Degree Title:

Master of Community Planning (MCP)

Degree Program Options:

MCP is a two-year residential on-campus professional degree program. Currently there is no online option.

Program Mission:

The MCP program's mission is to prepare students for professional careers as Community Planners. The MCP program is professionally oriented and focuses on the skills that professional planners need for practice in an interactive and interdisciplinary environment. The centerpiece of the program is the opportunity for students and faculty to engage with underserved communities throughout Alabama and the Southeast United States through engaged community outreach, teaching, and scholarly research. Through working on these community projects, students learn to help diverse and complex communities, study and analyze challenging issues, create and implement plans that could improve and protect their quality-of-life, culture, resource base, built environment, natural environment, and economic vitality. Approximately 95% of our students find employment in a professional planning or planning-related job within one year of graduation.

About the Program and its History:

The Master of Community Planning (MCP) program at Auburn University began in 1979 in the then School of Architecture and Fine Arts. It is one of the two graduate planning programs in the state of Alabama. As of January 2018, a total of 273 students have been granted the Master of Community Planning degree since its inception. In fall 2015, the MCP program moved to the Department of Political Science in the College of Liberal Arts, where it enjoys great support for its mission and vision and is surrounded by similar social science disciplines in a strong and effective administrative structure. Since moving to the Department of Political Science, the MCP program has strengthened its ability to deliver a more robust curriculum and offers a greater variety of courses to its students. Since this move, one faculty member was tenured effective fall 2017, two tenure-track faculty members were added in fall 2016, and more recently, another faculty member has also been granted promotion and tenure, effective fall 2018.

The program is closely engaged with the professional planning community via the Alabama state chapter of the American Planning Association, the American Institute of Certified Planners, and with several local communities in Alabama and the southeast region of the United States. The MCP program has an engaged and active alumni base, many serving on the program's Planning Advisory Council (PAC). The MCP program regularly engages practicing planners who serve as adjuncts, student project reviewers, and community partners. The program has five full-time tenured and tenure-track core faculty members, who are engaged in planning research, community outreach, and teaching dedicated to advance the MCP program's mission and field of planning. All core faculty members have doctoral degrees in the planning field and have a variety of professional experiences.

The MCP program offers a professional master's degree in planning. A total of 45 credit hours of coursework is required to be completed within a minimum of two academic years of full-time study. The Program is very engaged with local communities advancing Auburn University's land-grant mission. As a professionally-oriented master's degree, the program provides hands-on, practice-based, and collaborative learning, often

involving real clients from the community. Small class sizes ensure significant interaction among students and faculty, and ongoing feedback on interpersonal and professional communication skills.

The MCP program also offers dual degree options with the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program in the College of Liberal Arts and the Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) in the College of Architecture, Design, and Construction. The MPA program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). The MLA program is accredited by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB). A total of fifty-seven (57) credit hours are required to earn the joint MCP-MPA degree. The arrangement for dual degree options for MLA-MCP require greater credit hours. The non-design Baccalaureate requires 111 hours for MLA-MCP dual degree, while dual degree with a design background requires 73 hours. All core course requirements of the MCP degree are met in each of these dual degree programs. MCP Program also offers a Graduate Minor in Community Planning, which requires nine credit hours of community planning course work. This minor is open to all disciplines campus wide with approval from the MCP program Director.

Disciplinary Accreditation Requirements:

The Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) is national level accreditation agency that accredits all planning programs in the United States. The MCP degree was PAB accredited from 2004 until 2014, during which time 166 students graduated. In 2014, the College of Art, Design, and Construction (CADC) administration voluntarily withdrew from accreditation. By the fall of 2015, the MCP program moved to the Department of Political Science in the College of Liberal Arts where it enjoys great support for its mission and vision and is surrounded by similar social science disciplines in a strong and effective administrative structure. Currently, the MCP program is working towards regaining PAB accreditation.

