

URBAN PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY (COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING CONCENTRATION), MASTER

The Master of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy (MUPEP) is a Planning Accredited Program (PAB) which trains students with the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful in planning and planning related professions. Whether desiring to become a planning generalist or a generalist with a specialty in environmental and land use planning, community development and housing, or spatial analysis, students graduate from the MUPEP program with the skills and knowledge of equity, social justice and sustainability. We prepare students to become planners who demonstrate critical, visionary, and utopian thinking with an ability to elicit, understand, and respectfully characterize community values within planning projects.

The major objectives of the Master of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy Program are:

- To train students for professional careers in planning, allowing them to function in both generalist and specialist roles.
- To provide students with an understanding of the history and theories of cities and urban regions.
- To prepare students with life-long analytical, research, and communication skills.
- To provide students with the specific knowledge and skills needed to become successful practicing planners in a wide range of urban, metropolitan and regional planning areas.
- To provide students with scientific and technical skills that can be applied professionally to solve problems of both the built and natural environments.

Degree Requirements

The program requires 48 credits. Of those, twenty-four (24) are required core courses. In addition to the core requirements, students are required to take twelve (12) credits in specialization courses. The remaining twelve (12) credits are for elective courses.

With Department approval, it is possible to transfer up to 6 credit hours taken in another graduate program. Only courses with a B or higher grade will be considered and the course content must be relevant to the MUPEP degree.

The MUPEP program does not grant credit for courses completed for a prior earned degree.

All students, except for students completing a thesis, must satisfy the internship requirement and pass the comprehensive exit examination.

Specializations

All students must take 12 credit hours within one of the three specializations offered: (a) Sustainable Environmental and Land Use

Planning, (b) Community Development and Housing, or (c) Spatial Analysis and Mobility Planning.

Sustainable Environmental and Land Use Planning Specialization

The Sustainable Environmental and Land Use Planning specialization provides planners with conceptual and methodological skills to manage both the built and natural environments in order to promote sustainable and equitable urban development. Issues include: waste management, flooding and storm water, environmental pollution, land use planning, climate change, and environmental justice. Students are required to take both:

- UPEP 750 Urban Infrastructure Planning and Policy
- UPEP 761 Land Use and Environmental Planning

and 2 courses from the following list:

- UPEP 730 Introduction to GIS in Urban Planning
- UPEP 744 Public Participation in the Planning Process
- UPEP 776 Environmental Assessment
- UPEP 767 Environmental Justice and Equity

Community Development and Housing Specialization

The Community Development and Housing specialization introduces students to the myriad of issues facing urban communities. Courses train students in the methods used to assess the potential need and impact of housing and community improvement projects the surrounding residents. Students are required to take both:

- UPEP 740 Community Development in the Urban Milieu
- UPEP 742 Housing Policy: Context and Impact

and 2 courses from the following list:

- UPEP 744 Public Participation in the Planning Process
- UPEP 746 Introduction to Real Estate
- UPEP 748 Methods of Land Development Project Analysis
- UPEP 750 Urban Infrastructure Planning and Policy

Spatial Analysis and Mobility Planning Specialization

The Spatial Analysis and Mobility Planning specialization focuses on the coordination and visualization of the built environment and the impacts of land use policies. The specializations combine courses that allow students to identify development needs and issues and visualize clearly desired outcomes across functional areas. Included in the concentration are a progression of GIS, analytic and visualization tools that are standard to the planning profession. Students are required to take both:

- UPEP 713 Principles of Design
- UPEP 730 Introduction to GIS in Urban Planning

and 2 courses from the following list:

- UPEP 729 Urban Land Economics
- UPEP 731 Applications of GIS in Urban Planning
- UPEP 732 Advanced Studies in GIS
- UPEP 780 Comparative International Topics in Transportation

Electives

All students must take four elective courses (12 credit hours). They may select from any UPEP 7xx course that is not used to fulfill their core or specialization requirements. Alternatively, with the approval of their advisor, students may take program-related graduate courses in other Texas Southern University graduate programs or at other institutions.

Internships

All students, except for students completing a thesis, must satisfy the internship requirement. The internship option is designed for those going directly into practice and want to gain exposure in the field prior to graduation. Students enroll in UPEP 795 and identify an opportunity to work in a planning capacity over the course of 120 hours. A letter of offer is required that identifies responsibilities and the number of hours to be completed. At the completion of the internship, student are required to submit a report/project/journal reflective of lessons learned or internship accomplishments.

Thesis

The thesis is traditional academic research. Depending on the nature of the specific research project, the study could involve historical materials, secondary sources, create primary data, and/or explorations of planning theory. Students earn 6 credits for thesis research: 3 credits in UPEP 888 and 3 credits in UPEP 889; both course sections must be taken.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

The Master of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and a satisfactory academic record. To apply to the program, the following is required:

- 1. Online TSU Graduate School Application.
- 2. Resume.
- 3. Three letters of reference from people, preferably professors from your undergraduate degree program, who know you well and can provide an evaluation of your ability to perform and succeed at the graduate level.
- 4. An official transcript from colleges and universities attended. Applicant's undergraduate cumulative GPA must be at least a 3.0 in the last sixty hours.
- 5. Written statement of purpose (500 - 750 words). Students should write an original statement of purpose indicating future goals and reasons for pursuing the Master of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy specifically at Texas Southern University.
- 6. Graduate Record Examination scores from the GRE General Test must be submitted by all applicants. Only scores for tests taken within 5 years prior to the entrance term are considered valid.
- 7. For international applicants, the following additional documentation is required:
 - a. Official TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score is required for applicants whose native language is not English, unless the applicant has received an undergraduate degree from a U.S. college or university. A TOEFL score of at least 550 on the paper-based test or 213 on the computer-based test or 79 on the Internet-based test is required. An official IELTS score can be submitted in lieu of TOEFL in which case a minimum overall band score of 6.0 is required.
 - b. Applicants with a bachelor's degree or other educational credentials from a non-U.S. institution must submit an official

course-by-course transcript evaluation of that degree by one of the TSU approved transcript evaluation agencies.

- c. An affidavit of financial support as required by the Office of International Admissions.

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Summary

Code	Title	Hours
Core Curriculum (p. 2)		21-24
Community Development and Housing (p. 2)		12
Electives (p. 3)		9-12
Thesis		0-6
Total Hours		48

Core Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
UPEP 703	Planning Theory & Practice	3
UPEP 705	Introduction to Land Use Planning	3
UPEP 709	Principles of Planning Law	3
UPEP 719	Plan Making and Implementation	3
UPEP 725	Introduction to Statistics	3
UPEP 726	Applied Planning Methods	3
UPEP 720	Planning Studio I	3
UPEP 721	Planning Studio II (Not Required for Thesis Option)	
Total Hours		21-24

Community Development and Housing

The Community Development and Housing area of specialization introduces students to the myriad of issues facing urban communities. Courses train students in the methods used to assess the potential need and impact of housing and community improvement projects and their effects on the surrounding residents. Students are required to take:

Code	Title	Hours
UPEP 740	Community Development in the Urban Milieu	3
UPEP 742	Housing Policy: Context and Impact	3
Select two of the following:		6
UPEP 744	Citizen Part in Pln Process	3
UPEP 746	Introduction to Real Estate	3
UPEP 748	Methods of Land Development Project Analysis	3

UPEP 750	Urban Infrastructure Planning and Policy	3
Total		12

Electives

UPEP courses outside of the student's selected concentration may count as electives. In addition, if approved by their advisor, students may take graduate courses in other departments to count towards their electives.

internship option

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