>Economic Development</i>	52
<i>Geographic Information Systems</i>	53
<i>Housing and Community Development</i>	54
<i>Land Use and Environmental Planning</i>	55
<i>Transportation</i>	57
COMBINED DEGREE PROGRAMS.....	59
<i>Graduate-to-Graduate Degrees</i>	61
<i>Undergraduate-to-Graduate (U2G) Degrees</i>	70
FIELD PROBLEMS	74
THESIS.....	76
MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT.....	78
ESSENTIAL QUALITIES FOR PLANNERS AND POLICY MAKERS.....	80
INTERNSHIPS	82
PRACTICUM.....	84
<i>Practicum for Those in Combined Program with Social Work</i>	85
AICP OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARD.....	86
MASTER OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS	87
MASTER OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS VISION/MISSION STATEMENT	88
THE MPA PROGRAM.....	89
DEGREE OBJECTIVE, GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS, AND CURRICULUM.....	90

REQUIRED COURSES.....	91
<i>Required Courses</i>	91
<i>Sequence of Required Courses</i>	92
<i>Waiver of Core Course Requirements</i>	93
<i>Grades in Required Courses</i>	93
AREAS OF CONCENTRATION	94
<i>Public and Nonprofit Management</i>	95
<i>Public Policy</i>	96
COMBINED DEGREE PROGRAMS	98
<i>Graduate-to-Graduate Options with Other Disciplines</i>	98
<i>Graduate-to-Graduate Degrees</i>	100
CAPSTONE	103
INTERNSHIPS	108

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND JUSTICE

SPPA Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Plan and Principles of Community

SPPA has adopted a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Plan. It is available here: <https://sppa.uiowa.edu/about-us/strategic-plans/diversity-inclusion-plan>. This plan spells out the School's commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice, and how this commitment translates into practices. The plan also includes Principles of Community that SPPA faculty, staff and students are expected to adhere to. Those principles are below.

SPPA's Principles of Community

Preamble

The School of Planning and Public Affairs is a learning, teaching and research community. These principles of community spell out our values, intentions, as well as best practices guiding our behaviors and interactions.

These principles, initially developed by students, faculty and staff on 2/12/2021, will be revisited annually. It is our intention that SPPA students, faculty and staff will commit to these principles. Implementing these principles requires honing our collective skills over time. Thus, we will regularly make time for open discussions, training, and skill-building as we seek mutual and life-long learning.

Principles

- Honesty and integrity are core values in our teaching, learning, research and administration.
- We respect the dignity and humanity of all persons. We oppose violence and advocating violence, and seek nonviolent solutions to interpersonal and social issues.
- We strive to uphold a just community free of discrimination in our interactions, teaching, research, administration, and outreach practices.
- We recognize the intrinsic connections between diversity of perspectives and experiences, and excellence in learning, teaching, research and administration.
- We are committed to freedom of expression and open dialogue that respect all perspectives, differences and commonalities, and to creating conditions where everyone feels safe to express their views. To do so, we:
 - Stay open to discussing all ideas, even unsettling ones we may disagree with;
 - Let everyone self-identify rather than identify others (e.g., “POC”, “minority” is not acceptable to everyone, and word usage changes over time);
 - Listen carefully to -and do not silence- others, and validate others' statements and feelings;
 - Call each other in (i.e., asking for clarification) rather than out (i.e., judging or silencing);
 - Accept and learn from the feedback we receive during mutual learning moments;
 - Show generosity, acceptance, and forgiveness for others and ourselves (no one is perfect), thus giving each other grace and the “benefit of the doubt” (i.e., assuming the best);
 - Take responsibility for our actions, give meaningful apologies when needed, and are accountable for learning and improving our skills (accountability and forgiveness go hand in hand);
 - Pay attention to others' cues, strive to be sensitive to others' potential trauma history, and check in with those who might experience inappropriate treatment;

- Remain mindful of cultural differences and diversity within cultures, and of how words and behaviors might be understood or perceived differently;
 - Acknowledge and be mindful of the power we hold as students, staff and academics, and of the unequal power relationships among ourselves;
- We show leadership in addressing the most pressing issues facing our local and global communities are central to our educational mission, and guide our curriculum, research, and outreach activities.
- We promote open and equitable access to opportunities for learning and development for students, staff and faculty.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual. The university also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to university facilities. For additional information on nondiscrimination policies, contact the Director, Office of Institutional Equity, the University of Iowa, 202 Jessup Hall, Iowa City, IA 52242-1316, 319-335-0705 (voice), 319-335-0697 (TDD), diversity@uiowa.edu.

Non-Discrimination in the Classroom

The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for people of all gender, sexual, racial, religious, and other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited in MyUI to optionally share the names and pronouns they would like their instructors and advisors to use to address them. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories indicated by the University's Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Institutional Equity at <https://diversity.uiowa.edu/division/oie>

University of Iowa Policy on Human Rights

The University of Iowa brings together in common pursuit of its educational goals persons of many nations, races, and creeds. The University is guided by the precepts that in no aspect of its programs shall there be differences in the treatment of persons because of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual, and that equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all. These principles are expected to be observed in the internal policies and practices of the University; specifically in the admission, housing, and education of students; in policies governing programs of extracurricular life and activities; and in the employment of faculty and staff personnel. Consistent with state and federal law, reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities and to accommodate religious practices. The University shall work cooperatively with the community in furthering these principles. For additional information on nondiscrimination policies, contact the Office of Institutional Equity, The University of Iowa, 202 Jessup Hall, Iowa City, Iowa, 52242-1316; telephone (319) 335-0705.

Bringing Forth a Complaint

If you believe you have been discriminated against in violation of the University's policy on human rights (<https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/human-rights>) you have three options:

1. Contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity at <https://diversity.uiowa.edu/discrimination-complaint-procedures> or
2. Contact the Office of the Ombudsperson at <https://ombudsperson.org.uiowa.edu/> or
3. Contact the Campus Inclusion Team at <https://inclusionteam.uiowa.edu/about/>

For Option 1, an individual has the option of filing an informal or a formal complaint. If informal, OEOD attempts to reach a resolution, but does not reveal the identity of the complainant to the individual accused of discrimination. No action may be taken against the accused party. A formal complaint entails an investigation by the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity and the accused party is informed of the allegation and the identity of the complainant. If the complaint is upheld, the University may sanction the accused party.

For Option 2, the Ombudsperson provides a confidential (with limited exceptions) resource to help resolve the problem, as well as to mediate, if both parties agree to mediation. The Ombudsperson office essentially provides an additional, informal source of assistance.

Finally, Option 3 provides individuals with an opportunity to file a report on an incident of discrimination. Members of the Campus Inclusion Team will advise the individual and make suggestions and referrals. It does not conduct investigations or impose discipline.

Viewed as a whole, Option 1 has both an informal and a formal option, while Options 2 and 3 are strictly informal. Because Option 1 has a formal option, it also has the authority to lead to a sanctioning while the other two options do not.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Assistance for Students with Disabilities

The University of Iowa is committed to equality of educational opportunity for all students. The Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) facilitates academic accommodations and services for students with disabilities so that these students have equal access to university programs and activities, and can participate fully in all aspects of university life.

SDS staff work with students currently enrolled at the university as well as with students who have recently decided to come to the university. In order to qualify for services, a student must provide general information as well as disability documentation from a healthcare professional. SDS reviews documentation to determine if a student has a qualifying disability and identifies reasonable accommodations based on functional limitations. Through academic and other accommodations, SDS helps level the academic playing field for qualified students with disabilities. SDS shares the faculty's commitment to maintaining academic standards for all students, with and without disabilities, from admissions through graduation. The office does not endorse giving students with disabilities a competitive advantage.

Some possible accommodations include:

- Alternative Exam Service
- Alternative Media Services
- Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Students who require an accommodation should, during the first week of classes, contact SDS and fill out the SDS Application for approval of their accommodation. Once it is approved students have an SDS intake appointment and the approved accommodations will be outlined. Letters requesting these accommodations for specific classes can be completed by students and their Accommodations Coordinator. Each semester students need to contact SDS to request a Letter of Accommodations (LOA). They should take this letter to the instructor of each class for which the accommodations apply, and work with the instructor to determine how the accommodation will be provided.

The SDS office is in the lower level of Burge Hall and is planning to move to University Capitol Centre in Sept. 2021. More information can be found on their website at <http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/>

COVID-19 Safety Measures

All students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the university's plan for campus health and distancing practices. The university's Fall 2021 plan is available online (<https://coronavirus.uiowa.edu/fall-2021>). Detailed information for graduate students can be found at <https://grad.uiowa.edu/coronavirus-and-return-campus-faqs>.

The UI will continue to rely on guidance from the Board of Regents, State of Iowa; the Iowa and Johnson County departments of public health (IDPH, JCPH); the Big Ten Conference; and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding face masks, social distancing, and other health and safety measures.

To date, neither federal nor Iowa state law requires employers or institutions of higher education to mandate COVID-19 vaccinations. The university monitors public health officials' guidance regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Consistent with that guidance, the university urges everyone eligible to receive a vaccine when it is available to them, in consultation with their health care provider, through established protocols and recommendations of their health care provider.

Comprehensive information, including updates, can be found at <https://coronavirus.uiowa.edu/>

News of a widespread public health concern like COVID-19 can cause feelings of uncertainty and anxiety. The pandemic has not only created stress but can add to existing anxieties. See section on Coping with Graduate Study for support resources.

Precautions at SPPA

- Face coverings are not required, but recommended. Students should use their personal judgment with regards to mask wearing.
- In shared spaces, students are encouraged to allow for 6 feet (or 2 meters) of social distancing.
- Students should use hand sanitizer whenever they touch any surfaces in Jessup Hall (or anywhere else for that matter), and sanitize items such as keys, pens, and pencils before handing them to others.
- Surfaces or equipment used by the general public (example, ITC countertops, keyboards and chairs, and meeting tables and chairs) should be cleaned **by the user after each use**.

Kitchen area

- Everyone accessing shared spaces in campus buildings (e.g. hallways, staircases, restrooms, breakrooms) must follow Facilities Management and building-specific guidelines for procedures and protocol. This includes wiping down handles to coffee makers, refrigerator, microwave, sink, toaster, toaster oven, and hot water pot after each use.
- Students should use their own personal glasses, cups, plates, silverware, storage containers, etc. rather than sharing items in the kitchen area.
- Students should take their eating and drinking utensils home for washing (preferred) or dispose of them after use. Hot water in Jessup Hall does not reach a temperature to sterilize.

ITC and library

- Students should sanitize all computer keyboards, mice, and other related surfaces both before and after use. Students should follow any additional guidelines distributed by ITS.

Student desks

- Students should clean and disinfect their personal desk surfaces after each use .

Health Response

- Anyone who is worried about potential exposure should call a health care professional to assess symptoms and risk factors, Before going to QuickCare, Student Health, any UI Health Care clinic, the State Hygienic Lab, or any emergency room.
- Students concerned about being exposed to the virus should **CALL** the [Student Health Nurseline](#) prior to visiting in person. They are also prepared to field questions from students and parents via the student health email.
- The UI strives to be a welcoming and inclusive campus. It is important to avoid making assumptions about who may or may not be carrying the virus based on their identity.

Staying Informed

- Because the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve rapidly, it is important that all students, faculty, and staff **check their UI email daily**.
- Emails from the university or your college or unit, along with the [coronavirus.uiowa.edu website](https://coronavirus.uiowa.edu), are the best ways to stay informed.

Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

This section stems from the UI policy. The university community seeks to eliminate sexual harassment and sexual misconduct through education and accountability. Everyone is encouraged to report concerns or make complaints, including third parties when the respondent is a member of the university community or a visitor. The university is committed to stopping sexual harassment and sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. In accordance with regulatory requirements and institutional values, this policy defines expectations for the university community and establishes mechanisms for determining when those expectations have been violated.

Several University of Iowa policies can come into play when there is a complaint of sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and/or stalking. It is not unusual that someone might make a complaint or simply inquire about making a complaint without understanding the policies involved. To review the 2020 Interim Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct, please see <https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/interim-policy-sexual-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct>. Guidelines for involved parties are also on this page.

The Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator (OSMRC) coordinates the university's response to reports of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct, including dating/domestic violence, and stalking when those reports involve members of or visitors to the university community. Formal complaints about sexual misconduct by University students, faculty, or staff should be made to the [UI Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator](#). This person can assist in locating resources.

If you are experiencing or witnessing sexual harassment or misconduct, remember: You are not alone. You can find numerous ways to [access support](#) on the OSMRC website <https://osmrc.uiowa.edu>. For assistance in making a report during business hours, contact the Office of Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator at 319-335-6200.

The University and the School have established procedures to respond to questions, complaints, or concerns. Research suggests that impacted parties who work with a counselor or advocate heal more quickly and experience less postsecondary trauma. The [Resource and Referral Guide](#), with options for impacted parties, is available in English, Mandarin and Arabic. Students who would like to discuss their situations in a private environment, and share or seek information about a sexual misconduct issue *without* making a formal complaint should contact one of the [confidential](#) resources below.

- Rape Victim Advocacy Program, 24-hour line 335-6000, (for faculty, staff, or students)
- Monsoon Asian and Pacific Islanders in Solidarity, answered 24 hours 515-288-0881 (for faculty, staff, or students)
- Domestic Violence Intervention Program, 24-hour line 800-373-1043 (for faculty, staff, or students)
- Nisaa African Family Service, 338-7617 (for faculty, staff, or students)
- Women's Resource and Action Center, 335-1486 (for faculty, staff, or students)
- University Counseling Service, 335-7294 (for students)
- Office of the Ombudsperson, 335-3608 (for faculty, staff, or students)
- Faculty and Staff Services, Employee Assistance Program, 335-2085 (for faculty or staff)

Coping with Graduate Study, Stress and Mental Health Challenges

Being a graduate student can be stressful, from balancing school and work, plus family issues, to keeping up GPA and passing final exams. Students have access to a number of resources to help deal with these pressures.

Students are encouraged to seek help as a preventive measure or if feeling stressed or overwhelmed. Students should talk to their instructors for guidance with specific class-related concerns. SPPA faculty and staff recommend that students communicate their challenges and seek support as early as possible, and are committed to supporting all students as much as possible during difficult periods.

Fellow students can be most understanding and provide very effective support. Anyone concerned about another student's state of mind should encourage them to talk to faculty or staff, or to look into one of the resources below.

Anyone who is feeling stressed, overwhelmed, depressed or otherwise struggles with mental health is encouraged to contact University Counseling Service (UCS) at 319-335-7294 during regular business hours to schedule an appointment.

[University Counseling Services](#), located at [3223 Westlawn South](#) and [University Capitol Centre, Suite 1950](#), is available to all currently registered students. All services are provided without charge, except for testing and evaluation. Their website has information on counseling services, emergency (same-day) appointments and [self-help resources](#) (such as how to manage speaking anxiety, sleep issues and stress management). Their number is 319-335-7294.

USC offers group and individual therapy as well as counseling for couples about relationships while making referrals to other resources (<https://counseling.uiowa.edu/>). Student Health can also address related concerns (<https://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/>). These visits are free to students. After hours, students are encouraged to call the Johnson County Community Crisis Line at (319) 351-0140 or dial 911 in an emergency.

If you have a mental health condition and are experiencing a medication issue, [Student Health](#) may be the best resource. It is in [4189 Westlawn South](#) and appointments may be scheduled by calling 319-335-8394.

There is also a [24-hour National Graduate Student Crisis Line](#) (1-877-GRAD-HLP; 877-472-3457) "All counselors have completed training to understand the unique issues faced by graduate students."

[CommUnity Crisis Services](#) and [Food Bank](#) (formerly Johnson County Crisis Center) offers confidential crisis phone/text (855-325-4296) and [chat](#) emotional support services for anyone in need provided by trained crisis counselors. CommUnity also offers a local 24-Hour Crisis Line at (319) 351-0140 to talk with a caring and compassionate trained counselor.

The [UI Food Pantry](#) is available on campus in room 278 IMU to provide nutritious food and basic necessities for University of Iowa students, faculty, and staff in need. Clients should enter through the south entrance of the Iowa Memorial Union (Iowa House Hotel Lobby entrance).

[Coralville](#) and [North Liberty](#) each have a community food pantry as well.

Policy on Smoking

As mandated by Iowa law, the University of Iowa campus, including all buildings and grounds, are designated as smoke-free. Information on the smoking policy, smoking cessation resources, boundary maps and other frequently asked questions is available on the Human Resources [website](#).

Beginning August 24, 2015, the University of Iowa became tobacco-free. For the purpose of this policy, tobacco products are defined as including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookahs), bidis, kreteks, smokeless tobacco, chewing tobacco, snus, snuff, electronic cigarettes, and any non-FDA-approved nicotine delivery device.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Orientation, Plan of Study/My Plan and Advising

Orientation

Just before the beginning of classes, the school holds an orientation session with new students in the masters' programs. Curriculum structure, academic progress, course waivers, and other general requirements are explained. In addition, students are given keys and instructions on the use of departmental facilities, and their responsibilities are explained regarding the student room, known as the drafting room.

Plan of Study/MyPlan

Each student is to develop and review with their advisor a **two-year plan of study** (referred to in MyUI as MyPlan) during their first semester in the School, using the process described below. The purpose of the plan of study/MyPlan is to ensure that the student satisfactorily completes all course requirements for graduation, including core courses and courses in an area of concentration (see your program's section on "Areas of Concentration"). MyPlan multi-semester plans of study are to be approved by advisors before becoming effective. This is done directly on MAUI (the University's electronic repository for faculty to record student advising and related files) by the advisor, through taking a "snapshot" of the reviewed and agreed upon plan of study/MyPlan. "Snapshots," are automatically stored under Advising Notes.

Video tutorials to supplement the instructions below for Sample Plan, MyPlan and Schedule Builder are available at <https://myui.uiowa.edu/my-ui/help/registration/academic-planning.page>.

Students may view/edit their plan and view advising notes in MyUI's Student Information section, through Advising Notes/Files.

MyUI serves as a hub for students to access several of the UI systems and tools they use most. A **Sample Plan** of study, showing requirements for the student's program, is uploaded for them in MyUI at the beginning of their first semester, found under Student Information, Advising. Planning students will find a non-thesis and thesis version.

The Sample Plan is only an outline of the recommended coursework and sequence and should be exported into **MyPlan**. (Video available on "[Creating a Plan from a Sample Plan](#)"). MyPlan is a multi-semester document, which must be created and customized as part of the student's official record. The student must include courses to complete at least one area of concentration. The student's advisor can view MyPlans, but only the student is able to create, edit and save them.

Each semester, when the next semester's courses are available in MyUI, the student can export their desired courses from MyPlan into **Schedule Builder**. Schedule Builder is an unofficial document used as a road map for scheduling. Versions of Schedule Builder combinations can be saved, allowing the student to use one-click registration.

Before a student may register for the next semester, their MyPlan should be revised if necessary and they must meet with their advisor. Obtaining the advisor's approval serves as permission for course registration each semester. After the student's first semester, their course registration date and time can be found on MyUI on the Home tab. All previous versions of MyPlan remain as part of the student's advising record (saved as "snapshots"). Revisions are subject to the same approval process.

Students are encouraged to create sample plans in Schedule Builder ahead of all semesters to assist the school in planning for course offerings.

Students should be mindful that Sample Plans and MyPlan do not calculate if the student has met requirements for graduation.

Advising and Progress Self-Evaluation

New students are assigned faculty advisors based on their stated areas of interest and advisors' availability. Students are asked to meet with their advisors during the first two weeks of the semester to introduce themselves, review class schedules, and make certain that each student understands School requirements. Students with combined degree programs are advised by the school's director.

In the self-evaluation students are to reflect on their academic progress and provide a one-page evaluation of their first semester's experience by November 1st (for students whose first semester is a fall semester)¹. That evaluation is to be submitted to the student's advisor for placement in the Advising section of the student's electronic record (MyUI for students and MAUI for faculty). Before the advisor authorizes registration for the spring semester, the advisor and student are to meet to discuss the statement and the preparation of a two-year plan of study/MyPlan (previously created on MyUI). Once a completed plan of study/MyPlan is reviewed by the student with the advisor, who is to take a snapshot of that plan, the advisor is to authorize the student to register for the spring semester.

Before April 1st, the student should provide a second one-page reflective evaluation of his/her progress and hold another meeting with the advisor. This second student evaluation is to be deposited on MyUI/MAUI, registration authorized, and any necessary revisions to the plan of study/MyPlan saved on MyUI/MAUI. In this meeting with his/her advisor, the student is to be reminded of internship requirements, and if the student knows they are taking an internship, the internship [approval form](#) should be approved at this time by the advisor and placed on MAUI. See your program's "Internship" section for details on internship requirements.

By November 1st in the third semester of study, a third and final evaluation of academic progress should be provided by the student, a discussion held with the advisor (to include calculations to ensure all graduation requirements will be met and that final-semester registration is consistent with the plan of study/MyPlan), and, if necessary, a revised plan of study/MyPlan agreed to by the advisor and an approved snapshot saved in MyUI/MAUI. Progress towards passing the final examination should be discussed at this time.

No further student progress self-evaluation is needed for students in a two-year plan of study/MyPlan. The exit survey will serve as a final evaluation. Students in combined programs or in programs of study extending beyond two years should consult with their advisor to determine whether additional student evaluations are needed.

Change of Advisor

Under some situations, it may be appropriate for a student to change advisors. Students may initiate the procedure for changing advisors by discussing the proposed change with the existing and the proposed advisor, and then submitting a Change of Advisor form (available on the SPPA website) to the director for approval. Students should not hesitate to request a change if they feel that doing so will enhance their educational experience.

¹ Students who start their planning studies during a spring semester should submit their evaluations by April 1st.

Best Practices for Graduate Students and Their Advisors

The progress, development and success of a graduate student hinges on the commitment of both the student and the advisor. Basic principles of best practices in mentoring and graduate student life appear below. Graduate students should be aware of what is necessary for their success, and their advisors likewise should be aware of practices that promote their students' best interest.

Expectations of Graduate Students

1. A graduate student has the **primary responsibility for successful completion of their degree**. A graduate student should be committed to their graduate education and should demonstrate this by efforts in the classroom and in research. A graduate student is expected to maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, engagement, excellence, scholarly curiosity, and ethical standards.
2. A graduate student should **meet regularly with the advisor** and provide updates on the progress and results of ongoing research.
3. A graduate student should be **knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of the graduate program, the graduate college, and the institution**. The student should strive to meet these requirements, including teaching responsibilities.
4. A graduate student should **contribute to maintaining an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, and free of harassment and discrimination**.
5. A graduate student should **acknowledge primary responsibility to develop a career following the completion of the degree**. The student should seek guidance from available resources, including but not limited to their advisor and SPPA career services coordinator.
6. A graduate student should **comply with all institutional policies, including academic program milestones**. The student should comply with both the letter and spirit of all best practices and policies of the institution.

Expectations of Advisors

1. The advisor should be **committed to the education and training of the graduate student as a future member of the planning community**.
2. The advisor should **meet one-on-one with the student on a regular basis**.
3. The advisor should be **knowledgeable of the requirements and deadlines of their graduate program(s) as well as those of the institution**, including teaching requirements and human resources guidelines. The advisor should guide the student in these areas to ensure academic and professional success.
4. The advisor should **encourage the graduate student to attend professional meetings**.
5. The advisor should **provide an environment for their graduate students that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, and free of harassment and discrimination**.

