



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS®

City & Regional Planning

Strategic Plan | 2019-2024



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Introduction

This strategic plan provides a guide for the University of Memphis' Department of City and Regional Planning for the next 5 years. This document builds on the Department's 2012 Strategic Plan and interim planning efforts conducted in 2014, 2015, and 2016.

The plan describes the Department's vision, mission, values, goals and objectives. For the purposes of this plan, those terms are defined as follows:

A **vision** statement is an aspirational, future tense statement.

A **mission** statement succinctly describes an organization's main purpose.

Values are principles that guide how an organization conducts business. The organization's goals and actions can be checked against its values.

Our **GOALS** are written as "end state" statements in present tense.

This Strategic Plan is built around 4 goals, shown on page 4, that reflect the Department's mission statement. Each goal is tied to a set of measurable objectives, with appropriate performance indicators and benchmarks. These allow the Department to evaluate success or progress and develop appropriate actions.

Planning Process

This plan was developed over an 8-month process in 2018 and 2019 with contributions from faculty, students, alumni, practitioners, and university administrators. The full faculty met bi-weekly during the fall semester of 2018 to discuss Departmental values, conduct a SWOT analysis, and craft draft versions of our vision, mission, goals, and objectives.

The chair conducted two student workshops to review and revise these draft elements. Three student teams took the lead in developing objectives and outcomes related to Goal 1, which pertains to student life and satisfaction.

The Department gathered practitioner input by hosting a focus group at the 2019 spring retreat of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association titled, "Identifying Critical Issues for the Future of Planning Education in Tennessee." The conversation was designed to help the Department consider the curricular elements necessary to best prepare future practitioners. Students and faculty facilitated breakout group discussions about the changing needs of the planning profession, and emerging issues facing the state's cities and regions. Groups provided input on the following questions:

- What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to **best prepare students for entry level planning positions?**
- What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to **prepare students for the *changing needs* of the planning profession?**
- What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to **prepare students to address emerging issues and challenges facing Tennessee cities and communities?**
- What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to **make the program more appealing to the current generation of students and increase enrollment?**

An online survey was developed to gather additional input from alumni and other practitioners. The survey also solicited practitioner input on curricular elements, using the same prompts from the TAPA focus group as well as other questions. The survey had 51 responses. The text of the survey is included as an appendix to this document.

The Department hosted an “Alumni and Friends” Reception in April of 2019, which provided another informal opportunity for discussion of the strategic plan. Large boards were set up to collect comments on plan goals and solicit ideas about curricular elements needed to prepare students for the changing needs of the planning profession and emerging issues and challenges facing Tennessee cities and communities.

Alignment with Institutional Strategic Plans

The Department’s strategic plan was developed with careful consideration of our role within the University of Memphis and the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy (SUAPP). The vision and mission statements of those institutions are shown below:

University of Memphis

Vision

The University of Memphis is an internationally recognized, urban public research university preparing students for success in a diverse, innovative, global environment.

Mission

We provide the highest quality education by focusing on research and service benefiting local and global communities.

Values

Accountability

Integrity, transparency, excellence and the highest standards govern everything we do.

Collaboration

We seek partnerships both within and beyond the University to enhance our actions and our outcomes.

Diversity and Inclusion

Everyone is respected, included and given the opportunity to excel.

Innovation

We consistently seek a better way, and we embrace challenges.

Service

Our purpose is to benefit our students and society through knowledge and effort.

Student Success

We provide every student with the opportunity to excel.

School of Urban Affairs & Public Policy

Vision

The School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy will be an innovative, national leader for building academic and community collaborations that address urban challenges.

Mission

The mission of the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy is to assist in identifying and implementing policies and programs that enhance quality of life, well-being, and prosperity in metropolitan settings. As a hub for collaboration, SUAPP creates the diverse range of resources and disciplinary perspectives necessary for effective comprehensive metropolitan action.

City and Regional Planning Vision

The Department of City and Regional Planning at the University of Memphis will be nationally recognized as a program that builds on deep community ties and interdisciplinary connections to empower students, graduates, and partners in the pursuit of just, equitable, and sustainable cities and regions.

City and Regional Planning Mission

Our mission is to **educate** the next generation of inspired urban planners and scholars, conduct **research** that influences planning policy and knowledge, and **engage** in community partnerships to affect local **change**.