The MCP Program had applied for accreditation pre-candidacy before the PAB in March 2018. It has received a letter confirming that the MCP program meets the prerequisites of candidacy for accreditation as prescribed by the PAB policies, and the program must submit its self-study report for accreditation candidacy consideration. The program faculty is currently in the process of preparing its first self-study report (SSR1) for PAB candidacy consideration. The draft of this report is due to the PAB on or before August 1, 2018.

Number of Students:

As of January 2018, Auburn University's MCP program, has 39 currently enrolled graduate students consisting of both domestic and international students. Our students come from the southeast region of the United States, as well as from countries outside the United States. A large number of domestic students are primarily from Auburn, the state of Alabama and the Southeastern United States, while international students come from countries such as India, Nepal, Bangladesh, China, Lebanon, Vietnam, Ecuador, Uruguay, Iran and Nigeria.

Students are admitted into the program only after a review of their application materials with a minimum required GPA of 2.75 from a recognized University, one letter of intent to assess their interest, preparedness and commitment to pursue the graduate degree, and 3 letters of recommendation. In a few cases, professional experience in planning or related areas, dedication to the planning profession, including preparedness for the graduate degree may be assessed via a personal interview before acceptance into the MCP program. The MCP program also recruits international students via Auburn University's Global (AU-Global) program initiative, however, with a limited quality control.

The program makes special efforts to include students with diverse undergraduate degrees, skills, and racial backgrounds. Currently enrolled MCP students have undergraduate degrees in environmental design, architecture, geography, anthropology, other social sciences, business, economics, and engineering.

As of January 2018, the program has 39 currently enrolled students. The Auburn University Student Planning Association (AUSPA) is the program's student-led, highly motivated and engaged professional development organization that carries out multiple social and professional events every semester. An MCP faculty member serves as an advisor to this body.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Specificity of Outcomes

[Please provide a list of program level student learning outcomes. Student learning outcomes articulate the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students are expected to achieve as a result of completing the academic degree program.]

Expected Outcome 1: Professional Competence and General Planning Knowledge: Graduating students from the MCP program will have the knowledge required to perform effectively as professional planners in the public and private sectors. This outcome has six separate sub-outcomes, which are assessed separately:

      1a. Purpose and meaning of planning
      1b. Planning theory
      1c. Planning law
      1d. Human settlements and planning history
      1e. The future
      1f. Global dimensions of planning

Expected Outcome 2. Professional Competence and Planning Skills: Graduating MCP students will have the research and presentation skills necessary for the effective assembly, analysis, application and presentation and synthesis of information and concepts from planning practice and practice-oriented scholarship. This outcome has six separate sub-outcomes, which are assessed separately:

      2a. Research
      2b. Written, oral, graphic communication
      2c. Quantitative and qualitative methods
      2d. Plan creation and implementation
      2e. Planning process methods
      2f. Leadership

Expected Outcome 3: Professional Competence and Planning Values and Ethics: Graduating students will understand and be able to effectively apply planning knowledge, skills and values. This outcome has five separate sub-outcomes, which are assessed separately:

      3a. Professional ethics and responsibility
      3b. Governance and participation
      3c. Sustainability and environmental quality
      3d. Growth and development
      3e. Social justice
      3f. Heath and the built environment

2. Comprehensive Outcomes

[Please provide a brief narrative stating whether or not the list of student learning outcomes is comprehensive (i.e., the student learning outcomes accurately reflect the current scope of the program). Consider also providing a rationale for the degree/nature of comprehensiveness (e.g., student learning outcomes are aligned with disciplinary standards).]

The current list of student learning outcomes is comprehensive. It is directly derived from the list of standards by which accredited planning programs are assessed by the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB). While Auburn's planning program is not accredited at the moment, it is applying as a candidate for accreditation and due to submit its Self-Study Report (SSR) on August 1, 2018. The MCP program has been consciously aligning

its student learning outcomes with those of accredited planning program requirements following disciplinary standards. The above listed three outcomes also aligned with the MCP's strategic plan of 2016 with consensus from the core faculty.