6. The advisor should **not require the graduate student to perform tasks unrelated to their academic and professional development.**
7. The advisor **should provide career advice and assist in finding a position** for the graduate student following the student's graduation. The advisor should provide honest letters of recommendation and be accessible for advice and feedback on career goals.

Credit for Courses Taken Prior to Enrollment

Minimum Requirements

Credit for courses taken prior to admission to the School of Planning and Public Affairs may be allowed to apply toward students' program's requirement of 50 s.h. for Planning and 42 s.h. for Public Affairs under the following conditions:

1. An individual must have been classified as a student within a graduate college during the semester(s) in which he/she was enrolled in the requested "transfer" courses.
2. The courses are evaluated as graduate-level classes. The Office of Graduate Admissions will make this determination for all external transcripts.
3. They were not part of the requirements for any degree previously completed, or currently in progress, with the exception of courses taken to meet the requirements of formal combined-degree programs with our school.
4. Their subject area is closely related to that of school courses.
5. SPPA applies no more than 15 graduate semester hours that were completed prior to SPPA admission toward a student's plan of study/MyPlan.
6. Courses older than ten years are inadmissible for credit.
7. All other Graduate College rules are complied with, including the minimum of 60 hours for two master's degrees. (See Part I, section X. G.: <https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual>)

Student Obligation

A student who wishes to transfer course credits must present course syllabi, reading lists, and other supportive materials as necessary to demonstrate that courses for which credit is sought are germane to the degree offered by SPPA, and comparable in rigor to courses taught at Iowa. When transferring credits, students should be mindful that content knowledge mastery may be tested on the final exam.

Timing

Following admission into SPPA, but before the beginning of the first semester of classes, students requesting credit for courses taken elsewhere should present their request, with supporting data, to the director. Timing of the request is especially important if the credits applied for, and any courses to be waived, would affect the student's first-year plan of study/MyPlan.

Students already at the UI may submit the request to a faculty advisor who may submit the request for approval to the director.

It is important for students to understand that credits allowed for work done elsewhere (and waivers of specific courses -- see "[Waiver of Core Course Requirements](#)"), are allowed only upon approval; under no circumstances should a student alter their plan of study/MyPlan in anticipation that credits will be allowed by the faculty before such determination is made.

Courses Taken at The University of Iowa

If a student classified as an undergraduate, and not a U2G student, takes graduate courses in the school, these courses **cannot** count as graduate credits if the student is later admitted to the School for a master's degree. The School will normally waive the requirement to take those specific courses (see "[Waiver of Core Course Requirements](#)"), but the number of semester hours needed to graduate is not reduced.

A student who is classified as a Special Student (non-degree) in the **Graduate College** may take up to six semester hours of SPPA coursework for graduate credit. If a Special Student is later accepted into the School, courses taken in SPPA as a Special Student will count toward the required number of semester hours. Courses taken when a person is enrolled as a Special Student in the **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**, however, cannot be applied for graduate credit.

If a student in another graduate-level college at Iowa (i.e., Law) takes courses in Planning or Public Affairs prior to admission to a combined-degree program involving that other college and Planning/Public Affairs, those semester hours are counted. They are counted as transfer credits rather than academic residence credits. The student must still complete a minimum of 24 hours of academic residence credit after admission to Planning or Public Affairs. Due to the number of hours required in the various combined-degree programs, it is rare that this limitation constitutes a problem.

Undergraduate Courses Taken for Graduate Credit

Graduate students may enroll in and receive graduate credit towards their graduate degrees for a limited number of upper-division SPPA or non-SPPA undergraduate courses. (These are defined as 3000-4999-level courses.)

For students to receive graduate credit for 3000-4999-level courses in their plan of study/MyPlan, those courses must satisfy both of the following criteria:

1. A substantial portion of the material covered in the 3000-4999-level course is not available through a graduate-level course offered in SPPA, or in the non-SPPA courses listed on the URP or MPA curricula, and;
2. The course must require graduate-level work. For example, there must be additional course requirements for graduate students such as papers and projects, or the course may be designed primarily for graduate students but is listed as a 3000-4999-level course to permit the enrollment of upper-division undergraduates.

A maximum of **six** hours of non-URP/non-MPA 3000-4999-level courses may be applied towards the degree. Again, these need to be approved by students' advisors. Students may petition the faculty to be allowed to take more than six hours in exceptional circumstances.

Because the MPA program is an interdisciplinary degree, students in that program are not restricted in taking 3000 and 4000 level classes. Nevertheless, item 2 above applies to any course taken at this level.

Please note: The list of courses in the MPA and URP curriculum have already been pre-approved. You do not need approval from your advisor for those.

Also note: The following 3000-4999 level courses cannot count as graduate credit:

- PBAF:3560 Public Policy and Persuasion
- URP:2020 Environment and Society: Sustainability, Policy, and Politics
- URP:3001 Planning Livable Cities
- URP:3350 Transportation Economics
- URP:3134 Regional and Urban Economics
- URP:4752 Eight Generational Planning: Envisioning Cities for Year 2228

Assistantships*

Award Criteria

All assistantships are subject to funding availability. Most graduate assistantships are awarded on the basis of merit. For entering students, merit is determined by GRE scores, undergraduate GPA, work experience, the statement of purpose, and letters of recommendation. For continuing students, a leading measure of merit is the program GPA. However, consideration is also made of faculty and school needs and student skills that can meet those needs. Calculation of the program GPA is explained in the [Grading section](#) of this handbook. Past performance as a graduate assistant is also taken into account in making awards to continuing students. Performance includes the promptness of task completion, the quality of work, adherence to scheduled hours, general initiative, availability, and regular contact with the faculty supervisor. SPPA may also provide some assistantships based on students' merit and individual circumstances, subject to fund availability, with the goal of support students to the extent feasible.

Students requesting aid must take at least 9 semester hours of classes that count towards the Planning or Public Affairs degrees during the semester(s) in which they receive aid.

SPPA's policy is to not award any student more than **four** semesters of aid in the form of assistantships or substantial tuition scholarships.

Full-Year Assistantships

Assistantships for incoming students are typically awarded for both the Fall and Spring semesters. Returning second-year students who have a relatively high program GPA also may be awarded assistantships for both semesters. It should be stressed that all students who are awarded full-year assistantships are reviewed after the Fall semester. Continuation of an assistantship for the Spring semester cannot be assured unless the student has performed their assistantship duties satisfactorily. In addition, the second semester of aid is contingent on achieving at least a 3.2 program GPA during preceding semesters.

In making assistantship awards to continuing students, funds are first allocated to meeting commitments to students awarded aid for a full year. Remaining funds are then divided into two portions, one for first-year students, and the other for students in their second year or later. Within each of these groups, assistantships are awarded according to the criteria described above.

One-Semester Assistantships

Incoming students and returning students may be awarded assistantships for one semester. Whether such students receive further assistantships depends upon their performance in Planning or Public Affairs (see award criteria above), and upon the demand for and availability of funds.

* This section incorporates by reference the agreement between the Iowa State Board of Regents and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, Local 896-COGS, and is amended in accord with any revisions to University of Iowa collective bargaining agreements put into effect. The agreement is available here: <https://grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-student-employment-agreement>

Requests for Assistantships

To apply for an assistantship, students should apply in response to appointment postings publicized by the School no later than March 1 for the Summer and Fall semesters, or by October 1 for the Spring semester. Students must submit an "Assistantship Request" form, which can be obtained from the School office. The form requires information about students' preferences for an assistantship assignment (e.g., research assistant, teaching assistant, career services, student outreach, etc.). Students may also be asked to fill out a form about their individual skills. Students who have been awarded full-year assistantships (contingent on high-level performance) must submit a similar form stating their assistantship preferences for the upcoming semester. Assistantship request forms and preference forms must be returned by the date indicated on the application. If the deadline is not met, the student may be ineligible for an assistantship the following semester. Students are notified of their appointments in writing by April 15 for Fall and by November 1 for Spring.

Assistantship Awards and Incompletes

Decisions regarding assistantships for continuing students who have one or more incompletes from any UI course remaining at the time assistantships are awarded will be deferred until the incomplete is removed, except in those cases where the grade could not change the decision. That is, aid will be awarded if substitution of an F for each incomplete results in a GPA high enough to warrant aid, and aid will be denied if substitution of an A for each incomplete results in a GPA too low to warrant aid. A student whose aid decision is deferred runs the risk of receiving no aid due to the unavailability of funds, or of receiving aid only for the portion of the semester remaining after removal of the incomplete (which could make a non-resident liable for the much higher non-resident tuition rates).

Failure to Perform Duties Satisfactorily

Students who fail to perform their assistantship duties satisfactorily will receive written notice from the School director. This letter informs the student of any performance problem and indicates what conditions must be met to remedy the situation. If these conditions have not been met within the time period indicated in the written notice, the student's assistantship may be subject to reduction in pay or complete termination. If job performance is considered unsatisfactory at any subsequent time for the same student, the student is again notified of the problem and may be subject to termination immediately. Any financial hardship created by any assistantship reduction or termination are the responsibility of the student, not the School.

Fellowships

Fellowships are awarded primarily to new students. A fellowship is a set amount that the student may apply to their tuition. There is no work requirement for a fellowship. Fellowships offered at the time of admission are not renewed for subsequent semesters. Fellowships might become available for later semesters subject to funding availability, but this is not guaranteed.

Grading and Academic Performance

The School utilizes a grading system that includes pluses and minuses. The [program GPA](#) is calculated using grades for all courses taken at the University of Iowa that **can** be applied to the student's plan of study/MyPlan for their degree, **regardless of whether they exceed what courses are needed to complete the degree**. The program GPA is used in making financial aid awards and in determining academic performance for meeting the 3.0 grade point requirement for graduation.

The plus/minus system is translated into grade points according to the policy in effect for the University, as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>
A+	4.33
A	4.00
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
D-	0.67
F	0.0

The program GPA may differ from the UI cumulative GPA because the program GPA only includes courses on the university transcript that **can** be applied to the URP MS or MPA degree. In those cases when a student has re-taken a required or concentration course, the second course grade replaces the first grade and is used in computing the program GPA.

In core classes, the maximum grade is an A. Also in core classes, A's and A minuses are limited to no more than 50 percent of the class; in non-core classes, A pluses are highly restricted and it is recommended to instructors that there be no more than 50 percent A's and A minuses.

Minimum Grades

In order to receive credit towards graduation, students must earn a minimum of a B- in core, capstone and concentration classes. In other classes, students must earn a minimum grade of a C-.

Incomplete Courses

Students should make every effort to complete their coursework during the semester of registration. Occasionally, however, students find it necessary to take an incomplete in a course. The

Office of the Registrar's policy is that an incomplete automatically converts to an "F" at the end of the next full semester (winter session excluded), even if the student does not enroll after the session the "I" was posted. The exact date of the conversion each semester is determined by the Office of the Registrar (typically when transcripts are run at the end of the following semester).

To change a grade that has become an "F," approval by the instructor, the School director, and the collegiate dean is required. It is the School's policy that only in exceptional cases will grade changes be approved at this point. Therefore, a student should **not** anticipate that an incomplete removed after the Registrar's deadline will be assigned a grade other than "F." Merely revising work is not, in and of itself, a sufficient basis for the instructor to change an F grade. The work needs to be completed to the instructor's satisfaction

One final point: it is unwise to submit work required to remove an incomplete just prior to the Registrar's deadline. If the instructor believes that revisions or additions to this work are necessary, a student could miss the deadline. Sufficient time for review and grading should be allowed, and extra burdens should not be placed on instructors at busy periods.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not tolerated in academic or professional contexts. A person can lose their job for plagiarizing as well as suffer major public embarrassment. Both the University of Iowa and the School of Planning and Public Affairs take issues of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. This section defines cheating and plagiarism, provides guidelines for how to avoid plagiarism, and explains the procedures followed in the event a student in the school is accused of cheating or plagiarism. Further information about the University's expectations regarding student conduct, including academic conduct, can be found in the [Code of Student Life](#).

What is Cheating?

Cheating occurs when a student receives inappropriate help in completing an assignment, quiz or examination. It is quite proper to ask fellow students for help to understand concepts or other aspects of a homework assignment, and proper to give other students such help if they ask for it. However, it is never appropriate to ask someone else to do an assignment for you, or to copy their answers (or to provide answers or do work for someone else). Neither is it appropriate to ask fellow students for help *during* a quiz or in-class examination. Many students in Planning and Public Affairs work in teams on assignments, or in preparing for examinations. Unless the instructor informs you otherwise, this is appropriate, *as long as each member of the team participates in team discussions and work, and as long as each member of the team completes their own work*. Merely listening to the solutions other students discuss and then copying them down to present as your own work does *not* constitute teamwork and should not be tolerated by other members of the team. The following list of examples may clarify what cheating (or the appearance of cheating) includes:

1. Copying other students' assignments or answers to examination or quiz questions;
2. Allowing another person to copy your assignments or answers to examination or quiz questions;
3. Taking notes or books to an in-class examination or quiz (unless the instructor has given you explicit permission to do so) and using them to answer questions;
4. Misrepresenting your contribution to a group project, and;
5. Collaborating with other students on any piece of work if you have been explicitly instructed not to do so.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the misappropriation of intellectual property, which can take many forms. It can range from purposeful cheating (pretending someone else's work is your own) or the purchase of term papers, to lack of appropriate citations or references or too heavy a reliance on other people's words and/or ideas. Ideas are presented in many formats, and just because something exists only on the internet or in some other electronic format does not mean it is not intellectual property. Given the seriousness with which the University and the school treat plagiarism, it is important to avoid any appearance of inappropriate or unattributed use of other people's ideas and words. The Graduate College addresses plagiarism in the [Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College](#), Part I, section IV, part F and G. The following list of examples may clarify what plagiarism (or the appearance of plagiarism) includes:

1. Using someone else's phrases and/or sentences without citing the work from which they are drawn or identifying the words as a direct quote;
2. Presenting someone else's argument in your own words and as if it were your own, without referring to or citing the author. Obviously, you may have come up with the same thought independent of someone who published it. If you did, you should be able to show how you came to that conclusion;
3. Relying on other people's written words for a portion of your paper (cutting and pasting) even

- though you may cite them;
4. Paraphrasing someone else's paper or work sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph, although you do not copy their words precisely. This is still "stealing" someone else's intellectual property, especially if you do not cite them at every point;
 5. Copying someone else's paper or work (or large portions of it) verbatim without quotation marks and passing their word as yours, whether you cite them or not; and
 6. Including illustrations, tables, maps, etc. from a report, web page, article or any other piece of work without properly citing the source.

When and how should work be referenced or cited?

If you refer to an argument someone made, a finding they report, or anything else that is not "common knowledge" that someone else has provided, you should reference them, using either footnotes or the author's last name(s) and an accurate date of publication in parentheses at the end of the sentence or paragraph in which you finish explaining their point/argument in your own words.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Direct subsidies to private producers have been largely replaced by block grants and tax credits that provide only partial subsidies. Nevertheless, HUD retained responsibility for much of the housing produced under earlier programs, through mortgage insurance provided by the FHA and through Section 8 contracts that subsidize projects. *[Both of these points count as "common knowledge" and don't require a citation, although they were mentioned in this and several other reports referenced.]* By the mid-1990s, the appropriations necessary to renew contracts (and avoid mortgage foreclosures that would cripple the FHA) threatened to eclipse all other housing needs (CBO, 1994). *[This is a less well-known fact, and a specific finding of the report referenced.]*

If you want to use the author's precise words, because they are a particularly good, colorful or distinctive description, or because they are reported conversation, a direct quote is proper. Direct quotes may be as long as a paragraph; direct quotes longer than three lines should be set off in a block, but shorter quotes of phrases or sentences are indicated with quotation marks. All direct quotes should be followed by a citation - usually, the author's last name, date of the work, and page number of the direct quote. Specific citations should also be used for any illustrations (tables, pictures) that you cut and paste into your own work. It is quite acceptable to use footnotes instead of the citation method shown here. The point is the work should be acknowledged accurately.

FOR EXAMPLE:

As Feldman and Chowdhury (2002) note, compact housing forms achieved through space efficiencies and multistory design have a significant impact on both construction and life cycle costs.

Compact building forms minimize the building's "envelope," and thus decrease costly building components, such as the foundation, roof, and exterior walls. A one-story single-family dwelling is more expensive to build than a two-story structure with the same square footage, quality of construction and amenities. Compact building forms also reduce life-cycle costs because they are less expensive to heat, cool, and maintain. (Feldman and Chowdhury 2002, page x)

All works referred to or cited should be listed (unless your instructor tells you otherwise). If you use the method shown above, a reference list should be attached to the paper. If you use footnotes, that is where the works should be listed.

There are several acceptable referencing styles: The American Psychological Association (APA) and the *Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)*, 16th edition (University of Chicago Press 2010). Here are a few examples that use the APA style. Information on the APA style can be found at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html .

For books:

Peterson, Jon A. (2003). *The Birth of city planning in the United States, 1840-1917*. Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

For reports:

U.S. Census Bureau. (2000). *Statistical abstract of the United States*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

For journal articles:

Jun, Myung-Jin. (2008). Are Portland's smart growth policies related to reduced automobile dependence? *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 28: 100-107.

For web sites:

Cain, A., & Burris, M. (1999, April). *Investigation of the use of mobile phones while driving*. Retrieved from http://www.cutr.eng.usf.edu/its/mobile_phone_text.htm

If you are unsure whether a reference or citation is needed, err on the conservative side. Your instructor can also provide advice on this issue. A good UI guide to citation styles can be found on the [library resources website](#) created for students in your program, under Citation Help.

Penalties for cheating and plagiarism

Both cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offenses. In cases where either cheating or plagiarism is suspected, the School's policy is that the faculty member involved submits the evidence to the director. The director then evaluates the evidence to determine if there is probable cause to suspect that cheating or plagiarism has occurred. If he or she so determines, the director confronts the suspected student(s) with the evidence. If the student(s) acknowledges participating in cheating or plagiarism, the director takes one of the following actions:

1. If the student(s) has not committed a prior offense of this nature, the penalty shall be that the grade of zero is assigned to the assignment involved. Such a zero grade is conclusive and may not be changed by re-doing the item involved.
2. If the student(s) has committed a previous offense, such student(s) shall be dismissed from the School.

If the suspected student(s) denies that he or she has cheated or plagiarized, the director forms a committee composed of three faculty members (not to include the faculty member directly involved) and three non-voting students (not to include the student(s) involved). This committee interviews the student(s) involved, investigate the evidence, call witnesses if necessary, and take all measures to determine if cheating or plagiarism has occurred and to identify the responsible person(s).

Upon completion of its task, the committee reports the results of its investigations to the director. If the committee has determined that there is not sufficient evidence to substantiate an incident of cheating or plagiarism, or that there is insufficient evidence to identify the person(s) at fault, the director notifies the faculty and any students who have been directly involved in the investigation and close the inquiry. If, however, it has been determined that plagiarism has occurred and the wrongdoer(s) have been identified, then the director applies the appropriate penalty as specified in items (1) and (2) above.

It should be noted that it is the policy of the School that those who knowingly assist a person in cheating or plagiarism are equally at fault and are subject to the same penalties.

Student Appeals Procedure

Occasionally a student may feel that he or she was wronged by a decision made by a faculty member, a committee of the faculty, or the faculty as a whole. In such a case, a student may appeal the decision according to the following procedure*:

1. Appeal is made to the director, giving the facts of the case and the basis for the student's appeal. This appeal must be made in writing;
2. The director may then either conduct an investigation personally or appoint a committee of the faculty (which must consist of at least two faculty and which may consist of the entire faculty) to conduct an investigation. When the appeal involves a decision or action of one particular faculty member, that person shall not be on the investigating committee. The student shall be permitted to present their case to the investigating committee;
3. If the director conducts an investigation, he or she may then either grant or deny the appeal, or take other appropriate action. If he or she so chooses, the director may refer the matter to the faculty as a whole for a decision;
4. If the investigation is conducted by a committee, that committee may grant or deny the appeal, or take other appropriate action;
5. Where the appeal involves a matter of School policy, it should be noted that any change in policy is normally approved by the faculty as a whole;
6. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of a committee of the faculty, he or she may ask that the faculty as a whole review the decision. Such a review is conducted at the option of the director;
7. It should be noted that further appeal can be made to the Graduate College, according to policies and procedures of the Graduate College. These are outlined in the [Graduate College's Academic Policies](#). The Graduate College should be contacted for further information.

The University ombudsperson may prove of assistance in instances of this sort and should be contacted directly by the student.

Other student concerns: There are several opportunities for students to express concerns about the master's programs. Student representatives are selected by students to represent student opinion at faculty meetings. Each semester a town hall meeting takes place at which students can express concerns.

When students have concerns about how specific classes are taught, they should meet directly with the director. The director will either take up the matter directly or take it to an executive meeting of the faculty.

*In the event of disputes involving the University Collective Bargaining Agreement, the grievance procedure specified in that [agreement](#) applies.

Committee on Progress

Student progress is monitored by the faculty. One indication of unsatisfactory progress toward completion is a failure to maintain a program GPA of 3.0. This is above the Graduate College's standard of 2.75, below which a student is considered to be on academic probation by the Graduate College. The program GPA is derived from all courses taken at the University of Iowa which **can** be applied to the student's plan of study/MyPlan, regardless of whether they exceed what courses are needed to complete the degree. (The student should be aware that incomplete grades, while not entering into the computation of the grade point average, do not indicate successful completion of the required 50 units.)

Students who do not show progress toward the degree according to their plan of study, or whose program GPA is below 3.0, are automatically placed in a status of Official Concern and a Committee on Progress is convened. The Committee on Progress is composed of the student's academic advisor and one other faculty member appointed by the director. Its task is to assist students in overcoming academic problems. The students are allowed one semester in which to bring their program GPA up to the 3.0 level, or to make substantial progress toward bringing their GPA up to 3.0, while making progress toward the degree according to their plan of study. The Committee on Progress establishes the conditions that must be met for a student to be removed from Official Concern status and determines whether or not these conditions have been met. Failure to meet the conditions set forth by the Committee on Progress shall result in dismissal from the program.

Conditional Status

Students may be admitted on "conditional status." Students on conditional status must meet the obligations of regularly admitted students and may have additional conditions attached to their admission, e.g. the obligation to take remedial course work. Conditional students who do not satisfy admission conditions within two semesters are subject to dismissal by decision of the faculty.

Final Examination

The School requires that a final examination be administered to each graduate student prior to receiving a degree.

For non-thesis students, the final examination builds upon the Field Problems and Capstone group project experience in which students apply what they have learned in core courses to a real-world problem with a client such as a planning department, community organization, or a public agency (for more information, see the Field Problems or Capstone section below). There are two parts to the final exam: oral and written. Students who pass the first part (oral) do not need to take the written portion. Students who do not pass the oral portion, take the written test a few weeks later, before the Graduate College's deadline for final exam reports. Students who pass the written portion are deemed to have passed the final examination.