City and Regional Planning Values

Student Success

We provide students with opportunities to participate as members of the local planning community.

Justice, Diversity and Inclusion

We promote democratic learning through exposure to multiple perspectives and experiences. We pursue policies, plans, and projects that go beyond treating symptoms and confront systemic barriers that limit equal access to opportunity.

Collaboration and Interdisciplinarity

We seek partnerships both within and beyond the University to enhance our actions and our outcomes.

Service and Community Engagement

We engage our community, not as a laboratory, but through reciprocal partnerships in an engaged scholarship model.

Sustainability

We pursue actions and research that support long-lasting environmental, social, and economic health.

Innovation

We seek new approaches to problems to advance planning practice.

City and Regional Planning Goals and Objectives

This Strategic Plan is built around 4 goals that reflect the Department's mission statement. Goal 1 is about student life, success, and satisfaction. It encompasses recruitment, diversity and inclusivity, and opportunities. The word "vital" in the goal is intended to mean healthy and lively. Goal 2 is about making sure that people who go through our program are trained properly and given the proper support to find employment, attain certification, and become leaders. Goal 3 is about faculty research and scholarship. Goal 4 is about our connection to Memphis and our strengths in community engagement.

Goal 1. Our planning program is vital, offering students a rich environment that is conducive to learning, collaboration, and engagement.

- Objective 1.a. Course content is timely and relevant and course delivery is structured to provide opportunities for collaborative learning.
- Objective 1.b. Students have access to a wide range of experiences and opportunities outside the classroom that enhance their learning experience
- Objective 1.c. Students are invested in the program as stewards and ambassadors
- Objective 1.d. The MCRP is a program of choice for a diverse population of students

Goal 2. Our graduates excel as practitioners and scholars, contribute to the planning community, and positively impact the places in which they work.

- Objective 2.a. Students graduate with the required knowledge, skills, and values of the profession, as established by the curricular guidelines of the Planning Accreditation Board (Criteria 4A 1-3).
- Objective 2.b. A MCRP degree from the UofM is marketable and portable
- Objective 2.b. Alumni contribute to meeting community needs and provide service to the planning community

Goal 3. Our faculty and researchers are recognized for advancing knowledge in planning and related fields through innovative research.

- Objective 3.a. Faculty, researchers, centers, and students are supported in their pursuit of scholarship by department, school, and college resources
- Objective 3.b. Faculty, researchers, centers, and students develop and disseminate new knowledge and earn recognition

Goal 4. Our planning program builds on deep and meaningful ties to the greater Memphis community and engages in reciprocal community partnerships that address real planning challenges while advancing education and research.

- Objective 4.a. Faculty, researchers, centers and students are valued and provide expertise as partners in addressing Memphis-area planning needs

- Objective 4.b. Students benefit from experiencing the culture of Memphis, contributing to its rebirth, and searching for ways to make development just and equitable.
- Objective 4.c. The Department maintains strong connections with local, statewide, and national practitioners and alumni, who contribute to ongoing education to support cutting edge planning practice.

The following 4-column assessment matrix indicates how each objective will be measured, including performance indicators to be used and *starting* benchmarks. Measurements associated with objectives and outcomes will be collected and reviewed annually. As part of the regular review process, benchmark standards will be assessed and revised as needed.

The fourth column in the matrix shows outcomes of evaluation and/or actions that need to be taken, either in response to a completed evaluation or in order to conduct an evaluation. The current status is shown for each indicator where data exists.

Assessment Matrix

Goal 1:

Our planning program is vital, offering students a rich environment that is conducive to learning, collaboration, and engagement.

