June 6, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: David Cronrath
   Dean, School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation

FROM: Elizabeth Beise
       Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to Modify the Master of Community Planning (PCC log no. 12053)

At its meeting on May 3, 2013, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula and Courses approved your proposal to modify the Master of Community Planning. A copy of the approved proposal is attached.

The change is effective Fall 2013. Please ensure that the change is fully described in the Graduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials, and that all advisors are informed.

MDC/
Enclosure

cc: William Ildsardi, Chair, Senate PCC Committee
    Sarah Bauder, Office of Student Financial Aid
    Reka Montfort, University Senate
    Erin Howard, Division of Information Technology
    Pam Phillips, Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment
    Anne Turkos, University Archives
    Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar
    Alex Chen, Graduate School
    Carl Bovill, School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation
    Jim Cohen, Urban Studies and Planning
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
PROGRAM/CURRICULUM/UNIT PROPOSAL

Please email the rest of the proposal as an MSWord attachment to pcc-submissions@umd.edu.

Please submit the signed form to the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus.

College/School:
Please also add College/School Unit Code-First 8 digits: 01202600
Unit Codes can be found at: https://hypprod.umd.edu/Html_Reports/units.htm

Department/Program: 1260301
Please also add Department/Program Unit Code-Last 7 digits:

Type of Action (choose one):

- Curriculum change (including informal specializations)
- Renaming of program or formal Area of Concentration
- Addition/deletion of formal Area of Concentration
- Suspend/delete program
- New academic degree/award program
- New Professional Studies award iteration
- New Minor
- Other

Tip: italics indicate that the proposed program action must be presented to the full University Senate for consideration.

Summary of Proposed Action
There are four (4) proposed actions. First, the Urban Studies and Planning Program will add a new course requirement for its Master of Community Planning degree. The new 3-credit course to be required is will be entitled “URSP 608-Planning Technology.” The course will enhance our students’ analytical and research skills and provide them with a competitive edge for employment due to the increasing use of digital technology in professional planning work.

Second, in order to remain a 48 credit master’s program, we propose to continue requiring our students to do an internship for a semester, but for no credit. The change will enable students still to have 18 elective credits. Students must still do an internship for 300 hours during a Fall or Spring semester or in the Summer. We want to remain a 48 credit hour program because this is the norm in professional planning degree programs. The proposed action is identical to the internship-without-credit policy of the University of Pennsylvania’s Master of City Planning Program.

Third, we are changing the course content of URSP 606 and changing the name from “Urban Economics and Public Policy” to “Planning Economics” to reflect the content change. We will change the name through the VPAC process. The substance of the new course will include urban economics and location theory, to augment the current focus on applications of microeconomics to planning and policymaking. This change was advised by the reaccreditation site visit team from the Planning Accreditation Board in Fall 2012.

Fourth, we will not require that students take URSP 600-Research Design before they take URSP 601-Research Methods. There is no pedagogical reason why students need to take URSP 600 before taking URSP 601.
2. Department Chair
   James R. Cohen / Jean R. Cal / 3/11/13

3. College/School PCC Chair
   Carl Bann / 3/12/13

4. Dean
   Allen 3/16/13

5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required)
   6/14/13

6. Chair, Senate PCC
   [Handwritten: 5/3/13]

7. University Senate Chair (if required)
   [Handwritten: 6/12/13]

8. Senior Vice President and Provost
   [Handwritten: 6/12/13]
1. Current (Old) Requirements for the Master of Community Planning degree

The University of Maryland’s Graduate School Catalog states the following about the current M.C.P. degree requirements (at http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/catalog/programs/cmpl.htm)

Master of Community Planning (M.C.P.)

Graduation requires satisfactory completion of 48 credits of course work. The 12 credits in core courses introduce students to the foundations of city and regional planning, research methods, planning process, and planning history and theory. An additional nine “spread” credits give students a grounding in physical, social and economic planning. Nine additional credits are required for a specialization. Specializations include housing, economic development, social planning and management, transportation planning, urban design, historic preservation, land use/environmental planning, and international planning. A studio and internship are required. Courses are listed under URSP. The MCP program accepts up to nine credits from other graduate programs. Applicants to this program should use the CMPL program code.

Our program’s website lists our M.C.P. course requirements at http://www.arch.umd.edu/planning/academics/degree_programs/master_of_community_planning/degree_requirements.cfm. The page reads as follows . . .

