

COMMUNITY PLANNING at the
THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Community Planning at URI

The accredited Masters in Community Planning began in 1963.

There were **4 specializations** offered:

- Environmental and land use planning
- Urban design and physical planning
- Housing and community development
- Social policy planning

The Accredited Masters was part of the Department of Community Planning and Area Development (CPAD).

The Program also offered a Minor in Urban Studies.

- **In 2000** the Department of Community Planning joined with the Landscape Architecture program to become the Department of Community Planning and Landscape Architecture (CPLA).



The Master's theses and Master's research projects that CPAD graduate students wrote between 1968 and 2005 are available at <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/>

In 2006 the **Community Planning Masters Program** was discontinued. Some of the planning faculty retired and some moved to other departments. Two planning program faculty members (Professors Atash and Gordon) joined the Landscape Architecture department and continued to teach undergraduate and graduate planning courses.

- As a result, the majority of students in the Bachelors in Landscape Architecture program also earn a minor in Community Planning during their course of study.
- Responding to the need for planning education and using classes from the discontinued Masters in Community Planning program, the **Graduate Certificate in Community Planning** was created. This certificate began in the **Fall 2015** semester.

Graduate Certificate in Community Planning Curriculum (Fall 2015- current)

Required: CPL 410 (or 501): Fundamentals of Community Planning Practice (3 cr)

Plus 6 credits from the following core courses:

CPL 539: Introduction to Environmental Law (3cr)	CPL 450: Urban Design (3cr)
CPL 483: Land Development (3cr)	CPL 485: Environmental Planning (3cr)
CPL/MAF 516: Seminar on the Urban Waterfront (3cr)	PSC 505: Public Program Evaluation (3cr)

Plus 6 or 7 credits from the following elective courses:

CPL 538: Site Planning (3 cr.)	MAF 465: GIS Applications in Coastal & Marine Management (3cr)
CPL 549: Ecological Planning Seminar (3cr)	MAF 475: Human Responses to Coastal Hazards & Disasters (3cr)
LAR 444: Landscape Architecture Design Studio III: Sustainable Design (4cr)	MAF 564: Port Planning and Policy (3cr)
LAR 445: Landscape Architecture Design Studio IV (4cr)	PSC 524: Seminar in Public Policy Problems (3cr)

Graduate Certificate in Community Planning (continued)

Between May 2016 and now a total of 48 graduate students have completed the CPL graduate certificate.

Most of these students were enrolled in other graduate programs at URI:

- Masters of Environmental Science and Management (MESM): 28 students
- Master of Public Administration: 11 students
- Master of Marine Affairs: 5 students
- MESM & Master of Marine Affairs: 1 student
- Community Planning Certificate alone: 3 students



We currently offer a

- **Community Planning**
undergraduate **minor**
- **In person Graduate Certificate in**
Community Planning
- **Environmental Planning and**
Design Track in the Masters
Degree in Environmental
Science and Management.

Future Plans in 3 steps

Step I: To begin Fall of 2025

Graduate Online Certificate in Community Planning

Offered through URI Online

7-week intensive online classes

The CPL online Certificate can be combined with other online certificates (e.g., Master of Public Administration) to create a masters degree.

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

A 12-credit online Graduate Certificate in Community Planning (CPL).

Composed of three required classes:

- CPL 501: Introduction to Community Planning Practice
- CPL 585: Environmental Planning
- CPL 538: Site Planning

and one Elective:

- CPL 550: Urban Design
- PSC 583 Policy Analysis
- PSC 508: Policy and Grant Writing
- PSC 524: Seminar in Public Policy Planning
- PSC 505: Public Program Evaluation
- AFS/EVS 505: Environmental Leadership in Practice
- DSP 552: Computer Based Data Exploration

Step 2: From 2025-2027 develop

Non-Accredited Master of Planning Degree (online)

With a foundation of the 4 classes already created in the online certificate (Step 1)

- CPL 501: Introduction to Community Planning Practice
- CPL 585: Environmental Planning
- CPL 538: Site Planning
- CPL 550: Urban Design

build out the rest of the curriculum, updating the courses still available in the course catalog from the discontinued masters to create a program equivalent to 2 years full-time.

Step 3: After 25 students have graduated with the non-accredited Masters degree in Community Planning

Accredited Master of Planning Degree (online)

The URI Planning Program will need to graduate (and show documentation for) 25 program graduates before it can apply for preliminary accreditation.

Additional consideration:

In the past there was a 5-years to Masters programs (ABM) in Community Planning for majors in Landscape Architecture. This will be revived with opportunities to enroll students from other majors such as Marine Affairs & Public Policy.

Potential Challenge:



Will there be students willing to attend an unaccredited Masters program in planning?

Answer to this challenge:

Students who earn a Master of Planning degree from a non-accredited program just need to work for 1 year longer than those with accredited degrees before they can sit for their AICP Certification Exam.

Education (PAB is the Planning Accreditation Board)	Required Years of Professional Planning Experience before can take the AICP exam
Master's degree in planning from a PAB-accredited program	2
Bachelor's degree in planning from a PAB-accredited program	3
Master's degree in planning from a program not accredited by the PAB	3
Any other graduate or undergraduate degree (including Associate)	4
No college degree/no degree information provided	8

These three steps toward offering an online professional planning masters degree at URI

- Build on existing capacities and programs
- Scale up in a realistic timeline
- Utilize existing but dormant resources (course codes)



What is required

URI is committed to moving forward with these plans with the right resources.

Financial resources are needed to:

- hire additional faculty to teach the classes

- hire tenure track faculty for interdisciplinary research and teaching

- build leadership for an ongoing professional, accredited program

Our vision for a graduate planning program at URI is based on:

- significant demand for our graduates with planning education
- strong relationships with Alumni
- many opportunities for planning internships within the State
- only increasing demands for the knowledge and work of our students especially in the areas of coastal resilience and urban planning.

Our goal: to revitalize graduate planning education in Rhode Island while building and innovating for the future.



Questions?

Thank you

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