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Starting Benchmark	Evaluation / Action
1.a. Course content is timely and relevant and course delivery is structured to provide opportunities for collaborative learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses utilize both 'classic' and contemporary planning literature. • Courses evolve and/or new courses are offered to address emerging issues in the field • Instruction includes diverse perspectives and opinions to explore the fields most pressing issues and debates. • Courses engage multiple learning modalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course readings are updated as new literature or perspectives emerge in research and include research published within the past 2 years. • New or revised course offerings highlight innovative and relevant topics. • Courses include differing opinions or multiple perspectives on a given issue. • Class time is structured in multiple formats, that can include lecture, discussion, and student groupwork. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct annual review of course syllabi and assignment • Conduct bi-annual survey of alumni/practitioners and bi-annual workshop discussion with TAPA members to identify emerging issues that need to be addressed in the curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review and respond to results of 2019 survey and workshop

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Starting Benchmark	Evaluation / Action
1.b. Students have access to a wide range of experiences and opportunities outside the classroom that enhance their learning experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of Internships and fellowship placements # of Students who participate Department-sponsored Study Abroad experiences # of studios or other engaged-learning classes that involve community partners # students who attend TAPA, MSAPA, APA, ULI or other related conferences and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 50% of students engage in field placements during course of study At least 25% of students from each cohort At least 4 courses per academic year At least 50% of students from each cohort attend at least one relevant conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2018-19 figure is 62% 2018-19 figure is 23%. Participation was low for summer 2019. Discuss reasons with students. Criteria met for 2018-19 5 students attended APA NPC, 5 attended MS APA conference, 6 attended TAPA
1.c. Students are invested in the program as stewards and ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of Planning Student Organization (PSO)-led event or volunteer opportunity per semester Student participation in recruiting activities Activity of student/department social media presence Exit survey regarding student satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 per year Students attend on campus graduate recruitment fair Student engage their undergraduate institutions to promote UofM MCRP program Students maintain active presence on department/student organization Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSO provided volunteer support to 2 community organizations in 2018-19 Students provided support at 2 on-campus recruitment fairs. Develop a structure for student engagement of alma mater undergraduate institutions Develop and conduct exit survey for graduating students

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Starting Benchmark	Evaluation / Action
<p>1.d. The MCRP is a program of choice for a diverse population of students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total enrollment trends, 3-year average Recruitment plan that emphasizes diversity and contains measurable objectives benchmarks. Diversity indicators from student composition data – to include represent a broader understanding of diversity, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-year average change in enrollment comparable to national average for planning programs Measurable impact of specific recruitment plan elements. (See strategic issues for next 5-7 years.) <p>Composition by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race Nationality Region (within U.S.) Gender Socioeconomic background Undergraduate training First generation college Sexual orientation Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department 3-year average change in enrollment is slightly positive, while the national trend is slightly negative. Still, there is a need to prioritize recruitment and develop a recruitment plan that emphasizes diversity and contains measurable objectives benchmarks. (See strategic issues for next 5-7 years.) 3-year average for diversity percentage (percent non-white and foreign) is 27%. This is not reflective of area demographics and needs improvement. Diversity percentage was as high as 42% in 2012 and 2015. Expand the understanding of diverse and inclusive student body, to include race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, nationality, religion, and undergraduate training background, etc. <p>Other related actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the diversity of faculty body through new hiring. Set aside GA funding for one “need-based” student and one international student. Create opportunities for student internship/research projects/planning projects that

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Starting Benchmark	Evaluation / Action
			will enhance the diversity, inclusivity and equity of Memphis community and the surrounding regions.

Goal 2:

Our graduates excel as practitioners and scholars, contribute to the planning community, and positively impact the places in which they work.

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Starting Benchmark	Evaluation / Action
2.a. Students graduate with the required knowledge, skills, and values of the profession, as established by the curricular guidelines of the Planning Accreditation Board (Criteria 4A 1-3).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results of Student Learning Outcomes assessment, prepared annually for University accreditation portfolio. Results of Graduate Satisfaction Survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully meet all Student Learning Outcomes assessment criteria At least 80 percent report feeling prepared to confront complex planning problems and influence change in their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria met for 2018. Analyze results of Learning Outcomes assessment for 2019 and develop necessary responses. Analyze results of Graduate Satisfaction Survey for 2019 and develop necessary strategies.
2.b. A MCRP degree from the UofM is marketable and portable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of master's graduates taking the AICP exam within 5 years who pass Recent graduate success in obtaining professional planning, planning-related or other positions within 12 months of graduation. Alumni employment outside of the Memphis Metro area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 80 percent pass rate Maintain 80 percent success rate A significant number of recent graduates find work outside of the Memphis Metro area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current pass rate is 100% Current rate is 84% Graduates from the last 3 years are working in Nashville, Chattanooga, Ohio, Missouri, South Carolina, and Wyoming.
2.c.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alumni service in leadership positions (e.g., Planning Director, Assistant Planning Director, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UofM Alumni regularly advance to leadership positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alumni currently hold planning leadership positions in Memphis (Director of Planning and

