

*Department of City and Regional Planning*  
*University of North Carolina*

M.C.R.P. PROGRAM GUIDE AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
CLASS ENTERING IN FALL 2011

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**KEEP THIS IN YOUR FILES FOR FUTURE REFERENCE**

Revised March 2011

## MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR CLASS ENTERING IN AUGUST 2011

### 1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Master's program are to prepare you for your first professional job and for a long-term career in planning. We believe that both aims can best be met by a program of study and simulated practice that combines theory and methods with substantive knowledge about planning, spatial development and public policy. The program is structured to provide: 1) a core of planning theory, urban theory and planning methods, 2) in-depth coverage of substantive knowledge, methods, techniques and institutions in an area of specialization, 3) elective courses to broaden or deepen knowledge and skills in particular areas of interest, and 4) application of knowledge and skills in a problem-solving workshop and Master's Project.

To sustain a long-term career in which your practice interests and skills change and grow with changes in professional practice and the role of planning in society, you need to develop a sound base in planning theory and methods, and a broad perspective on planning as a public activity. The required courses in planning theory, planning methods, urban spatial structure, and microeconomics serve this objective as do other courses in the department. The planning core and in-depth study of the theory and methods in at least one area of specialization in planning will prepare you for entry into professional practice. You must declare an area of specialization by October of your first semester when you pre-register for spring classes. Faculty advisors will help with course selection and sequencing. You may also take courses throughout the University and at Duke University, North Carolina Central University and North Carolina State University at no additional tuition or fees. See the Student Services Manager for details.

This guide sets out a general framework and minimal requirements. It does not convey what you need to do to make the most of the resources available in the Department and the University. Use this guide as a starting point and checklist, not as a blueprint. The major task in developing a successful program is to select and complete a set of courses that clearly defines and provides the basis for professional competence in an area of specialization and for long-term professional growth. The burden and responsibility fall on you, but the faculty is ready and willing to help.

Satisfactory completion of the MCRP degree requires you to pass a minimum of 51 credit hours, including core courses, required courses in one area of specialization, and a Master's Project. A minimum of 39 semester credit hours must be taken inside the department. Although the department has no internship requirement, we strongly recommend that students get professional work experience in the summer following the first year in the program.

### 2. ADVISING

Faculty will conduct group advising sessions for students interested in each area of specialization. Take advantage of these sessions to formulate your program of study. You will also be assigned a faculty advisor on the basis of your initially chosen area of specialization. Your advisor must approve all your courses. You may change advisors if you decide to change area of specialization; *see the Student Services Manager*.

You should structure your program to fulfill all core requirements and take the necessary foundation courses in your area of specialization during your first year. You should use the first semester to meet the quantitative analysis, economics, and urban spatial structure requirements, and to take either planning theory or a course in your intended specialization.

In addition to beginning your area of specialization during your first year, you should use elective courses to explore other areas of planning. As discussed below, sufficient latitude exists in the program to develop a second area of specialization. In order to qualify for the courses you want in other areas and to get the most from them, however, you should take them in proper sequence. Therefore you need to plan ahead to be sure you have taken prerequisite and basic courses. Our objective is to help you customize your program of study to meet the interests and career aspirations you have.

### 3. REQUIREMENTS

#### A. Core Requirements (for all students)

These courses must be taken during the first year in residence. Students who have taken courses equivalent to core courses may request an exemption. The course instructor recommends whether an exemption should be granted. Exams are also used to determine exemptions from planning methods and economic theory.

1. Planning Theory (3 credits). PLAN 704 satisfies this requirement. The course assumes no previous familiarity with planning literature. It is an introduction to planning theory, practice and history. You take this course in the Fall or Spring of your first year.

2. Urban Spatial Structure (3 credits). This is satisfied by completing PLAN 714, Urban Spatial Structure in the fall of the first year.

3. Economic Theory (3 credits). This is satisfied by completing PLAN 710, Microeconomics for Planning, in the fall of the first year. Students can take a test offered at the beginning of the fall semester if they believe they satisfy this requirement through prior work.

4. Planning Methods (3 credits). Students are required to take PLAN 720 in their first fall semester. PLAN 721 follows up on PLAN 720 to provide additional quantitative skills. Students specializing in the areas of economic development and transportation are required to take PLAN 721, which is a variable credit course, for at least 1.5 credits. Additional coursework in planning methods and techniques is offered in each specialization.

