

DEPARTMENT OF CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING  
UNC - CH

# MCRP GUIDE



ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-2019

## Table of Contents

OBJECTIVES .....	2
ADVISING .....	2
REQUIREMENTS .....	2
Core Requirements (for all students) .....	3
Exemptions from Core Courses .....	3
Requirements in the Areas of Specialization .....	4
INTER-INSTITUTIONAL ENROLLMENT .....	5
TRACKS AND CERTIFICATES .....	6
Design track .....	6
Real Estate Development Track .....	6
Natural Hazards Resilience Track and Certificate .....	7
Geographic Information Science Certificate .....	7
International Development Certificate .....	7
DUAL DEGREES .....	7
INDEPENDENT STUDY .....	8
INTERNSHIP .....	8
MASTER'S PROJECT .....	8
MAINTAINING ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY .....	9
POLICY ON INCOMPLETES .....	9
TRANSFER OF CREDIT .....	10
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION .....	10
POLICY ON DUAL USE OF STUDENT PAPERS .....	11
DEPARTMENTAL FEEDBACK SESSIONS .....	11
APPENDIX .....	12
Appendix A- Course Substitution Request .....	12
Appendix B- PLAN 710 Exemption Request .....	13
Appendix C- PLAN 720 Exemption Request .....	14

## 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. To that end, the Department of City and Regional Planning at UNC-CH offers a program of study and practice that combines theory and methods with substantive knowledge about planning, spatial development and public policy.

The program will provide students with

- (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, including cross-cutting tracks, 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.

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. In addition, all University rules including those of the graduate school apply.

Any deviation from the requirements laid out in this guide require approval by the student's faculty advisor and the MCRP program director. You must submit documentation of all approved substitutions to the Student Services Manager as soon as all approvals are finalized.

## ADVISING

Students should attend group-advising sessions by specialization each semester. Group advising sessions take place during orientation and at least one week before registration opens for the following academic term. The Department will also assign a faculty advisor to each student. Faculty advisors will be the primary point of contact for students in negotiating the program and it is the student's responsibility to schedule individual advising meetings with their assigned faculty advisor. Any deviation from the required coursework requires approval by the student's faculty advisor and the MCRP program director. Students must submit documentation of approved deviations or course substitutions ([appendix A](#)) to the Student Services Manager as soon as all approvals are finalized.

## REQUIREMENTS

To satisfy the basic requirements of the MCRP program you must complete:

- At least 51 graduate credits (at the 400 level and up within the College of Arts and Sciences)
- At least 36 credits of the 51 graduate credits must be in Planning for MCRP-only students and 33 credit hours in Planning for dual degree students
- All the planning core courses
- At least one 3 credit Law class
- At least 12 credit hours within one of the planning specializations
- A Master's Project
- A Planning Workshop in your second year

Students should structure their coursework to fulfill all the core requirements and foundational specialization courses during their first year in the program.

### Core Requirements (for all students)

Students generally complete the core coursework during their first year in residence.

1. *PLAN 704 Planning Theory (3 credits)*. Students cannot be exempted from this course.
2. *PLAN 714 Urban Spatial Structure (3 credits)*. Students must take this course during their first semester in the program. Students cannot be exempted from this course.
3. *PLAN 710 Microeconomics for Planning and Public Policy Analysis (3 credits)*. Students may be exempted from this course by demonstrating subject matter expertise.
4. *PLAN 720 Planning Methods (3 credits)*. Students may be exempted from this course by demonstrating subject matter expertise.
5. *Law course (3 credits)*. All students are required to take a law course. PLAN 724 (Law for Planners) can be used to satisfy this requirement by students in any specialization. Students may take any other Law course to satisfy this requirement with approval from their advisor and the director of their specialization.
6. *PLAN 823 Planning Workshop (3 credits)*. Students fulfill this requirement in their second year by taking the section of PLAN 823 that is closest to the student's areas of interest. A student may with the instructor's approval and adviser's concurrence, take a second workshop course as an elective. Students cannot be exempted from this course.
7. *PLAN 992 Master's Project (3 credits)*. Students fulfill this requirement in their second year by completing a project of professional quality on a planning topic. Students work with a faculty advisor and will enroll in the section of PLAN 992 that corresponds to their advisor.