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Starting Benchmark	Evaluation / Action
Alumni contribute to meeting community needs and provide service to the planning community	<p>Executive Director of Nonprofit, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alumni providing volunteer service to planning and related organization (e.g. state APA chapters, ULI, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UofM Alumni hold a significant number of volunteer posts 	<p>Development, Administrator of Comprehensive Planning, Director of Housing and Community Development), Franklin, TN (Director of Planning and Sustainability), Murfreesboro (Director of Planning), Oxford, MS (Director of Planning), Jackson, MS (Deputy Director of Planning), DeSoto County, MS (Deputy Director of Planning).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate leadership and service questions into Graduate Satisfaction survey. Analyze findings.

Goal 3:

Our faculty and researchers are recognized for advancing knowledge in planning and related fields through innovative research.

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Benchmark	Evaluation / Action
3.a. Faculty and researchers are supported in their pursuit of scholarship by department, school, and college resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of internal grant and seed awards made to faculty/researchers Number of interdisciplinary research teams Engagement with SUAPP pre-award coordinator, business officer, and other research support staff Research center(s) are supported to address challenges through interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one per year Faculty/researchers participate in research endeavors with colleagues from other departments. Yields at least one proposal per year Center(s) continually participate in interdisciplinary and collaborative initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 internal seed awards made in previous 2 years Faculty have participated in 4 interdisciplinary teams in the previous 2 years. 3 proposals submitted with assistance of SUAPP support staff Conduct analysis and develop appropriate strategies
3.b. Faculty, researchers, centers, and students develop and disseminate new knowledge and earn recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publications in scholarly journals and presentations at conference Production of plans and other planning reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 presentations made at conferences each year At least 5 scholarly publication submissions each year Faculty/researchers/students consistently contribute to development of important planning reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 presentations made in 2018-19 Conduct analysis and develop appropriate strategies Research center contributed to City of Memphis Comprehensive Plan, Nonprofit Housing Study, Frayser Economic Development Study, and UofM Shared Prosperity Concept report in 2018-19.

Goal 4:

Our department builds on deep and meaningful ties to the greater Memphis community and engages in reciprocal community partnerships that address real planning challenges while advancing education and research.

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Benchmark	Evaluation/Action
4.a. Faculty, researchers, centers and students are valued and provide expertise as partners in addressing Memphis-area planning needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department engagement in local contracts and other partnerships Department efforts receiving local media coverage Participation on local boards, committees, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental participation in at least one local partnership per year At least one local media highlight per year Departmental representation on at least one local board, committee per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2018-19 partners include Memphis Medical District Collaborative, Cooper-Young neighborhood, University Neighborhood Development Corporation, City of Memphis (Memphis 3.0 comprehensive plan), Innovate Memphis (Transit Academy) High Ground news embedded reporter covered Studio course work on Shared Prosperity in the University District Faculty currently serve on the Board of BLDG Memphis and Advisory Board for Memphis 3.0
4.b. Students benefit from experiencing the culture of Memphis, contributing to its rebirth, and searching for ways to make development just and equitable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program courses offering engaged learning components and utilizing community partnerships Student participation in internship and fellowship placements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A least 2 courses with engaged learning components / community partners per year Consistently provide internship opportunities with local agencies and organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two studio courses, Site Planning, and Historic Preservation Planning involved partners in 2018-19. Students held internship placements with OPD, HCD, MATA, DMC, Shelby County Housing, Shelby Farms Park, Frayser CDC, the Works CDC in 2018-19

Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	Benchmark	Evaluation/Action
4.c. The Department maintains strong connections with local, statewide, and national practitioners and alumni, who contribute to ongoing education to support cutting edge planning practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation on local/state/national boards, committees, etc.• Department sponsorship of events, workshops, lectures, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department representation on at least one local/state/national boards, committees, etc.• At least one per semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Faculty serve on ACSP Governing Board• Department has hosted regular speaker series with ULI-Memphis and will be hosting a Transit Academy with local nonprofit, Innovate Memphis in 2019 and 2020.