The purpose of the final exam is to measure the student's ability to not only practice good planning, public policy analysis, or public management but also to reflect on one's practice in the context of critical theories and methods featured in the core curriculum. Thus, in the final examination, students are asked specific questions requiring demonstration of how knowledge obtained in the core courses was applied to the group's work performed in Field Problems or Capstone. The purpose of the examination, therefore, is to ascertain the ability of students to effectively and intelligently apply knowledge, skills, and abilities developed in the core courses to an actual real-world problem.

At the beginning of the Fall semester the School issues second year students a set of study or preparatory questions.

The oral part of the final examination is administered to each non-thesis student in the two weeks prior to Spring Break and prior to the Graduate College's deadline for receiving final exam reports, (typically the second week of April). One week prior to the oral exam date, each candidate for the degree must submit to the examining panel a two-page paper that describes the specific contributions she or he made to the Field Problems or Capstone project.

If a written exam is necessary, the student should arrange the exam time with their examining panel being mindful of the Graduate College's deadlines for graduating that same semester. If a student does not take the written portion of the exam prior to the Graduate College deadline for final examinations, the student shall be failed on the basis of their oral examination.

Each student is examined by an examining panel of three faculty members named by the School's director. All of the members must be tenured or tenure-track faculty in the School. The faculty committee remains the same for both the written and oral parts.

Consistent with Graduate College requirements, members of the evaluating panel evaluate each examination as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory and two votes for an unsatisfactory performance on the examination result in failing the oral portion of the final examination. A report of the outcome of the final examination (including the oral portion and, if taken, the written portion) is due in the Graduate College no later than 48 hours after the examination, and by the deadline date established by the Graduate College.

If a student fails the final examination (both oral and written), he or she is entitled to one retake. Under Graduate College rules the retake cannot be taken until a subsequent semester. Students must be registered in the semester in which they graduate, so extra tuition/fees would apply to delayed graduations. The retake may be written or oral (not both). If the student fails the retake, s/he is dismissed from the program. For the retake, the new committee consists of the chair of the first committee plus two faculty members who did not serve on the first committee. They are appointed by the director. The retake exam must be taken no later than 12 months after the first exam.

SPPA RESOURCES

Career Assistance

The School is committed to providing outstanding career assistance for both summer internship and post-graduation jobseekers, with a dedicated Career Services Coordinator. Students are urged to use all the services offered, and to begin preparing early. The School offers job information access and personal advising support until the student secures their first job or for up to one year after a student's graduation date, whichever comes first.

In addition to having an advanced degree, students need experience to be competitive. The majority of SPPA students have internships in the summer between their first and second year. (See the [MPA](#) or [URP](#) section on Internships for the qualifications that need to be met.)

Resume

All students should write or update their resume **and** have the Career Services Coordinator and a faculty member review it before the beginning of their second semester. Tips specific to students in each program can be found in the online [SPPA Career Services Manual](#). The SPPA Career Service Coordinator specializes in supporting URP and MPA students. The UI Pomerantz Career Center primarily serves undergraduates, but their [Career Guide](#) website offers general resume and cover letter examples. Although not dedicated to SPPA students, the Graduate College Grad Success Center (<https://grad.uiowa.edu/grad-success>) is also available to SPPA students for career support.

Students should begin to submit resumes for job and internship applications to consulting firms in the fall semester. Local governments are more likely to advertise openings after January. Students interested in nationally competitive internships should be mindful of early deadlines during the fall semester.

Every year SPPA compiles a Resume Book which students may contribute to. To be included in the book, students are required to attend a career services presentation on resumes. The book is distributed by email to approximately 600 alumni every spring. Each year one or more students obtain a position through one of the alums contacted in this way.

Job Postings

Beginning in January, 40-60 new job and internship are posted weekly on the SPPA [website](#). This service brings outstanding job, internship and fellowship opportunities to SPPA students, and assists them in securing challenging, interesting positions nationwide. SPPA also maintain a list of more than 1,900 links to potential employers in local government, at planning and public affairs organizations and consulting firms nationwide. This site is available to assist students and enhances individual searches.

Alumni

We maintain close contact with our alumni. We also receive employment notifications from alumni and other professionals who would like to advertise internship and entry-level positions directly to our students. Graduates tend to move up the ladder quickly; and years later, they are still happy with the education they received at Iowa. Alumni and students are encouraged to join and be active in the LinkedIn group, University of Iowa School of Planning and Public Affairs Alumni & Student Group. Students are welcome to contact alums for advice, informational interviews and networking opportunities. If alumni contact information is not available through LinkedIn, the Career Services Coordinator can assist students in obtaining it.

Mock Interviews

In the spring semester the School arranges mock interviews in which selected planning and public affairs employers “interview” students for hypothetical positions. At the end of the interview, the employer gives feedback on the student’s resume and interviewing strengths and weaknesses. Additional support for employment searches is provided for planning students by the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association in which practitioners conduct mock interviews for students and other young planners. Participating in mock interviews allows students the opportunity to experience a professional interview, which can be quite different from previous experience. Students will benefit by improving their interviewing skills and career prospects.

Networking

LinkedIn profiles are equal in importance to a well written resume. It is highly recommended students create one to increase networking and to build a professional online presence. Students are also encouraged to begin networking with professional planners and those in public affairs, including at local, regional and national conferences. To support this, the school is often able to provide some travel expense assistance. (See the section on “[SPPA Support for Student Travel](#).” Travel support is also available from various sources at the university (see “[UI Sources of Support for Travel](#)”).

Mentors

Students should contact the SPPA career services coordinator for assistance in identifying alumni to approach about mentoring. A mentor match service is also offered by the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association before each annual conference.

Resume Builders

Additional strategies for finding a position include: joining a national professional organization; creating your own website to highlight your skills and portfolio; becoming involved with local or regional planning or public affairs related organizations; running for a [campus charter committee](#); running for a position on the Executive Committee of the American Planning Association’s [Student Representatives Council](#) (for planning students). Additional suggestions are in the [Career Services Manual](#) under “Opportunities to Beef up Your Resume.”

Facilities

Computer Facilities

SPPA students can use the Instructional Technology Center (ITC) in room 327 (the "drafting room"). This facility has been established using student fees to promote computer-based instruction of students in SPPA and other academic units. The computers are available by HawkID login to all students on campus for 50 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters. [Printing](#) output is directed to the black and white printer and a color printer in the ITC.

The School's computers are housed in room 351 (the SPPA library). ArcGIS and other specialized software are available on both the library and ITC computers. Adobe Creative Cloud is available only on the library computers. Output is directed to the printers in the ITC.

Note: The hard drives on all computers (ITC and library) are periodically cleared by ITS throughout the semester, as they are not intended for personal data storage. Remember to save your work to OneDrive, the shared network drive, or your personal flash drive.

On July 13, 2021 the following OneDrive features were added to all ITCs on campus:

1. Automatic Sign-in: Users are automatically signed into OneDrive when they sign into an ITC workstation.
2. Files On-Demand: This allows users to see and access files in the cloud and download them on-demand only when they need them, saving space on the computer.
3. Known Folder Moves: All files located in Desktop, Documents, and Pictures folders will automatically be stored in OneDrive.

Depending on the type of machine used (Windows vs. Mac), user experience may differ. Learn more about these updates in the [new OneDrive Features support article](#).

Computer Cluster Use by Non-SPPA Students

During the 50 hours per week when the ITC in room 327 is open to all university students, SPPA students do not have priority use of computers, software or printers. After hours, on weekends, and during university breaks, the computer facility is available **only** to SPPA students and faculty.

Students in our School are asked to use good judgment when the hour arrives to close the facility for the day. Non-School students should be informed in a courteous manner that the cluster closes at 5:00. Good interpersonal relations are important in working with the somewhat different usage circumstances of SPPA versus other students.

Important: Students are required to sanitize the keyboards of all computers in both the ITC and the library before and after each use. Sanitizer and wipes will be made available for this purpose.

Software Copyrights

It is important to keep in mind that essentially all computer software is copyrighted. Under no conditions are users of SPPA computers allowed to copy any software programs.

Reserving Facilities

There are a few occasions when an instructor wishes to use the computer lab for a course. On those occasions, there will be a sign posted stating the date, time and course number. Generally, however, the facility will be operated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Fishbowl Meeting Room and Teleconferencing Center

The School's space also includes a meeting room available to students, faculty, and staff--the Fishbowl. The Fishbowl includes two large HD screens, a computer, and teleconferencing equipment. The space is to be used for groups such as Field Problems and public affairs Capstone meetings, web conferencing with project partners, and faculty meetings. The equipment can also be used by individuals to facilitate job and internship interviews. It may be reserved by checking the Outlook reservation calendar. To check availability and make a reservation, send a meeting invitation to RES-JH327A-Fishbowl@uiowa.edu. Note that your reservation won't be completed until you received an "ACCEPTED" message back from RES-JH327A-Fishbowl@uiowa.edu.

The University's preferred web conferencing software is [Zoom](#). A Zoom professional account is site licensed for all faculty, staff, and students and there is no limit on the length of meetings. For interviews, students may also use their personal Skype account or the university's Skype for Business (see <https://its.uiowa.edu/support/article/2783> and <https://its.uiowa.edu/skype#!how-to-and-support>). GoToMeeting is not recommended. Students should make sure they are familiar with the software and that all equipment is working several days before a scheduled meeting or interview.

The Fishbowl also has a Polycom system to be used for telephone conference calls. Those calling in should be given the phone number 319-335-0042.

For outgoing conference calls, you must first dial 9, then 1, then the area code and number.

SPPA Server

We have two spaces divided on our server (U: drive, Urban folder), one for course materials and the other for shared student file storage.

The "Courses" folder is writable by faculty and readable by students. The "Students" folder is writable by all SPPA students and faculty. The "Students" folder will be emptied every year on August 1st. Please make sure any files you wish to keep are copied elsewhere by then, or they will be lost.

The file services are available on campus or [remotely](#) when connected to the campus Virtual Private Network (VPN).

From a Windows machine, you can create a mapped drive to the following location: <\\iowa.uiowa.edu\shared\Urban\Students> or <\\iowa.uiowa.edu\shared\Urban\Courses>

The mapping does not transfer between computers. Students who log in to a different computer will have to map to the drive again.

On a Mac you can connect to the server at: <smb://iowa.uiowa.edu/shared/urban>

At the end of the academic year, students in Field Problems/Capstone will be directed to archive their files on a research drive under the school's control. Otherwise, all student work will be swept over the summer.

Wireless Hot Spots

The [wireless network](#) is available in Jessup Hall in all classrooms and student common spaces.

Student Use of Equipment, Supplies and Drafting Room

Use of Copier/Scanner

Students may use the School's copier/scanner for scanning only. Scanning may be done by emailing the document to yourself at no charge. Students have access to the copier/scanner in the SPPA library from 8:30 to 4:30 P.M. on a non-priority basis.

The University [Copy Centers](#) provide copying services and accept UI identification cards and cash for payment.

Duplication of Materials at School's Expense

The student is to obtain permission from the instructor for work to be charged to the School in instances where such reproduction is for the instructor's use.

Faculty will determine how to reproduce materials such as student papers which are to be distributed in a class.

Use of Supplies

Students are expected to provide their own supplies for class work. The supply closet contains supplies for staff and faculty use. Research and teaching assistants may draw supplies directly related to their employment from their faculty supervisor.

Office supplies needed to complete Field Problems and Capstone projects are to be provided by the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC) on a limited basis. Please consult with IISC's director about whether IISC can purchase the item or not. Examples include copying, envelopes, postage, name tags, paper cups, plates, napkins, coffee, etc.

All professional printing must be completed by University of Iowa Printing and Mailing Services. Please allow at least one week to process printing requests.

Stationery, envelopes, stamps, and related items are exclusively for official School purposes and are not for personal use.

Use of Letterhead

Students may use the School's electronic letterhead only for correspondence related to official school business and after permission from a faculty member. Electronic letterhead is available from the administrative services coordinator. The faculty person must read and approve the correspondence before it is sent out on letterhead; advance permission alone is not sufficient.

Keys

On the day of orientation, students are issued two keys, one for the drafting room and one for their desk. Keys that are lost result in a fee of \$7 per key.

A limited number of keys are available for use of the SPPA library and are available on a first-come basis. These are typically checked out for the semester to those wishing to use special software located on the library computers or using the room for research on evenings or weekends.

Please note: Jessup Hall is locked after hours and on weekends. You may access JH at these times by using your Iowa One ID card which you should obtain at the beginning of your first semester.

Drafting Room

The Drafting Room (327 Jessup) is an important part of the School of Planning and Public Affairs. It provides master's students a place where to work and keep materials. Along with the School library and the ITC, it provides space where students can work and meet with fellow students. The sense of community that develops among students throughout the course of their study has much to do with the shared space they enjoy in the Drafting Room.

Because the Drafting Room is a shared space, students should not leave the room unlocked and unattended overnight or on weekends.

Students should also exercise caution in working late at night in the Drafting Room. Jessup Hall is locked in the evening, but students should take care when they leave the building. Students should look to assist each other so that no one has to leave the building alone. Information about [personal safety](#), including the [Rave Guardian app](#) and [Nite Ride](#), are available on the University's website.

General

Misuse of School supplies or resources may subject a student to disciplinary action.

Personal Effects

Planning does not accept responsibility for lost or missing items left unattended in Jessup Hall. Because of the high cost of books and laptops, students are urged to exercise care in where they place them.

Student Travel

SPPA Support for Student Travel

Each year the School may provide funding for partial support of student travel to present papers or posters at conferences, and if funds permit, to support travel or registration for conferences that enhance students' education.

To be eligible for travel assistance, a student **usually** must have a paper, abstract, or poster formally accepted for presentation at an appropriate conference. The faculty will consider requests for support for travel to or registration for attendance at an appropriate conference. An appropriate conference is one directly related to some aspect of urban and regional planning or public affairs. In certain circumstances, the travel may take place after the student has graduated.

Students who are enrolled in at least nine semester hours of coursework listed on their plan of study/MyPlan may submit requests for travel funds to attend one professional conference each academic year.

For planning students, the American Planning Association's Iowa Chapter assists with funds to attend one APA meeting per year, whether it is the [Iowa APA](#) (typically in October) or [national conference](#) (varies between Mar.-May). The School receives an amount that is divided among planning students after travel has been completed to one of the conferences.

APA offers reduced conference registration fees or payment to be used towards the fees for students who sign up to volunteer at the national APA conference.

Public affairs students may choose to attend a conference from the following. Conference dates may change and it is recommended students check the organization's website for the most up-to-date information.

- [American Society for Public Administration](#) (ASPA) April
List of affiliated conferences includes:
 - Midwest Public Affairs Conference (MPAC) Sept.
 - National Conference of Minority Public Administrators Mar.
- [Assoc. for Research on Non-Profit Organizations & Voluntary Action](#) (ARNOVA) Nov./Dec.
This is a more research organization for non-profit researchers.
- [Association of Fundraising Professionals](#) (AFP) May
For those who want to work as a fund-raising officer. It has two certification programs, namely [CFRE](#) and [ACFRE](#)
- [Government Finance Officers Association](#) (GFOA) May
For state/local finance officers, offering students internship opportunities, scholarships and student chapters
<https://www.gfoa.org/about-gfoa/student-opportunities>
- [International Association of Administrative Professionals](#) (IAAP) July
professional, annual conferences, certifications
- [International Economic Development Council](#) (IEDC) Oct.
Offering certification for economic development officials.
Credentials from IEDC are highly preferred in job ads.
One of our recent alumni found this conference very interesting and helpful.
- [Iowa City/County Management Association](#) (IaCMA)

- [Iowa Municipal Management Institute](#) (IMMI) Mar.
hosted annually by IaCMA
- [Iowa League of Cities](#), annual conference and exhibit Sept.
- [National Associations of Commissions for Women](#) (NACW) July
- [Young Nonprofit Professionals Network](#) Chapter mtgs. vary

UI Sources of Support for Travel

The University of Iowa offers additional sources of support for student travel:

- The [Graduate and Professional Student Government](#)
- The [Graduate Student Senate](#)
- Sally and Ken Mason Travel Award

Note: At the time of publishing this manual, it has not been decided if this award will be offered in 2021-2022. If it is, the call will go out at the end of September, with an estimated deadline of November 1st.

Thanks to the generosity of Sally and Ken Mason, funds are again available this fiscal year for undergraduate, graduate and professional students to apply towards travel to academic and professional meetings and conferences, and travel associated with study abroad programs. Please note that per the donor intent, preference will be given to students who are seeking to attend their first professional conferences, those who are presenting at a conference, and those who are first-generation students.

Applications must be completed [online](#) and are typically due by November 1st. Students can request up to \$500 per application, but no more than one \$500 award will be made to any individual student. Travel dates must take place after the date on which the awards are determined/distributed (usually by the first week in December), but no later than the last day of spring semester classes. Applications are submitted electronically to the Associate Provost's office and a committee makes the award decisions.

- [Student Impact Grant](#)
The University of Iowa Office of the President and the University of Iowa's Center for Advancement's Student Advancement Network (SAN) have partnered to create the Student Impact Grant, which provides funding for a variety of activities for undergraduate and graduate students outside of the classroom, such as research, travel, and service projects. The President's Office has generously allocated \$7,000 per semester to help enhance the student experience at the University through these grants. For Winter/Spring travel, applications will be accepted online beginning August 30, 2021 until the deadline on September 27, 2021. The application period for Summer/Fall semester travel has been during the month of January.
- The UI [Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research](#)
The student must be presenting at the meeting (oral or poster presentation) for which they are requesting travel assistance and the student must be working in the areas of environmental global change and environmental sciences. A maximum of two students per research group will receive travel funds.

Note: To qualify, you must have a CGRER member (Spak) sign your application as your advisor. Academic year applications are typically due January 15 and so students should be alert to this deadline. In the past, Field Problems projects have qualified for this opportunity.

Jim Harris Memorial Scholarship Award

The Jim Harris Memorial Scholarship award was established in 2002 to honor the memory of the Planning program's first Chair, Jim Harris. The scholarship recognizes a student (or recent graduate) who best exemplifies Jim's commitment to community service and passion for social justice.

The award is based on the faculty's evaluation of the person best demonstrating excellence in community service. Community service may include volunteer work with a non-profit organization, involvement in a professional planning-related organization, or in advocacy on planning-related issues. Paid employment does not typically qualify as community service. The service may have taken place anywhere – in Iowa City, elsewhere in the state of Iowa, elsewhere in the nation, or internationally. Current students and those who have graduated during the past academic year are eligible. At least part of the service should have occurred during the student's time in the School of Planning and Public Affairs.

Nominations are to be submitted to the director by February 1st. Nominees are asked to provide a resume and brief description of community service activities. The recipient of the award is announced by March 31st.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION AND INPUT

School of Planning and Public Affairs Student Association

The School of Planning and Public Affairs Student Association (SPPASA) is a university-recognized student association comprised of graduate students in the School of Planning and Public Affairs at the University of Iowa. SPPASA's primary goal is to promote student interests by giving students a forum to discuss matters that affect the program as a whole, as well as individually.

Throughout the year SPPASA is involved in many activities, including but not limited to garnering financial support for trips and conferences. In order to take advantage of the maximum number of funding opportunities and ensure continuity of the association over the summer months, students elect SPPASA officers in the spring for the following academic year.

Other SPPASA activities include planning social activities, organizing volunteer opportunities, and intramural athletics. All students are encouraged to participate, as the success of this organization is dependent upon student involvement.

Student Representatives

Representatives within SPPA

Each class from both programs select one representative and an alternate to attend regular faculty meetings. Student representatives are entitled to participate fully in discussions but may not vote. Occasionally it is necessary for the faculty to go into executive session, in which case the student representatives will not be allowed to be present.

Each department or interdisciplinary program is allotted one full senator per fifty students to have a representative on the Graduate Student Senate (GSS). Planning and public affairs students should each select an appropriate number of GSS senators and alternatives for their programs.

Each class of planning students should elect a student representative to the American Planning Association. This may be the same person representing the class at faculty meetings, or person elected as an officer of SPPASA.

Representatives in campus-wide organizations

SPPA Students can run for positions in the various committees of the UI [Graduate & Professional Student Government](#) which advocates for graduate and professional students.

Students with assistantships can be Research Assistants (RAs) or Teaching Assistants (TAs). Both TAs and RAs are represented by the UE Local 896 – [COGS](#) (Campaign to Organize Graduate Students) and attend COG meetings or can run for positions with COGs.

Evaluations of Courses by Students

Purpose

Standardized forms for evaluation of the School's courses are distributed through ICON near the end of each semester in all courses. All students are requested to complete these forms for each course. The course evaluations serve several important purposes:

1. They inform the instructor about course elements where students feel he or she is doing well or poorly;
2. They provide insight into ways a course could be improved (e.g., select another text), and;
3. They aid the director in assessing the overall teaching performance of each faculty member.

These evaluations are an important source of information about the quality of a faculty member's teaching.

Students are asked to disassociate their ratings of an instructor with their performance in the course, to be objective; avoid using the evaluations to "help" an instructor they are fond of or to "get even" with one they may be less favorably disposed toward. The sole purpose of the course evaluation process ought to be to improve the quality and relevance of instruction.

Procedure

All class evaluations are performed online during the final two weeks of classes—before final exams begin. Instructors should permit time for completion of the evaluations in class. In any event, students are encouraged to complete these evaluations. The instructor does not receive the evaluation results until final grades have been submitted for the semester. They are also reviewed by the director and utilized in annual performance reviews of faculty as well as at the time of consideration for promotion and tenure.

Exit Survey

An exit survey will be conducted with **all** graduating students at the end of their final semester. Each student will have the opportunity to respond anonymously to an internet-based survey that includes both closed and open-ended questions that allow the student to express their opinions, ideas, and suggestions about their program, the School's facilities, curriculum, and procedures. If students wish, they may follow up their responses to the survey with an oral interview with the director. The School of Planning and Public Affairs uses the results from the survey to plan and implement improvements.

MASTER OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING

URP Vision/Mission Statement

The Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning's **vision** is to promote just and inclusive human settlements in which economic development, environmental enhancement, and social justice jointly contribute to sustainability, resilience, and quality of life at all scales from local to global. Within this context, our **mission** is to educate professional planners who will be responsible future leaders and decision-makers into the 21st century.

Further information about URP goals and objectives is available on the SPPA website.

The Planning Program

Planning is a dynamic and exciting field. Planners combine analysis with activism, and policy evaluation with implementation, in order to improve the quality of life in cities and regions. In addition to traditional jobs as city or regional planners, professionals are in demand in such diverse fields as regional transit, sustainability, public facilities provision, rural economic development, public health, nonprofit neighborhood housing, legislative analysis, and real estate development.

The University of Iowa is recognized as a leader in developing a curriculum attuned to the changing world of planning. At the heart of our master's degree program is an integrated curriculum that gives first-year students a solid foundation in the analysis of social problems and public policies, and prepares them for careers beyond the traditional position of city planner. Students in the second year of Iowa's program focus on areas of concentration, which include economic development, land use and environmental planning, housing and community development, transportation, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Students can complete more than one concentration.

Graduate students in the program will earn the M.S. degree in Urban and Regional Planning. Combined graduate degrees are available in law, social work, civil and environmental engineering, higher education and student affairs, and occupational and environmental health.

Iowa's M.S. degree in Urban and Regional Planning is accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board. Information on planning accreditation can be found at <http://www.planningaccreditationboard.org/>.

While accreditation encompasses many standards, fundamental are PAB's expectations for planning curricula.