3. Communicating Student Learning Outcomes
[Please provide a brief statement describing if and how the list of student learning outcomes is shared with others (e.g., paper copies are shared with program faculty at a meeting, the outcomes are posted to the departmental website).]

Last year, the core MCP faculty members met on April 25, 2017 to finalize the above set of outcomes, and voted unanimously to approve them. Copies of the outcomes were available via email. Since these outcomes are aligned with the Planning Accreditation Board requirements, faculty continued using the same for the current the program will use these outcomes moving forward, starting with the 2017-2018 academic year. Going forward, program will also share its program learning outcomes with the students at the time of orientation at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters.

Curriculum Map

4. [Please provide a curriculum map that visually represents the alignment between student learning outcomes and required courses/experiences.]

Below is the revised curriculum map that visualizes the alignment between our student learning outcomes and the required core courses in the program. This curriculum map was revisited and revised during several MCP faculty meetings throughout January 2018 to May 2018 to align with the accreditation needs while preparing the first draft self-study report for the Planning Accreditation Board.

Curriculum Map Courses Required of All Students A. Required Knowledge, Skills and Values	CPLN 6450: Planning History and Theory	CPLN 7240: Research Methods	CPLN 6050: Land and Urban Economics	CPLN 7200: Urban Design	CPLN 6460: Geographic Information Systems	CPLN 7430: Planning Law	CPLN 6010: Introduction to Community Planning	CPLN 7140: Public Budgeting	CPLN 7600 & 7610: Synthesis Studio
A1 General Planning Knowledge									
a) Purpose and Meaning of Planning	X		X				X		X
b) Planning Theory	X		X						X
c) Planning Law						X	X		X
d) Human Settlements and History of Planning	X		X	X			X		X
e) The Future		X	X	X	X		X	X	X
f) Global Dimensions of Planning	X		X				X		X
A2 Planning Skills									
a) Research	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
b) Written, Oral and Graphic Communication		X	X	X	X		X	X	X
c) Quantitative and Qualitative Methods		X	X		X			X	X
d) Plan Creation and Implementation				X		X	X		X
e) Planning Process Methods	X		X	X		X	X		X
f) Leadership	X							X	X
A3 Values and Ethics									
a) Professional Ethics and Responsibility	X								X
b) Equity, Diversity and Social Justice	X	X					X		X
c) Governance and Participation						X	X	X	X
d) Sustainability and Environmental Quality				X			X		X
e) Growth and Development			X		X		X		X
f) Health and the Built Environment				X			X		X

In the above curriculum map, the three learning outcomes and their sub-outcomes (rows) are aligned with atleast one required course (columns). Introduction to planning class introduces most topics, other core courses

offer introductory, reinforced or emphasize on a particular learning outcomes, and the two synthesis studio classes reinforce, emphasize and syhntheisze. Faculty will meet in fall 2018 and revisit our curriculum map to clearly map courses with their learning outcomes and group them as 1=introduced, 2=reinforced, 3= emphasized.

Measurement

5. Outcome-Measure Alignment

[Please provide a description of the assessment measures, noting how they were chosen/developed to align with the student learning outcomes.]

Assessment Method 1: Exit Survey of Graduating Students – All graduating MCP students complete an exit survey asking them their impressions of the MCP program, including a self-assessment of the learning objectives. Survey focuses on:
- Impressions of the MCP program
- Self-assessment of the learning objectives

Assessment Method 2: Comprehensive Exam – after completing two semesters in the Community Planning Program, students must pass a comprehensive exam.
- Students must pass comprehensive Exam with at least a 60% score.

Assessment Method 3: Synthesis Project – All students are required to complete a two-semester long synthesis studio project that touches on all of the learning objectives in the program. Prior to, and during the final presentation, the faculty -- including outside reviewers -- evaluate students using the rubric as discussed below. Assessment results are compiled in a table below.