### Exemptions from Core Courses

Students may place out of Planning Methods (PLAN 720) and Microeconomics for Planning and Public Policy Analysis (PLAN 710). To place out of either of these courses, students must provide proof of subject matter expertise (see below) *and* complete the University's required Ethics training.

If the exemption is approved, students must take another 3-credit planning course to earn the necessary credits for program completion.

**Students must submit documentation of approved exemptions ([appendix B](#) and [appendix C](#)) to the Student Services Manager as soon as all approvals are finalized.**

### Subject matter expertise

Students may prove their subject matter expertise by:

- Passing an exam offered by the department on the Friday immediately before the beginning of the fall semester.
- Completing an equivalent graduate course at UNC within the past three years provided the final grade was P or better. Students will be required to provide an unofficial transcript and the course syllabus.
- Completing an equivalent graduate course outside of UNC within the past three years provided the final grade was B or better. Students will be required to provide an unofficial transcript and the course syllabus.

### Ethics training

Students will need to provide a certificate of completion for the basic module for Group 2: Social and Behavioral Research. Students can access the module, training and testing platform through [UNC's Research and Training website](#).

### Requirements in the Areas of Specialization

The department offers four specializations that represent coherent fields of planning practice. These specializations are:

- *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.
- *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.

Each specialization addresses theory, methods, strategies, plans and policies relevant to professional practice. In addition, the law course, the workshop and the Master's Project are usually related to the area of specialization. Each specialization consists of 12 credit hours (usually four courses of three credits each).

The courses required for each specialization, as well as highly recommended electives where appropriate, are listed below.

Specialization requirements may change year to year and students must complete the specialization requirements that were in place in the semester they began coursework at DCRP.

Please refer to the [DCRP website](#) for course descriptions.

Economic Development	
PLAN 770	Economic Development Policy
PLAN 771	Development Planning Techniques
PLAN 773	Urban & Regional Development Seminar
Select <b>at least one</b> of the following courses:	
PLAN 760	Real Estate Investment & Affordable Housing
PLAN 776	Development Finance
PLAN 785	Public Investment Theory
Alternative finance course (3 credits) approved by advisor	

Housing & Community Development	
PLAN 769	Housing and Community Development Planning Policy
PLAN 760	Real Estate Investment and Affordable Housing
PLAN 761	Housing & Public Policy
PLAN 763	Urban Neighborhood Revitalization

<b>Land Use &amp; Environmental Planning</b>	
PLAN 741	Land Use & Environment Planning
PLAN 744	Development & Environmental Management
PLAN 752	Project & Site Planning
Select <b>one</b> of the following courses:	
PLAN 745	Development Impact Assessment
PLAN 547	Energy, Transportation, and Land Use
PLAN 641	Watershed Planning
Plan 722 (1.5 credits) is strongly recommended	

<b>Transportation Planning</b>	
PLAN 636	Urban Transportation Planning
PLAN 738	Transportation Policy & Planning
Select <b>one</b> from the following courses:	
PLAN 739	Transportation Planning Models
PLAN 637	Public Transportation
PLAN 638	Pedestrian & Bicycle Seminar
Select <b>one</b> of the following courses:	
PLAN 741	Land Use & Environmental Planning
PLAN 745	Development Impact Assessment
Alternative course approved by advisor	

In exceptional cases, a student's faculty advisor in concurrence with the specialization director and MCRP director may grant exemptions or deviations from the courses listed below. Students are responsible for documenting deviation approvals ([appendix A](#)) with the Student Services Manager as soon as the approval is granted.

