

Department of City and Regional Planning
University of North Carolina

M.R.P. PROGRAM GUIDE AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
CLASS ENTERING IN FALL 2007

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KEEP THIS IN YOUR FILES FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

Revised June 2007

M.R.P. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR CLASS ENTERING IN AUGUST 2007

1. OBJECTIVES

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

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, there is sufficient latitude 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.

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 appropriate course instructor recommends whether the exemption should be granted.

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 can 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, Economics for Planners, 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. Students can take a test offered at the beginning of the fall semester if they believe they satisfy this requirement through prior work. PLAN 721 follows up on PLAN 720. It provides a better preparation in quantitative methods. Students specializing in the areas of economic development and transportation are required to take PLAN 721. Additional coursework in planning methods is offered in areas of 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, 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 five courses (15 credit hours). 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. Strongly suggested electives are also noted. Please refer to the DCRP website for detailed 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 MRP 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 community development, design and preservation, economic development, land use and environmental planning, and transportation planning. Sustainable development is the overarching concept for these specializations. Each emphasizes equity, environmental quality, economic viability, and social participation and grapples with the interconnections among these dimensions of sustainability.

Community & Regional Economic Development focuses on planning for functional and sustainable regional economies and issues of income and jobs for central city areas.

Housing, Real Estate & 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 management, and policy analysis with emphasis on water resources.

Emphasizing small-area planning, Design & Preservation of the Built Environment combines coursework in urban history, urban design, and historic preservation.

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 core courses in planning theory, planning methods, economics and urban spatial structure.

Community & Regional Economic Development

PLAN 770	Economic Development Policy
PLAN 771	Development Planning Techniques
PLAN 773	Regional Development Seminar
Select two from the following courses:	
PLAN 799(63)	Planning for Jobs
PLAN 526	Public Finance For Planning and Policy
PLAN 785	Public Investment Theory
ECON 440	Analysis of Public Finance

Housing, Real Estate & Community Development

1) Housing & Community Development	
PLAN 760	Real Estate Investment
PLAN 761	Housing and Public Policy
LAW 255	Housing and Community Development Law
PLAN 763	Urban Neighborhood Revitalization
PLAN 776 OR PLAN 762 Or PLAN 799(64)	Development Finance Central City Revitalization Diversity and Inequality in Cities
2) Real Estate Development	
PLAN 760	Real Estate & Affordable Housing
PLAN 752	Site Planning and Sustainable Design
PLAN 725	Development Dispute Resolution
PLAN 765	The Development Process
MBA 852	Real Estate Process
Recommended Electives:	
PLAN 745	Development Impact Assessment
PLAN 757	Planning for Historic Preservation
PLAN 761	Housing and Public Policy

Design & Preservation of the Built Environment

PLAN 550	Making the American Landscape
PLAN 752	Project and Site Planning
PLAN 651	Theories and Principles of Urban Design
PLAN 757	Planning for Historic Preservation
Select one of the following courses:	
PLAN 740 Or PLAN 741 Or PLAN 760	Land Use and Environmental Policy Land Use and Environmental Planning Real Estate Investment
Recommended Elective:	
PLAN 499(12)	Experiencing Historic American Architecture

Land Use & Environmental Planning

PLAN 740	Land Use and Environmental Policy
PLAN 741	Land Use and Environment Planning
PLAN 744	Development and Environmental Management
PLAN 752 OR PLAN 745 OR PLAN 641	Site Planning and Sustainable Design Development Impact Assessment Ecology and Land Use Planning
PLAN 724 or LAW 290	Planning Law
Environmental Planning Option	
PLAN 585	American Environmental Policy
PLAN 785	Public Investment Theory
PLAN 784	Natural Resource Law and Policy
Select two of the following courses:	
PLAN 641 PLAN 685 PLAN 686 ENVR 755 GEOG 441 Alternative environmental course at Duke's Nicholas School or with approval of advisor	Ecology and Land Use Planning Water & Sanitation Planning in Developing Countries Environmental Policy Instruments Design of Water Systems Watershed Systems

Transportation Planning

PLAN 636	Urban Transportation Planning
PLAN 738	Transportation Policy and Planning
Select two of the following three courses:	
PLAN 637	Public Transportation
PLAN 739	Transportation Planning Tools/Methods
PLAN 799(54)	Pedestrian and Bicycle Seminar
Select one of the following courses:	
PLAN 741	Land Use and Environmental Planning
PLAN 745	Development Impact Assessment
Alternative course in transportation at NCSU or elsewhere with approval of advisor	

5. SECOND AREA OF SPECIALIZATION AND ELECTIVES

In addition to suggested electives for their area of specialization, students can take, as electives, courses that are required in other areas of specialization. A student may also pursue a second area of specialization, a supporting area 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.

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, 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:

1. By April of their first year, students should meet with the MRP program director to review the MP requirements and discuss ways to complete MP-related work before the beginning of their second year.
2. By September or October 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 also offers a research course for MRP students (1.5 credits) each fall to help them formulate their MP.

3. By November 3, 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 focus area faculty. (See Attachment A for the appropriate form). The faculty members in the student's focus area 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.

4. By the end of November, focus area 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.

5. By March, the student must submit a complete draft to the Masters project advisor (and to the faculty reader, if applicable) for review.

6. 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 late 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 will be 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.

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 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 MRP 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 MRP, 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 MRP 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 MRP.

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, 1981, p. 19(b)
(emphasis added)

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:

- a) The instructor(s) is/are consulted in advance and agree (in writing) that the paper may be used in more than one course.
- b) 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) the Department assesses its overall performance in two ways. First, each specialization organizes a group discussion to constructively discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the specialization and the Department. Faculty members from each specialization will be present. Both first and second year students are expected to attend. Second, an anonymous survey will be distributed among first and second year students. The survey will be used to develop quantitative measures of performance.

ATTACHMENT A

COVER PAGE FOR MP PROPOSAL
(Due to Student Services Manager by November 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:

Housing/community development Economic development Transportation
Design and historic preservation Land Use/Environmental 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 | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 2. Detailed literature review | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 3. Proposed methodology (e.g., research design, data collection methods) | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 4. Expected results from the study and value to the field of planning | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 5. Preliminary reference list | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 6. Timetable for completion | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 7. An outline of the project to aid review by focus area faculty | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

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

For Office Use Only:

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

- Approved
- Approved conditionally
- Not approved

Assigned Master's Project Advisor _____

Signed (member of focus area faculty): _____

ATTACHMENT B

(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 Regional Planning
in the Department of City and Regional Planning.

Chapel Hill

(YEAR OF DEGREE)

Approved by:

READER (optional)

PRINT NAME

ADVISOR SIGNATURE