Note that our program assessment rubric used for the synthesis studio in spring 2017 and fall 2017 was very detailed (with detailed explanation of every cell in the rubric table) and it was quite wordy for reviewers. We recognized that many reviewers were not able to complete the assessment form within the timeframe. The MCP faculty realized this in Fall 2017, and therefore revised the rubric in its faculty meetings and email discussions. The simplified program assessment rubric is presented below. This revised rubric was used for the graduating class of Spring 2018 during the Synthesis Studio II class final reviews for program assessment.

	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Comments
General planning knowledge				
Purpose and meaning of planning The student communicates the purpose of the project, and the purpose of planning in the context of the project.				
Planning theory The project is based on a specified procedural planning theory (or set of theories), which is clearly communicated by the student.				
Planning law The project demonstrates an understanding of planning law and is legally implementable.				
Human settlements and planning history The project is grounded in knowledge of planning history.				
The future The project is forward thinking and contains clear direction for future improvement.				
Global dimensions of planning The project considers local connections to global issues and the global dimensions of planning.				

Planning skills				
Research The student uses research methods, sources, and all available sources of information to develop their findings.				
Written, oral, graphic communication The student uses good written, oral, and graphic communication to convey the project to others.				
Quantitative and qualitative methods The project is well grounded in planning research methods.				
Plan creation and implementation The project is a holistic and comprehensive plan with clear implementation direction.				
Planning process methods The project follows a clear and established planning process.				
Leadership The student has taken a leadership role in developing the plan and working with the client and community to develop the final project.				
Values and ethics				
Professional ethics and responsibility The project complies with the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, the Alabama Ethics Code, and norms of ethics and professional responsibility in the planning profession.				
Governance and participation The project uses or considers a high degree of public participation and citizen empowerment.				
Sustainability and environmental quality The project considers sustainability and environmental quality and the long-term impacts of planning on future generations.				
Health and the built environment The project considers the implications of individual and community health in the places where people live, work, play, and learn.				
Growth and development The project balances growth and development with social equity, environmental, and economic issues, and community concerns.				
Social justice Social justice is at the forefront of all parts of the plan.				

6. Direct Measures

[Please consider indicating which assessments are direct measures of student learning (e.g., exams, rubric scores).]

MCP Program uses two direct assessment measures:

Assessment Method 2: Comprehensive Exam –after completing two semesters in the Community Planning Program, students must pass a comprehensive exam. The comprehensive exam assesses students' knowledge from their core planning courses and determines if they are prepared to progress to the synthesis studio courses, which represent their masters' project. The comprehensive exam not only incorporates all foundational planning knowledge from students' required core classes, it is also modeled on the American Institute of Certified Planner's (AICP) planning certification exam, as to better prepare our students for their future professional needs.

Assessment Method 3: Synthesis Project – is a direct measure of all of the learning objectives through the rubric for the synthesis studio.

7. <u>Data Collection</u>

[Please provide a description of the assessment data collection process (i.e., information on how data were collected, who provided data, and the pertinent methodological details such as rating/scoring design).]

Assessment Method 1: Exit Survey of Graduating Students - All graduating students complete an exit survey asking them their impressions of the MCP program, including a self-assessment of the learning objectives. Students have the option of completing the exit survey in paper form or online. Program director circulated paper form surveys and the MCP program's administrative assistant sent email links to the graduating students. Program's administrative assistant collected all completed surveys and collated all the survey results.

Assessment Method 2: Comprehensive Exam – after completing two semesters in the Community Planning Program, students must pass a comprehensive exam with a minimum 60% score. The exam is administered by MCP faculty on campus during exams week.

Assessment Method 3: Synthesis Project – All of the faculty are involved in the final and midterm presentations by students in the synthesis studio. Each faculty member completes the grading rubric and the results are averaged.

Results

8. Reporting Results

[Please provide assessment results aligned with the student learning outcomes. If historical assessment data is available, consider providing this data to reveal any student learning trends.]

Assessment Method 1: Exit Survey of Graduating Students – This survey was sent out to all graduating MCP students via email and a physical copy of this survey was distributed to those on campus on the final days of their synthesis class presentations on April 17, 19 and 24, 2018. The MCP program had 12 graduating students in spring 2018, and 8 students completed the exit survey. The results of their responses as recorded are summarized in the table below. To compare results of last year, spring 2017 responses (n=5) are presented side by side.