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

Upon completion of the 36 required planning credits, students will have 15 credits of elective courses left to complete the 51-credit minimum requirement. Students may utilize their available elective credit hours to complete a second area of specialization or take graduate courses in any other discipline. This flexibility enables students to customize their program and maximize the benefits of their tenure at DCRP.

## INTER-INSTITUTIONAL ENROLLMENT

Students may register for up to two courses per semester at NCSU or Duke University. Students who want to enroll in courses at NCSU or Duke University must first contact the faculty teaching the course at the external institution and obtain their permission to register. The student must submit the written permission to register along with a completed [inter-institutional approval form](#) to the Student Services Manager no later than the first week of the semester.

Assuming that the inter-institutional course is a graduate-level course, the course will count toward the 51 minimum graduate credit requirement, but it will not count toward the minimum planning credit requirement.

## TRACKS AND CERTIFICATES

In addition to the core curriculum and the four departmental specializations, the department offers course tracks and certificates.

**Tracks** are packages of courses that students take as electives along with the specializations. Tracks do not require additional credit hours to complete, but instead are elective courses that are also used to meet general program requirements. There is no formal application process to take the courses within a track and tracks are not noted in official transcripts. Tracks are intended to guide students through a set of courses that provide more specialized area expertise.

**Certificates** have a formal application process and require that students complete additional credit hours. Certificates, unlike tracks, are noted on a student's transcript upon completion.

The department offers Real Estate Development and Design as tracks. The department also hosts the Natural Hazards Resilience Certificate, which students may also choose to take as a track instead. Geographic Information Systems and International Development are offered as certificates only.

Please visit the [tracks and certificates section of the DCRP](#) website for additional information on the planning tracks available and information for faculty contacts.

### Design track

The design track emphasizes site-level physical planning that enables students to become effective placemakers by promoting sustainable development that is aesthetically enriching.

The course sequence includes

PLAN 651	Urban Form and the Design of Cities
PLAN 752	Project and Site Planning
Select <b>at least one</b> of the following courses:	
PLAN 757	Planning for Historic Preservation
PLAN 745	Development Impact Assessment

### Real Estate Development Track

The real estate track focuses on the planning, development, and redevelopment of the city as a physical entity. The tracks prepares students to become conversant in the development process, contributing to the creation of urban environments that are healthful, equitable, and sustainable.

The course sequence includes:

PLAN 765	Real Estate Development
PLAN 760	Real Estate Development and Affordable Housing
Select <b>at least one</b> of the following courses:	
PLAN 771	Development Planning Techniques
PLAN 752	Project and Site Planning
PLAN 776	Development Finance
MBA 852	The Real Estate Process

### Natural Hazards Resilience Track and Certificate

The natural hazards resilience **track** helps train researchers and practitioners who can help the public, nonprofit and private sectors become more resilient in the face of natural hazards and disasters and adapt to the effects of a changing climate.

The course sequence includes:

PLAN 754	Natural Hazards Resilience Speaker Series (1 credit)
PLAN 755	Planning for Natural Hazards and Climate Change Adaptation
PLAN 756	Survey of Natural Hazards and Disasters
Elective course approved by advisor (3 credits)	

Students who would like to receive an official Natural Hazards **Certificate** may do so by applying for admission into the certificate program and completing six additional graduate-level credits. Students wishing to complete the Certificate should carefully review the [application materials](#) and the [Graduate School Handbook section on certificate programs](#).

### Geographic Information Science Certificate

The GIS certificate coursework trains students in geographic information systems, remote sensing, quantitative methods, spatial analysis, global positioning systems, and data visualization.

This is a UNC certificate program requiring an additional admissions application and it is administered by the Geography Department. Students interested in pursuing the GIS certificate should carefully review the [application materials](#) and the [Graduate School Handbook section on certificate programs](#).

### International Development Certificate

This certificate allows students to step outside of the U.S. perspective when focusing on development; research and coursework; foster interdisciplinary approaches to development; and engage in peer learning.

