

*Department of Urban and Regional Planning
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona*

Strategic Plan

The mission of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning is to prepare students to be leaders in the planning profession through a multi-disciplinary professional education that builds planning knowledge and skills while fostering critical thinking and a reflective ethical perspective on planning. The Department's programs seek to link theory and practice, model engagement and collaboration, and broaden access to the profession.

The Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Cal Poly Pomona provides professional programs in urban and regional planning, focusing on planning practice. The faculty emphasizes teaching, enriched by research activities, professional involvement, and community service.

Important characteristics include:

- We are student-centered. Faculty members provide extensive contact hours in classes, studios, and office hours. All lectures, seminars, laboratories, and activities are taught by faculty. Through their active involvement in graduate and undergraduate student planning organizations and department and college committees, students play an important role in the governance of the department.
- We embrace our multidisciplinary setting. Courses draw on a variety of disciplines that provide the knowledge and skills needed for effective planning. We co-lead interdisciplinary courses in the College of Environmental Design. This plan assumes that URP will continue to be housed in a College of Environment Design that includes both design and policy concerns.
- We have a commitment to a comprehensive notion of sustainability that considers the interrelations between environmental, economic, and social/political systems, with special attention to social equity. We prepare students to advance sustainability in a way that understands and anticipates social change and we build students' skills so that they can be effective change agents.

The undergraduate and graduate programs are intended to provide the knowledge, skills, decision-making abilities, and depth of judgment required to become an effective practicing professional in urban and regional planning or to pursue advanced degrees. We focus on the interaction of the natural and built environment, within a broad social and economic context. Topics related to the natural environment include greenhouse gas mitigation and climate adaptation, watersheds, habitat, water, and other resources. Topics related to the built environment include land use, urban design, housing, open space, or infrastructure systems, organized around themes such as community development, transportation planning, land use and urban design, and environmental policy.

The primary learning outcome demonstrated by graduates of the Bachelor of Science and Masters programs in Urban and Regional Planning is **effectiveness as urban and regional planning**

professionals. Effectiveness means the application of planning knowledge and skills to facilitate the development of visions and goals, create and implement plans, and resolve urban and regional problems. We regularly update and define our desired learning outcomes in the URP Statement of Learning Outcomes. Planning work takes the form of creating physical designs as well as adopting and implementing plans, programs, and policies. This work is done with a long-term, comprehensive perspective, addressing environmental sustainability, and social justice.

The secondary learning outcome is that graduates develop **critical thinking** skills and have a **reflective perspective** concerning the creation of knowledge, use of planning skills, and professional practice and ethics. The intention is that graduates continually consider their own values and those of their clients and communities in undertaking professional planning. Their reflection considers democratic participation, social justice, and environmental sustainability. These outcomes are assessed in students' ability to reflect on key planning issues in capstone professional practice seminars and community studios.

These outcomes are assessed through external review of capstone studios and individual research projects, surveys of alumni and exiting students, and other measures such as student competitions and award programs.

The graduate program assumes that students have a greater level of maturity, experience, and general knowledge. There is no "general education" component of the graduate curriculum; discussions of planning topics assume that students will bring the contributions of their respective undergraduate majors to the discussion. The program focuses on preparing individuals for leadership roles in urban and regional planning. Theoretical issues related to planning are discussed with more rigor and in greater abstraction at the graduate level than the undergraduate level.

The faculty's Vision for Teaching and Learning is as follows:

We have a clear commitment to the fundamental qualities that create a balanced educational program in the design, planning, and management of the environment. We are dedicated to and passionate about enhancing individuals so that they are:

- receptive to the world through the sharpening of senses;
- comprehending the world through the exercise of intelligence;
- engaging the world through interaction, collaboration, and communication;
- creatively envisioning other worlds through imagination;
- effective in the world through the practice of skills;
- ethical in their professional practice;
- committed to civic engagement and democratic practice; and
- conscious of planning values such as a future orientation and sustainability.

We realize the value of our individual role and service but also believe we are part of something larger than our College. We nurture a spirit of support and cooperation and an acknowledgment of the importance of each individual to the future well-being of society.

Department Goals and Objectives

The following summarizes the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the Bachelor of Science and Master of Urban and Regional Planning programs.