Responses of MCP Exit Survey Spring 2018 in comparison to Spring 2017

MCP Exit Survey Questions: While completing my MCP degree at Auburn, I have…	Spring 2018 (n=8)					Spring 2017 (n=5)				
	SD	D	N	A	SA	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Gained a basic understanding of the purpose and meaning of planning.	0%	0%	0%	25%	**75%**	0	0	0	40	60
2. Gained a basic understanding of theory and practice planning	0%	0%	0%	13%	**88%**	0	0	0	40	60
3. Gained a basic understanding of planning law.	0%	0%	0%	38%	**63%**	0	0	0	60	40
4. Gained a basic understanding of human settlements.	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%	0	0	0	0	100
5. Gained a basic understanding of the planning profession and the future.	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%	0	0	0	40	60
6. Gained a basic understanding of the global dimensions of planning.	0%	0%	25%	50%	**25%**	0	0	20	60	20
7. Enhanced my research skills.	0%	0%	0%	38%	**63%**	0	0	0	60	40
8. Enhanced my skills in written, oral and graphic communication.	0%	0%	0%	25%	**75%**	0	0	40	40	20
9. Developed the necessary skills related to quantitative and qualitative methods.	0%	0%	0%	25%	**75%**	0	0	0	100	0
10. Developed basic skills related to plan creation and implementation.	0%	0%	13%	25%	**63%**	0	0	0	100	0
11. Developed basic skills related to planning process methods.	0%	0%	13%	25%	**63%**	40	0	0	40	20
12. Developed basic skills to exercise leadership in the planning profession.	0%	0%	0%	50%	**50%**	0	20	20	40	20
13. Developed basic appreciation of professional ethics and responsibility.	0%	0%	0%	25%	**75%**	0	0	0	60	40
14. Developed a basic appreciation of the relation of equity, diversity, and social justice to planning.	0%	0%	0%	25%	**75%**	0	0	20	20	60
15. Developed a basic appreciation of roles and processes of governance and participation.	0%	0%	0%	38%	**63%**	0	0	20	40	40
16. Developed basic appreciation of factors related to sustainability and environmental quality.	0%	0%	0%	38%	**63%**	0	0	0	60	40
17. Developed a basic appreciation of factor related to growth, infrastructure and development.	0%	0%	0%	25%	**75%**	0	0	0	60	40
18. Developed a basic appreciation of factors related to health and the built environment.	0%	0%	0%	50%	**50%**	0	0	0	60	40
Note: **SD** = Somewhat Disagree, **D** = Disagree, **N** = Neutral, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree										

MCP Exit Survey Questions:	Yes	Maybe	No	MPA	UG	
19. In addition to the MCP degree, did you complete an additional degree at Auburn?	25%	0%	50%	13%	13%	
20. Do you plan to pursue AICP certification by taking the examination once you're eligible?	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%	

The table above indicates graduating students' overall impressions of the MCP program, including a self-assessment of the learning objectives. As per the table above, this year's exit survey highlighted that the program needs to focus on following areas:

- Gained a basic understanding of the global dimensions of planning (with 25% respondents being neutral to the question). This area needs attention. Program has recently undertook a survey to understand the needs and interest in study abroad and found positive responses.