Planning students come from a variety of educational backgrounds, e.g., art, geography, economics, English, political science, engineering, architecture, sociology, urban studies, and history. In the 2020-2021, academic year there were 14 different undergraduate majors among our students, providing testimony to the broad variety of subject areas studied by our students.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation Requirements

- GPA:** Attain an overall 3.0 program grade point average for all courses taken at the University of Iowa that **can** be applied to the student's plan of study/MyPlan for the planning degree, **regardless of whether they exceed what courses are needed to complete the degree** (see section on [Grading and Academic Performance](#)).
- Credits:** Complete 50 hours of course credit, at least 38 hours of which must be Planning courses. The remaining 15 credits are subject to the student's advisor approval based on their relevance to the planning field. **Planning courses include those listed under the planning program at Iowa (URP prefix) and courses offered by planning programs at other universities that were taken prior to enrollment and have been accepted for credit by the UI program faculty.** (See section on "[Credit for Courses Taken Prior to Enrollment.](#)")
- Course Work:** Complete satisfactorily all core and capstone courses (unless this requirement is waived by the program - see "[Waiver of Core Course Requirements](#)"), and a minimum of 9 semester hours in courses for an area of concentration. Satisfactory completion means attainment of a grade of B- or better in each required course. If the grade is lower than a B-, the course must be repeated until a B- or higher grade is obtained. (See section on "[Grades in Required Courses.](#)") However, if a course is not used to satisfy any of the area of concentration or the core courses, and if the student's GPA is adequate, and the Graduate College accepts the credit, then the course may count towards the 50 hours for the degree even if the grade is below a B-, as long as it is no lower than a C-.
- Final Exam:** Non-thesis students must pass a final exam (oral and written components, see Final Examination section above) administered by the student's final exam committee. Thesis students must complete a thesis and pass a final oral examination on the thesis.

Requirements for non-thesis and with thesis degrees

By default, all students are admitted into Planning to pursue a master's degree without a thesis requirement. With their advisor's consent students may elect to pursue a master's degree with a thesis. Students may change their degree objective (with or without thesis) by obtaining a change-of-status form from the school's administrative office and having it approved by the director. For more details, see the [Thesis](#) section of this manual.

Curriculum: Overview and Required Courses

Curriculum overview

The curriculum is based on the philosophy that planners must develop the theoretical and analytic skills necessary to analyze social problems and evaluate public policies. Planners also must develop professional skills in report writing, oral presentation, public-involvement, computer use and team management in order to function effectively in various organizational and political environments.

The planning curriculum is a two-year program leading to a Master of Science degree in Urban and Regional Planning. Fifty semester hours are required: 30 semester hours of core courses (including 6 hours of capstone courses fulfilled with Field Problems in Planning I and II), at least 9 semester hours in an area of concentration, and 11 semester hours of electives, which may include 2 semester hours of credit for completion of a qualified internship (see "[Internships](#)" section).

- At the heart of the two-year master's degree in planning is an integrated core curriculum providing students with a solid foundation in social, economic, and public policy analysis. First-semester courses draw from traditional disciplines, particularly economics and statistics, and are combined with introductions to law, land use and theories and practice of planning.
- As students proceed, increasing emphasis is placed on the development of critical judgment and insight through the application of theories to realistic planning problems and case studies.
- Students focus on one or two areas of concentration, as well as complete a major planning research project in our capstone Field Problems course.
- For the capstone project students apply their knowledge and skills to a planning problem or issue in an Iowa community. This will be done in tandem with the University's Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC) which has been providing public consultation to communities in Iowa for over a decade.

In sum, the required curriculum comprise includes core and capstone courses.

- The core curriculum assists students in understanding the institutions and systems--social, economic, environmental, political, administrative, and legal systems--as context for planning and policy analysis and constrained public choices.
- Students develop the ability to identify social goals and normative criteria for evaluating public policies.
- Both quantitative (statistics, forecasting, surveys, regional analysis) and non-quantitative skills are required to perform evaluations and produce plans.
- The capstone courses enable students to apply core class principles to actual planning problems.

Required Courses

Core courses are designed to provide the student with the necessary skills and background for more advanced course work. They must be completed or formally waived. For this reason, it is Planning's policy that students take core courses in the sequence below.

If a student is waived from a core requirement, an elective may be substituted. However, a student should not postpone taking a core course that has not been waived. Written permission to postpone a core course must be obtained from the faculty advisor.

Part-time students, students in two-degree programs, and those entering planning in mid-year should be careful in planning the course of study to avoid later problems with electives that assume knowledge of the core material, and with core courses that build upon first-semester courses.

Given that Field Problems builds upon the core curriculum, students are expected to have completed (with a grade of B- or better) all but one first-year core course, plus completed a minimum of 24 semester hours prior to enrolling in Field Problems.

Students with half-time assistantships may not register for more than 12 semester hours per semester.

First-Year		Title and Instructor for 2021-22		Semester Hours
URP:6200	Fall	Analytic Methods I (Spak)	core	3
URP:6201	Spring	Analytic Methods II (Nguyen)	core	3
URP:6202	Fall	Land Use Planning: Law and Practice (Anthony)	core	4
URP:6203	Fall	The Making of Cities: History and Theories of Planning (Laurian)	core	3
URP:6205	Fall	Economics for Policy Analysis (Qian)	core	3
URP:6208	Fall	Program Seminar	core	1
URP:6225	Spring	Applied GIS for Planning & Policy Making (Spears)	core	1 or 3
URP:6233	Spring	Public Finance and Budgeting (Nguyen)	core	3
Second-Year				
URP:6209	Fall	Field Problems in Planning I (Kraus)	capstone	3
URP:6210	Spring	Field Problems in Planning II (Kraus)	capstone	3
URP:6258	Fall	Systems and Scenario Thinking (Spak)	core	3

Waiver of Core Course Requirements

Core courses can be waived fully or in part for students who have completed comparable courses covering substantially the same material prior to enrolling in the program, and who received a grade of B or higher in those courses. SPPA's policy is to grant waivers for core courses only in exceptional cases. However, students who believe they have a legitimate case for waiver are encouraged to request one by contacting the course instructor and submitting a course waiver form.

Student must supply sufficient supporting materials to demonstrate that the subject matter contained in the course for which a waiver is sought has been covered with comparable rigor elsewhere. It should be emphasized that the burden of proof lies with the student to demonstrate the adequacy of previous training. Course outlines, exercises (if applicable), exams, and transcripts are the types of documentation typically required.

The waiver form is available on the SPPA website and must be signed by the instructor of the core course and by the student's advisor, who enters their recommendation on the form (e.g., complete or partial waiver).² The request is then presented by the advisor to the full faculty for approval.

Waiver requests should be made as early as possible, but no later than the first week of the semester during which the course would normally be taken. Should a request be denied, the student must enroll in the course before too much of the semester has elapsed. Under no circumstances is a waiver granted

² Engineering students should see information about the automatic waiver for Analytic Methods I in the [U2G Combined Degree Programs](#) section.

after the student has completed subsequent sequential courses, or after the student has completed Field Problems.

It should be noted that approval of a waiver exempts the student from the requirement to take a particular course, but does not reduce the 50 hours required for the degree. A student who waives a core course has the same final examination requirements as one who did not waive the particular course. (See sections on "[Final Examination](#)" and "[Thesis.](#)") Therefore, it would be prudent to assure oneself that the material has been adequately mastered before requesting a waiver.

Grades in Required Courses

A required course requirement can be satisfied either by waiver of the course or by completion of the course with a grade of B- or better. A required course for which a student received a C+ or lower must be repeated with a grade of at least a B-.

If a required course is repeated, it appears twice on the student's official university transcript. The original grade and the grade for the second time the course was taken will both be included in the official GPA. However, for purposes of determining the program GPA, satisfying Planning's requirement of a 3.00 GPA for graduation, and meeting the requirement of 50 semester hours, the second course replaces the first. That is, assuming at least a B- is received the second time, the 3 hours credit for the first time the course was taken do not count towards the 50 hour requirement and the first grade is not included in the program GPA. (See "[Grading and Academic Performance.](#)")

Electives Outside of Areas of Concentration

The following courses are not part of any concentration but are good options to round out students' education. Students may want to look for those courses, which are not offered every semester.

URP:3217	Negotiation and Conflict Resolution	3 s.h.
URP:6282	Grant Writing (Mirr)	2 s.h.
URP:6320	Introduction to Graphic Communication (Gassman)	2 s.h.
URP:6330	Developing Graphic Content (Gassman)	1 s.h.
EPLS:5240	Topics in Education: Facilitating Controversial Dialogue/ Facilitator Preparation for Leaders	3 s.h.

Areas of Concentration

Planning students select one or more area(s) of concentration (usually in their second semester). The purpose of the area of concentration requirement is to ensure that the student develops depth in a particular substantive area of planning by mastering a set of elective courses that together constitute a coherent plan of study/MyPlan in that area.

Planning offers five areas of concentration: **economic development; housing and community development; land use and environmental planning; transportation planning, and geographic information systems (GIS)**. Since the GIS concentration is skills more than content-driven, students electing a concentration in **GIS must also fulfill the requirements of another area of concentration**. The course offerings and requirements for each area of concentration are described below. Note that not all of the courses listed are offered every year.

Students may design alternative areas of concentration, subject to faculty approval, or combine two areas. For example, students can design a concentration in health services planning with appropriate course work in the Departments of Health Management and Policy or Occupational and Environmental Health, or in human services planning with courses in the School of Social Work. An area of concentration must be in a substantive field of planning. A concentration in a skill, research method, or law, is not permitted. However, course work in a particular method may be an appropriate **component** of a concentration. Students interested in alternative concentrations should consult with their advisor. Plans for a specially designed alternative concentration must be presented by the advisor to the faculty in a faculty meeting and approved by the faculty, before the alternative is approved.

It is up to students, with the help of their advisor, to either (1) select a concentration (or more) from the list of five options proposed, or (2) design an alternative or non-standard concentration. In all cases the student's plan of study/MyPlan must include at least nine semester hours of course work in the area of concentration. The student must attain at least a **B- in each course** for that course to be applied to the area of concentration requirement. Normally, not more than three hours of readings courses or independent study may be counted towards a concentration. In those cases when a student has re-taken a concentration course, the second course grade replaces the first grade and is used in computing the program GPA.

Please note: Because courses offered by other departments were obtained at the time this manual was printed, students must check course offerings on MyUI, consult with their advisors and take care when including such courses on their plan of study/MyPlan.

Economic Development

The economic development area of concentration focuses on building strong and economically resilient communities and organizations. It prepares students for positions with city planning and development departments, regional planning and development agencies, state economic development agencies, neighborhood economic development groups, and other non-profit or public/private economic development organizations.

Students study regional economic growth processes, the changing structure of employment, the relationship between local industrial sectors and national and international economic trends, and strategies for poverty alleviation and economic resilience. Courses also focus on forecasting the economic impact of business location decisions, alternatives for financing development, state and local development strategies and policies, innovative institutional arrangements such as public/private partnerships, and other issues such as plant closings, job training, poverty reduction, tax incentives, and federal small business programs. The following Economic Development courses are usually offered at The University of Iowa.

In general, students with an Economic Development concentration must take Economic Development Policy and should take an additional 3 semester hours from courses in Group 1, and a further 3 to 4 semester hours from courses in either Group 1 or Group 2 for a total of at least 9 hours.

Required		Title and Instructor for 2021-22	Semester Hours
URP:6295	Spring	Economic Development Policy (Qian)	3

Group 1 Planning Courses

URP:6290*	Fall	Economic Impact Assessment (staff)	3
URP:6297	Fall	Financing Economic Development for Poverty Alleviation (Nguyen)	3

Group 2 SPPA Courses

PBAF:6241		Strategic Management of Public and Nonprofit Orgs. (Twedt-Ball)	3
URP:6245	Spring	Growth Management (Anthony)	3
URP:6265*	Fall	Planning Sustainable Transportation (Spears)	3
URP:6273	Spring	Community Dev. Through Creative Placemaking (Kraus)	3

*Not offered 2021-2022

Group 2 Courses offered by other departments

Finance

FIN:4230		Real Estate Process (subject to instructor approval due to prerequisites)	3
FIN:9230:001		Real Estate Finance and Investments (subject to instructor approval due to prerequisites)	2

Economics

ECON:3350		Industry Analysis	3
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Entrepreneurship

ENTR:4200		Entrepreneurship: Business Consulting (face-to-face and online Fall, Spring; online Summer)	3
ENTR:4400		Managing the Growth Business (face-to-face and online Fall, Spring; online Summer)	3

Geographic Information Systems

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialty prepares students for positions with city planning departments, regional planning agencies, state development agencies, neighborhood economic development groups, and other nonprofit or public/private economic development organizations.

Planning offers a variety of GIS courses. Students learn how to use GIS software, learn about the management of land information, and explore model building within a GIS framework. Other courses cover GIS-based, three-dimensional visualization, programming in a GIS environment, and web-based GIS. Some policy courses make use of GIS for analysis and forecasting purposes. Supplemental classes in remote sensing (offered by the Geographical and Sustainability Sciences department) are recommended.

In general, students with a GIS concentration take the required course and at least a further 8 s.h. from Group 1 or Group 2. Students with a GIS specialty are also required to develop a concentration in one of the other planning areas offered by planning.

Required		Title and Instructor for 2021-22	Semester Hours
URP:6225	Spring	Applied GIS for Planning & Policy Making (Spears)	3

Group 1 Planning Courses

URP:4262	Spring	Transportation Research Methods & Analysis (Spears)	3
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*Not offered 2021-2022

Group 2 Courses offered by other departments

Geographical and Sustainability Sciences

GEOG:3520		GIS for Environmental Studies (subject to instructor approval due to prerequisites)	3
GEOG:3540		Intro. To Geographic Visualization	3
GEOG:4150		Health and Environment: GIS Applications	3
GEOG:4500		Applications in Environmental Remote Sensing (prerequisites required)	4
GEOG:4520		GIS for Environmental Studies: Application (subject to instructor approval due to prerequisites)	3
GEOG:4580		Introduction to Geographic Databases (subject to instructor approval due to prerequisites)	3
GEOG:6500		Seminar in Spatial Analysis and Modeling	3

Interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate in Geoinformatics

A Geoinformatics certificate is available to graduate students through the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Informatics (IGPI). The 21 semester hours of courses required to complete the certificate include offerings from Urban and Regional Planning, Geographical and Sustainability Sciences, Earth & Environmental Sciences, and Statistics. For more information, please see: <https://informatics.uiowa.edu/study-opportunities/graduate-program/geoinformatics/certificate-requirements>.

Housing and Community Development

The well-being of urban populations depend on affordable quality housing, jobs and wages that support access to quality housing and services, and community sense of place. Lack of reasonably priced housing options, loss of population and jobs, urban decay, residential segregation by race, gentrification, and costly public services threaten the prosperity of cities, regions, and communities. The concentration in housing and community development examines social inequities in the built environment; federal, state and local housing and community development policies and programs; community organizing and placemaking; and innovative public/private/neighborhood partnerships.

Graduates with this background are prepared for positions in a) housing and community development divisions of city, regional, state and national planning agencies and departments; b) housing-focused non-profit organizations; c) private planning consulting firms and companies that build and develop new housing; and d) community development corporations.

In general, students with a Housing and Community Development concentration must take Housing Policy and should take at least 3 credit hours from courses in Group 1, and a further 3 hours from courses in either Group 1 or Group 2 for a total of at least 9 hours.

Required		Title and Instructor for 2021-22	Semester Hours
URP:6271	Spring	Housing Policy (Anthony)	3

Group 1 Planning Courses

URP:6273	Spring	Community Dev. Through Creative Placemaking (Kraus)	3
URP:6297	Fall	Financing Economic Development for Poverty Alleviation (Nguyen)	3

Group 2 SPPA Courses

URP:6245	Spring	Growth Management (Anthony)	3
URP:6278	Fall	Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness I (Dunkhase) (also offered online by Smith)	3
URP:6290*	Fall	Economic Impact Assessment (staff) (if not taken as a core course)	3
URP:6295	Spring	Economic Development Policy (Qian)	3
URP:6400*	Winterim	Sustainable Development: The Kerala Experience (Anthony)	3

*Not offered 2021-2022

Group 2 Courses offered by other departments

Finance

FIN:4230		Real Estate Process (subject to instructor approval due to prerequisites)	3
FIN:9230:001		Real Estate Finance and Investments (subject to instructor approval due to prerequisites)	2

Social Work

SSW:4843:0001		Social Welfare Policy and Practice	3
SSW:6145		Organization & Com. Practice	3

Land Use and Environmental Planning

In the age of Anthropocene, environmental degradation linked to land development patterns (e.g., urban sprawl), ecosystem disturbances (e.g., wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats, invasive species), and materials and energy consumption, have dramatic cumulative impacts on people, flora and fauna in all cities and regions. Those patterns contribute to climate warming, worsening the frequency and scale of natural disasters (e.g., floods, fires, hurricanes, heat waves) from the local to the global scale.

In cities, humans experience unequal environmental quality, with declining and gentrifying neighborhoods, food deserts, varying access to parks and green infrastructure, and areas of concentrated pollution, toxic sites and brownfields. Non-human species struggle with habitat fragmentation and loss, the major causes of species extinction.

Transition towns, Densification projects, Eco-cities, Green urbanism, Ecological landscaping, Renewable energy districts and microgrids, and other models seeking to “design with nature” and reduce cities’ environmental footprints offer creative alternatives. Students pursuing this concentration acquire the knowledge, skills and techniques to develop plans and policies designed to protect, preserve and regenerate ecosystems, and to promote sustainable, just, ecologically sound, and health-supportive environments.

Students in this area of concentration generally pursue careers in local, regional, state or federal government agencies, such as states’ Departments of Natural Resources, the EPA, FEMA, or the National Park Service, in consulting firms, and in environmental advocacy nonprofit organizations.

Students pursuing this concentration must take Environmental Policy (URP:6256), at least one 3 semester hour course in Group 1, at least one 3 semester hour course in Group 2 (for a total of at least 9 hours in the concentration). Students should work with their advisor to select the courses that best meet their interests and professional specialization needs.*

*Students without backgrounds in environmental sciences may wish to take the following courses to strengthen their understandings of ecological processes:

- GEO:1020/1021 The Global Environment
- CEE:3155 Principles of Environmental Engineering

The former, being a 1000 level course, cannot be taken for graduate credit or count towards the total 50 hours required for the graduate degree).

Required		Title and Instructor for 2021-22	Semester Hours
URP:6256	Spring	Environmental Policy (Spak)	3
Group 1 Planning Courses			
URP:6243	Spring	The Land Development Process (Busard/Mueller)	3
URP:6245	Spring	Growth Management (Anthony)	3
URP:6253*	Spring	Designing Sustainable and Healthy Cities (Laurian)	3
URP:6257*	Spring	Environmental Management (Laurian)	3
URP:6266	Fall	Transportation and Land Use Planning (Spears)	3
URP:6280	Fall	Planning for Disaster Mitigation and Recovery (Schwab)	2-3
Group 2 SPPA Courses			
URP:4170*	Spring	Megacities Seminar (Spak)	2
URP:4750*	Spring	Environmental Impact Analysis (staff)	4
URP:5800	Spring	Environmental Economics and Policy (Secchi)	3
URP:6265*	Fall	Planning Sustainable Transportation (Spears)	3
URP:6400*	Winterim	Sustainable Development: The Kerala Experience (Anthony)	3

*Not offered 2021-2022

Group 2 Courses offered by other departments

Geographical and Sustainability Sciences Courses

GEOG:3310	Landscape Ecology	3
GEOG:3320	Wetlands: Function, Geography and Management	3
GEOG:3340	Ecosystem Services: Human Dependence on Natural Systems	3
GEOG:3350	Urban Ecology	3
GEOG:3420	Sustainable Development and Green Building	3
GEOG:3500	Intro. to Environmental Remote Sensing	3
GEOG:3760	Hazards and Society	3
GEOG:4150	Health and Environment: GIS Applications	3
GEOG:4500	Applications in Environmental Remote Sensing	4
GEOG:4520	GIS for Environmental Studies: Application	3
GEOG:4770	Environmental Justice	3
GEOG:6300	Seminar in Environment, Conservation, and Land Use	3

Civil and Environmental Engineering Courses

CEE:3790	Resilient Infrastructure Emergency Response	3
CEE:4158	Solid and Hazardous Wastes	3
CEE:4159	Air Pollution Control Technology	3
CEE:5410	Politics of FEWS (Food, Energy and Water resources) (offered online)	3

Other Courses

EES:3390	Integrated Watershed Analysis	3
JMC:5266	Risk Communication (Kelly) (offered online)	3
OEH:4240	Global Environmental Health (face-to-face; online in Spr.)	3
OEH:4260	Global Water and Health	3

Transportation

Transportation facilities have been used to encourage economic development, to shape growth patterns, to improve opportunities for disadvantaged persons, and to elevate the general quality of life in and around urban areas. Students in this concentration become competent in developing transportation policies, understanding the interaction between transportation and land use, and measuring transportation demand. They learn how transportation plans are produced, and what regulations govern transportation planning. They investigate new transportation laws and regulations, financing systems, and the impact of transportation facilities or modes on environmental quality. These students find employment in consulting firms, state transportation agencies, regional organizations, cities, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and transportation districts.

By working closely with their advisor, a student should develop an appropriate set of courses that demonstrates the necessary level of specialization and meets the interests and professional needs of the student. Students with a Transportation concentration must take Transportation and Land Use Planning and should take an additional 3 semester hour course in Group 1, and a further 3 to 4 hours from courses in Group 2 for a total of at least 9 hours.

Required		Title and Instructor for 2021-22	Semester Hours
URP:6266	Fall	Transportation and Land Use Planning (Spears)	3

Group 1 Planning Courses

URP:4262	Spring	Transportation Research Methods & Analysis (Spears)	3
URP:6260	Spring	Transportation Policy and Planning (Spears)	3
URP:6265*	Fall	Planning Sustainable Transportation (Spears)	3

Group 2 SPPA Courses

URP:6290*	Fall	Economic Impact Assessment (staff) (if not taken as a core course)	3
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*Not offered 2021-2022

Group 2 Courses offered by other departments

Civil Engineering

CEE:4763		Traffic Engineering	3
CEE:5998		Individual Investigations: Civil and Environmental Engineering	arr.

Public Health

OEH:4530		Global Road Safety	3
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Transportation Certificate

Students specializing in transportation may be eligible to be awarded a Transportation Certificate. The Transportation Certificate Program, coordinated by School of Planning and Public Affairs Associate Professor of Instruction, Steve Spears, enables students to be awarded an additional credential. It is documented on a student's transcript at the time the master's degree is earned. To apply to the Transportation Studies Program students must complete the [application form](#) on the SPPA website **by November 1st of the student's first semester**. Any courses taken prior to the certificate application cannot be counted.

Students enrolled in the certificate program may wish to participate in faculty-led transportation research, which may explore topics such as system planning, traffic operations and engineering, spatial data systems and analysis, simulation applications, and policy issues.

To obtain a certificate, planning students must complete a minimum of 15 semester hours of transportation-related courses offered in Urban and Regional Planning and related fields. Specific requirements are listed in the University General Catalog under the heading of [Transportation Studies, Graduate Certificate](#). Substitutions are possible if the courses listed are not offered during the student's residency at the University of Iowa. (An alternative Transportation Planning Certificate is being developed, and should start being available in Fall 2022).

