

# URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING, PHD

The PhD is open to a limited number of quality students who intend to teach, or do research in a university, in an independent research agency, or in large planning organizations.

Generally, students spend two years of full-time coursework before being advanced to candidacy, and an additional one to two years in preparation and defense of a dissertation. Details on administrative requirements for the degree are available in the PhD URPL Handbook (<https://dpla.wisc.edu/academics/handbooks/>).

Although the department stresses the development of general skills and mental attitudes that are common to all planning endeavors, students are required to specialize in an area of planning that is of interest to the student.

The department seeks students with high academic qualifications and the potential to become qualified professional planners. The department is especially interested in women and minority applicants. Since there are relatively few undergraduate planning programs in the country, students come into the field from a wide range of disciplines. In recent years, planning students have generally come from the social sciences, with geography, economics, political science, and sociology the most common undergraduate backgrounds. The range, however, runs from the arts to the sciences.

## ADMISSIONS

### ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).** Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	February 1
Spring Deadline	October 15
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Required

English Proficiency Test	Every applicant whose native language is not English, or whose undergraduate instruction was not exclusively in English, must provide an English proficiency test score earned within two years of the anticipated term of enrollment. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Requirements for Admission policy: <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241</a> ( <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/</a> ).
Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)	n/a
Letters of Recommendation Required	3

**Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Applications submitted by the deadlines listed above will be considered for limited Department funding.**

Application for admission to the program consists of the following materials: the online application, unofficial transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work, statement of purpose (applicants should submit a thoughtful, reflective one- or two-page statement discussing reasons for going into planning; applicants with an interest in a particular concentration should discuss this; applicants with planning or planning-related experience should include this), and three references from people familiar with the applicant's academic and/or professional work.

In addition to requirements for admission to the Graduate School, there are **four** unique requirements unique to the PhD in Urban and Regional Planning program.

- Master's Degree.** Applicants to the PhD program are expected to have a master's degree.
- Professional Practice.** Because planning is a practice-oriented field, applicants are expected to have completed at least one year of full-time experience as a professional planner or in a related field. The PhD program is flexible and is intended to appeal to individuals from diverse academic backgrounds. Therefore, it is possible to be admitted without having met the professional practice requirements. Deficiencies may be made up once an admitted applicant is in the program.
- GRE.** Applicants are expected to submit a GRE test score. The GRE may be waived for anyone who has a master's degree in Planning or a closely aligned field from an accredited US institution.
- Faculty Advisor.** In order to be admitted into the program, a member of the faculty must agree to serve as the student's advisor. Before final admission decisions are made, applications are circulated among faculty in the department of Planning & Landscape Architecture (and our affiliates). The advisor will become the chair of the admitted applicant's PhD committee.

In reviewing applications, the department gives extra weight to planning-related work, such as Peace Corps or professional planning experience. The department also considers graduate coursework, even if it is in another field. If applicants have such experience, it should be highlighted in the application.

The success of international applicants enrolled in the program depends heavily on a good working knowledge of English. Prospective applicants who do not feel comfortable using the English language are strongly urged to consider further language study before applying for admission.

All applicants are required to have an introductory-level course in statistics. This requirement may be met by taking an introductory course, for no graduate credit, during the student's first semester of study.

## FUNDING

## FUNDING

### GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (<https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/>) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

### PROGRAM RESOURCES

The PhD URPL Program Committee will help students look for funding for their graduate study, though the program cannot guarantee funding. Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information is available from the Graduate School and from the PhD URPL Program Committee. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

## REQUIREMENTS

## MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (<http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirements>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

## MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

### MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

#### Mode of Instruction Definitions

**Accelerated:** Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

**Evening/Weekend:** Courses meet on the UW-Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

**Face-to-Face:** Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW-Madison Campus.

**Hybrid:** These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

**Online:** These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

## CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement Detail	
Minimum Credit Requirement	51 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	32 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	26 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244</a> ( <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/</a> ).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203</a> ( <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/</a> ).
Other Grade Requirements	The minimum average GPA in courses satisfying the Structure and Processes of Cities and Regions requirement shall be 3.5. If a student does not achieve this GPA in the three courses s/he identifies, they may continue to take courses (within the general departmental PhD program policies of how long a student may be a pre-dissertator) from the list provided until they have three courses where their average GPA is 3.5.
Assessments and Examinations	The department administers three preliminary field examinations. The purpose of the preliminary examinations is to satisfy the department that the student is knowledgeable about the central theoretical and methodological perspectives common to the field of planning, and has sufficient knowledge about the design and conduct of research to undertake the dissertation.
Language Requirements	No language requirements.
Graduate School Breadth Requirement	All doctoral students are required to complete a doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate. Refer to the Graduate School: Breadth Requirement in Doctoral Training policy: <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200</a> ( <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200/">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200/</a> ).
	PhD students and their advisors are responsible for filing copies of executed breadth agreements with the PhD program committee. The breadth requirement must be satisfied prior to filing the warrant for the preliminary examination.

## REQUIRED COURSES

All doctoral students are required to complete 9 credits on the structure and processes of cities and regions. These courses shall cover the nature of urban and regional development processes over time and the impact of urban and regional development on the social, economic, environmental, institutional, and physical structure of cities and regions. Courses should also cover the response of federal, state and local governments to the issues and problems generated by such development and the planner's role in developing public policy and programs to deal with those problems and issues.

Courses satisfying the requirement for this component of doctoral studies must be approved by the student's PhD advisor and then by the PhD

program committee and shall be recorded on a form provided by the committee.

The remainder of the required credits to reach a minimum of 51 typically are made up of research credits (URB R PL 990).