As per the table above, this year's exit survey results in general improved in most areas as compared to the last year's. Several questions had significantly higher rate of responses as compared to last year (shown in bold) for the "strongly agreed" category of responses. Noteworthy improvements are in the following areas:

- Enhanced my research skills (improved from 0% strongly agreed to 50% strongly agreed)
- Enhanced my skills in written, oral and graphic communication (improved from 20% strongly agreed to 75% strongly agreed
- Developed the necessary skills related to quantitative and qualitative methods (improved from 0% strongly agreed to 75% strongly agreed
- Developed basic skills related to plan creation and implementation (improved from 0% strongly agreed to 63% strongly agreed
- Developed basic skills related to planning process methods (with 40% strongly disagreed to 0 now, and 20% strongly agreed to 63% strongly agreed)
- Developed basic skills to exercise leadership in the planning profession (with 20% disagreed to 0 now, and 20% strongly agreed to 50% strongly agreed)

Assessment Method 2: Comprehensive Exam – After completing two semesters in the Community Planning Program, students must pass a comprehensive exam with a minimum 60% score. Exam questions are not separated by topic, since multiple learning objectives are present in each question, so there is no way to know which question in the comprehensive exam relates to which specific learning objective. However, the results of the comprehensive exam demonstrate how students have gained general planning knowledge in the program. The exam consists of 75 multiple choice questions completed in a 2 hour time limit. Questions are randomly selected from each core class and students are provided with a study guide (question bank) several months prior to the exam date.

The results are below:

Fourteen students completed the comprehensive exam on May 4, 2018. Students who were eligible included those who had completed all or a substantial number of core classes in the program and were either scheduled to graduate at the end of the Fall 2018 or Spring 2019 semesters. The highest score on the exam was 100 % and the lowest score was 70.7 %, with the average falling at 96.8 % (A). Six students passed the exam with a 100 % score, seven students scored greater than or equal to 96% (A). Only one student received 70.7% (C).

Assessment Method 3: Synthesis Project – All students are required to complete two semesters of synthesis studio courses that touch on all of the learning objectives in the program. Prior to and during the final presentation, the faculty / reviewers evaluate Synthesis Studio students using the rubric described above. Four full-time MCP faculty, one adjunct professor, and two outside reviewers completed the evaluation. Therefore,

the data below represents evaluation results of seven individual reviewers for thirteen students. A total of 74 responses were collected and are presented in the table below. The last column in the table below shows total number of responses that were completed for a particular question. Note, reviewers could not complete responses to all 18 questions and therefore numbers in the last column vary. This evaluation data was collected over a three day period during the final review presentations. A total of 17 students were enrolled in the MCP Synthesis Studio II, and sixteen students presented their final studio work and were evaluated using the above mentioned assessment rubric. This student group included 12 graduating students for Spring 2018, and 5 continuing students who had completed their first year and took the Synthesis Studio II as their first studio course.

The majority of the students met all of the evaluation criteria. Exceptions were as listed below; detailed evaluation results are shown in the table below:

- Planning law (24% partially met and 2% does not meet)
- Global dimensions of planning (48% partially met and 5% does not meet)
- Research (21% partially met)
- Written, oral, graphic communication (31% partially met)
- Quantitative and qualitative method (31% partially met and 3% does not meet)
- Plan creation and implementation (24% partially met and 3% does not meet)
- Governance and participation (23% partially met and 6% does not meet)

End of the Semester Evaluation by the MCP faculty and external reviewers –Spring 2018

	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total number of evaluations
General planning knowledge				
Purpose and meaning of planning The student communicates the purpose of the project, and the purpose of planning in the context of the project.	88%	12%	0%	73
Planning theory The project is based on a specified procedural planning theory (or set of theories), which is clearly communicated by the student.	87%	7%	6%	68
Planning law The project demonstrates an understanding of planning law and is legally implementable.	76%	24%	2%	62
Human settlements and planning history The project is grounded in knowledge of planning history.	87%	10%	3%	67
The future The project is forward thinking and contains clear direction for future improvement.	87%	13%	0%	70
Global dimensions of planning The project considers local connections to global issues and the global dimensions of planning.	48%	48%	5%	63
Planning skills				
Research The student uses research methods, sources, and all available sources of information to develop their findings.	79%	21%	0%	73
Written, oral, graphic communication The student uses good written, oral, and graphic communication to convey the project to others.	69%	31%	0%	74
Quantitative and qualitative methods The project is well grounded in planning research methods.	79%	31%	3%	75