Degree Requirements

21 Credits of Required Courses
These required credits, together with the 9 credits of spread courses, provide students with a solid generalist planning education.

URSP 600 Research Design and Applications 3 credits
URSP 601 Research Methods 3 credits
URSP 604 The Planning Process 3 credits
URSP 605 Planning History and Theory 3 credits
URSP 708 Community Planning Studio 6 credits
URSP 709 Internship 3 credits

9 Credits of Spread Courses
Students must select 3 credits from restricted lists in each of three areas: Physical planning, Economic planning, and Social planning. The following courses are recommended to meet the spread requirement.

Physical planning:
URSP 603 Land Use Planning: Concepts & Techniques 3 credits

Economic planning:
URSP 606 Urban Economics and Public Policy 3 credits

Social planning:
URSP 673 Community Social Planning 3 credits
URSP 662 Urban and Regional Planning in Developing Countries 3 credits

9 Credits in an Area of Specialization
These allow students to focus their education in an area of planning in which they intend to work.

9 Credits of Free Electives
These allow students to broaden their planning education in a direction of their own choosing.

Electives may be chosen from courses offered in the Department as well as those offered in other departments on campus, in the University of Maryland System, and in the consortium colleges. Click here for a list of the consortium schools and UMD's rules and procedures for registering for a consortium class.

Optional Final Paper

Prior to graduation, each MCP candidate has the option of submitting and receiving faculty approval for a professional or academic paper that is well organized, logically argued, uses evidence appropriately, and shows a command of the English language. This paper should be strong enough to warrant publication in an academic or professional publication and should show potential employers what the student is capable of. For more information please click the Final Paper tab above.


We are proposing some minor changes to the requirements. They are summarized below, followed by our suggested new version of the MCP program requirements to be printed in Graduate School Catalog.

Essentially, there are four (4) changes to be made.

A. We are adding a new required course: URSP 608-Planning Technology. We are offering this course in Spring 2013 under the number URSP 688L-Planning Technology, and are submitting a request for a course number change through VPAC during the Spring '13 semester.

B. We would like to still require URSP 709-Internship, but to have the students do the internship for no credit instead of for 3 credits.

C. We are changing the course content of URSP 606 and changing the name from ?Urban Economics and Public Policy? to "Planning Economics" to reflect the content change. We will change the name through the VPAC process. The substance of the new course will include urban economics and location theory, to augment the current focus on applications of microeconomics to planning and policymaking. This change was advised by the reaccreditation site visit team from the Planning Accreditation Board in Fall 2012.

The new UMD catalog description of the URSP course requirements are shown below. The description includes the course number change for URSP 699L and the new name for URSP 606.

D. We do not wish to require that students take URSP 600-Research Design before they take URSP 601-Research Methods. There is no pedagogical reason why students need to take URSP 600 before taking URSP 601.

The following is our proposed new course requirement listing.
Degree Requirements

21 Credits of Required, Core Courses
These required credits, together with the 9 credits of spread courses, provide students with a solid generalist planning education.

URSP 600 Research Design and Applications 3 credits
URSP 601 Research Methods 3 credits
URSP 604 The Planning Process 3 credits
URSP 605 Planning History and Theory 3 credits
URSP 608 Planning Technology 3 credits
URSP 708 Community Planning Studio 6 credits

Internship
Prior to graduation, each student must complete an internship with a planning agency or firm. During the semester of the internship, the student must work 300 hours, submit a journal with weekly entries on their reflections of the internship experience (per instructions provided by the URSP program director); and have their internship supervisor do an evaluation at the end of the semester. The program director will e-mail an electronic evaluation form to the supervisor, who will complete the form, send to the program director, and share with the student.

9 Credits of Spread Courses
Students must select 3 credits from restricted lists in each of three areas: Physical planning, Economic planning, and Social planning. The following courses are recommended to meet the spread requirement.

Physical planning:
URSP 603 Land Use Planning: Concepts & Techniques 3 credits

Economic planning:
URSP 606 Planning Economics 3 credits

Social planning:
Either: URSP 673 Community Social Planning 3 credits
Or URSP 662 Urban and Regional Planning in Developing Countries 3 credits

9 Credits in an Area of Specialization
These allow students to focus their education in an area of planning in which they intend to work.