### Coursework Satisfying Requirement for Structure and Processes of Cities and Regions

Code	Title	Credits
ECON 475	Economics of Growth	3–4
ECON 712	Economic Theory-Macroeconomics Sequence	3
ECON/REAL EST/ URB R PL 420	Urban and Regional Economics	3
URB R PL/ECON/ REAL EST 420	Urban and Regional Economics	3
REAL EST/ECON/ URB R PL 420	Urban and Regional Economics	3
A A E 731	Frontiers in Development Economics 2	3
A A E/REAL EST/ URB R PL 520	Community Economic Analysis	3
GEOG/ URB R PL 505	Urban Spatial Patterns and Theories	3
I SY E 516	Introduction to Decision Analysis	3
PUB AFFR 873	Introduction to Policy Analysis	3
PUB AFFR/ POLI SCI/ URB R PL 874	Policy-Making Process	3
POLI SCI/ PUB AFFR/ URB R PL 874	Policy-Making Process	3
URB R PL/POLI SCI/ PUB AFFR 874	Policy-Making Process	3
REAL EST/ URB R PL 720	Urban Economics	3
REAL EST 978	Research Seminar in Real Estate and Urban Land Economics	1
URB R PL/ECON/ PUB AFFR 734	Regional Economic Problem Analysis	3
URB R PL 751	Introduction to Financial Planning	3

may approve up to a maximum of 19 credits of prior coursework toward program requirements. Students will be required to obtain 32 credits per the Graduate School's minimum residency requirement.

### Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

No credits from any undergraduate degree may transfer toward the PhD program.

### Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

### Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW-Madison

A maximum of 15 credits may transfer from the UW-Madison University Special career; requests for prior coursework to be applied to credit requirements should be submitted to the PhD committee for evaluation.

## PROBATION

A semester GPA below 3.0 will result in the student being placed on academic probation. If a semester GPA of 3.0 is not attained during the subsequent semester of full-time enrollment (or 12 credits of enrollment if enrolled part-time) the student may be dismissed from the program or allowed to continue for one additional semester based on advisor appeal to the Graduate School.

## ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

All students are required to conduct a yearly progress report meeting with their thesis committee after passing the preliminary examination.

## CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

## TIME LIMITS

All courses for the Structure and Processes of Cities and Regions requirement must be taken and successfully completed within the doctoral student's first five semesters (i.e., two and one-half academic years) in the PhD program. This coursework requirement must be met before the student is advanced to candidacy (awarded dissertator, ABD status).

## GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Dean of Students Office (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)

## POLICIES

### GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

### MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

#### PRIOR COURSEWORK

##### Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

Requests for prior coursework to be applied to credit requirements should be submitted to the PhD Committee for evaluation. The committee

- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employee disabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances. They may also contact the L&S Academic Divisional Associate Deans, the L&S Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning Administration, or the L&S Director of Human Resources.

## OTHER

The PhD Urban and Regional Planning Program Committee will help students look for funding for their graduate study, though the program cannot guarantee funding. Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information is available from the Graduate School and from the PhD Urban and Regional Planning Program Committee. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Acquire and demonstrate knowledge about the professional field of planning, as exemplified in the accreditation guidelines for the master's program in urban and regional planning and the Planning Accreditation Board. These include knowledge about: the purpose and meaning of planning, planning history, planning theory, planning law, the structure and function of cities and regions, and global dimensions of planning. Students demonstrate this knowledge through entrance requirements (a master's degree in planning or acceptable cognate field), through completion of coursework, and through completion of preliminary examinations in planning theory, planning methods, and planning specialization.
2. Acquire and demonstrate knowledge about the role and use of planning theories in both practice and research, including the historical development of planning theory, major theoretical approaches within planning, and the application of theories from other disciplines

as applied to planning. Students demonstrate this knowledge through coursework and completion of a planning theory preliminary examination.

3. Acquire and demonstrate knowledge of social science research methods, including research design, data collection, and quantitative and qualitative methods used in planning research. Students demonstrate knowledge through completion of graduate coursework in research methods and through completion of a research design and methods preliminary examination.
4. Acquire and demonstrate knowledge of a substantive research and practice field within planning. Students demonstrate specialized knowledge in one of the major fields within planning through completion of coursework and through a research-specialization preliminary examination.
5. Acquire and demonstrate skills in conducting academic research and scholarly inquiry in the field of urban and regional planning, including ability to summarize and critique extant research, ability to develop a research proposal, skills in seeking funding, skills in completion of research projects, and skills in written and oral presentation of research findings.
6. Acquire and demonstrate specialized skills in research for their chosen major field within planning. This will include skills in particular research methods and data analysis specific to their chosen field within planning.
7. Acquire and demonstrate general knowledge about planning suitable to teaching master's-level planning students in accredited programs. Students will acquire and demonstrate specific knowledge about their chosen field of specialization within planning.
8. Acquire and/or demonstrate competence and experience in the professional practice of planning. Students demonstrate this skill through the requirement of previous professional work experience within the field of planning.
9. Acquire and demonstrate knowledge of planning values and planning ethics, as exemplified in the accreditation guidelines for the master's program in urban and regional planning and the Planning Accreditation Board. This would also include awareness of rules of ethical professional conduct as exemplified in the Code of Ethics of the American Institute of Certified Planners.
10. Demonstrate and be held to the highest standards of academic citation and attribution in all their coursework and published work.
11. Demonstrate understanding of professional conduct through required professional work experience in planning.
12. Be given opportunities for training and experience in classroom teaching, presentation of research at academic conferences, and development of research proposals for funding agencies.
13. Demonstrate ethics and values consistent with the "Wisconsin brand" of urban and regional planning, which includes participation, transparency in governance, environmental protection and social justice.

## PEOPLE

### PEOPLE

<https://dpla.wisc.edu/facstaff/faculty> (<https://dpla.wisc.edu/facstaff/faculty/>)