5. Problem-Solving Workshop (3 credits). Application workshops enable students to hone skills attained in other coursework and to generate useful analyses, plans and recommendations to public and non-profit clients, thereby providing community engagement and valuable service to the state. The workshop requirement is fulfilled in the second year by taking the section of Planning 823 that is most closely related to the student's areas of interest. A student may, with the instructor's approval and adviser's concurrence, take an additional workshop course as an elective.

#### B. Requirements in the Areas of Specialization

The department offers specializations that represent coherent fields of planning practice. Each specialization addresses theory, methods, strategies, plans and policies relevant to professional practice. In addition, planning law, the application workshop and the Master's Project are usually related to the area of specialization. Electives are available to broaden knowledge or deepen knowledge in a specialization.

Each specialization consists of 15 credit hours (usually five courses for three credits each). When a law course meets a specialization requirement, it counts as a PLAN course regardless of the department in which it is taken.

A minor in Public Policy is also available through the Public Policy Department (see Professor Andrews) as are certificate programs in International Development and Social Change (see Professor Tewari) and Geographic Information Sciences (see Professor Song).

The courses required in each area of specialization are listed below. Highly recommended electives are also noted. Please refer to the DCRP website for course descriptions.

C. Master’s Project

Students are required to complete a Master’s Project, which carries three credit hours. See section 7 for further information.

D. Summary of MCRP Requirements

Requirement	Total Credits	# of Credits That Must Be in DCRP	# of Credits That May Be Outside of DCRP
Planning Theory	3	3	0
Urban Spatial Structure	3	3	0
Economic Theory	3	3	0
Planning Methods	3	3	0
Problem-solving Workshop	3	3	0
Area of Specialization	15	12-15	0-3
Elective/Supporting Courses	18	6-9	9-12
Masters Project	3	3	0

4. AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

The department offers five specializations associated with professional planning practice in economic development, housing and community development, land use and environmental planning, placemaking and real estate development, and transportation planning. Sustainable development is the overarching concept for all specializations. Each emphasizes equity, environmental quality, economic viability, and social participation and grapples with the interconnections among these dimensions of sustainability.

- **Economic Development** focuses on planning for functional and sustainable regional economies and issues of income and jobs for central city areas.
- **Housing, & Community Development** is concerned with the supply of affordable housing, the revitalization of urban neighborhoods, project development, and central city redevelopment.
- **Land Use & Environmental Planning** addresses growth management at the urban and regional scales, environmental stewardship, and policy analysis with emphasis on water resources.
- **Placemaking and Real Estate Development** focuses on planning, design, preservation, and redevelopment of the city as a physical entity.
- **Transportation Planning** provides concepts and tools relevant to transportation policy and planning and in-depth knowledge of the reciprocal relationship between transportation decisions and land development.

The course listings that follow do not include the workshop course or the four core planning courses. In addition to suggested electives for their area of specialization, students can take, as electives, courses that are required in other areas of specialization.

### **Economic Development**

PLAN 770	Economic Development Policy
PLAN 771	Development Planning Techniques
PLAN 773	Urban & Regional Development Seminar
PLAN 774	Planning for Jobs
PLAN 721*	Advanced Planning Methods
Select at least one of the following courses:	
PLAN 776	Development Finance
PLAN 785	Public Investment Theory
PUBA 730	Government & Non-Profit Accounting (2.0 credits)
PUBA 731	Government Budgeting & Finance
PUBA 765	Capital Budgeting & Finance (1.5 credits)

*\*PLAN 721 is required for at least 1.5 credits*

### **Housing & Community Development**

1) Housing & Community Development	
PLAN 760	Real Estate Investment and Affordable Housing
PLAN 761	Housing & Public Policy
PLAN 763	Urban Neighborhood Revitalization
LAW 255	Housing and Community Development Law
Select one of the following courses:	
PLAN 776	Development Finance
PLAN 764	Techniques In Neighborhood Revitalization
PLAN 762	Central City Revitalization
PLAN 799 (64)	Diversity & Inequality in Cities