9 Credits of Free Electives
These allow students to broaden their planning education in a direction of their own choosing.

Electives may be chosen from courses offered in the Program as well as those offered in other departments on campus, in the University of Maryland System, and in the consortium colleges. Click here for a list of the consortium schools and UMD's rules and procedures for registering for a consortium class.
Optional Final Paper

Prior to graduation, each MCP candidate has the option of submitting and receiving faculty approval for a professional or academic paper that is well organized, logically argued, uses evidence appropriately, and shows a command of the English language. This paper should be strong enough to warrant publication in an academic or professional publication and should show potential employers what the student is capable of. For more information please click the Final Paper tab above.

3. Rationale for the Changes

The rationale for the first proposed change – having a required course in planning technology – is the result of our discussions with the URSP program’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of 15 planning professionals in the Washington-Baltimore greater metropolitan area. The TAC provides us with their observations on trends in the planning profession and makes suggestions about curriculum, research and studio projects, and internships and jobs. URSP faculty and Student Planning Association representatives meet with the TAC periodically (at least once per year). For the past two years, TAC members had been advising us of the growing importance of new technology in planning, including Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other types of analytical tools, digital applications, and social media. At a minimum, the TAC members advised that all students should have GIS skills, and that additional technological knowledge would make them even more employable and effective in their professional work. At the TAC members’ suggestion, we have created the planning technology course and made it a requirement. It is being offered as an elective in Spring 2013 and we intend for it to be a required course for students entering the program in Fall 2013. The decision to add the program requirement of a planning technology course was supported by the reaccreditation site visit team who evaluated URSP in Fall 2012.

The rationale for the second proposed change – still requiring our students to do an internship but not for credit -- is that URSP faculty and students would like to retain the opportunity for students to take 18 elective credits. Since 9 credits in one planning specialization area – such as economic development or environmental planning – constitute a specialization, we would like to continue giving our students the option of having two specializations.

In addition, students do their internships off-campus under the supervision of non-University employers. The internships must submit a completed form to the program director prior to the beginning of the semester in which (s)he does the internship, that lists the location of the internship, outlines the work activities to be done, and provides contact information for the internship supervisor. After one month the director will send an evaluation form to the internship supervisor to check on the student’s performance and to confirm the internship requirement is being satisfied. The internship supervisor will share the completed evaluation form with the intern. The program director will send another evaluation form to the internship supervisor at the end of the semester, which will be completed and returned to the URSP program director and shared with the student. The completed evaluation will also confirm whether the required 300 internship work hours have been performed.

Even without credit, the internship will still be a valuable learning experience. In addition to the opportunity to learn on the job, students must make weekly entries into a journal -- the format of which is created by URSP. In their journals the interns reflect on their internship experience. The premise of a journal is that it is not enough to observe and record experiences -- it is important for the interns to make meaning out of what is experienced so that they are “reflective practitioners”. It should be noted that the University of Pennsylvania’s Master of Community Planning Program requires that its students do a non-credit internship.

The rationale for the third change – altering the content of URSP 606 and changing its name -- is the direct result of the recommendations of the reaccreditation site-visit team’s report in Fall 2012. The Planning Accreditation Board adopted new reaccreditation standards in early 2012. The site visit team informed us that we need include urban economics and location theory in URSP 606. Beginning in Spring 2013 we are offering the new course content, and would like the name of the course to reflect this change.

The rationale for the fourth change – not requiring students to take URSP 600-Research Design prior to taking URSP 601-Research Methods, is that we do not find it important for students to take qualitative methods prior to taking
qualitative methods. In addition, in any given semester at least 30 percent of our students are working full-time while they participate in our graduate program. To accommodate them, we offer our classes on Monday through Thursdays from either 4:00 to 6:30 p.m. or from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. A student who is not able to take a 4:00 p.m. class during a semester because of daytime work responsibilities, may not be able to take classes in a certain sequence. In addition, we have no evidence to suggest that it is problematic for students to take the Research Methods class prior to taking the Research Design course.

4. Sample Program under the Proposed Requirements

The following table shows how a student entering the M.C.P. program in Fall 2013 would progress through the revised program year by year. The table shows how the requirements would be satisfied if the student were a student completing the program in two years, or if the student completed the program in 2.5 years.