This is a UNC certificate program requiring an additional admissions application and it is administered by the Center for Global Initiatives. Students interested in pursuing the International Development Certificate should carefully review the [application materials](#) and the [Graduate School Handbook section on certificate programs](#).

## DUAL DEGREES

DCRP offers a number of dual degrees in coordination with the Gillings School of Global Public Health, the Law School (JD), the Kenan Flagler Business School (MBA), the School of Government (MPA), and with the North Carolina State University School of Design (Landscape Architecture). Those interested need to apply and secure admission both programs independently, although this does not have to be simultaneous (a student can apply to both programs at the same time, or to one program and the following year to the other).

In contrast to MCRP-only students, planning students pursuing an approved dual degree must complete 33 credit hours in Planning rather than 36. The remaining 15 credit hours can come from the student's other Master's program. Any 15 credit hours taken in that other program can be counted as planning electives. Some programs have capstone paper requirements similar to the Master's Project. Students may be able to combine these research or practice-oriented projects to help them synthesize knowledge from both fields. When degree requirements for each program are fulfilled, students receive the MCRP degree and the second degree.



## INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students may enroll in a maximum of three credit hours of independent study in any one semester following the first semester in residence. Students with an outstanding incomplete grade may not apply for independent study.

Students who wish to take an independent study course must first identify a faculty member willing to sponsor the course and work closely with the student throughout the semester. To obtain the instructor's final approval for an independent study, students should prepare an outline of the contents of the proposed study, an appropriate reading list or methods to be employed, and the final product to be evaluated by the sponsoring faculty.

The student must submit [a proposal](#) that meets all [university guidelines governing independent studies](#) to the Student Services Manager no later than the first week of classes of the term in which the student wishes to enroll in the independent study course.

## INTERNSHIP

The department does not require an internship to graduate, but most students complete an internship in the summer between their first and second years in the program. Students who wish to obtain course credit for their internships may register for PLAN 799.

PLAN 799 is a one-credit course that students can take up to three times (i.e. summer, fall and spring). Students do not need to register for the course if they do not wish to receive academic credit. International students, however, must register for PLAN 799 to receive approval of Curricular Practical Training.

## MASTER'S PROJECT

Students must submit a final project of professional quality that demonstrates the student's capabilities in his/her area and his/her readiness for professional practice.

Students register in three credits of PLAN 992 in their second year in the program to complete the Master's Project.

The project may expand on a paper or other work done in a course or on a research assistantship or may be related to an internship, job, or be an original project. Students may complete part of the work of the Master's Project as part of an independent study course taken in the student's third semester, generally the fall semester of the second year.

While most Master's Projects take the form of a paper, other formats, such as a plan, audiovisual presentation or computer program are also acceptable formats.

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 may approve requests for joint preparation and to set such special standards as may be required for such projects.

## MAINTAINING ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Pursuant of the [graduate school and registrar guidelines](#), the Department of City and Regional Planning uses the following grade definitions:

H	High Pass
P	Pass
L	Low Pass
F	Fail
IN	Incomplete
AB	Absent from Final Examination

Incompletes (INs) are temporary grades which automatically convert to an F\* unless the grade is replaced with a permanent grade by the last day of classes for the same term one year later.

In accordance with [Graduate School policy](#), graduate student becomes academically ineligible to continue in the Graduate School if he/she receives any grade of F (or F\*) or receives nine or more credit hours of L.

When special circumstances warrant, students who have become ineligible may submit a reinstatement petition. The student must initiate a reinstatement petition in the form of a letter to the Chair. The student will be required 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 Chair, 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. Furthermore, a minimum of three semesters in residence is required for the MCRP. Additionally, all rules (e.g honor code and campus code) of the Graduate School on maintaining academic eligibility apply.

## 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. It is the responsibility of the student to complete the work on a timeline established with the primary instructor of the course. If faculty have not requested a grade change within a year, the IN grade will automatically turn into a grade of F.