During the student's final semester, the [Certificate Completion Form](#) must be submitted before the established deadline for the Degree Application set by the Graduate College (approximately 10 weeks before graduation).

Combined Degree Programs

Various combined-degree options are available allowing students to earn a graduate degree in Planning and another degree in less time than would be required to obtain the two degrees independently. Courses for one degree are considered as elective credit for the other degree program.

The following formalized combined degree options have been established:

Combined graduate-to-graduate degree options for Planning and:

- Law (J.D.)
- Civil and Environmental Engineering (Sustainable Water Development) (M.S.)
- Social Work (M.S.W.)
- Occupational and Environmental Health (M.S.)
- Higher Education and Student Affairs (M.A.)

Undergraduate-to-graduate (U2G) degree options are also possible.

The following have been formalized:

- Civil and Environmental Engineering (B.S.E.)
- Environmental Policy and Planning (B.S. or B.A.)

The U2G option is also open to students in **any** undergraduate major at the University of Iowa.

Information about those programs is available from the SPPA admissions coordinator.

While the requirements of each graduate-to-graduate and U2G-degree option vary, all have key features in common. In each case a student must:

- Complete an approved area of concentration in Planning. Work in the other academic unit does not, in and of itself, necessarily constitute a valid area of concentration (e.g., "law" is not a concentration, although an environmental law course may be part of an environmental concentration).
- For graduate-to-graduate degrees, take at least 38 hours of planning courses that have been previously approved to count towards the degree (except for the combined degree with Law which requires 35 semester hours). Courses in other programs can sometimes be substituted for planning core courses. However, this does not reduce the 38-hour requirement.
- For U2G degrees, take at least 50 semester hours of Planning courses that have been previously approved to count towards the master's degree.
- Unless otherwise specified, Field Problems is required of students in combined degree programs.
- Satisfy planning's final examination requirement.

Specific features of the formalized graduate-to-graduate and U2G degree programs are below. The student should verify the most recent degree requirements with the department of interest as courses and requirements in other departments are subject to change with little prior notification.

Graduate-to-Graduate options with other disciplines

Even when an established graduate-to-graduate degree program does not exist, students can receive a master's degree in Planning in conjunction with another graduate degree, e.g., with Journalism or Public Health.

University policy requires that prior administrative approval be granted, and a minimum of 60 semester hours of graduate credit be completed to receive two master's degrees. However, courses taken to satisfy one unit's requirements also may be applied to meet the other unit's requirements. Some credits can be shared when one master's degree requires, or both master's degrees require, more than 30 semester hours of graduate credit. (No more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the credits necessary for one degree may be composed of coursework taken for the other degree.) In all cases, combined degree programs require at least 60 semester hours of graduate credit and each unit's degree requirements must be met. Students should consult with their advisors, and consult the Graduate College Manual, Part I, section X. G.: <https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual>.

Admission

Students already admitted to another academic unit are formally assigned to that unit. Students interested in pursuing two master's degrees should request that both their home unit and Planning write letters to the Graduate College approving their student pursuit of two master's degrees and exchange letters between departments. At a time when the majority of their coursework is in Planning, students should file a Change of Status form with the Graduate Admissions Office to be formally assigned to Planning.

Students who are first admitted to Planning and subsequently desire to obtain a second master's degree, should contact their advisor and the SPPA Director. Letters from both academic units should be sent to the Graduate College, as above and exchanged between departments. A Change of Status form should be filed when students complete their coursework in Planning. Doing so enables the student to be formally assigned to the other academic unit. For students who plan to complete all degree requirements in Planning and in the other academic unit simultaneously, no Change of Status form is needed.

Tuition

As a member of a graduate-to-graduate degree program, students may pay the greater of the two programs' tuition costs. U2G students are assessed undergraduate level tuition and fees during their first year of the U2G program (students' 4th or senior year), and until the bachelor's degree is conferred. Students are encouraged to consult the Graduate College to determine the tuition amount.

Specific features of the formalized combined-degree programs follow; however, the student should verify the most recent combined-degree requirements with the department of interest, because courses and requirements in other departments are subject to change with little prior notification.

Graduate-to-Graduate Degrees

Law

Careers

One of the more popular combined-degree programs is Law (J.D.) combined with Urban and Regional Planning (M.S.). Combined law-planning degree graduates typically obtain employment as city managers, city attorneys, city planners or planning administrators. They also practice at law firms or advocacy organizations as land use, housing, transportation or environmental law specialists.

Admission

Students are expected to meet the admission requirements of the respective programs, take the requisite admission exams and provide appropriate admission materials. The two programs make admission decisions independently. Students should begin taking law courses in advance of planning courses. All requirements for each degree must be satisfied separately, which includes passing the final examination for each program.

Coursework

The J.D. degree requires 84 semester hours, typically completed in three years; the M.S. requires 50 semester hours, typically completed in two years. Law applies a maximum of 12 hours of planning courses toward the J.D. requirement. (Six of those hours may be outside of law [example, URP] and the other six are discretionary credits.) Planning applies 15 hours of law courses toward the M.S. requirement. With approval of the student's planning advisor, three hours of law courses can be used to meet the requirements of the concentration. Therefore, combined-program students typically complete both degree requirements in four years. Taking classes over a summer term may be required to meet this target. A total of 107 hours of graduate work is required for the combined degree, including a minimum of 35 hours in planning and 72 hours of law.

Tuition

Combined degree students with law are assessed tuition at the College of Law rate except for any semester or summer session in which the student is not enrolled for any law credits and none of the credits being earned that semester or term are applied toward the student's J.D. degree. All combined degree students pursuing a J.D. degree are assessed at least 6 semesters of law school tuition.

Sample Four-Year Plan of Study
Graduate-to-Graduate Combined Degree
Law-Planning³
 (Beginning Law first)

Semester 1

LAW:8017 Contracts	4 s.h.
LAW:8026 Intro. To Law & Legal Reasoning	1 s.h.
LAW:8032 Legal Analysis, Writing and Research I	2 s.h.
LAW:8037 Property	4 s.h.
LAW:8046 Torts	<u>4 s.h.</u>
Total hours	15 s.h.

Semester 2

LAW:8006 Civil Procedure	4 s.h.
LAW:8010 Constitutional Law I	3 s.h.
LAW:8022 Criminal Law	3 s.h.
LAW:8033 Legal Analysis, Writing and Research II	2 s.h.
Law elective	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours	15 s.h.

Summer 1

Law internship/employment (optional and recommended, typically without credit)

Semester 3

URP:6200 Analytic Methods I - core course	3 s.h.
URP:6202 Land Use Planning: Law and Practice - core course	4 s.h.
URP:6203 The Making of Cities: History and Theories of Planning– core course	3 s.h.
URP:6205 Economics for Policy Analysis - core course	3 s.h.
URP:6208 Program Seminar - core course	<u>1 s.h.</u>
Total hours	14 s.h.

Semester 4

URP:6201 Analytic Methods II - core course	3 s.h.
Planning electives	3-4 s.h.
Law electives	<u>6 s.h.</u>
Total hours	13 s.h.

Summer 2

URP:6335 Planning Internship	<u>2 s.h.</u>
Total hours	2 s.h.

² This plan does not include summer law classes and begins with law courses first. Those who take summer classes may take fewer hours during the fall/spring semesters. Students have the option of starting in planning the first year, followed by law. Students should be aware that none of the planning semester hours earned before matriculating at the law school may be applied toward the J.D. degree. Likewise, no law semesters taken before matriculating in planning may be applied toward the master's degree in planning.

Semester 5

URP:6209 Field Problems in Planning I - capstone course	3 s.h.
URP:6258 Systems and Scenario Thinking	3 s.h.
URP:6290 Economic Impact Assessment	3 s.h.
Law electives ⁴	<u>6 s.h.</u>
Total hours	15 s.h.

Semester 6

URP:6210 Field Problems in Planning II - capstone course	3 s.h.
Planning electives (number of s.h. depends on whether planning internship was done)	4 s.h. or 6 s.h.
Law electives (number of s.h. depends on whether planning internship was done)	<u>3 s.h. or 6 s.h.</u>
Total hours	10 or 15 s.h.

Summer 3

Internship/employment (typically no credit)

Semester 7

Law electives (number of s.h. depends on law electives taken in Semester 6)	<u>12 or 14 s.h.</u>
Total hours	12 or 14 s.h.

Semester 8

Law electives (number of s.h. depends on law electives taken in Semester 6)	<u>12 or 14 s.h.</u>
Total hours	12 or 14 s.h.

Law, J.D.

72 semester hours

Planning, M.S.

35 semester hours (see footnote [2](#))

⁴ Beyond satisfying the semester-hour requirement, second- and third-year law students have the following requirements for graduation: students must (1) take Constitutional Law II, one legal ethics course and one skills course; and (2) earn four upper-class writing units. Also, the planning school strongly recommends combined degree students take LAW:8796 Property II.

Sustainable Water Development

Students in this combined graduate-to-graduate degree program obtain an M.S.E. in Civil and Environmental Engineering with a subprogram of Sustainable Water Development and an M.S. in Urban and Regional Planning.

Careers

Planning and environmental engineering are closely related. Planning professionals are often trained in environmental policy and interact frequently with engineers trained in civil and environmental engineering. Water is an important point of contact and joint effort between planning and engineering, both in urban and exurban areas. The purpose of this combined degree program is to train professionals who are equipped to address water quality and quantity problems with both their engineering and their planning and policy skills.

Admission

Students are expected to meet the admission requirements of the respective programs, take the requisite admission exams and provide appropriate admission materials. The two programs make admission decisions independently. Students may begin each program in advance of the other or begin the two programs concurrently. All requirements for each degree must be satisfied separately, which includes passing the final examination for each program. URP students without an undergraduate degree in engineering must complete Principles of Environmental Engineering (CEE:3155; 4 s.h. with laboratory) prior to admission to the combined degree program. This course covers fundamentals of water supply and treatment processes; wastewater treatment processes; processes for air pollution control, groundwater remediation; solid and hazardous waste management.

Coursework

The M.S.E. in Civil and Environmental Engineering subprogram Sustainable Water Development requires 31 semester hours. The combined degree option in planning and sustainable water development reduces the total semester-hour requirement for both degrees from 81 to 65. Students must earn a minimum of 38 semester hours in planning and have 12 semester hours of engineering courses applied to the planning requirement of 50. Students can complete the course work in five semesters. Students need to decide which courses are appropriate with their advisors in both departments. More information about the Sustainable Water Development degree can be found [on their website](#).

Sample Plan of Study
Graduate-to-Graduate Combined Degree
Sustainable Water Development - Urban and Regional Planning

Semester 1

URP:6200	Analytic Methods I	3 s.h.
URP:6202	Land Use Planning: Law and Practice	4 s.h.
URP:6203	The Making of Cities: History and Theories of Planning	3 s.h.
URP:6205	Economics for Policy Analysis	3 s.h.
URP:6208	Program Seminar	<u>1 s.h.</u>
Total hours		14 s.h.

Semester 2

URP:6201	Analytic Methods II	3 s.h.
URP:6233	Public Finance and Budgeting* OR Elective	3 s.h.
CEE:5310	Informatics for Sustainable Systems	3 s.h.
CEE:5350	Watershed Hydrology & Ecosystem Process	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours		12 s.h.*

Semester 3

CEE:5440	Foundations of Envir. Chemistry and Microbiology	3 s.h.
CEE:5380	Fluid Flows in Environmental Systems	3 s.h.
URP:6209	Field Problems in Planning I	3 s.h.
URP:6290	Economic Impact Assessment* OR Elective	3 s.h.
URP:6258	Systems and Scenario Thinking	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours		15 s.h.*

Semester 4

URP:6210	Field Problems in Planning II	3 s.h.
CEE:5993	Community-Centered Problem Solving and Design	3 s.h.
CEE	Electives	<u>6 s.h.</u>
Total hours		12 s.h.

Semester 5

CEE	Electives	6 s.h.
URP	Electives	<u>6 s.h.</u>
Total hours		12 s.h.

Urban and Regional Planning, M.S.	38 s.h.
Civil & Environ. Engineering, M.S.E.	<u>27 s.h.</u>
Total	65 s.h.

***Note:** Students are required to take URP:6233 Public Finance and Budgeting **OR** URP:6290 Economic Impact Assessment

Social Work

Careers

Students in the combined graduate-to-graduate degree program in social work obtain the M.S.W. (Master of Social Work) and the M.S. in Urban and Regional Planning. In the MSW program, these students generally pursue a human-services-planning concentration. Graduates of this combined program find careers as human-services planners for local, state and nonprofit agencies. The combined degree improves the graduate's qualifications for positions of responsibility in human services or social-services planning and administration.

Admission

Students are expected to meet the admission requirements of the respective programs, take the requisite admission exams and provide appropriate admission materials. The two programs make admission decisions independently. Students may begin each program in advance of the other or begin the two programs concurrently. All requirements for each degree must be satisfied separately, which includes passing the final examination for each program.

Coursework

The M.S.W. degree requires 60 semester hours. The combined-degree option in planning and social work reduces the total semester-hour requirement for both degrees from 110 to 83-85. Students must earn a minimum of 38 s.h. in URP and have 12 s.h. of social work courses applied to the URP requirement of 50. Students can complete the coursework in 3 years by taking 11-13 hours in summer school and averaging 12 hours per semester during the academic year. With approval of the student's Planning advisor, 3 hours of social work courses can be used to meet the requirements of the concentration. Students in the combined M.S.W. program take the Social Work Practicum in place of the Field Problems capstone requirement – refer to section [Practicum](#) for details.

Higher Education and Student Affairs

The combined graduate-to-graduate degree between Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) in the Department of Education Policy and Leadership Studies (M.A.) and Urban and Regional Planning (M.S.) fills a growing need for higher education academic administrators with knowledge and understanding of planning and sustainability principles and methods.

Historically, campus planning consisted primarily of physical planning in a university setting, with an emphasis on capital improvements and space planning. While this remains an important area, strategic planning and sustainability are becoming increasingly important in higher education planning. Sustainability planning encompasses the growing concern on university campuses for sustainable practices on campus (e.g., energy conservation), and the importance of creating a culture of sustainability and integrating sustainability into the curriculum.

Careers

Students with combined URP-HESA degrees are ideally suited to meet all the dimensions of campus and higher education planning, particularly the growing emphases on strategic and sustainability planning.

The following are key market-place skills and duties, in demand in the higher education job market, which are supported by the combined URP-HESA curriculum.

- Forecasting and matching space requirements with both academic program requirements and sustainability principles.
- General capital improvements planning
- Integrating physical improvements with student life and sustainability principles
- Developing and employing sustainability metrics to measure campus sustainability performance
- Researching and promoting best management practices for campus sustainability
- Creating a culture of sustainability in an institution of higher education
- Understanding how to integrate sustainability into undergraduate and graduate curricula
- Knowledge and understanding of higher education administration and issues
- Knowledge of strategic planning in higher education
- Ability to achieve consensus on campus planning issues with a broad variety of stakeholders—students, faculty, administrators, contractors, adjacent communities.
- Developing and managing campus climate action plans, such as [Penn's Climate Action Plan](#)

Admission

Students are expected to meet the admission requirements of the respective programs, take the requisite admission exams and provide appropriate admission materials. The two programs make admission decisions independently. Students may begin each program in advance of the other or begin the two programs concurrently. All requirements for each degree must be satisfied separately, which includes passing the final examination for each program.

Coursework

The M.A. degree in HESA requires 40 hours. The combined degree option in URP and HESA reduces the total semester-hour requirement for both degrees from 90 to 68. Students can complete the course work in three years. Students need to decide which courses would be appropriate with their advisors in each department.

Model Plan of Study
Graduate-to-Graduate Combined Degree
Higher Education and Student Affairs - Urban and Regional Planning

Semester 1		
URP:6200	Analytic Methods I	3 s.h.
URP:6202	Land Use Planning: Law and Practice (<i>*HESA</i>)	4 s.h.
URP:6203	The Making of Cities: History and Theories of Planning(<i>*HESA</i>)	3 s.h.
URP:6205	Economics for Policy Analysis (<i>*HESA</i>)	3 s.h.
URP:6208	Program Seminar	<u>1 s.h.</u>
Total hours		14 s.h.
Semester 2		
URP:6201	Analytic Methods II	3 s.h.
URP:6233	Public Finance and Budgeting* OR Elective	3 s.h.
URP elective/area of concentration		<u>6 s.h.</u>
Total hours		12 s.h.
Semester 3		
EPLS:5251	College Students & Their Environments (<i>*URP</i>)	3 s.h.
EPLS:5253	Assessment in Higher Education & Student Affairs	3 s.h.
EPLS:6216	Finance in Higher Education (<i>*URP</i>)	3 s.h.
EPLS:6225	Introduction to Public Policymaking (<i>*URP</i>)	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours		12 s.h.
Semester 4		
EPLS:5252	Administration of Higher Education & Student Affairs	3 s.h.
EPLS:6224	Organizational Theory & Administrative Behavior (<i>*URP</i>)	3 s.h.
EPLS:6290	Master's Project	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours		9 s.h.
Semester 5		
URP:6209	Field Problems in Planning I	3 s.h.
URP:6258	Systems and Scenario Thinking	3 s.h.
URP:6290	Economic Impact Assessment* OR Elective	3 s.h.
EPLS:5100	Issues & Policies in Higher Education	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours		12 s.h.
Semester 6		
URP:6210	Field Problems in Planning II	3 s.h.
EPLS:5247	Multiculturalism in Higher Education	3 s.h.
EPLS elective/recommended course		<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours		9 s.h.
Urban and Regional Planning, M.S.	38 s.h.	
HESA, M.A.	<u>30 s.h.</u>	
Total	68 s.h.	

***Note:** Students are required to take URP:6233 Public Finance and Budgeting **OR** URP:6290 Economic Impact Assessment

**HESA* Course cross-counted for HESA credit.

**URP* Course cross-counted for URP credit.

Occupational and Environmental Health

Students in this combined program pursue an M.S. degree within the College of Public Health, with an emphasis on occupational and environmental health.

Careers

Graduates typically find employment with state health and human services departments or in health or environmental planning.

Admission

Students are expected to meet the admission requirements of the respective programs, take the requisite admission exams and provide appropriate admission materials. The two programs make admission decisions independently. Students may begin each program in advance of the other or begin the two programs concurrently. All requirements for each degree must be satisfied separately, which includes passing the final examination for each program.

Coursework

An M.S. in Occupational and Environmental Health requires 40 semester hours. The combined degree in planning and occupational and environmental health requires 71 semester hours, which includes 38 hours of planning courses and 33 hours of environmental health. Students decide which courses are most appropriate with their Planning advisor and the other department.

Undergraduate-to-Graduate (U2G) Degrees

Civil and Environmental Engineering

Careers

Graduates of the U2G program with Engineering benefit from obtaining a combination of technical skills as well as an understanding of policy development and implementation. Such a combination of skills would prepare a graduate for a career as a public-works director, city engineer, transportation engineer, or in the public utilities sector.

Admission

Students pursuing a B.S.E. degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering may apply for admission to the undergraduate-to-graduate (U2G) degree program with planning during the second semester of their junior year. A complete application for admission to the Graduate College should be submitted at that time. Provided students meet all requirements for a B.S.E. in Engineering, planning judges their application to the program as satisfactory, and their grade point average is at least 3.0, they would be admitted to the U2G degree program. Students who wish to apply for financial aid from planning should submit funding requests per departmental requirements for spring and final year funding.

Coursework

The U2G program enables a student to save one academic year while completing two degrees. U2G program students would normally begin to take planning courses in their third and fourth years (the standard engineering curriculum is to be taken during the first two years of the B.S.E.). During the fifth year (after receiving a B.S.E. in Engineering), students complete a curriculum similar to that of Planning's second-year students. In most cases, students in the U2G program complete an approved planning internship during the summer between their fourth and fifth years. U2G program students take the standard comprehensive examination administered to all M.S. in Planning students, during the last semester of the 5th year.

All course requirements of both academic units are satisfied under the U2G program. One Planning core course (URP:6200, Analytic Methods I) is waived because Engineering students generally have an ample analytical background. With approval of the student's planning advisor, three hours of engineering courses can be used to meet the requirements of the concentration. A summary of a typical plan of study for a student in the combined program follows.

Model Plan of Study Undergraduate-to-Graduate (U2G) Combined Degree Civil and Environmental Engineering - Urban Planning

Year 3 Fall

URP:6208 Program Seminar 1 s.h.

[Select one of the following] 3-4 s.h.

URP:6202 Land Use Planning: Law and Practice - EFA required course (4 s.h.)

URP:6203 The Making of Cities: History and Theories of Planning - EFA
required course (3 s.h.)

URP:6205 Economics for Policy Analysis -EFA required course (3 s.h.)

Total hours 4-5 s.h.

Year 3 Spring

URP:6201 Analytic Methods II - EFA required course, **OR** electives 3 s.h.

Total hours 3 s.h.

Year 4 Fall		
[Select a minimum of 6 semester hours]		6-7 s.h.
URP:6202	Land Use Planning: Law and Practice - EFA required course (4 s.h.)	
URP:6203	The Making of Cities: History and Theories of Planning - EFA required course (3 s.h.)	
URP:6205	Economics for Policy Analysis - EFA required course (3 s.h.)	
URP:6233	Public Finance and Budgeting (prerequisite (URP:6205) - EFA Elective Course (3 s.h.).	2-3 s.h.
OR		
URP:6290	Economic Impact Assessment (prerequisite (URP:6205) (2 s.h.)	<u> </u>
Total hours		6-9 s.h.
Year 4 Spring		
[Select one]		9 s.h.
URP:6201	Analytic Methods II - EFA Required Course (3 s.h.), AND electives (6 s.h.), OR Electives	<u> </u>
Total hours		9 s.h.
Civil & Envir. Engineering, B.S.E.		<hr/>
Planning semester hours applied		22 s.h.
Year 5 Summer		
URP:6335	Internship	<u>2 s.h.</u>
Total hours		2 s.h.
Year 5 Fall		
URP:6209	Field Problems in Planning I	3 s.h.
URP:6258	Systems and Scenario Thinking	3 s.h.
[Select one if not taken earlier]		3-4 s.h.
URP:6202	Land Use Planning: Law and Practice (4 s.h.), OR	
URP:6203	The Making of Cities: History and Theories of Planning (3 s.h.)	
[Select one if neither taken earlier]		3 s.h.
URP:6233	Public Finance and Budgeting (prerequisite URP:6205) (Spring),	
OR		
URP:6290	Economic Impact Assessment (prerequisite URP:6205)	
Electives		<u>2-3 s.h.</u>
Total hours		15 s.h.
Year 5 Spring		
URP:6210	Field Problems in Planning II	3 s.h.
Electives		<u>11 s.h.</u>
Total hours		14 s.h.
Total in fifth year		<hr/> 30 s.h.
Urban and Regional Planning, M.S.		52 s.h.
35 semester hours must have a URP prefix		

Environmental Policy and Planning

The undergraduate-to-graduate (U2G) degree between Environmental Policy and Planning (EPPL) in Geographical and Sustainability Sciences and Urban and Regional Planning (URP) allows students to earn an undergraduate degree and a master's degree in five years. Benefits of pursuing the combined degrees include:

- Time to completion of two degrees is five years instead of six
- Apply course credit to both degrees
- Save time and money
- Eligibility for graduate assistantships
- Gain skills in the critical areas needed by employers
- Graduate with the professional credentials to enter the field of planning

Careers

By completing the master's degree in planning, the undergraduate EPPL degree is enhanced with in-depth graduate study and professional education focused on urban planning, including environmental planning.