GOAL #1: Student-centered graduate and undergraduate programs in urban and regional planning that implement Cal Poly Pomona’s “learn by doing” educational philosophy and are centers of excellence for the University and the profession.

Objectives

A) Excellence in undergraduate and graduate planning education that prepares students for leadership positions in the private, non-profit, and public sectors.

Policies and Programs

a) Achieve continuous curriculum innovation and improvement that links theory and practice, anticipates the future of the planning profession, encourages a multiplicity of career paths based on an articulated URP Learning Outcomes Statement.

b) Conduct regular assessment and feedback on curriculum and program quality, including annual external review of capstone products, surveys of alumni and graduating students, and other feedback.

c) Maintain continuous accreditation for both degree programs.

d) Integrate new instructional technologies in courses in a strategic manner. Align in-class/on-line teaching modalities with course learning outcomes and pursue shared specialization courses with other CSU planning programs.

e) Assess success and relevance of existing electives and explore new coursework in emerging areas such as urban food systems, inequality, well-being, negotiation and mediation, and new models of community engagement.

f) Participate in the ongoing development of programs at the John T. Lyle Center for Regenerative Studies (CRS), and support the interdisciplinary design course and capstone interdisciplinary experiences.

g) Include identifiable social change and social equity material in appropriate courses and promote discussion and social action about

these issues linked to service learning experiences. Promote significant faculty and student participation in social change and social equity issues, such as leadership in non-profit organizations.

h) Facilitate the spread of planning knowledge, problem solving processes and values through the Dale Prize, faculty research, and community outreach

i) . Provide course activities that engage students in communities in ways that provide reciprocal learning, locally, nationally, and internationally.

B) Significant contribution to the quality of planning practice in California and beyond through the work of faculty, students, and alumni.

a) Achieve positive program ratings by external bodies and external recognition of student and faculty work through APA and other awards programs.

b) Expand the impact of the annual Dale Prize colloquium in creating a theory/practice dialogue around key planning issues.

c) Link faculty scholarly activity to pressing California public policy issues in scenario planning, transportation planning, infrastructure, community development, and the environment.

d) Support continued growth of the alumni association and alumni involvement.

C) A faculty that is of a size, caliber, and ethnic and gender diversity that fosters excellence, defined as a tenure and tenure-track faculty size (aspirational goal = ten full-time equivalent faculty (FTEF); near-term goal = nine FTEF. No less than two FTEF temporary faculty to provide a practice perspective and address specialty areas.

a) Recruit new tenure-track faculty in environmental planning and physical planning/urban design with an emphasis on the teacher-scholar model combined with community service.

b) Recruit temporary faculty in needed specializations from extensive resources in Southern California.

c) Create an institutional and collegial atmosphere that is supportive of diversity of current and future faculty, including an active mentoring program for new hires.

d) Attract regular participation of outside scholars and practitioners to enrich and

diversify the department's activities through teaching, leading seminars, giving guest lectures, mentoring, conducting professional workshops, and serving on thesis committees.

D) A student body that is of a size, caliber, and ethnic and gender diversity that fosters excellence, defined as a minimum enrollment of approximately 60 undergraduate students and 18 graduate students per entering class, balancing high admission standards while achieving an ethnic and gender composition that reflects the diversity of Southern California.

a) Adopt enrollment management activities that align incoming class sizes with available faculty resources. In the undergraduate program, manage enrollment through second choice majors policy and change of majors. In the graduate program, manage class size through admission standards. Monitor eligibility index scores for undergraduate students and minimum GPAs for graduate students to balance student quality and capacity.

b) Create and maintain outreach programs that attract creative, collaborative, and innovative students (e.g., APSA high school scholarship initiative).

c) Undertake recruiting and retention programs targeting underrepresented groups based on assessment of enrollment patterns.

E) Contribution to the knowledge and practice of planning through innovative professional activities and research.

- a) Achieve active participation by faculty in APA, AICP, ACSP, Planners Network and/or other planning or planning-related organizations and develop partnerships with other design-related organizations, such as the AIA, ACSA, ASLA, and AEP.
- b) Increase external funding for department activities, through grants and contracts.
- c) Disseminate faculty research through conference presentations, peer reviewed journals, books, essays, professional reports, courses and workshops for practitioners, and web publishing.
- d) Acquire resources and establish a Department fund to allow release time from teaching for significant research projects. An aspiration goal is 15 WTU per year; will work with Provost on research release time proposal as part of semester conversion.
- e) Provide leadership in University administrative programs and policies concerning the environment, design, transportation, and community engagement.
- f) Carry out client-sponsored projects that create funds for research and teaching assistantships and student scholarships.