Strategic Issues for the Next 5 Years

The final section of this 5-year strategic plan discusses emerging issues to be considered and strategies necessary to accomplish the objectives laid out herein.

SWOT Analysis

In the process of developing the strategic plan, the faculty completed an analysis of the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). This analysis informed the development of our goals and objectives. The opportunities and threats portion of the SWOT analysis relate to emerging or future issues and are most relevant to consideration of strategic issues for the next 5 years. The internal and external opportunities, threats, and other issues to be aware of are listed below.

Internal Opportunities:

- Undergraduate concentration in Urban Studies (University College) creates a potential pipeline to the MCRP
- Pending Urban Affairs PhD program could provide additional research capacity
- As the only Accredited graduate planning program in Tennessee and Arkansas, we should be able to have a wide recruiting area
- Strong study abroad creates opportunities for increased recognition and research partnerships
- New university structures to facilitate interdisciplinary research partnerships within and outside of SUAPP

Internal Threats:

- Lack of stable funding source for our outreach arm, the UofM Design Collaborative
- Inconsistent enrollment patterns
- Pending Urban Affairs PhD may stretch faculty capacity
- Undergraduate program might not be sustainable without new 1000 and 2000 level courses, which could stretch faculty capacity
- Plans for renovations to McCord hall create uncertainty about space allocation
- Inconsistent internal funding support for UMDC

External Opportunities/Threats and Other Issues to be Aware of:

- Declining enrollment across all planning programs
- Changing demographics of future students
- Changing Needs of Profession and relation to curriculum
- Changing Needs/Issue of City and Region
 - How will Memphis 3.0 be received and what other opportunities does it create for the Department?
 - Increasing local attention to transportation accessibility/equity
 - Increasing local attention to water issues
 - Rapid midrise housing development and increasing infill inside certain parts of the city and the potential for gentrification concerns

Short Term Actions Driven by Strategic Plan Assessment Matrix

Measurement associated with objectives and outcomes will be collected and reviewed annually. As part of the regular review process, benchmark standards will be assessed and revised as needed. Outcomes and objectives will be updated as appropriate and strategic actions will be prioritized. As noted in the assessment matrix, some of the current objectives require actions that will need to occur to support the plan. Most notable are the following items, related to Goal 1:

- Review of the curriculum and alignment with practitioner and alumni feedback about emerging issues (Objective 1.a.)
- Development of metrics for an expanded understanding of diverse and inclusive student body (Objective 1.d.)
- Development of a recruitment plan that emphasizes diversity and contains measurable objectives benchmarks.

Curricular review:

We believe that our current curriculum is robust and prepares students well, but regular review of the course content is essential for remaining relevant. Achieving objective 1.a (Course content is timely and relevant and course delivery is structured to provide opportunities for collaborative learning) will require continual review of the curriculum and consideration of practitioner and alumni feedback regarding emerging issues. As noted in the description of the planning process, the Department has used a variety of approaches to gather significant input from practitioners on these questions. This information will be analyzed and incorporated into future curriculum reviews.

Appendix B provides a summary of input collected at the TAPA workshop and through the online survey of alumni and practitioners. The pages included in Appendix B are a snapshot of feedback boards used to gain additional input at the spring 2019 Alumni and Friends Reception. They include generalized responses from the survey.

Diversity/Inclusivity Metrics:

Objective 1.d (The MCRP is a program of choice for a diverse population of students) requires an expanded understanding of diversity and inclusivity. Current diversity metrics are essentially limited to race and gender. While these indicators are incredibly important, we also recognize that to be inclusive also means to be welcoming to students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientations, age groups, religion, etc. We will develop a more appropriate metric for measuring the diversity and inclusivity of our student body.

Recruitment Plan:

Students played a large role in developing the objectives under Goal 1. In discussing elements of the goal, we came to realize that the Department, including faculty and students, can be doing a lot more to recruit students in a way that emphasizes diversity. A number of suggestions were made during the planning process.