Admission

Applicants to the U2G program should apply for admission during the second semester of their junior year. Complete application instructions can be found on the [SPPA website](#). The application requirements are:

- Completion of 80 semester hours of undergraduate work
- Successful completion of URP:3001 Planning Livable Cities
- A minimum GPA of 3.25

Coursework and Timeline

Year 1

Undergraduate coursework

Year 2

Undergraduate coursework

URP:3001 Planning Livable Cities

Year 3

Undergraduate coursework

Must complete 80 semester hours of undergraduate coursework to apply
GPA of 3.25 or higher

Year 4

Complete bachelor's degree requirements

Take up to 18 semester hours of graduate coursework

Pay undergraduate tuition rate until bachelor's degree is confirmed

Complete Funding Application/Award Form and submit to Anne Nessa by January 15 for priority funding in Year 5.

Bachelor's degree conferred

Year 5

Complete graduate coursework

Pay graduate tuition rate and become eligible for graduate assistantship

Master's degree conferred

A model plan of study for those pursuing the **B.S.** in EPPL combined with URP is available on the [SPPA website](#).

Model Plan of Study
Undergraduate-to-Graduate (U2G) Combined Degree
Environmental Policy and Planning, B.A. - Urban Planning, M.S.

Year 4 Fall

URP:6200 Analytical Methods I	3 s.h.
URP:6202 Land Use Planning: Law and Practice	4 s.h.
URP:6203 The Making of Cities: History and Theories of Planning	3 s.h.
URP:6205 Economics for Policy Analysis	3 s.h.
URP:6208 Program Seminar	<u>1 s.h.</u>
Total hours	14 s.h.

Year 4 Spring

URP:6201 Analytic Methods II	3 s.h.
EPPL electives	<u>12 s.h.</u>
Total hours	15 s.h.

Envir. Policy and Planning, B.A.
Planning semester hours applied

17-18 s.h.

Year 5 Summer

URP:6335 Internship	2 s.h.
URP elective	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours	5 s.h.

Year 5 Fall

URP:6209 Field Problems in Planning I	3 s.h.
URP:6258 Systems and Scenario Thinking	3 s.h.
URP:6290 Economic Impact Assessment, OR URP concentration elective	3 s.h.
URP concentration elective	3 s.h.
URP elective	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours	15 s.h.

Year 5 Spring

URP:6210 Field Problems in Planning II	3 s.h.
URP:6233 Public Finance and Budgeting, OR URP concentration electives	3 s.h.
URP electives	6 s.h.
URP concentration electives	<u>3 s.h.</u>
Total hours	15 s.h.

Total in fifth year

30 s.h.

Urban and Regional Planning, M.S.
35 semester hours must have a URP prefix

52 s.h.

Field Problems

All master's students are required to complete the capstone courses in Field Problems (URP:6209 and URP:6210). The purpose of Field Problems is to give students a field project experience in which students, working in teams, apply what they have learned in core courses to an actual planning problem with a actual client such as a planning department, community organization, or a public agency.

Field Problems represents the planning program's opportunity to prepare a professional planning report for an actual client and is therefore an important step in the education of a professional planner. It provides an excellent opportunity for the transition from theory to practice, which is the foundation of professional planning education, while enabling the student to further develop important professional skills and credentials. It also provides practical experience that complements students' internship. The resulting report or plan is itself a testimonial to the student's level of professional development, and can be used to establish a student's credentials in the labor market. Finally, Field Problems is also an important opportunity for students and faculty to perform important community outreach activities that benefit Iowa communities and adds value to a degree in Planning.

Field Problems projects are undertaken over the course of the academic year. Students register for three hours of URP:6209 in the fall semester. Under faculty supervision, students in URP:6209 meet with their client, develop a scope of work for their project, and complete a specific portion of their project in the fall term. Each Field Problems group, typically consisting of three to six students, will be supervised by two or three planning faculty members.

Students are required to present their scope of work and initial findings in an oral and written report that they make before the entire planning faculty in the fall semester. Based on feedback they receive in the fall semester from both faculty members and their client, students continue work on their Field Problems and register for three hours of URP:6210 in the spring term.

During the spring term, students make 1) a final report, both written and oral, to the faculty in April, and 2) a final report, both written and oral, to the client in late April or early May prior to the end of classes. Other presentations to the faculty may also be required. The final report to the client incorporates student responses to the advice and guidance provided by the faculty in prior presentations and meetings with supervising faculty. Finally, students who expect to graduate must pass an oral examination on their Field Problems project prior to the Graduate College's late April deadline for final examinations. Details on this last requirement are found in the [Final Examination](#) section.

In Fall 2022, students are expected to participate in Field Camps in the week prior to fall classes.

As in all planning practice, Field Problems projects are guided by the AICP Code of Ethics (see <http://www.planning.org/ethics/ethicscode.htm>) in which planners, among other expectations, are asked to exercise independent professional judgment on behalf of their clients while at the same time accepting the decisions of their client "...concerning the objectives and nature of the professional services we perform unless the course of action is illegal or plainly inconsistent with our primary obligation to the public interest." Pursuant to this objective, students and supervising faculty are expected to remain in close contact with the client in order to assure that the Field Problems project meets the client's objectives.

Field Problems projects are graded individually. Grades take into account the overall quality of the Field Problems report, the quality of the individual student's work, and the degree to which the student contributed to the overall quality of the Field Problems report. Quality of the Field Problems report is be measured against a common set of professional standards, including:

1. Is the actual work performed commensurate with the scope of work outlined at the fall term presentation?

2. Are the methods employed in the analysis appropriate to the problem and are they employed correctly? Are there other methods that should have been employed, but were not?
3. Does the work make a good faith effort to identify and obtain all relevant data?
4. Does the work make a good faith effort to identify and employ all relevant theory?
5. Are the report's conclusions supported by the empirical information presented in the report?
6. Are policy implications and recommendations made clear and do they have utility for the client?
7. Does the report's appearance and structure meet professional standards for effective communications and attractiveness?

Further details on Field Problems grading criteria are found in the Field Problems course syllabus.

Note about the impact of insufficient grade in Field Problems

Given that Field Problems builds upon the core curriculum, students are expected to have completed (with a grade of B- or better) all but one first-year core course prior to enrolling in Field Problems. Exceptions to the group work requirement will not be made. Students who receive a C+ or lower in URP:6209 are not allowed to take URP:6210 the next semester. Instead, they must retake URP:6209 in the following Fall term. If they earn a B- or better, they then take URP:6210 in the following Spring term. Students receiving a C+ or lower in URP:6210 will be deemed to have failed Field Problems and will need to repeat both URP:6209 and URP:6210 in the following year.

Thesis

Some students may wish to undertake a major piece of planning or policy-related research while in the program. Theses may be helpful in gaining desired employment, or for continuing graduate work at the doctoral level. A thesis can demonstrate students' research capabilities, writing abilities, and analytical skills. The program support students interested in writing theses.

Curriculum Requirements

Coursework requirements for thesis students are identical to those for all other students: completion of core coursework (23 semester hours), development of an area of concentration (9 semester hours), completion of a Field Problems capstone, and completion of 50 semester hours total. Of the 9 units necessary for a concentration, up to 3 units may be Readings (URP:6305). Remaining units for the 50 total hours are combinations of elective courses, Readings, and Thesis (URP:6325). In all cases, a maximum of 8 semester hours of Readings may be used toward the degree requirements and a maximum of 6 semester hours can be Thesis (URP:6325) units.

Under the above curriculum arrangement, students may use up to 14 semester hours (8 in directed readings and 6 in thesis hours) for research and writing a thesis. However, they are encouraged to use elective units to broaden their coursework experiences by completing at least one course in a somewhat different field than those of the thesis and area of concentration.

Topic and Committee Selection

Students who select the thesis option are responsible for choosing a thesis topic and finding a faculty member to serve as their thesis advisor. This should occur during the second semester of their first year in Planning.

Research for the thesis (including background research or a literature review, and the preparation of a preliminary thesis prospectus) should be performed during the summer between the second and third semesters. A maximum of two units of Readings (URP:6305) can be applied toward this work. Benchmarks should be established with the thesis advisor at this stage, and at subsequent stages of the thesis preparation, in order to insure substantive progress in a timely fashion.

Students selecting the thesis option are required to form a thesis committee, which should be done early in the third semester but must be done before the end of that semester. The thesis committee is to include a minimum of three members of the University Graduate faculty, with no fewer than two being tenure or tenure-track from Urban and Regional Planning. Whenever a thesis topic is closely related to a discipline outside planning, or is a thesis by a combined-degree student, it is required that at least one faculty person from that related discipline be included on the committee. After selection of the thesis committee, a schedule of thesis-review sessions between the student and advisor should be prepared.

Final Prospectus

The final thesis prospectus must be approved by the thesis committee. To ensure that this occurs in a timely fashion, a draft prospectus should be circulated to committee members early in the third semester (or sooner). Upon submission of the final prospectus to the committee, the committee shall give its approval or disapproval within two weeks.

Thesis Requirements

The general requirements for format and procedure are set out on the Graduate College [Thesis and Dissertations](#) webpage. Thesis and other graduation [deadlines](#) are also available on the Graduate College website.

Grading

Theses are graded with one final letter grade (URP:6325) upon satisfactory completion of the thesis requirement. Semester hours of thesis work completed in advance of the final semester of registration receive a temporary grade of "I". Thesis work cannot be taken on an "S-U" basis of grading. Readings work can be graded when it is taken or grades may be assigned at the end of the thesis process. Readings grades may be assigned on an "S-U" basis if agreed to in advance. Both the timing and the basis for grading are to be established jointly by the student and the advisor. In general, readings courses should be graded when taken unless it is certain that the thesis will be completed and the incomplete removed before the end of the following semester. Similarly, a student should not register for thesis hours unless the thesis will be completed before the end of the following semester.

Thesis Examination

All students are required to have an oral defense of their thesis before their thesis committee. This oral defense must be scheduled prior to the Graduate College deadline for examination. This procedure provides an opportunity for the student to benefit by substantive comments from the full committee.

A student may complete the thesis and the oral examination after the Graduate College deadline for the particular semester, but will then receive the degree in the summer session or the first semester following full completion of the requirements.

Students are responsible for determining and following the Graduate College deadlines and procedures with respect to theses. The thesis oral defense will be open to all interested parties. Members of Planning, students and faculty, are encouraged to attend oral defense meetings.

The thesis examination satisfies the Graduate College requirements for a final examination.

Copies of Theses

All master's theses, excluding MFA theses, must be submitted to the Graduate College electronically via ProQuest. There is a one-deposit model whereby students defend their thesis and then submit only one copy to the Graduate College on or before the deadline for the semester in which they intend to graduate. It is strongly suggested by the Graduate College that you submit your thesis at least 10 working days before the first deposit deadline.

One hard copy must be submitted to each thesis committee member at least five working days before the defense. One electronic copy along with hard copies of the signed Certificate of Approval and the title page are required for the thesis deposit. Additionally, one hard copy should be submitted to the department as well.

Major Research Project

In some cases, students may want to pursue an independent research topic in more depth than a readings course would allow, but may be unwilling to devote the time required for a Master's thesis. In such cases, a major research project may be appropriate.

A major research project would typically be completed during the fall semester of the second year. Students interested in pursuing this option should take the following steps:

1. Identify a faculty committee, chaired by the student's advisor, by the end of Summer at the latest.
2. Prepare a research proposal, to be presented to the faculty committee within three weeks of the start of the Fall semester. Approval of a final proposal incorporating feedback and comments should occur by the fifth week of the Fall semester.
3. Complete a draft of the research project by Thanksgiving Break, with comments and criticism to be received from members of the advisory committee one week later.
4. Complete and present the final research project to the faculty committee by the end of the Fall semester.

Student can register for up to six semester hours of URP:6315 Independent Study in Planning during the Fall semester. A major research project does not replace the Field Problems capstone requirement.

Students need to choose an advisor with expertise in their proposed topic. A committee of three faculty members should be formed, chaired by the student's advisor, who must be in SPPA. The remaining two committee members could be from outside SPPA. The committee serves as a resource during the research and evaluates the final product.

The research schedule should be agreed upon at the beginning of the project. It is important that draft versions of the paper or product be completed according to this schedule, to ensure time for feedback. It is the student's responsibility, not the faculty advisor's, to ensure that all deadlines are met. The student's advisor will ensure that committee members meet reasonable deadlines for reviewing drafts or other input.

A major research paper should extend understanding of a specific planning or policy problem, or understanding of a specific trend in urban, regional or rural development. It should produce new knowledge, so it must include independent, original research (for example, through interviews, spatial analysis, or data collection and analysis). It should not consist mainly of a review of existing literature and research, although it should include such a review as a basis for framing questions and defining the methodology to be used. It is more ambitious in scope than a term paper written for a course, but is more restricted in scope than a thesis. Although page limits are inevitably arbitrary, between 10,000 and 12,000 words (40 to 50 pages) are appropriate. It need not be only a traditional "text," however. Videos, software or web pages may be valuable components (or in some cases the entire product). However, clear agreement should be reached with the student's committee on the scale of these products.

The exact format of a major research paper should be decided by the student and the committee. The preparation of a well-organized research proposal is critical to the major research project. The research proposal helps to determine whether the proposed project is feasible in terms of time and personal resources. The student must demonstrate an adequate grasp of the project objectives and methodology.

The following areas must be addressed in the research proposal: background of the problem being investigated; definition of a central question or hypothesis; a research plan, and; a preliminary list of bibliographic references or resource materials. If needed, sources of research support should also be identified in the proposal. The methodology and literature review will be more thoroughly developed early in the project, but students should have an idea of how they will approach the research and have read some key resources on the topic before developing a proposal. The following questions might be considered when developing a proposal:

- Does the title convey the meaning of the study? Is it concise?
- Does the introduction prepare the reader appropriately to read the proposal?
- Is the problem clearly defined? Is it clear that the problem is significant to planners and warrants investigation? Will this study contribute to the profession and the understanding of this problem?
- What specific issues will be addressed in this project?
- To what extent has this problem been investigated previously? How does this prior knowledge shape the study being proposed?
- How will the research questions be answered? What methods/methodologies will be employed? What are the limitations of the study?
- What resources will be needed to complete the research, and where will these come from?

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES FOR PLANNERS AND POLICY MAKERS

In addition to what students learn in the program, there are additional skills that employers look for. Student should keep those in mind to build their skillset prior to graduation. Surveys of professional planners reveal that the top qualities they look for when hiring a new planner are:

Communication

- The ability to write well.
- The ability to communicate clearly in conversation and presentation.
- Strong communication and presentation skills -- written, oral, "digital" (maps and images).
- Ability to communicate effectively and fairly with different groups of people.
- The individual must be able to communicate with the public effectively.
- Must be diverse and adaptable, able to communicate on a variety of levels with folks ranging from the citizen to the developer, attorneys, etc.
- Ability and willingness to effectively communicate with engineers, politicians, business leaders, and private citizens alike.
- Grammar
- Realize that your role (in council meetings etc.) is to present the facts and the benefits/disadvantages.
- Oral and written communication
- Communicate your ideas graphically (maps, aerials, diagrams).

Relating to others

- Ability to interact with/relate to public - I've seen way too many issues develop simply because of a staff member's poor communication/manner with a citizen.
- Customer service focused
- Willing to serve the public.
- Ability and willingness to work well with a wide variety of people -- listening, explaining, facilitating, etc.
- Social Awareness
- Team player (works well with others)
- Tact and Humility
- Even-tempered
- PATIENCE
- Ability to keep their personal social, political, environmental, and new-urbanist (pro/con) views separate from the workplace.
- Separate yourself from the politics to the extent possible.
- A collaborative spirit
- Confidence (especially when being the hard-case telling someone they are in violation and must comply - standing by what the ordinance states is within your authority to enforce).

Independent

- The individual must be a self-starter and progressively motivated to adapt to constant change.
- Able to lead
- The ability to work with minimal supervision in a variety of tasks.

Deal with change

- Flexibility - With changing administrations and regulations, a planner needs to be able to alter their approach from time to time. Without changing their ethics/morals/principles, a planner working for me will need to have some flexibility in the way they do their work.
- The individual must be open minded and not easily discouraged - pick the "opportunities" that have a more likelihood of success and not let those "challenges" that we all face daily keep us from focusing on the "BIG" picture thinking, people skills.

Detail oriented

- Detail Oriented - Careless mistakes or small oversights paint a poor image for how the larger things are being handled. The devil is in the details for me.
- Attention to detail.
- Organization
- Multi-tasking
- Must be organized

Humor

- The ability to not take yourself so seriously, because no matter what you think, you don't have all of the answers.
- You must possess a sense of humor and compassion. There are times that you will need to use both at the same time. Laughter is always a solid way to break the ice with anyone. Compassion will allow you to work through difficult situations with a citizens or small businessman.

Education

- Some amount of college level Economics training - at minimum one Microeconomics and one Macroeconomics course.
- A planner in a smaller community should understand the basics of both infrastructure and economic development as they relate to effective planning.
- A 4 year degree.....period.
- You must know the Constitution, the Zoning Ordinance and Unified Development Ordinance. A former planning director who I worked for stated that former Chief Supreme Court Justice Warren Burger stated "If Police Officers have to know the Constitution, planners should too!" Therefore, it is important that we learn to apply the rule of law in land use cases strictly based on what is in the Ordinance and what has changed in state law. If the case is taken to court, the only thing that the judge is going to look at is your staff report and the ordinance.
- Knowledge of and ability to interpret legal land use and development matters.

Other qualities

- Demonstrated ability to learn "technical" material across a spectrum of issues.
- You must be a visual thinker. As a planner, you must be able to visualize what an applicant is proposing. This including seeing obstacles that the applicant, Planning Board Members and Town Council might not see.
- Zoning is secondary to effective implementation.
- Comprehensive approach (i.e. possessing a "planning mind").
- An understanding of the city/town (history, demographics, neighborhoods, data).
- "works well under pressure"
- Bonus quality- common sense

Internships

Internships are designed to give students practical experience through on-the-job training. Internships provide students with two special opportunities:

- To obtain “real world” planning experience
- To reflect critically on the work setting, the planning activity, and planning’s curricular links to those activities.

Students who complete an appropriate internship, write a satisfactory internship paper, and receive an evaluation from their supervisor of “good”, “very good”, or “excellent” are eligible to receive two units of credit toward the degree in planning. The internship option can be satisfied through employment with a relevant agency, firm, or organization for the equivalent of **at least** eight weeks at a half-time fraction (160 hours) during the student's period of affiliation with planning (including summers). Students should seek internships in which their work efforts will be substantive and planning-related (i.e., scanning, receptionist, or carrier services are typically **not** acceptable internship arrangements). An internship cannot be done prior to beginning the program, except in extenuating circumstances.

Students who obtain internships funded by the planning program are not permitted to use those internships for internship credit.

If a planning student is employed full-time (30 hours per week or more) in a professional position related to their area of study, they may receive course credit for the work without pursuing a separate internship. An Internship Approval form must be signed by the student’s advisor to assure the work meets the requirements needed to receive course credit. The requirement of an evaluation by the student’s supervisor is waived. An internship paper must also be written, after at least 160 hours of work have been completed, in order to receive the 2 s.h. of course credit.

Students who choose the internship option must have the details approved by their advisors beforehand. The Internship Approval form (under Current Students on the [SPPA website](#)) should be completed by the student and sent to the advisor for their approval and signature before the advisor uploads it to MAUI.

At the end of the internship, a paper about the internship must be submitted to a student's advisor, who may accept, reject, or require changes to the paper. In certain cases, subject to the consent of the advisor, the paper may be submitted to another faculty member for review (usually because of the faculty member’s interest in or experiences with the student or the internship provider). Although the precise form of an internship paper may vary with the nature of the internship, in general the paper should contain the following elements:

1. **A description of the internship:** the employer, the student's position in the organization, and the tasks performed or the project on which the student worked;
2. **A critical discussion of the planning process and the organization:** In this section, the student should think critically about such matters as: the work s/he performed, the purpose of the work performed, where and how it fits in the organization’s planning mission; the structure of the agency/organization, the relation of the agency or the project to local politics and community involvement; and, the method of policy development. This section should be reflective, thoughtful, critical, yet constructive.
3. **The value of the experience as it relates to the student's individual development** and the potential value of such an internship for other students in planning.

Internship papers should be typed and double-spaced. They should be written clearly and concisely, avoiding unnecessary detail. An appropriate length is between 5 and 10 pages.

In addition, each student must have their supervisor complete an evaluation of the student’s performance. A copy of the “Employer’s Report on Planning Intern” is available on the [SPPA website](#).

The completed evaluation form, signed by the supervisor, needs to be submitted to the planning administrative office for review by the student's advisor at the same time the internship paper is submitted. Again, if the supervisor reports that the student's internship was evaluated as fair or poor, then the student will not receive credit for the internship.

The workflow of the form is as follows:

1. At the beginning of the internship, student gives the form to their employment supervisor.
2. Upon completion of the internship, the employer mails the form back to the SPPA administrative services coordinator.
3. The student and their advisor receive an email from the administrative services coordinator notifying them the form has arrived and that they need to meet.
4. The evaluation form is uploaded to the student's electronic advising file.
5. Advisor accesses this form **and** the original Internship Approval Form from the electronic advising file when he/she meets with the student.
6. The advisor and student sign the Employer Evaluation Form and the advisor uploads the form to the student's file (MAUI) before the deadline (see front cover for the deadline date).
7. The advisor **also** signs the Internship Approval Form to finalize the process and then uploads it to MAUI as well.

In some unusual circumstances, a student may discover that an internship that was expected to be "substantive" turned into something less meaningful. If this is the case, the student should contact their advisor immediately (or the planning director, if the advisor is unavailable) and discuss the issue. Efforts will be made by the student and the advisor with the employer to improve the quality of the internship work experience.

Course Credit and Due Dates

Students typically register for the course, URP:6335 Internship, during the semester just following their internship* (or, in the case of an internship done during the student's final semester in the program, concurrent with the internship).

Internship papers are due on the date specified on the inside [cover of this manual](#). For example, for a summer 2021 internship, a student would typically register for URP:6335 during the fall 2021 semester and submit the internship paper by October 1 (although earlier submission is desirable). Students must request their "Internship Approval Form" from their student file and submit it along with their internship paper.

The student's faculty advisor will review the internship paper. If the paper needs revision, the student has two weeks to submit the revisions. If a satisfactory internship paper is not submitted, a grade of "unsatisfactory" will be posted and the student will not receive credit for the internship experience. In addition, if the student's internship supervisor evaluates the student's overall performance as fair or poor, then the grade for the class will be "unsatisfactory." Results of both the faculty and the client review should be indicated on the "Internship Form" and uploaded to MAUI by the advisor.

Students may not register for URP:6335 more than once.