### **Land Use & Environmental Planning**

PLAN 740	Land Use & Environmental Policy
PLAN 741	Land Use & Environment Planning
PLAN 744	Development & Environmental Management
Select one of the following courses:	
PLAN 745	Development Impact Assessment
PLAN 752	Principles of Site Planning & Urban Design
PLAN 641	Ecology & Land Use Planning
Select one of the following courses:	
PLAN 724	Law for Planners
LAW 290	Land Use Controls
Environmental Planning Option	
PLAN 585	American Environmental Policy
PLAN 785	Public Investment Theory
LAW	Environmental law course approved by advisor
Select two of the following courses:	
PLAN 781	Water Resources Planning
PLAN 786	Environmental Quality Management
PLAN 685	Water & Sanitation Planning in Developing Countries
PLAN 641	Ecology & Land Use Planning

### **Placemaking and Real Estate Development**

PLAN 651	Urban Form& the Design of Cities
PLAN 752	Principles of Site Planning & Urban Design
PLAN 760	Real Estate Investment and Affordable Housing
PLAN 765	Real Estate Development
Design Orientation (one of the following)	
PLAN 741	Land Use and Environmental Planning
PLAN 757	Planning for Historic Preservation
Development Orientation	
MBA 852	Real Estate Process

### **Transportation Planning**

PLAN 636	Urban Transportation Planning
PLAN 738	Transportation Policy & Planning
PLAN 721*	Advanced Planning Methods
Select two from the following courses:	
PLAN 739*	Transportation Planning Models
PLAN 637	Public Transportation
PLAN 638	Pedestrian & Bicycle Seminar
Select one of the following courses:	
PLAN 741	Land Use & Environmental Planning
PLAN 745	Development Impact Assessment
Alternative course in transportation at NCSU or Duke approved by advisor	

*\*PLAN 721 is required for at least 1.5 credits; PLAN 739 is a 1.5 credit hour course*

## **5. SECOND AREA OF SPECIALIZATION AND ELECTIVES**

Completing core courses and one area of specialization will account for 30 credit hours leaving 18 credit hours plus the Master's Project to graduate. Students can therefore pursue a second area of specialization which requires up to 15 additional credit hours. Alternatively, students can gain competence in another aspect of professional practice or in a discipline (economics, sociology, etc.), another professional program represented on campus (business, public or health administration, environmental sciences and engineering, etc.), or develop analytical skills and general competence for professional practice through a grouping of courses selected from different areas of specialization or elective courses. This flexibility is offered to enable students to customize their program and maximize the benefits of their tenure at DCRP.

## **6. INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Under the course PLAN 896 (up to 3 credits) the department offers independent study opportunities to students after their first semester in residence. Students must apply to an instructor for independent study. An independent study approval form from the Student Services Manager is used to secure formal permission from the instructor. It is generally expected that independent study will involve a research project or extensive literature search and will not duplicate material covered in courses in this department or elsewhere on campus. To obtain the instructor's permission, students are asked to outline the contents of the proposed study, and illustrative readings or methods to be employed, and the final product to be produced.

The approval of the Director of the Master's Program is also required for an independent study. A maximum of one independent study course is permitted in any one semester following the first semester in residence. Students with an outstanding incomplete grade may not apply for independent study. See "Policy on Incompletes" below.

## 7. MASTER'S PROJECT

Students must submit a final project of professional quality on a topic in their area of specialization. This Master's project serves to demonstrate the student's capabilities in his/her area and his/her readiness for professional practice.

The Master's project is original work, involving a substantial degree of independent research and/or analysis. The product is expected to have considerably more substance than the typical term paper. The project may expand on a paper or other work done in a course or on a research assistantship, or be related to an internship job, or be an original project. Part of the Master's project work may be done as part of an independent study course taken in the student's third semester, generally the fall semester of the second year.

In format, the Master's project may be a research paper, a critical essay, an extensive case study, or a development and evaluation of a program, project, or plan. The requirement is ordinarily met by a word-processed paper with text supported by tables, charts, and references, and supplemented by a bibliography. The requirement can also be met by an original piece of work in some other form, such as a plan, an audiovisual presentation, or a computer program.

In the majority of cases, the student submits an individually-prepared Master's project. In exceptional cases, students may request permission to submit a jointly-prepared Master's project. The faculty is authorized to approve requests for joint preparation and to set such special standards as may be required for such projects.