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. Students with one or more IN grades will not be permitted to register for an independent study course.

Students with two or more IN 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.

## 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 (equivalent) 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. The student must also submit the course syllabus and an official transcript. The student’s faculty advisor will review the information and if appropriate 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.
- 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 10 semester hours may be transferred from other institutions.

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.

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The department’s student services staff can provide guidance and assistance with program-related matters. All forms required for the department and the Graduate School are available from the Graduate School website and the department’s student services staff.

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.

## 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.

## DEPARTMENTAL FEEDBACK SESSIONS

At the end of the academic year (late 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, yet required, survey is distributed among second-year students prior to graduation. The survey is used to develop quantitative measures of performance.

## APPENDIX

### Appendix A- Course Substitution Request

<u>Student Last Name</u>	<u>Student First Name</u>	<u>PID</u>
<u>Specialization</u>		
<b>REQUIRED COURSE</b>		
<u>Course Number</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	
<b>SUBSTITUTE COURSE</b>		
<u>Course Number</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	
<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Semester and Year</u>	
<u>Grade</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>	
<b>REASON FOR REQUEST</b>		
<u>Student</u>		
<u>Date</u>		
I certify that the information above is true and accurate		

<u>Faculty Advisor or Specialization Director</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied

<u>MCRP Director</u>	<u>Date</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved
		<input type="checkbox"/> Denied

## Appendix B- PLAN 710 Exemption Request

There are **two** requirements to be considered for an exemption from PLAN 710.

You must provide proof of subject matter expertise and complete the University's Required Ethics Training. If the exemption is approved, students are responsible for taking an additional planning course to earn the necessary credits for program completion.

Student Name  PID

### Subject Matter Expertise

- ☐ I have passed the exemption exam offered by DCRP

Date of exam:

- ☐ I have completed an equivalent graduate course at UNC within the past three years and received a grade of H or P

You must attach unofficial transcript showing the grade

Course Number/ Name	<input type="text"/>		
Grade	<input type="text"/>	Semester/ Year	<input type="text"/>

- ☐ I have completed an equivalent graduate course elsewhere within the past two years and received a grade of B or better

You must attach the syllabus

Course Number/ Name	<input type="text"/>	Grade	<input type="text"/>
Semester/ Year	<input type="text"/>	Institution	<input type="text"/>

### Required Ethics Training

- ☐ I have completed the University's Human Subjects training course.

You must attach a certificate of completion of the basic module for Group 2: Social& Behavioral Research

<http://research.unc.edu/offices/human-research-ethics/getting-started/training/>

Click "CITI Online Course" and follow instructions

Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Faculty Instructor of PLAN 710

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Denied

## Appendix C- PLAN 720 Exemption Request

There are **two** requirements to be considered for an exemption from PLAN 720.

You must provide proof of subject matter expertise and complete the University's Required Ethics Training. If the exemption is approved, students are responsible for taking an additional planning course to earn the necessary credits for program completion.

Student Name  PID

### Subject Matter Expertise

- ☐ I have passed the exemption exam offered by DCRP

Date of exam:

- ☐ I have completed an equivalent graduate course at UNC within the past three years and received a grade of H or P

You must attach unofficial transcript showing the grade

Course Number/ Name	<input type="text"/>		
Grade	<input type="text"/>	Semester/ Year	<input type="text"/>

- ☐ I have completed an equivalent graduate course elsewhere within the past two years and received a grade of B or better

You must attach the syllabus

Course Number/ Name	<input type="text"/>	Grade	<input type="text"/>
Semester/ Year	<input type="text"/>	Institution	<input type="text"/>

### Required Ethics Training

- ☐ I have completed the University's Human Subjects training course.

You must attach a certificate of completion of the basic module for Group 2: Social& Behavioral Research

<http://research.unc.edu/offices/human-research-ethics/getting-started/training/>

Click "CITI Online Course" and follow instructions

Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Faculty Instructor of PLAN 720

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Denied