***International students** must register for the internship in the semester they are doing the work. Check with International Students and Scholars Services to learn about the registration requirements.

Practicum

Occasionally, an exceptional opportunity arises for a student to complete an extended planning internship while still a Planning student in SPPA that requires the student to be absent from Planning for all or part of a semester in addition to the normal summer internship period. Under certain circumstances, this experience can qualify as a practicum. If the requirements below are met, the practicum constitutes an internship and also substitutes for the required capstone courses Field Problems in Planning I and II. Students choosing the practicum option must register for URP:6229, Practicum, for one to five semester hours during the practicum experience. (A total of five semester hours is required, spread across one or more semesters.) At least 1 semester hour must be taken in the semester the student expects to graduate. The requirements for the practicum are as follows:

1. The practicum can be taken only after all core course requirements have been satisfied.
2. The student must obtain an internship with a planning or planning-related organization consisting of at least five continuous months of full-time employment.
3. The practicum experience must consist of a specific, structured project that will result in a polished final report. Students cannot receive practicum credit for an ordinary internship, where the student is functioning primarily as a staff member assigned a variety of duties from day-to-day or week-to-week. The practicum must include a project similar in scope to a field problems project and this project must be a primary focus of the intern's job.
4. The project must include teamwork in the same way that a field problems project entails teamwork. In other words, there must be shared responsibility for conducting the required analyses and for the final product. Working independently under the supervision of an organization official does not constitute sufficient "teamwork."
5. The practicum will be conducted under the supervision of a committee of three faculty members. The student must develop a work plan for the practicum in consultation with his or her committee. The work plan constitutes a contract and should include a description of the project, the milestones to be attained, and the final report to be produced. The work plan should also identify the person or persons to whom the final project is to be presented and should describe the nature of the teamwork involved. The plan is subject to the approval of the faculty as a whole, upon the recommendation of the committee. Retroactive approval will not be granted under any circumstances.
6. As the milestones identified in the work plan are attained, this should be reported to the committee. Minor revisions to the work plan may be made during the internship with the approval of the committee.
7. Upon returning to planning, the student must make a formal presentation of the project's final report to the committee and other faculty. The final report produced during the practicum must be submitted to the committee. The final report, the formal presentation, and the student's responses to questions asked by faculty at the formal presentation will constitute the final examination for students who select the practicum option.

Students undertaking a practicum should understand that agencies may alter the job description after the internship has begun, and that the nature of the project and of the teamwork involved may change as a result. The student bears the responsibility of requesting faculty approval of a revised work plan, and the student should be aware that the faculty might not approve the revised plan. Thus, there is no guarantee that practicum credit will be awarded if the project is substantially changed.

It should also be noted that, to satisfy the internship requirement, the student must submit an internship paper as described in the internship section of the student manual and register for 2 hours of internship (URP:6335).

The committee awards a grade for the practicum based on the quality of the final report, the oral presentation, and the attainment of the milestones specified in the work plan.

Practicum for Those in Combined Program with Social Work

For students in the combined degree program with Social Work **only**, these practicum requirements have been adjusted to enable the practicum required for the M.S.W. portion of the combined-degree to satisfy the requirements for a practicum in the planning program. This enables students in the combined social work program to substitute the social work practicum (if it meets the following criteria) for the Field Problems I and II capstone course requirement. Note that this does not reduce the total 35 hours that must be completed in planning– it merely allows the student to waive out of the required Field Problems sequence.

An acceptable Practicum for combined social work candidates should meet the following requirements, in addition to the requirements established by the School of Social Work:

1. The practicum may be taken before all first-year planning core course requirements have been satisfied, but usually 9 semester hours of core course requirements would have been completed.
2. The practicum should be in a field of social work that is closely related to planning. community development, social services or housing agencies may all provide practicum experiences that would involve planning activities. Each practicum is obviously unique, and students should consult with their advisors in both social work and planning to determine whether the projects identified by the agency would provide an appropriate range of experience.
3. The practicum must entail at least 700 hours of employment.
4. The practicum experience must consist of a specific, structured project that will result in a polished final report. Students cannot receive practicum credit for an ordinary internship, where the student is primarily functioning as a staff member assigned a variety of duties from day-to-day or week-to-week. The practicum must include a project similar in scope to a field problems project and this project must be the primary focus of the intern's job. Good examples of practicum responsibilities that would be acceptable include analyzing the outcomes of a particular program, developing a new program (including applying for grants to support it), or developing a human services plan. Again, students should consult with their advisors in both social work and planning to decide whether the practicum experience would be appropriate.
5. The practicum will be conducted under the supervision of a committee of three faculty members. The student must develop a work plan for the practicum in consultation with his or her committee. The work plan constitutes a contract and should include a description of the project, the milestones to be attained, and the final report to be produced. The work plan should also identify the person or persons to whom the final project is to be presented and should describe the nature of the teamwork involved. The plan is subject to the approval of the faculty as a whole, upon the recommendation of the committee. Retroactive approval will not be granted under any circumstances.
6. The project must include teamwork in the same way that a field problems project entails teamwork. In other words, there must be shared responsibility for conducting the required analyses and for the final product. Working independently under the supervision of an organization official does not constitute sufficient "teamwork."
7. The acceptability of the social work practicum as a substitute for Field Problems is subject to the approval of the planning faculty as a whole, upon the recommendation of the student's committee.
8. The student must make a formal presentation of the project's final report to faculty and students in the planning program. The final report produced during the practicum should be submitted to the student's committee in planning. The final report, the formal presentation, and the student's responses to questions asked by faculty at the formal presentation will constitute the final examination for students in the combined degree program with social work who select the practicum option.

AICP Outstanding Student Award

The American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) sponsors an outstanding student award each year. This is not a national competition. Instead, each planning school selects a student for the award. Under our procedures, nominations for the outstanding student may be made by faculty, staff, or students. Any student who graduates during a given academic year and has a cumulative GPA of at least 3.50 is eligible to be nominated for the award for that year.

Nominations are to be submitted to the planning director by February 1st. Nominees are asked to provide a resume and brief description of the criteria as listed below. A Student Award Committee, consisting of two faculty members, makes a recommendation to the faculty, which then selects the recipient.

Planning's selection of an outstanding student is based on the faculty's assessment of the quality of the student's work in planning and the student's promise of success as a professional planner. In making this assessment, the faculty will look for evidence of the student's intellectual ability, acquired skills, and commitment to planning. Definitions of these three categories are provided below.

Intellectual Ability as demonstrated by:

- The innovative nature of work accomplished while in planning;
- The ability to analyze problems and methods critically;
- The ability to synthesize concepts and apply them to real situations, and;
- A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.50.

Acquired Skills as demonstrated by:

- The ability to communicate clearly and succinctly in written and oral forms;
- The ability to design a research effort and monitor its implementation;
- The ability to apply analytic methods to their appropriate uses, and;
- The ability to work effectively in a team or group situation.

Commitment to Planning as demonstrated by:

- Contribution through service to the students, staff or faculty;
- A sense of professional direction;
- Individual initiative and desire for a successful career in planning;
- Leadership in student organizations, and;
- Contributions to the planning profession through participation in planning activities of state or local government, such as planning boards or commissions.

MASTER OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Master of Public Affairs Vision/Mission Statement

The Master of Public Affairs degree program prepares/trains the next the generation of public managers, administrators, policy makers and analysts who:

- stem from a wide range of socio-demographic backgrounds and interests
- embrace the public services values of public affairs, policy, and administration
- can analyze, develop and implement programs and policies that serve the public interest
- have the knowledge and skills to effectively and fairly manage and lead government, non-profit and private agencies and their staff
- serve their employers, profession and communities by promoting good governance, sound investments, sustainability, resilience, equity and justice
- have successful careers in public service, public administration, as well as non-profit and private sector management in Iowa and beyond

The program's mission is also to serve public and nonprofit sector agencies in the State of Iowa and beyond:

- through student and faculty engagement with communities (IISC and other applied projects)
- through faculty research that advance public affairs, administration, and policy knowledge and practice

The MPA Program

The 2016-2021 University of Iowa Strategic Plan indicate the university’s goal to “Create a university ecosystem that enables UI to be an international leader in confronting the grand challenges of the 21st Century.” At the end of the second decade of the 21st century, societies strive to collectively, creatively, and democratically respond to key challenges facing our communities, our nation, and the world. Among these challenges are:

- environmental change—including an increased incidence and intensity of disasters such as flooding, sea level rise, and wildfires attributable to climate change
- inequalities by race, income, social status, gender, and sexual orientation
- inequalities in access to housing, education, health and economic prospects
- health care, addiction and pandemics
- an aging population
- inadequate infrastructure
- transportation
- immigration
- economic development
- public safety

Interdisciplinary approach to complex issues

In response to these challenges, SPPA created an interdisciplinary master’s degree in Public Affairs (MPA) to train future leaders to creatively address these and other challenges.

The MPA is inherently interdisciplinary and builds on SPPA faculty and courses as well as faculty in other UI units, all of which they have earned national and international reputations:

- Business—Organizations and Leadership, Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness
- Education—Education Policy
- Engineering—Civil and Environmental Engineering--sustainability
- Geographical and Sustainable Sciences—climate change, sustainability
- History—history of policing, race and American history
- Law—Nonprofit Organizations
- Political Science—Public Policy, Politics
- Public Health—Health Planning and Management
- Sociology and Criminology—Criminal Justice Policy
- Strategic Communication
- Urban and Regional Planning

Campus Public Affairs Centers

The University also hosts important public affairs centers including

- [Public Policy Center](#)
- [Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center](#)
- [Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities](#)

Degree Objective, Graduation Requirements, and Curriculum

Degree Objective

All students are admitted into the public affairs program to pursue a master's degree without a thesis.

Graduation Requirements

- GPA:** Attain an overall 3.0 program grade point average for all courses taken at the University of Iowa that **can** be applied to the student's plan of study/MyPlan for the public affairs degree, **regardless of whether they exceed what courses are needed to complete the degree** (see section on [Grading and Academic Performance](#)).
- Credits:** Complete 42 hours of course credit in public affairs courses or courses approved by the student's advisor that contribute to a degree in public affairs. **These may include courses offered by public affairs programs at other universities that were taken prior to enrollment and have been accepted for credit by the program faculty.** (See section on "[Credit for Courses Taken Prior to Enrollment](#).")
- Course Work:** Complete satisfactorily all core and capstone courses (unless this requirement is waived by the program - see "[Waiver of Core Course Requirements](#)"), and a minimum of 9 semester hours in courses for an area of concentration.
- Satisfactory completion means attainment of a grade of B- or better in each required course. If the grade is lower than a B-, the course must be repeated until a B- or higher grade is obtained. (See section on "[Grades in Required Courses](#).") However, if a course is not used to satisfy any of the area of concentration or the core courses, and if the student's GPA is adequate, and the Graduate College accepts the credit, then the course may count towards the 42 hours for the degree even if the grade is below a B-, as long as it is no lower than a C-.
- Final Exam:** Students must pass an oral exam administered by the student's final exam committee.

Curriculum

The curriculum is based on a philosophy that balances coursework and choices between public administration and public policy courses and therefore prepares a student for a profession in either or both public administration and public policy.

The curriculum is a two-year program leading to a Master of Public Affairs (MPAff). It consists of 42 semester hours, including 21 semester hours of core courses, 3 hours of capstone courses, at least 9 semester hours in an area of concentration, 6 semester hours of electives, plus 3 semester hours for completion of a qualified internship. (See "[Internships](#)" section.)

Required Courses

The Master of Public Affairs (MPAff) requires 42 semester hours. As an interdisciplinary program, courses are offered by the School of Planning and Public Affairs and the Political Science Department, as well as from other units such as Management and Organizations in the Tippie College of Business, Strategic Communications in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, and the Larned Waterman Nonprofit Resource Center in the College of Law.

Required Courses

8 core courses (20 s.h.)

1 internship (3 s.h.)

5 electives (minimum 15 s.h., including 9 s.h. taken within a concentration)

a one-semester capstone project (4 s.h.)

For the capstone project students will engage in analysis of a contemporary public policy problem plus development of recommended action steps. This will be done in tandem with the University's [Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities](#) (IISC) which has been providing public consultation to communities in Iowa for over a decade.

Students must take PBAF:6340 Public Policy Analysis in the spring of their first year OR PBAF:5120 Public Policy Process in the fall of their second year to meet the core course requirement.

Those in the Public Policy area of concentration must take Public Policy Analysis. If not counted as a core course, it can be counted towards the area of concentration.

Students with half-time assistantships may register for no more than 12 semester hours per semester.

Sequence of Required Courses

First Semester		Title and Instructor for 2021-22	Semester Hours
PBAF:5117	Fall	Bureau. Politics & Public Admin. (Zuhlke)	core 3
PBAF:6200	Fall	Analytic Methods I (Spak)	core 3
PBAF:6205	Fall	Economics for Policy Analysis (Qian)	core 3
PBAF:6208	Fall	Program Seminar	core 1
Second Semester			
PBAF:6225	Spring	Applied GIS for Planning & Policy Making (Spears)	core 1,3
PBAF:6233	Spring	Public Finance & Budgeting (Nguyen)	core 3
PBAF:6240	Spring	Public Management (Monroe)	core 3
PBAF:6340	Spring	Public Policy Analysis (Qian) (Or PBAF:5120 in third semester, and instead take Concentration or Elective)	core 3 elective 3
Third Semester			
PBAF:5120*	Fall	Public Policy Process (Zuhlke) (Or PBAF:6340 in second semester of first year and instead take Concentration or Elective)	core 3
PBAF:6335	Sum./Fall	Internship* Concentration or Elective Concentration or Elective	core 3 elective 3 elective 3
Fourth Semester			
PBAF:6210	Spring	Public Affairs Capstone (Kraus, Schuettgeltz, Zuhlke) Concentration or Elective Concentration or Elective	capstone 4 elective 3 elective 3

*Not offered 2021-2022

* The internship is required. In rare cases when finding an internship that meets the SPPA requirements is impossible, a student may substitute the internship with another course. Students seeking this substitution should demonstrate their best efforts to find an internship. The substituted course must be approved by the faculty advisor and the director.

Waiver of Core Course Requirements

Core courses can be waived fully or in part for students who have completed comparable courses covering substantially the same material prior to enrolling in the public affairs program, and who received a grade of B or higher in those courses. SPPA' policy is to grant waivers for core courses only in exceptional cases. However, students who believe they have a legitimate case for waiver are encouraged to request one.

To obtain a waiver of Analytic Methods I or Economics for Policy Analysis the student should arrange to take an evaluation of their knowledge of course material so that a determination can be made no later than the first week the waived course meets. Students are advised to contact the course instructor to arrange for the test and obtain details of the material covered in the test.

In the case of other core courses, the student must supply sufficient supporting materials to demonstrate that the subject matter contained in the course for which a waiver is sought has been covered with comparable rigor elsewhere. It should be emphasized that the burden of proof lies with the student to demonstrate the adequacy of previous training. Course outlines, exercises (if applicable), exams, and transcripts are the types of documentation typically required. The waiver form is available on the SPPA website and must be signed by the instructor of the core course and by the student's advisor, who will enter their recommendations. The request is then presented by the advisor to the full faculty for approval.

Waiver requests should be made as early as possible, but no later than the first week of the semester during which the course would normally be taken. Should a request be denied, the student will then be able to enroll in the course before too much of the semester has elapsed. Under no circumstances will a waiver be granted after the student has completed subsequent sequential courses, or after the student has completed Public Affairs Capstone.

It should be noted that approval of a waiver exempts the student from the requirement to take a particular course, but does not reduce the 42 hours required for the degree. A student who waives a core course has the same final examination requirements as one who did not waive the particular course. (See sections on "[Final Examination](#)") Therefore, it would be prudent to assure oneself that the material has been adequately mastered before requesting a waiver.

Grades in Required Courses

A required course requirement can be satisfied either by waiver of the course or by completion of the course with a grade of B- or better. A required course for which a student received a C+ or lower must be repeated with a grade of at least a B-. If a required course is repeated, it will appear twice on the student's official university transcript. The original grade and the grade for the second time the course was taken will both be included in the official GPA. However, for purposes of determining the program GPA, satisfying the school's requirement of a 3.00 GPA for graduation, and meeting the requirement of 42 semester hours, the second course will replace the first. That is, assuming at least a B- is received the second time, the 3 hours credit for the first time the course was taken will not count towards the 42 hour requirement and the first grade will not be included in the program GPA. (See "[Grading and Academic Performance](#).")

Areas of Concentration

Public Affairs students select one or more area(s) of concentration (usually in their second semester). The purpose of the area of concentration requirement is to ensure that the student develops depth in a particular substantive area of planning by mastering a set of elective courses that together constitute a coherent plan of study/MyPlan in that area.

There are two areas of concentration in the MPA:(1) Public and Nonprofit Management and (2) Public Policy. The course offerings and requirements for each area of concentration are described below. Note that not all of the courses listed are offered every year.

In all cases the student's plan of study/MyPlan must include at least nine semester hours of course work in the area of concentration. The student must attain at least a **B- in each course** for that course to be applied to the area of concentration requirement. Normally, not more than three hours of readings courses or independent study may be counted towards a concentration. In those cases when a student has re-taken a concentration course, the second course grade will replace the first grade and will be used in computing the program GPA.

Please note: When considering taking courses offered by other departments, students must check course offerings on MyUI, consult with their advisors and take care when including such courses on their plan of study/MyPlan.

Public and Nonprofit Management

This concentration focuses on the management of public and nonprofit organizations. It provides students an understanding of the principles and foundations for successful leadership, management, and communication in public and nonprofit organizations.

Students must earn nine hours towards this concentration by taking any three courses from the list below. Students may propose other courses not listed here, but must obtain written approval from their adviser for these courses to be counted toward the concentration. Given the range of academic units across campus that offer courses in public and nonprofit management, it is wise to plan ahead by ascertaining the timing and availability of these courses during your course of study.

Note: Students may not take both LAW 8753 and MGMT 3500, and cannot take both LAW 8755 and MGMT 4600 because these pairs of courses have similar contents.

Required	Title and Instructor for 2021-22	Semester Hours
Nonprofit Management		
LAW:8753	Nonprofit Organizations: Structure, Governance & Strategy	3
LAW:8755	Nonprofit Organizations: Advocacy, Collaboration & Fundraising	3
PBAF:6278:0EXW	Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness I (summer option)	3
PBAF:6279:0EXW	Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness II	3
MGMT:4600	Nonprofit Ethics and Governance	3
Public Management		
PBAF:6282	Spring/Sum. Grant Writing (Mirr)	2
PBAF:6238	Spring Public Human Resource Management (Mart)	3
PBAF:6239*	Fall Organizational Dynamics and Leadership (Nguyen)	3
PBAF:6241	Fall Strategic Mgmt of Public & Nonprofit Organizations (Twedt-Ball)	3
Strategic Communication		
JMC:5200	Topics in Strategic Communication	3
JMC:5240	Digital Strategic Communication	3
JMC:5270	Leadership Communication	3
JMC:5300	Foundations of Strategic Communication	3
PBAF:3560	Spring Public Policy and Persuasion (Schuettpelz)	3

*Not offered 2021-2022

Public Policy

This concentration focuses on public policy, including public policy analysis, the public policy process (including the political process), and policy areas such as environmental policy, education policy, housing policy etc.

Note: Students in the Public Policy concentration are required to take PBAF:6340 Public Policy Analysis. If not taken as a core course, then it can count towards the area of concentration.

Students may propose other courses not listed here but must obtain written approval from their adviser in order for these courses to be counted toward the concentration. Given the range of academic units across campus that offer courses in public policy, it is wise to plan ahead by ascertaining the timing and availability of these courses during your course of study.

Required	Title and Instructor for 2021-22	Semester Hours
Criminal Justice		
CRIM:3500	Policies and Procedures of Policing	3
CRIM:3600	Crime and Public Policy	3
CRIM:4120	Environmental Criminology	3
CRIM:4470	Communities and Crime	3
Economic Development Policy		
PBAF:6295 Spring	Economic Development Policy (Qian)	3
PBAF:6297 Fall	Financing Economic Development for Poverty Alleviation (Nguyen)	3
Educational Policy		
EPLS:6222	Intro to Educational Policy	3
EPLS:6225	Higher Education Policy	3
EPLS:6228	K-12 Education Finance and Policy	3
Environmental Policy		
PBAF:5800 Spring	Environmental Economics and Policy (Secchi)	3
PBAF:6256 Spring	Environmental Policy (Spak)	3
PBAF:6257* Spring	Environmental Management (Laurian)	3
PBAF:6258 Fall	Systems and Scenario Thinking (Spak)	3
CEE:3790	Resilient Infrastructure and Emergency Response	3
CEE:5410	Politics and Economics of the Food, Energy, Water Nexus	3
LAW:8433	Environmental Law	3
LAW:8622	International Environmental Law	3
POLI:3518	Water Wars: Conflict and Cooperation	3

*Not offered 2021-2022

Health Policy

PBAF:6253*	Spring	Designing Sustainable and Healthy Cities (Laurian)	3
HMP:5610		Health Policy	3
HMP:5650		Health Policy Analysis	3
HMP:6710		Federalism and Health Policy	3

Housing and Community Development Policy

PBAF:6271	Spring	Housing Policy (Anthony)	3
PBAF:6273	Spring	Community Dev. Through Creative Placemaking (Kraus)	3

Methods

PBAF:6201	Spring	Analytic Methods II (Nguyen)	3
PBAF:6340	Spring	Public Policy Analysis (Qian)	3

Politics of Public Policy Making

JMC:5248		Strategic Political Communication	3
PBAF:3560	Spring	Public Policy and Persuasion (Schuettpelez)	3
POLI:3102		The U.S. Congress	3
POLI:3104		Immigration Politics	3
POLI:3118		Interest Groups	3
POLI:3123		State Politics in Iowa	3
POLI:3203		Campaigns, Elections, and Voting Behavior	3
POLI:3204		Public Opinion	3
POLI:3519		Politics of Aging	3

Sustainable Development

PBAF:5800	Spring	Environmental Economics and Policy (Secchi)	3
PBAF:6253*	Spring	Designing Sustainable and Healthy Cities (Laurian)	3
CEE:4107		Sustainable Systems	3
CEE:5410		Politics and Economics of the Food, Energy, Water Nexus	3
GEOG:3420		Sustainable and Green Building Concepts	3
GEOG:4750		Environmental Impact Analysis	3
GEOG:4770		Environmental Justice	3

Transportation Policy

PBAF:6260	Spring	Transportation Policy and Planning (Spears)	3
PBAF:6265*	Fall	Planning Sustainable Transportation (Spears)	3
PBAF:6266	Fall	Transportation and Land Use Planning (Spears)	3

*Not offered 2021-2022

Combined Degree Programs

Various combined-degree options are available allowing students to earn a graduate degree in Public Affairs and another degree in less time than would be required to obtain the two degrees independently. Courses for one degree are considered as elective credit for the other degree program.

The following formalized combined degree options have been established:

Combined graduate-to-graduate degree options for Public Affairs and:

- **Law**

The combined undergraduate-to-graduate (U2G) option is also open to students in **any** undergraduate major at the University of Iowa.

Information about these programs is available from the SPPA admissions coordinator.