These ideas will be further developed into a formal recruitment plan that will include measurable outcomes. Some starting points include:

- Capitalize on dual degree options
- Capitalize on undergraduate courses
 - Track student enrollment in Urban Studies concentration
 - Develop communication strategies to maintain engagement with those students
- Improve connection to specific undergraduate disciplines on campus
- Increase awareness of UofM MCRP program at target Universities in Tennessee and adjacent states.
 - Create more formal partnerships with Urban Studies program at Tennessee State University (HBCU)
- Work with alumni in Nashville, Knoxville, and Chattanooga to create opportunities to connect with potential MCRP students in those cities
- Work with current students to make connections are their alma matter institutions
- Set aside GA funding for one “need-based” student and one international student
- Create opportunities for student internship/research projects/planning projects that will enhance the diversity, inclusivity and equity of Memphis community and the surrounding regions
- Increase awareness of Planning as a field of study /career in local high schools
 - One of the program’s recent African American graduates is currently running an Urban Design Club through a summer program at local predominantly African American middle school. The program is hosted by her employer, the Heights CDC. We have engaged in conversations about expanding the program with departmental resources in order increase awareness of planning within our local middle and high schools.

Finally, the Department will consider the development of a Community Advisory Board, which could contribute to curricular review, a discussion of diversity and inclusivity, and the development of a robust recruiting plan

Note Regarding Faculty Composition

Regular review of Departmental objectives will be particularly important given the extent of change in faculty composition in recent years. The Department added a new tenure track faculty member in 2018, will add another in fall of 2019, and will conduct a search for a new faculty member to start in fall of 2020. These three new hires replace faculty members who have left the department for other institutions or retired. As a result of these changes, the strengths, skillsets, motivations, and interests of the faculty as a whole may naturally shift somewhat. It is important that plans to guide the future of the program are reassessed regularly as any changes to the culture of the department emerge. Some decisions, such as curricular changes will not be made until after the future faculty team is settled.

Appendix A

Appendix A: Input Survey

Intro Screen

The University of Memphis' Department of City and Regional Planning is preparing a new Strategic Plan to guide our efforts for the next 5 years. This short survey is designed to solicit input from practitioners and alumni that will help us craft our strategic plan.

A draft version of the core elements of the plan (Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, and Objectives) is shared at the end of this survey for open comment.

Our department is also preparing for a PAB Accreditation Site Visit next Fall. The survey will also help us gather evaluative data for our accreditation report.

To begin the survey click below. The survey is mobile-device-friendly.

For more information, contact cityplanning@memphis.edu.

1. Are you a graduate of the Master of City and Regional Planning Program at the University of Memphis?

If yes, go to #2

If no, go to #5

2. When did you graduate from the Master of City and Regional Planning Program at the University of Memphis?
 - a. After 2017
 - b. Between 2010 and 2017
 - c. Before 2010

If b, go to 3

If a or c, go to #5

3. Please select the choice that best describes your opinion about the following statements.

My experience in the Master of City and Regional Planning program provided me with skills and knowledge that help me (or will help me) confront complex problems in planning and community development.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Unsure

Disagree Strongly Disagree

My experience in the Master of City and Regional Planning program prepared me to influence change in the community in which I practice.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Unsure

Disagree Strongly Disagree

My experience in the Master of City and Regional Planning program prepared me with the hard/technical skills I need to succeed in the profession (i.e., GIS, demographic analysis, ability to interpret land use records and site plan, etc.)

Strongly Agree

Agree

Unsure

Disagree Strongly Disagree

Appendix A

My experience in the Master of City and Regional Planning program prepared me with the communication skills I need to succeed in the profession (i.e., writing, facilitating meetings, etc.).

Strongly Agree

Agree

Unsure

Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. In which of the following ways have you provided service to the community or the planning profession?
- Membership on non-profit board of directors
 - Leadership or committee position in state or national professional association (e.g., TAPA, APA, ULI, etc.)
 - Volunteer time/talent to assist with community development projects
 - Presentations at local/state/national conferences
 - Other _____

5. Are you currently employed?

If yes, go to 6

If no, go to 9

6. Which of the following best describes the type of organization that you work for?
- a. Public agency in planning related field
 - b. Nonprofit agency in planning related field
 - c. Private consulting firm in planning related field
 - d. None of the above

7. In what location do you work?
- a. Shelby County, Tennessee
 - b. West Tennessee
 - c. Middle Tennessee
 - d. East Tennessee
 - e. Mississippi
 - f. Arkansas
 - g. Another location not listed here

8. Has your organization hired any UofM City and Regional Planning graduates in the past 5 years?

If yes go to 9

If no go to 10

9. How do you generally assess the preparation of the UofM graduates you have hired in the past 5 years?

Very well prepared

Well prepared

Adequately Prepared

Not adequately prepared

Appendix A

The following set of questions seek your practitioner perspective on curriculum.

