

Accelerated Master of Urban Planning

Only current KU undergraduate students in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (CLAS) are eligible to apply to the Accelerated Master of Urban Planning. If you are not a current undergraduate student at KU, please consider the Master of Urban Planning.

The Accelerated Master of Urban Planning combines a College of Liberal Arts & Sciences undergraduate degree in any major and the Master of Urban Planning. It is designed for students who have a passion for problem solving and helping communities engage with their futures and the futures of plants, animals, and the land. It allows well-qualified students to earn a bachelor's and a master's degree in five years, rather than the six years it would take to earn each degree separately. This program combines in-depth training in the major of the student's choice with an accredited professional master's degree in urban planning. Graduates are prepared for careers in the public, private and not-for profit sectors helping make communities better places.

Any CLAS undergraduate major is good preparation for an urban planning career because the profession is so wide-ranging in the skills required. Planners can be specialists (transportation, sustainable land use, or housing and development) or generalists working on how all these systems work together to create great places. Planners can be technical experts working with numbers or communicators building relationships or both. Get the undergraduate degree you have always wanted, then the career you probably did not know existed, but is right and meaningful for you and what you care about.

Admission to Graduate Studies

Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

Careful course selection and steady progression through the undergraduate major is necessary to ensure all requirements for both degrees are completed within the 5-year time frame. All prospective students should discuss their interest with the undergraduate advisor for the major of their choice and the Urban Planning Program director as soon as possible. A meeting with the Urban Planning Program director should take place no later than the student's junior year to discuss possible admission to the accelerated master's program.

Prospective students should plan to apply for the M.U.P. in the second semester of their junior year. The following requirements must be met by this time:

- On track to complete all requirements for a B.A., B.S., or B.G.S. degree in the CLAS degree of their choice from KU by the second semester of the senior year.

Students pursuing the accelerated master's degree are also strongly encouraged to take the following as preparatory courses* for the master's curriculum:

UBPL 200 Sustainability and Society – sophomore year

UBPL 300 Planning the Sustainable City – junior year

**In some cases, it may be possible for these courses to substitute for major electives. Consult with your undergraduate advisor to determine if this is an option for your major.*

When students are ready to apply, submit an application through the Graduate Admissions application portal (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/>). The following information should be gathered in advance and uploaded with the application:

- Statement of interest that succinctly summarizes the students' interests, education, their long-term career goals, and how the accelerated degree program will help them achieve those goals;
- A copy of the student's advising report;
- The names and email addresses of three persons qualified to comment on the applicant's academic abilities and probable success in graduate study. These individuals will be asked to provide a letter of recommendation. At least two should be faculty members who have had the student in class.

Upon review of the application for admission, the Urban Planning Program will notify the student of their eligibility to begin coursework in the program. Final acceptance to the Master of Urban Planning graduate program will be contingent upon the following:

- Successful completion of all requirements for the bachelor's degree;
- Grades of B or above in all urban planning graduate-level coursework

Any student who does not meet this minimum grade requirement may continue in the program but must repeat any graduate course for which they did not earn a B or above. Students should still aim to complete all requirements by the end of Year 5. Students may also elect to earn only the bachelor's degree and re-apply to the graduate program at a later time.

Curriculum

While completing the following degree requirements, graduate students are expected to understand and follow Office of Graduate Studies policies (<https://policy.ku.edu/office/Graduate-Studies/>) relevant to their student status and academic standing.

Prior to Conferral of the Bachelor's Degree

Students must be approved to begin coursework toward the master's before completing any 500 level or above coursework in Urban Planning that is to count toward the master's degree. Once approved, the student must complete the following 18 credit hours of Urban Planning courses while still an undergraduate student to complete the undergraduate and graduate degrees in five years:

Code	Title	Hours
Core Courses		
UBPL 705	Urban Economic Theory and Analysis	3
UBPL 736	Planning Law and Institutions	3
UBPL 741	Foundations of Compassionate Critical Thinking	3
UBPL 742	Applied Data and Spatial Analysis	3
UBPL 785	History and Theory of Planning	3
One topic area policy course¹		3
UBPL 710	Housing Policy and Planning (Housing & Development Topic Area)	
UBPL 720	Sustainable Land Use Policy and Planning (Sustainable Land Use Topic Area)	
UBPL 750	Transportation Policy and Planning (Transportation Topic Area)	
UBPL 750	Transportation Policy and Planning (Multidisciplinary Planning Topic Area)	
Note: Students must choose one topic area, but early on, they may not be sure of which one of the four topic areas to choose. It is common for students to take two different policy courses to explore topics and make a decision. In addition, students may have take one 400 level policy course as an undergraduate which can help them decide as well. They will not be eligible to take the 700 level version of the course, but that does not preclude them from choosing that topic area for their master's program.		
Total Hours		18

¹ Note that the topic area policy course completed in the senior year will consequently impact the number of elective credits required in the 5th year depending on the topic area selected to complete the requirements for the degree.