The procedure and timetable for completion of the Master's project is:

- By April of their first year, students should meet with their academic advisor to review possible MP topics, the MP requirements, and discuss ways to complete the MP requirements in a timely manner.
- By September at the latest, second-year students should discuss Master's project ideas and requirements with faculty and make a preliminary selection of a topic. If the student wishes to devote a Fall semester independent study course to the masters project, he/she should discuss the topic with the likely advisor/instructor during the previous spring semester or before the Fall registration in August. The department may offer a research course for MCRP students (1.5 credits) in the fall to help them formulate their MP.
- By October 1, at the latest, the student should submit to the Student Services Manager the topic, research question or purpose, proposed method, preliminary bibliography, and an outline of the proposed project for review and approval of the specialization faculty. (See Attachment A for the appropriate form). The faculty members in the student's specialization are responsible for reviewing the student proposals in their area. The faculty group will approve the topic, method and the outline, usually with modifications, and assign a masters project advisor (*see attachment A*). The MP advisor will approve a draft and receive the completed project. In addition, the student may select and obtain the consent of a second faculty member to serve as a reader who would review both the draft and the completed product. The Master's project advisor (and possibly a reader) will signify approval of the paper by signing the title page, which should have the format shown in attachment B.

- By the end of October, specialization faculty will review the proposals and respond to the student. The student should immediately discuss the project with the assigned Masters project advisor and develop a timetable for completing the Masters project.
- By March, the student must submit a complete draft to the Masters project advisor (and to the faculty reader, if applicable) for review.
- One copy of the final Masters project should be submitted in PDF format. They should submit a copy of their title page, approved and signed by the Masters project (and second faculty reader, if applicable) to the Student Services Manager. An electronic copy of the MP will remain on file in the department. The deadline date changes each year. Check with the Student Services Manager and/or watch for a posted notice. It is usually in mid April.

Students who do not meet the deadline will not graduate at the Spring commencement. They are advised that it will be difficult to receive advice and guidance from their faculty advisor over the summer months, when classes are not in session in the department. Also, the student must be registered during the semester in which the MP is submitted. If this is after the student's fourth semester ends, payment of additional tuition is required.

Masters projects are maintained on file by the department as a permanent record of the student's work. They may be used by the faculty after students graduate as evidence of their professional interests, analytical capacities, and writing abilities for letters of recommendation.

Students will be asked their permission to allow their work to be part of the University Library online Institutional Repository. The library has a royalty-free license to reproduce, distribute, publish and publicly display students Master's Paper in a searchable, online database available to students, faculty, and other researchers. The student maintains copyright to their work. This service is provided free of charge to students.

## **8. MAINTAINING ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

A graduate student becomes academically ineligible to continue in the Graduate School if he/she receives any grade of F or receives 9 or more credit hours of L. When special circumstances warrant, students becoming academically ineligible may be reinstated upon petition through the Department Chairman. Petition must be initiated in the form of a letter by the student. The student is expected to submit a statement to support his/her petition, explaining the circumstances of the poor grade or grades, why he/she should be reinstated, and a plan for completing degree requirements, which includes making up courses if necessary. The petition will be forwarded to the Graduate School with a statement of endorsement or non-endorsement from the Chairman, who receives a recommendation from the ad hoc faculty Committee on Student Reinstatement. The student may or may not be asked to meet with the committee. The committee shall request a recommendation from the student's faculty advisor, and shall examine the student's departmental records. The committee shall meet as soon as practical after receiving a student's petition for reinstatement, but, because petitions usually occur during vacation periods between semesters or after spring graduation when faculty are not regularly available, the committee will take the time it needs to make its recommendations.

If reinstatement is allowed, it often has stipulations, such as taking one or more specific courses, taking off one or two semesters, taking a summer school course, taking a reduced load, seeking academic or other counseling, or receiving no service-related financial aid, etc.

After reinstatement, the student receiving an additional grade below P will again become ineligible.

## 9. TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Students who have completed graduate courses in other schools may request transfer of credit towards the MCRP under the following conditions:

- The courses were graduate-level and taken for credit;
- The courses were not credited toward any other degree;
- A grade of "B" or better was obtained; and

They are reviewed and approved by the student's advisor as appropriate for credit towards the MCRP, and approved by the Director of the Master's Program.

The procedure for review and approval is: the student writes a request to his/her advisor, specifying the name and number of the courses taken, date taken and the grade received, their equivalents at UNC, and their relevance to the student's MCRP program. A syllabus and examples of the work in the course are also desirable. An official transcript is also required by the Graduate School. Advisors are authorized to recommend transfer credit under the following general criteria: For planning courses being considered for transfer, the advisors will evaluate the courses taken in comparison to comparable DCRP courses, and where equivalent may recommend transfer credit provided that the courses fit logically into the student's UNC program. For core courses, however, the student must also obtain the approval of the instructor of the equivalent DCRP core course. Non-planning courses will be evaluated as electives in the student's program here and will be judged on their merit and their contribution to the student's total program. In addition, all rules of the Graduate School on eligibility for transfer apply to requests made in the department.