Suggested 2-Year Course Plan

YEAR 1
Fall (12 credits)

- URSP 600 Research Design
- URSP 603 Land Use Planning
- URSP 605 Planning History and Theory
- SPREAD COURSE (URSP 606 or Social) or ELECTIVE

SPRING (12 credits)

- URSP 600 Research Design (if not taken in Fall)
- URSP 601 Research Methods
- URSP 604 Planning Process
- URSP 608 Planning Technology
- SPREAD COURSE (URSP 606 or Social) or ELECTIVE (if not taking URSP 600)

SUMMER (3 or 6 credits)

- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE, or URSP 708 Studio, or URSP 709 Internship

YEAR 2

FALL (12 credits)

- URSP 708 Studio (if not yet taken)
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE
SPRING (12 credits)

- URSP 708 Studio (if not yet taken)
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE (if needed for 48 credits)

Suggested 2 1/2-Year Course Plan for MCP Degree

YEAR 1

FALL (9 credits)

- URSP 600 Research Design
- URSP 603 Land Use Planning
- URSP 605 Planning History and Theory

SPRING (9 credits)

- URSP 600 Research Design (if not taken in Fall)
- URSP 601 Research Methods
- URSP 604 Land Use Planning
- URSP 608 Planning Technology

SUMMER (3 or 6 credits)

- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE, or URSP 708 Studio, or URSP 709 Internship

YEAR 2

FALL (9 credits)

- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR SPREAD COURSE (URSP 606 or Social) or ELECTIVE
- ELECTIVE
- ELECTIVE

SPRING (9 credits)

- URSP 708 Studio (if not yet taken)
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR SPREAD COURSE (URSP 606 or Social) or ELECTIVE
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE
SUMMER (3 credits)

- URSP 709 Internship

YEAR 3

FALL (6 credits)

- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE
- SPECIALIZATION COURSE OR ELECTIVE

5. Prerequisite Structure of All Required or Optional Courses Appearing the New Requirements

The above table in item #4, above, reflects the prerequisite structure of all required and optional courses based on the proposed changes. The prerequisite requirement is that a student have completed the other five core courses prior to doing either the community planning studio or the internship (or have already completed four and be taking one coterminous with the studio class).

6. List of new courses: Prefix, Number, Title and Credits

There is one course for which we would like a name change. In addition, there are five "URSP 688__Recent Topics in Urban Studies and Planning" courses for which we would like to change course numbers.

The course for which we are requesting a name change in Testudo is URSP 709. In the Graduate Catalog, the course is correctly entitled "Internship", for 3 credits. However, on Testudo the course is identified as "Field Instruction", for 3 credits. The latter term is misleading, because the students "taking" URSP 709 are working off campus for a semester with public or private planning agencies or firms – not taking a class with a faculty member on campus. So we are requesting that the course be officially listed on Testudo as "Internship".

In addition, there are five "URSP 688__Recent Topics in Urban Studies and Planning" courses for which we would like to change course numbers. They are the following . . .

URSP 688L-Recent Topics . . . Planning Technology, 3 credits, to be changed to URSP 608-Planning Technology.

URSP 688N-Recent Topics . . . Urban Transportation Policy and Planning, 3 credits, to be changed to URSP 634-Urban Transportation Policy and Planning.

URSP 688O-Recent Topics . . . Introduction to U.S. Housing Policy and Planning, 3 credits, to be changed to URSP 620-Introduction to U.S. Housing Policy and Planning.

URSP 688V-Recent Topics . . . Economic Development, 3 credits, to be changed to URSP 663-Economic Development.

URSP 688X-Recent Topics . . . New Issues in Community, 3 credits, to be changed to URSP 674-Current Issues in Community.
7. List of Courses Being Deleted from Master of Community Planning Program Requirements

There are no courses being deleted from Master of Community Planning program requirements. However, we are making it optional for students to take URSP 709-Internship for credit, as explained in #4, above.

8. Letters from Any Departments Whose Courses Will Be Required or Otherwise Impacted

There will be no impacts on any other departments or programs on campus, since all the above changes are related to URSP courses.

9. Differential Impact of Changes on Current Students and Future Students

Any student who entered the program in, or prior to, the 2012-13 academic year will not be impacted by the requested changes. Students who enter the program in Fall 2013 and after will be the only ones subject to the changes in the curriculum.