After Conferral of the Bachelor's Degree

After the bachelor's degree has been conferred, the student will complete a total of 24 post-baccalaureate graduate credit hours, consisting of the following:

Code	Title	Hours
Core Courses		
UBPL 763	Politics and Planning	
UBPL 777	Equity, Justice, and American Cities	
UBPL 780	Climate Change and Hazards Planning	
MUP Topic Area - To complete degree requirements, students must select a substantive topic area and complete the courses listed for a total of 9 credit hours.¹		9
Housing & Development:		
UBPL 710	Housing Policy and Planning	
UBPL 715	Community and Neighborhood Revitalization	
UBPL 764	Real Estate Development	
Sustainable Land Use:		
UBPL 720	Sustainable Land Use Policy and Planning	
UBPL 725	Environmental Planning Techniques	
UBPL 735	Site Planning and Design	
Transportation:		
UBPL 750	Transportation Policy and Planning	
UBPL 756	Data Driving Transportation	
UBPL 758	Transportation for Livable Cities	

Multidisciplinary Planning:		
UBPL 730	City and County Planning	
UBPL 750	Transportation Policy and Planning	
UBPL 764	Real Estate Development	
Electives		6
Any UBPL course outside of a student's chosen topic area, a graduate-level course outside SPAA approved by the Urban Planning Director, or:		
UBPL 707	Sustainability and the Future of Transportation	
UBPL 746	GIS Applications for Design and Planning	
UBPL 767	Creative Placemaking	
UBPL 802	Special Topics in Urban Planning: _____	
PUAD 703	Foundations of the Nonprofit Sector	
PUAD 708	Collaboration in Public Administration	
PUAD 824	Creating Good Public Policy	
PUAD 825	Urban Policy and Administration	
PUAD 828	Nonprofit Management and Policy	
PUAD 834	Human Resource Management	
PUAD 835	Managing Public Money	
PUAD 836	Data Informed Decision-Making	
PUAD 837	Advanced Public Budgeting and Finance	
PUAD 839	Topics in Public Administration: _____	
PUAD 841	Context, Ethics and Legal Environment of Public Administration	
PUAD 845	Managing Public Organizations	
PUAD 851	Infrastructure Management	
PUAD 853	Policy Analysis	
PUAD 854	Innovation and Organizational Change	
PUAD 857	Performance Management and Governance	
PUAD 858	Performance Audit	
PUAD 861	Data Analytics	
PUAD 862	Emergency Management in the United States: Theory and Practice	
PUAD 863	Program Evaluation	
PUAD 892	Reflections on Practice	
PUAD 893	Directed Readings	
PUAD 898	Leading to Create a Culture for High Performance	
PUAD 930	Research Seminar in Public Administration and Democracy	
PUAD 931	Research Seminar in Public Management	
PUAD 932	Seminar in the Intellectual History of Public Administration	
PUAD 934	Research Methods in Public Administration	
PUAD 935	Advanced Quantitative Methods for Public Administration	
PUAD 936	Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation	
PUAD 937	Qualitative Methods in Public Administration	
PUAD 939	Topics in Public Administration: _____	
PUAD 943	Constitutional Foundations of Public Administration	
PUAD 949	Law, Courts, and Public Policy	
PUAD 998	Directed Reading on Public Administration	
Total Hours		24

¹ Note that the topic area policy course completed in the senior year will consequently impact the number of elective credits required in the 5th year depending on the topic area selected to complete the requirements for the degree.