A maximum of 9 semester hours may be transferred from other institutions. A minimum of three semesters in residence is required for the MCRP.

Transfer credit is granted in a memo to the Graduate School from the Director of the Master's Program recommending the transfer. At the time of graduation, the student lists all transfer credits on an application for a degree form for the Graduate School.

## 10. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

All forms required for the department and the Graduate School are available from the Student Services Manager in New East 111. Your department records are kept there. Advice and assistance with other program matters is also available from the Student Services Manager.

All general rules of the Graduate School, including the University Honor Code, apply to students in the department. Consult the Graduate School Handbook and the Graduate School Guide when in doubt.

## 11. POLICY ON INCOMPLETES

An Incomplete grade results from the course instructor's determination that exceptional circumstances warrant extending the time for completion of course work, but in no case will this extension exceed one year. If the time allowed is to be less than one year, this information should be transmitted in writing to the student, with a copy to the Graduate School. If within twelve months a grade change request has not been submitted by the instructor, the Incomplete automatically becomes an F. (Graduate School Handbook, 2010, p. 9)

The department does not regard requests for grades of Incomplete on the grounds of personal convenience or failure to complete assigned work as constituting exceptional circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to complete coursework during the semester in which the course is taken.

Students with one or more Incomplete grades will not be permitted to register for an independent study course. The Student Services Manager will check the student's grade record prior to forwarding a request for independent study to the Director of the Masters' Program.

Students with two or more Incomplete grades from previous courses will not be considered in good standing within the department until they have successfully completed these courses and removed the Incomplete grades. This standing will affect recommendations for assistantships and other departmental assignments.

## 12. **POLICY ON DUAL USE OF STUDENT PAPERS**

It shall be DCRP policy that a student may not submit the same paper, or a slightly modified version of it, in more than one class, unless:

- The instructor(s) is/are consulted in advance and agree (in writing) that the paper may be used in more than one course.
- The paper's cover sheet carries a statement indicating the courses to which it is being or has been submitted.

The usual DCRP expectation for a dual course paper or for a paper used sequentially in more than one course is that it must represent substantially greater effort than a paper prepared for a single course.

Violation of this procedure shall be considered a violation of the Student Honor Code.

## 13. **DEPARTMENTAL FEEDBACK SESSIONS**

At the end of the academic year (April or early May) the Department assesses its overall performance with graduating MCRP students in two ways. First, each specialization holds a meeting to constructively discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the specialization, core courses, and the Department. Faculty members from each specialization and second-year students are expected to attend. Second, an anonymous survey is distributed among second-year students. The survey is used to develop quantitative measures of performance.

COVER PAGE FOR MP PROPOSAL  
(Due to Student Services Manager by October 1)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic or Tentative Title: \_\_\_\_\_

To help identify the appropriate faculty members to review your proposal, please check the general concentration area of your project:

- Economic Development  Housing & Community Development  Land Use/Environmental Planning
- Placemaking and Real Estate Development  Transportation Planning

Requested Advisor (if you have a preference): \_\_\_\_\_

Checklist of sections to include in the attached proposal:

- 1. Definition and description of the research question or purpose  YES  NO
- 2. Detailed literature review  YES  NO
- 3. Proposed methodology (e.g., research design, data collection methods)  YES  NO
- 4. Expected results from the study and value to the field of planning  YES  NO
- 5. Preliminary reference list  YES  NO
- 6. Timetable for completion  YES  NO
- 7. An outline of the project to aid review by specialization faculty  YES  NO

If you answered "no" to any of the above, please explain.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**For Office Use Only:**

Specialization Faculty Action and Comment (see back for additional comment):

- Approved
- Approved conditionally
- Not approved

Assigned Master's Project Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (member of specialization faculty): \_\_\_\_\_

(MASTERS PROJECT TITLE)

by

(YOUR FULL NAME)

A Masters Project submitted to the faculty  
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of City and Regional Planning  
in the Department of City and Regional Planning.

Chapel Hill

(YEAR OF DEGREE)

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
READER (optional)

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
ADVISOR SIGNATURE

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Author name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of DCRP Master's Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Master's Paper Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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