Plan creation and implementation The project is a holistic and comprehensive plan with clear implementation direction.	76%	24%	3%	72
Planning process methods The project follows a clear and established planning process.	82%	15%	3%	72
Leadership The student has taken a leadership role in developing the plan and working with the client and community to develop the final project.	88%	12%	0%	68
Values and ethics				
Professional ethics and responsibility The project complies with the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, the Alabama Ethics Code, and norms of ethics and professional responsibility in the planning profession.	97%	3%	0%	63
Governance and participation The project uses or considers a high degree of public participation and citizen empowerment.	71%	23%	6%	65
Sustainability and environmental quality The project considers sustainability and environmental quality and the long-term impacts of planning on future generations.	83%	13%	4%	71
Health and the built environment The project considers the implications of individual and community health in the places where people live, work, play, and learn.	NA	NA	NA	NA
Growth and development The project balances growth and development with social equity, environmental, and economic issues, and community concerns.	89%	8%	3%	72
Social justice Social justice is at the forefront of all parts of the plan.	79%	16%	6%	70

9. Interpreting Results

[Please provide an interpretation of the results aligned with the student learning outcomes. The interpretation should reflect consideration of factors (e.g., capabilities of a particular cohort, innovative curricular change) that may have affected the results.]

This year's results for both the comprehensive exam and Synthesis Studio were different from the previous year. While the comprehensive exam results improved significantly, program assessment via the synthesis studio had mixed results. This year's exit survey responses of graduating students also improved significantly as compared to the previous year. This indicates higher level of satisfaction among the graduating students' while experiencing in the two year MCP program, including their self-assessment of the learning objectives. There are following reasons of this results that MCP program faculty has realized. For areas that need improvements, faculty is making plans to address it.

a) This year, MCP students were provided with a study guide or a question bank several months prior to the comprehensive exam. Unlike last year, this year's students were also provided with the answer key. The significant improvement in the results could be attributed to the old sets of questions and availability of an answer key. To address this, the MCP program faculty feel that there is a need to revise and expand the question bank, and in future, avoid sharing an answer key.

b) Many students who were enrolled in MCP core classes in spring 2018 were also enrolled in the Synthesis Studio II class. This potentially affected their ability to synthesize learning from all classes while working on the Synthesis Studio project. The program is structured in such a way that synthesis studios are only taken after completing all the core classes and the comprehensive exams. However, the program faced a bit of a challenge this year largely due to class scheduling and rolling enrollment of

students. The MCP program had rolling admissions where students joined the program in all three semesters -- fall, spring, and summer. The program has now responded to this issue, and has stopped summer enrollment for incoming students. Additionally, a few core classes such as GIS and Introduction to Planning are now offered in both fall and spring semesters to address the needs of fall and spring intakes.

c) The cohort in the Spring 2018 Synthesis Studio was also a bit lopsided with a significantly large percentage of international students that entered in the program via the AU Global program. Many of these students had serious communication issues, while many were also enrolled in core classes and synthesis studio simultaneously. Low assessment scores on Planning Law (24% partially met and 2% does not meet), Research (21% partially met), and low scores on written, oral, graphic communication (31% partially met) were attributed to this cohort. This is also reflective in the final Synthesis Studio-II grades. Four of the 17 enrolled students could not pass the Synthesis Studio II class and will repeat it. To address, the MCP program is now in dialogue with the AU Global program to screen students for quality and commitment to the MCP program. Also, the MCP program is stopping summer enrollment to streamline class scheduling.

d) On short notice, one of the MCP core faculty members left Auburn University in December 2017 for personal reasons. While the program quickly responded and hired an adjunct, and another core faculty stepped in to fill the teaching gap. This sudden change impacted the program's ability to deliver quality urban design, graphic communication, and other plan creation and qualitative research expertise. The lower assessment values in those three areas were also potentially attributed to those unexpected changes:

- Plan creation and implementation (24% partially met and 3% does not meet)
- Written, oral, graphic communication (31% partially met)
- Quantitative and qualitative method (31% partially met and 3% does not meet)