Electives

Any School of Public Affairs & Administration (SPAA) class can be taken as an elective. UBPL 767 and UBPL 730 are strongly suggested as electives because they are applied skills classes covering all of the topic areas. Graduate level classes taken outside of SPAA require Urban Planning Director approval

Portfolio Exam

The Portfolio Exam offers the student a learning opportunity to integrate the knowledge acquired through coursework and demonstrate their competence as a planner. The portfolio entails compiling coursework and any relevant planning-related work completed during their studies. The portfolio should demonstrate the practices, knowledge, skills, and behaviors that support the student's success in the planning profession. Additionally, it requires students to reflect on their learning. For the work samples selected, students will reflect upon and write about why they chose the work sample giving a brief overview of the work and describing what they learned from it. This should include a discussion of the specific skills they gained referencing the Urban Planning Program Learning Objectives table. Ultimately, the portfolio and reflection should illustrate that they have the necessary foundation to pursue a career in planning.

The examination consists of the student completing the portfolio and written reflective narratives summarizing how the work samples demonstrate competency in planning practices, knowledge, skills, and behaviors. The Urban Planning faculty committee appoints a 2-member portfolio exam committee for each student's portfolio. The grading committee is selected from the full-time faculty in the Urban Planning Program. One grader teaches at least one of the core courses and is outside the student's chosen topic area, and the other grader teaches within the student's topic area. The portfolio exam committee assesses and grades the exam with Honors, Pass, or Unsatisfactory with options to retake. Up to two retake attempts are permitted. The department will determine an appropriate minimum interval between exam attempts.

Progression Requirements

Each student's progress will be monitored at various points during the program:

- Upon approval to begin coursework toward the accelerated masters, the student will meet with the Graduate Program Coordinator to plan the graduate UBPL courses to be taken for elective undergraduate credit. Students should continue to work closely with their undergraduate advisor to ensure all requirements for the undergraduate degree(s) are met.
- In the final spring semester of undergraduate study (Year 4), the student will meet with the Graduate Program Coordinator to review the student's performance in UBPL courses. The student must earn a grade of "B" or better in these courses to be eligible for regular admission to the Master of Urban Planning degree.
- Following completion and award of the undergraduate degree (end of Year 4), the admitted student will again meet with the Graduate Program Coordinator to review the course plan for the fifth year of study and update progress as needed. The student's performance in the graduate-level courses taken as an undergraduate will be

evaluated. To continue in the program, students must earn a combined minimum GPA of 3.0 for these courses.

- For those students who do not meet the minimum GPA requirement of 3.0 in the first semester of Year 5, an alternative plan of study to address the student's deficiencies may be developed at the program's sole discretion. Students may also be dismissed from the program.
- If the baccalaureate degree is not completed at the end of Year 4, the student will not be permitted to enroll in courses for graduate credit toward the MUP degree until the baccalaureate degree has been conferred.

Students are encouraged to complete all requirements for the master's degree within one year of receiving the bachelor's degree to take full advantage of the accelerated format. If unforeseen circumstances prevent the timely completion of the master's degree, the student should consult with the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Urban Planning Director to develop an alternative plan for completion.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Understand the evolution and current practice of planning in communities, cities, regions, and nations; how planning has advanced and hindered the attainment of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; past and present conceptions of the future, including the relationship between planning and the future. (Planning History)
- Understand the expectations about planning outcomes in different local and national contexts; conceptual models about what planning is and how it works; the role of planning in responding to the global climate crisis. (Planning Theory)
- Understand the behaviors and structures available to bring about sound planning outcomes; mechanisms and practices for ensuring equitable and inclusive decision-making; legal and institutional contexts within which planning occurs in the U.S. and/or internationally. (Planning Law & Institutions)
- Understand the political, economic, social, and environmental explanations of and insights on historical, present, and future development; relationships between the built and natural environments and individual and community health and well-being; planning responses to mitigate climate change, reduce risks, and recover from climate-exacerbated impacts; interactions – flows of people, materials, ideas, and cultures – across world regions. (Urban & Regional Development)
- Understand the planning process and community and stakeholder engagement; plan creation and implementation; methods of design and intervention to understand and influence the future. (Planning Process & Engagement)
- Develop research and critical analysis skills for preparing and conducting research; quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, analysis, and forecasting; methods of geo-spatial analysis, mapping and data visualization; data analytics and urban technology. (Analytical Skills & Tools)
- Work in teams and with professionals in allied fields; professional leadership in the planning context; written, oral, and graphic communication. (Professional, Communication, & Leadership Skills)