We strive for our curriculum to include content that considers the changing needs of the planning profession and is relevant to emerging issues facing the Midsouth Region and the state of Tennessee. Your practitioner perspective is important to achieving this.

10. **Assess the importance of the following skills/topics in preparing students for entry level planning positions?**

Very important Somewhat important Not important

1. Ability to read site plans
2. Understanding of land use law and regulations
3. Understanding of basic economics and public finance
4. Basic understanding of real estate finance
5. Knowledge of planning history
6. Understanding of environmental processes
7. Written communication
8. Oral communication/public speaking
9. Meeting facilitation
10. Negotiation
11. GIS and spatial analysis
12. Qualitative analysis
13. Demographic analysis
14. Graphic design

11. Are there other topics or skills that should be emphasized to best prepare student for entry level planning positions?

12. What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to **prepare students for the *changing needs* of the planning profession?** (Are there skills/knowledge that planners need today that they didn't need 10 years ago?)

13. What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to **prepare students to address emerging issues and challenges facing Midsouth and Tennessee cities and communities?**

14. What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum **to make the program more appealing to the current generation of students and increase enrollment?**

Appendix A

Draft Elements of 5-Year Strategic Plan

Below is a DRAFT version of the Vision, Mission, Values, Goals and Objectives that form the core of our 5-Year Strategic Plan. These were developed through several working sessions with faculty and current students. Your responses to the previous questions will help us develop strategies and other components of the plan.

Please review the core elements below share any comments or feedback you have.

As you review, consider the following background information about how we developed the Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, and Objectives:

- A **VISION** statement is an aspirational statement. Future tense.
- A **MISSION** statement describes an organization's main purpose. Succinctly.
- **VALUES** describe an organization's principles and guide how the organization conducts business. The organization's goals and actions can be checked against its values.
- Our **GOALS** are written as "end state" statements in present tense.
- Our **OBJECTIVES** are designed to be measurable, and for each objective we are developing a set of Performance Indicators and Benchmarks.

Insert VMVGO

15. Open ended comment

16. Anything else you'd like to share?

Appendix B

Appendix A: Curricular Input

What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to prepare students for the *changing needs of the planning profession*?

Survey responses to date: *Place a dot by the ones you think are important!* 

- Planning for diverse populations
 - Real Estate Finance
 - How to work in minority communities as an outsider
 - Project management
 - Municipal finance and fiscal constraints
 - Micromobility
 - Open data
 - Databases, R
 - Graphic visualization (adobe suite, photoshop, illustrator, sketchup)
 - Predictive Analytics
 - Tools for online/virtual public engagement
 - Data driven decision making
 - Social Media Awareness
-

Other Ideas? Write them below!

What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to prepare students to address emerging issues and challenges facing cities and communities in the Midsouth and Tennessee?

Survey responses to date:


Place a dot by the ones you think are important!



- Understanding of local/state housing and infrastructure financing
- Political motivations that fuel anti-city agendas
- some more understanding of local and state budget and legislative processes
- Knowledge of the UDC and pending Memphis 3.0
- Regionalism, intergovernmental agreements
- Community benefits agreements
- Water and infrastructure issues
- Emphasis on rural planning

Other Ideas? Write them below!

What topics or skills should be emphasized in the curriculum to make the program more appealing to the current generation of students and increase enrollment?

Survey responses to date: *Place a dot by the ones you think are important!* 

- Equity
- Position Planning as a generalist degree with a secondary discipline to accompany it (Architecture, MBA/Finance, Art/Design, technology etc.)
- Transportation
- Emphasizing incremental work
- Urban design
- Continue to offer opportunities for students to work directly with local government and community organizations on short and long term planning projects
- Social equity without hidden agendas
- Environmental sustainability
- Continue emphasizing community work
- Advanced visualization programs
- Data driven decision making

Other Ideas? Write them below!