To address this, and to meet the teaching requirements, the MCP program has now hired a one year visiting faculty member for the 2018-19 academic year to cover the urban design and graphic communication area of teaching. In Fall 2018, the program will also start a search for a full time tenure-track urban design faculty position for a Fall 2019 start date.

e) Program faculty have not been able to meet after the studio reviews and program assessment results were compiled to discuss and find solutions. Program faculty will meet in fall 2018 to discuss these concerns and find a solution to address its lower assessment on the following fronts:

- Global dimensions of planning (48% partially met and 5% does not meet)
- Research (21% partially met)
- Governance and participation (23% partially met and 6% does not meet)

10. Communicating Results
[Please provide a very brief narrative describing with whom the results are shared (e.g., all program faculty).]

The initial results of the assessment were shared with all program faculty on May 4, 2018. The results of Comprehensive Exams and assessment were also discussed via email with the faculty and with Planning Advisory Council on May 8, 2018 meeting, briefly. The program briefly discussed draft of the assessment report for the 2017-18 academic year at the last MCP faculty meeting on May 15, 2018, and decided to discuss, share and follow up via email during summer break. The director of the MCP program revised the report and sent the revised version to program faculty and the department chair on June 18, 2018 Individual program faculty sent their comments and suggestions, and a revised draft was sent to all program faculty members again on June 20, 2018. A copy of the report was also sent to the MCP program's administrative assistant to check and ensure data accuracy. On June 23, 2018, this 2017-18 MCP Assessment report was revised to its final form

for faculty review and final approval. The 2017-18 MCP Assessment report was finalized on June 26, 2018 after faculty voted unanimously to approve it.

Use of Results

11. Purposeful Reflection and Action Plan

[Please provide a narrative describing the process in which faculty engage to discuss assessment results and create actionable plans in an effort to improve student learning.]

One of the MCP program's assessment measures is the end of the semester Synthesis Studio review. The assessment rubric helped identify areas that needed greater emphasis for strengthening the program's learning outcomes. There are two noteworthy changes that the program witnessed. One of the MCP core faculty left the program in December 2017 due to personal reasons. The program quickly responded and hired an adjunct, and another faculty stepped in to fill the teaching gap. However, this sudden change impacted the program's ability to deliver quality urban design, graphic communication, and other plan creation instruction. The lower assessment values in those three areas were:

- Plan creation and implementation (24% partially met and 3% does not meet)
- Written, oral, graphic communication (31% partially met)
- Quantitative and qualitative method (31% partially met and 3% does not meet)

As a further response to meet the teaching needs, the MCP program has hired a one year visiting faculty for the 2018-19 academic year. In Fall 2018, the program will also start a search for a full time tenure-track urban design faculty position for a Fall 2019 start date.

Results from assessment highlights areas that the program need to focus more on. These focus area include following areas to improve learning outcomes:

- Global dimensions of planning (48% partially met and 5% does not meet)
- Planning law (24% partially met and 2% does not meet)
- Research (21% partially met)
- Governance and participation (23% partially met and 6% does not meet)

MCP faculty have not had a chance to meet and review these program assessment outcomes in depth because the reviews were conducted in late April and results were compiled by the second week of May. The Planning Accreditation Board revised its curriculum criteria in April 2017, adding a new public health student learning outcome, and slightly revising its social justice learning outcomes. The Planning faculty revised its exit survey to reflect these changes, and from January - May 2018, reviewed and mildly revised its curriculum map, revisited student learning outcomes, and simplified the synthesis studio rubric. The changes from the last year were although minor, but important. Throughout the spring 2018 semester, MCP faculty continued to collectively prepare and finalize the self-study report for the PAB accreditation candidacy. In these meetings, MCP core faculty also took a stock of their 2016 strategic plan accomplishments and also reviewed future strategic actions going forward to improve the program to fully comply with the PAB's accreditation standards. Faculty will relook at the curriculum map to clearly map courses with their learning outcomes as 1=introduced, 2=reinforced, 3= emphasized.