F) A high level of multidisciplinary education and research.

- a) Undertake at least one multidisciplinary research or community service project annually.
- b) Initiate joint courses and studios with faculty and students from Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Art, Civil Engineering, or other departments and attract non-majors to URP
- c) Obtain external funding for interdisciplinary work via budgets, grants and contracts, including collaborations outside the department.
- d) Promote URP minor to target majors including Architecture, Landscape Architecture, LCRS, and Public Administration.

GOAL #2: A supportive environment for teaching and learning, research, service, and University and Department governance. A sense of community among students, faculty and alumni.

Objectives

Policies and Programs

A) A Department culture that places student learning and growth at the center of all activities.

a) Support undergraduate and graduate planning student organizations and include students in issues of Department governance.

b) Provide students with opportunities for frequent contact with faculty advisors for program advice and mentoring to increase student retention. Take advantage of ENV advising staff in the area of internships and professional development.

c) Encourage alumni participation in student activities, e.g., Dale Prize Student Scholarships; APA Student Travel Grants; Student/Alumni Mentoring Program.

d) Offer workshops to students to promote graduate education and career development.

e) Promote undergraduate students' research through faculty participation as members to students in programs such as RSCA, conference, McNair, and URFSA, and so on.

B) Regular activities that support faculty development, collaboration and a sense of community.

a) Offer Department- specific classes or workshops to support the development of faculty teaching skills, such as using computers in teaching, lecturing and studio courses, and research and publication.

b) Provide regular opportunities for faculty, student and faculty/student interaction outside of classes and administrative meetings, such as

informal seminars and social events.

c) Foster faculty satisfaction and retention through a culture of mutual support and commitment to shared governance in Department affairs.

C) Instructional technology, space, and facilities that support innovation and excellence in teaching and learning.

a) Work with the College to provide access to adequate space for research, classrooms, studios, seminars, and meetings.

b) Advocate for spatial reconfiguration to facilitate interaction with ENV disciplines.

c) Pursue new models for furnishing studios to allow flexible arrangements for teaching and student work.

d) Acquire and/or develop space suitable for seminar activities.

e) Develop and expand the use of hybrid and on-line teaching strategies, including shared specialization courses with other CSU planning programs.

D) Engagement and leadership in University governance, education, and service initiatives.

a) Bring planning values and ethics to governance in college and university committees, including the Academic Senate and other committees such as the Transportation Advisory Committee.

b) Offer general education classes that enhance understanding of cities and regions and the role of planning in society.

c) Participate in university communities promoting faculty scholarship and creative activity.

GOAL #3: A proactive approach toward community change at the local, regional, national, and international level, and commitment to a high level of responsiveness and service to communities.

Objectives

A) Community engagement (service learning) activities that are integrated in lecture, studio, and other courses.

B) A proactive Department role in serving the community and the profession regarding communities and planning and being recognized and trusted by community groups as a reliable partner.

Policies and Programs

a) Conduct at least four community-based projects annually.

b) Recruit and use part-time faculty that have experience and knowledge that can help engage specific communities. Regularly use community activists and other community members as guest lecturers, part-time faculty, presentation jurors, etc.

c) Encourage faculty involvement in community service on a pro bono basis to develop community/university relationships and service learning courses through the University's Center for Community Service Learning.

d) Promote faculty to bring planning topics and issues of international communities by conducting research, teaching studios, and building collaboration with universities in overseas countries.

a) Cultivate relationships with communities and community organizations.

b) Create community change by resolving problems, building social capital, and supporting institutions.

c) Encourage faculty and student service on commissions, non-profit boards, community organizations, and planning organizations.

d) Develop continuing education/professional courses/workshops using URP 4630, URP 4500A, URP 6520, and URP 6430 as a course delivery vehicle. Collaborate with the APA and other organizations on training needs.

e) Generate research and scholarly writing on community change and community-based pedagogy; support and reward the scholarship of engagement in the RTP process.

f) Disseminate knowledge about department

community service activities using venues such as social media, the department's webpage, and the college's newsletter.