While the requirements of each graduate-to-graduate and U2G-degree option may vary, all have key features in common. In each case a student must:

- Complete an approved area of concentration in Public Affairs. Work in the other academic unit does not, in and of itself, necessarily constitute a valid area of concentration (e.g., "law" is not a concentration)
- For graduate-to-graduate degrees, take at least 38 hours of Public Affairs courses that have been previously approved to count towards the degree (except for the combined degree with Law which requires 42 semester hours). Courses in other programs can sometimes be substituted for Public Affairs core courses. However, this does not reduce the 38-hour requirement.
- For U2G degrees, take at least 50 semester hours of Public Affairs courses that have been previously approved to count towards the master's degree.
- Unless otherwise specified, Capstone is required of students in combined degree programs.
- Satisfy Public Affairs final examination requirement.

Specific features of the formalized graduate-to-graduate and U2G degree programs are below. The student should verify the most recent degree requirements with the department of interest as courses and requirements in other departments are subject to change with little prior notification.

Graduate-to-Graduate Options with Other Disciplines

Even when an established graduate-to-graduate degree program does not exist, students can receive a master's degree in Public Affairs in conjunction with another graduate degree.

University policy requires that prior administrative approval be granted, and a minimum of 60 semester hours of graduate credit be completed to receive two master's degrees. However, courses taken to satisfy one unit's requirements also may be applied to meet the other unit's requirements. Some credits can be shared when one master's degree requires, or both master's degrees require, more than 30 semester hours of graduate credit. (No more than ¼ of the credits necessary for one degree may be composed of coursework taken for the other degree.) In all cases, combined degree programs require at least 60 semester hours of graduate credit and each unit's degree requirements must be met. Students should consult with their advisors, and consult the Graduate College Manual, Part I, [section X. G.](#)

Admission

Students already admitted to another academic unit are formally assigned to that unit. Students interested in pursuing two master's degrees combined should request that both their home unit and Public Affairs write letters to the Graduate College approving their student pursuit of two master's degrees and exchange letters between departments. At a time when the majority of their coursework is in Public Affairs, students should file a Change of Status form with the Graduate Admissions Office to be formally assigned to Public Affairs.

Student who are first admitted to Public Affairs and subsequently desire to obtain a second master's degree, should contact their advisor. Letters from both academic units should be sent to the Graduate College, as above and exchanged between departments. A Change of Status form should be filed when students complete their coursework in Public Affairs. Doing so enables the student to be formally assigned to the other academic unit. For students who plan to complete all degree requirements in Public Affairs and in the other academic unit simultaneously, no Change of Status form is needed.

Tuition

As a member of a graduate-to-graduate degree program, students may pay the greater of the two programs' tuition costs. U2G students are assessed undergraduate level tuition and fees during their first year of the U2G program (students' 4th or senior year), and until the bachelor's degree is conferred. Students are encouraged to consult the Graduate College to determine the tuition amount.

Specific features of the formalized combined-degree programs follow; however, the student should verify the most recent combined-degree requirements with the department of interest, because courses and requirements in other departments are subject to change with little prior notification.

Graduate-to-Graduate Degrees

Law

Admissions

Students are expected to meet the admission requirements of the respective programs, including taking the requisite admission examinations and providing the appropriate admission materials. The two academic units make admission decisions independently. Typically, students apply to admission to the MPAff program during their first or second year of study in the JD program.

Detailed application processes are described on the respective academic unit websites:

JD: <https://law.uiowa.edu/admissions/apply-iowa-law/juris-doctor-jd>

MPAff: <https://sppa.uiowa.edu/future-students/mpa/apply>

GMAT Waiver:

The MPAff Program will consider the LSAT as a replacement for the GRE for current University of Iowa JD students under the following conditions:

- Minimum 3.00 undergraduate GPA; and
- Student is in good standing in the College of Law.

LSAT Waiver:

An LSAT waiver is available through the Kinnick Law Program. In order to be eligible to apply through the Kinnick Law Program, the student must be:

- a current undergraduate student at the University of Iowa,
- a current graduate student at the University of Iowa in another degree program, or
- an applicant to a graduate degree program at the University of Iowa who wishes to combine the other degree with the JD.

Additionally, the student or applicant must have:

- at least a 3.5 GPA (through six semesters of undergraduate academic work) or be in the top ten percent of the undergraduate class, and
- a score, not more than five years old, in the top 15th percentile of the ACT, SAT, GMAT, or GRE, and have never taken the LSAT.

For additional details, see <https://law.uiowa.edu/admissions/kinnick-law-program>

Approval as a Combined Degree Candidate:

- In order to be classified as a combined degree candidate, a JD student must obtain the approval of the Dean of the College of Law or the Dean's Designate (currently, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs).

Credit Acceptance

The College of Law applies 12 semester hours of courses from the MPAff required courses toward the 88 semester hours requirement for the JD.¹ Pursuant to the College of Law's policy on distance education courses, online courses may not be counted toward the JD unless the College of Law faculty first approves the course's academic content, the method of course delivery, and the method of evaluating student performance. The MPAff Program applies 9 semester hours of JD coursework taken after admission to the MPAff program toward required electives. This agreement provides students with reduced credit hours when compared to completing both degrees independently.

¹ The requirement for students matriculating in the JD program before August 2020 is 84 semester hours.

JD Requirements	MPAff Requirements
<p>88 semester hours total required for graduation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 semester hours counted from MPA <p>Of the 88 semester hours required for graduation, the following general additional requirements must be satisfied:</p> <p>All required first-year courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 64 semester hours of Faculty Instruction Courses At least 6 semester hours of experiential coursework At least 4 upper-level writing units, of which at least 2 must be faculty-supervised Professional Responsibility and Constitutional Law II <p>See Graduation Requirements for the J.D. Degree, <i>Iowa College of Law Academic Policies and Procedures</i>, II., for additional requirements and limitations.</p>	<p>42 semester hours total required for graduation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 semester hours counted from JD <p>Of the 42 semester hours required for graduation, the student will complete 33 semester hours that are unique to the MPAff (12 courses):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureaucratic Politics and Public Admin. (PBAF:5117) Program Seminar (PBAF:6208) Analytic Methods I (PBAF:6200) Economics for Policy Analysis (PBAF:6205) Introduction to Public Policy (PBAF:5111) Public Finance and Budgeting (PBAF:6233) Public Management (PBAF:6240) Internship (PBAF:6335) Public Affairs Capstone (PBAF:6210) 8 semester hours of electives

Combined total minimum amount of credit earned is 109 semester hours.

Conferral of the Combined JD/MPAff Degree

Pursuant to College of Law policy, unless the student withdraws from one of the programs of study, a combined degree candidate may not receive the JD until completing the requirements for both the JD and MPAff degrees.

Sample Plans of Study for JD/MPAff Combined Degree

The following sample plans of study is provided as an example only. Students may elect to take intersession courses that may count toward degree requirements. College of Law policies limit the maximum number of semester hours that a student may enroll in that count toward the JD.

Sample Plan of Study

	JD Hours	MPAff Hours	Total
Year 1 Fall	15 sh	0 sh	15 sh
Year 1 Spring	16 sh	0 sh	16 sh
Year 2 Fall	15 sh	0 sh	15 sh
Year 2 Spring	15 sh	0 sh	15 sh
Year 3 Fall	0 sh	12 sh	12 sh
Year 3 Spring	0 sh	12 sh	12 sh
Year 4 Fall	9 sh	3 sh	12 sh
Year 4 Spring	6 sh	6 sh	12 sh
<i>Unique hour total</i>	<i>76 sh</i>	<i>33 sh</i>	<i>109 sh</i>
<i>Double-counted hours</i>	<i>12 sh</i>	<i>9 sh</i>	<i>130 sh</i>
Total	88 sh	42 sh	130 sh

At the end of the fourth year of study, students will have completed 88 sh toward the JD degree and 42 sh toward the MPAff degree, including double-counted courses. Students must complete a combined total of no less than 109 sh to earn both degrees.

Cost

In keeping with the Office of the Executive Vice President & Provost Tuition Assessment Policy, the JD program will be designated as the primary program of study due to it being the higher tuition rate.

Session based exceptions are processed via an assessment override. In those semesters, the College of Law will submit a program override request to the Registrar's Office two weeks prior to the generation of the first Ubill. During the override session, the student maintains their primary degree enrollment classification (the JD), but their tuition group is lowered to the MPAff program rate.

Therefore, JD/MPAff combined degree students pay JD tuition **during the first six spring/fall semesters in which they are enrolled as full-time students after matriculation into the JD program**, and MPAff program tuition (via override) for any subsequent semesters after the first six spring/fall semesters through completion of both degrees. Students enrolling in summer coursework pay JD tuition if enrolling in any courses that counts for credit towards the JD. Students enrolling in summer coursework that counts for credit toward the MPAff degree but not the JD degree pay MPAff program tuition. In these cases, the tuition assessment override must also be applied. Students should be advised to inform the College of Law Registrar to ensure the override is applied. Students enrolling in intersession courses will pay the tuition of the program for the semester associated with the intersession period (again, an override may be necessary). As of 2020, August intersession courses are associated with the fall semester and January, March and May intersession courses are associated with the spring semester. For example, if a student is enrolled in a March intersession course during the student's primary year of MPAff studies, the student pays MPAff tuition. Overrides must always be approved and applied to ensure accurate tuition assessment since the JD remains the primary program of study across the entire period of degree completion. On the rare occasion when a student matriculates into the MPAff first, an individualized tuition assessment plan must be approved by the College of Law, School of Library and Information Sciences, and the Graduate College.

Capstone

KEY INFO

- Projects are one semester
- Projects are identified through IISC (default)
- Projects are group-based, with 2-4 students per group (default)
- Students can request individual projects, with constraints (that faculty, SPPA director agree, that project partner confirms support), and a formal application process

OVERVIEW

MPA students typically take their semester-long Capstone course for the Master of Public Affairs degree during their last semester in the program.

In this project-based course, students work for, and in conjunction, with a project partner (or “client”), with faculty supervision, and produce a professional-quality deliverable.

Capstone projects focus on management and/or policy topics. Projects can be applied to non-profit organizations, local, county, state, federal and/or international public agencies (or to interagency processes), and to any public affairs topic.

Capstone projects are typically completed in small groups (2-4 students). Individual projects are possible to better serve a student’s needs and interests.

All Capstone projects must have a Project Partner, unless rare special circumstances apply. Potential projects are identified through the IISC community partnership model, as well as other IISC and SPPA connections with state and local agencies.

Students are presented with multiple potential projects, and rank projects according to their preferences. Groups will be determined by the primary course instructors.

Students can apply to work on a self-identified individual Capstone project (see below).

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MPA students work on an individual or group Capstone project, typically in their final semester. This is an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge they have acquired through their curriculum to a real-life situation, to “learn by doing” and to hone their analytical, communication and implementation skills.

The capstone outcome is a professional product, or deliverable, that demonstrates the knowledge, critical thinking, and production skills learned throughout the student’s MPA graduate program.

The main learning objectives are:

1. **Application of learning to a “real-world” problem-solving situation:** Students draw from their training in public policy and public and nonprofit organizations management. “Management” in this context includes financial management (e.g., budgeting), information management (e.g., information technology), performance and human resources management. “Public policy” in this context include the design, adoption and implementation of policies that seek to promote the public good and serve the public

interest as a whole, or distinct populations or publics (including social, environmental, and economic policies).

2. **Competencies in the core courses and sustainability:** Students demonstrate analytic insight, skills and abilities learned in core courses, as well as general knowledge of administration, leadership, and organizational theory and practice. Students demonstrate understanding of how public management and public policy topics are interconnected, and ability to promote social, economic and/or environmental sustainability.
3. **Competencies in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice:** Students demonstrate understanding and ability to analyze existing conditions, policies, practices, problems and data from a DEIJ perspective, and ability to develop and advocate for creative solutions to address differential impacts and outcomes.
4. **Problem Solving:** Students demonstrate the ability to apply problem-solving processes, technologies, systems approaches, and collaborative and innovative thinking to identify solutions. Students apply qualitative and quantitative analysis to decision-making processes.
5. **Communication Skills:** Students demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively and to design, write, and produce professional-quality documents.
6. **Self-Management Skills:** Students demonstrate the ability to work independently and creatively, meet deadlines, and collaborate positively and productively with colleagues, project partners and faculty mentors. For group projects, students demonstrate the ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

CRITERIA FOR PROJECT SELECTION

MPA Capstone projects can focus on government and/or nonprofit management, public policy and programs design, implementation and evaluation in a wide range of social, economic and/or environmental areas.

The projects are designed to evaluate existing policies and/or to propose new policies/actions related to any or several of these broad goals:

- Promote environmental, social and/or economic sustainability
- Reduce injustices and promote equity, inclusivity and/or diversity
- Enhance the economic efficiency and resilience of public/nonprofit agencies and programs
- Improve communities' wellbeing, sense of place, health and resiliency
- Implement best practices in public management and/or public policy
- Strengthen governance ethics, capacity and effectiveness

I. PROJECTS RELATED TO IISC AND FIELD PROBLEMS IN PLANNING

Every year, IISC manages multiple community engagement projects. MPA students have the opportunity to structure their Capstone within one of the IISC projects. This may be particularly beneficial for students interested in local government, local nonprofit organizations (e.g.,

working on housing, economic development, health, renewable energy), or issues and policies that impact local communities (e.g., wellbeing, access to services, employment, poverty, sense of place, justice and inclusion, natural disasters, resilience).

When feasible and appropriate, MPA students may work alongside Urban Planning students involved in the Field Problems Planning Capstone course. In this case, MPA Capstones contribute to, yet remain distinct from, planning projects. MPA capstones could:

- Analyze the actual and/or potential impact of federal, state, county and city policies, programs and/or practices on IISC communities;
- Propose policies, programs, legal/regulatory, governance changes to promote local sustainability, resilience, diversity, equity and inclusion in IISC communities;
- Work with public/nonprofit organizations in IISC communities that require public/nonprofit management and/or policy work (e.g., grant writing, program development, organizational management).

COURSE STRUCTURE/APPROACH

In consultation with Capstone project partners and faculty mentors, students conduct and report on a major project that synthesizes and applies knowledge and skills learned in program courses. The project builds on knowledge and skills acquired in core and specialization courses.

Capstone projects have both conceptual and applied components:

- The conceptual components include a review of the relevant literature and state-of-the-art practices (e.g., based on books, legal documents, research articles), and in-depth explanations and applications of relevant theory(ies) to project. This conceptual component answers the question: “What do experts in the field say about relevant topics?”
- The applied components describe current practices, policies and potential gaps (e.g., using data analysis, regulatory reviews, interviews, public engagement), engage in creative problem-solving, and propose feasible management and/or policy strategies to solve real problem(s). This prepares students for professional development and career advancement. This applied component answers the question: “How can the problem be solved through improved public/nonprofit policy and management?”

Regular meetings with project partners and faculty mentors is essential for project success. Student teams working on IISC projects meet regularly with project partners and faculty mentors (at least monthly), to discuss progress and receive mentorship.

For Capstone projects managed as individual projects, the student, project partners, and faculty mentor will arrange a meeting schedule. The student and faculty mentor should meet at least 3 times with project partners (recommended 4-6 times):

- at the outset to identify the problem, set project goals, scope, contents, general methodology, and deliverables;
- to provide guidance throughout the semester; and
- at the end of the semester for the final presentation.

STUDENT (WORKING IN GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALLY) COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Memorandum of Understanding:** The memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the student team and the project partner organization specifies the project scope, schedule, deliverables and the role of the project partner in helping to complete the project.
- **Project Plan:** The team proposes a plan setting forth a schedule by which the project is to be completed, the specific tasks to be completed, the estimated number of hours for each task, deadlines, task distribution among group members, possible bottlenecks, potential sources of data and information, etc. The plan should contain interim deliverables and benchmark dates, and the key questions that have to be answered to complete the project.
- **Two Presentations** to faculty and project partners:
 - A scoping presentation at the end of the first month.
 - A final presentation at the end of the semester.
- **Poster:** A poster showing project purpose and outcomes (it may be submitted for a regional or national conference).
- **Final Report:** The final project report should generally contain the following 5 sections:
 - Section 1: Introduction (topic, significance, context, application, goals, DEIJ dimensions)
 - Section 2: Background (literature and/or theories, including relevant DEIJ topics)
 - Section 3: Methodology (data collection and analysis, experiment, creative work)
 - Section 4: Findings
 - Section 5: Recommendations
 - Section 6: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice impact statement

SELF-IDENTIFIED INDEPENDENT CAPSTONE AUTHORIZATION

If IISC projects do not meet students' professional development needs, they may complete an individual Capstone project more closely aligned with their policy and management interests.

Prior to enrolling in the course, students must discuss their plan with a faculty mentor, and follow up with a pre-application letter to their faculty mentor and the SPPA Director. The pre-application letter must include:

- Name of faculty mentor
- Proposed project partner(s) (i.e., project partners)
- Brief description of the project (goals, deliverables)

- Explanation of how this project is important to the student's professional development

Once the pre-application is approved, students must seek formal support from their project partner, and submit a detailed proposal "Application for the Individual Capstone Experience" to their faculty mentor and the SPPA Director. To facilitate IISC planning, this application needs to be submitted to the SPPA Director at least 90 prior to the beginning of the semester during which the capstone occurs.

The Application for the Individual Capstone Experience must include:

- Name of faculty mentor
- Project partner(s) (i.e., clients)
- Project proposal: Completed in consultation with the faculty mentor and project partner(s), the proposal presents the project goal(s), project partner(s), overall plan for completion, general methodological approach, and deliverables.
- Faculty mentor approval and signature indicating their commitment to supporting the project

The faculty mentor submits the completed application to the SPPA Director for final approval at least **90 prior** to the beginning of the semester during which the capstone occurs. Once it is approved, SPPA Director informs IISC director.

Upon approval of the application, the student must submit a completed and signed Memorandum of Understanding at least **60 days** prior to the beginning of the semester during which the capstone occurs.

Once the project is approved, the student is expected to work independently, with periodic contact with project partner(s) and faculty mentor to report on progress on the plan, discuss potential roadblocks, and decide on best strategies to advance project goals.

Project costs (e.g., travel) may become the responsibility of the student if the project partners cannot cover those costs.

Internships

Internships are designed to give students practical experience through on-the-job training. Internships provide students with two special opportunities:

- To obtain “real world” public or non-profit management or public policy experience
- To reflect critically on the work setting, the activity, and public affairs’ curricular links to those activities.

Students who complete an appropriate internship, write a satisfactory internship paper, and receive an evaluation from their supervisor of “good”, “very good”, or “excellent” are eligible to receive three units of credit toward the degree in public affairs. The internship option can be satisfied through employment with a relevant agency, firm, or organization for the equivalent of **at least** eight weeks at a three-quarters-time fraction (240 hrs.) during the student's period of affiliation with SPPA (including summers). Students should seek internships in which their work efforts will be substantive and related to their degree in public affairs (i.e., scanning, receptionist, or carrier services are typically **not** acceptable internship arrangements). An internship cannot be done prior to beginning the program, except in extenuating circumstances.

Students who obtain internships funded by the public affairs program are not permitted to use those internships for internship credit.

If a public affairs student is employed full-time (30 hours per week or more) in a professional position related to their area of study, they may receive course credit for the work without pursuing a separate internship. An Internship Approval form must be signed by the student’s advisor to assure the work meets the requirements needed to receive course credit. The requirement of an evaluation by the student’s supervisor is waived. An internship paper must also be written, after at least 240 hours of work have been completed, in order to receive the 3 s.h. of course credit.

An internship is generally required. In cases when finding an internship that meets the SPPA requirements is not possible, a student may substitute the internship with another course. The substituted course must be approved by the faculty advisor.

Students must have the internship details approved by their advisors beforehand. The Internship Approval form (under Current Students on the [SPPA website](#)) should be completed by the student and sent to the advisor for their approval and signature before the advisor uploads it to MAUI.

At the end of the internship, a paper about the internship must be submitted to a student's advisor, who may accept, reject, or require changes to the paper. In certain cases, subject to the consent of the advisor, the paper may be submitted to another faculty member for review (usually because of the faculty member’s interest in or experiences with the student or the internship provider). Although the precise form of an internship paper may vary with the nature of the internship, in general the paper should contain the following elements:

1. **A description of the internship:** the employer, the student's position in the organization, and the tasks performed or the project on which the student worked;
2. **A critical discussion of the public policy or administrative process and the organization:** In this section, the student should think critically about such matters as: the work s/he performed, the purpose of the work performed, where and how it fits in the organization’s mission; the structure of the agency/organization, the relation of the agency or the project to local politics and community involvement; and, the method of policy development. This section should be reflective, thoughtful, critical, yet constructive.
3. **The value of the experience as it relates to the student's individual development** and the potential value of such an internship for other students in Public Affairs.

Internship papers should be typed and double-spaced. They should be written clearly and concisely, avoiding unnecessary detail. An appropriate length is between 5 and 10 pages.

In addition, each student must have their supervisor complete an evaluation of the student's performance. A copy of the Employer's Report on Intern is available on the SPPA website. The completed evaluation form, signed by the supervisor, needs to be submitted to the SPPA administrative office for review by the student's advisor at the same time the internship paper is submitted. Again, if the supervisor reports that the student's internship was evaluated as fair or poor, then the student will not receive credit for the internship.

The workflow of the form is as follows:

1. At the beginning of the internship, student gives the form to their employment supervisor.
2. Upon completion of the internship, the employer mails the form back to the SPPA administrative services coordinator.
3. The student and their advisor receive an email from the administrative services coordinator notifying them the form has arrived and that they need to meet.
4. The evaluation form is uploaded to the student's electronic advising file.
5. Advisor accesses this form **and** the original Internship Approval Form from the electronic advising file when he/she meets with the student.
6. The advisor and student sign the Employer Evaluation Form and the advisor uploads the form to the student's file (MAUI) before the deadline (see front cover for the deadline date).
7. The advisor **also** signs the Internship Approval Form to finalize the process and then uploads it to MAUI as well.

In some unusual circumstances, a student may discover that an internship that was expected to be "substantive" turned into something less meaningful. If this is the case, the student should contact their advisor immediately (or the SPPA director, if the advisor is unavailable) and discuss the issue. Efforts will be made by the student and the advisor with the employer to improve the quality of the internship work experience

Course Credit and Due Dates

Students typically register for the course, PBAF:6335 Internship, during the semester just following their internship* (or, in the case of an internship done during the student's final semester in the program, concurrent with the internship).

Internship papers are due on the date specified on the inside [cover of this manual](#). For example, for a summer 2021 internship, a student would typically register for PBAF:6335 during the fall 2021 semester and submit the internship paper by October 1 (although earlier submission is desirable). Students must request their "Internship Form" from their student file and submit it along with their internship paper.

The student's faculty advisor will review the internship paper. If the paper needs revision, the student has two weeks to submit the revisions. If a satisfactory internship paper is not submitted, a grade of "unsatisfactory" will be posted and the student will not receive credit for the internship experience. In addition, if the student's internship supervisor evaluates the student's overall performance as fair or poor, then the grade for the class will be "unsatisfactory." Results of both the faculty and the client review should be indicated on the "Internship Form" and uploaded to MAUI by the advisor.

Students may not register for PBAF:6335 more than once.

***International students** must register for the internship in the semester they are doing the work. Check with International Students and Scholars Services to learn about the registration requirements.