

Urban Planning and Environmental Policy Masters Course Descriptions

UPEP 800 - The Growth and Development of Cities (3)

Examines the forces that have prompted urban development and shaped urban areas throughout human history. Focuses on the historic relationships between cultural influences and theoretical concepts and their impact on contemporary patterns, trends and problems of urban development.

UPEP 801 - Planning Theory and Practice (3)

Examines the intellectual heritage and procedural approaches shared by practitioners working in all areas of contemporary planning practice. Focuses on the general area of planning theory and ethical issues.

UPEP 802 - Quantitative Methods in Planning (3)

Utilizes computer-based analytical tools for planning analysis, and descriptive and influence statistics as applied to public policies in planning and environmental policy. The software package SPSS is the working tool of the class.

UPEP 803 - Research Methods and Evaluation in Environmental Planning (3)

Examines methods of investigation and analysis, the formulation of theory, appropriate research and data gathering techniques, data preparation and data processing, measures of association and statistical significance, and methods of addressing environmental quality.

UPEP 804 - Introduction to Site Design (3)

Focuses on the study and evaluation of the developed environment, with particular emphasis on those aspects of the development process that result in “better” physical forms. An appreciation of the architectural and design elements of land-use development is stressed.

UPEP 805 - Plan Preparation Studio (3)

Under the supervision of faculty members, students create planning projects that address solutions to real world issues facing communities and public service organizations.

UPEP 806 - Land-Use and Environmental Law (3)

Provides a basic framework of important environmental laws and a survey of critical cases, policy decisions and legal history. Addresses regional, national and international issues, with a focus on inter-jurisdictional problem systems in different localities.

UPEP 810 - Land-Use Control Policy and Regulation (3)

Discusses all aspects of public land – usage policy and legislation, implementing governmental actions, land use control exercised by several levels of government, and practice and impacts of zoning on growth management.

UPEP 811 - Introduction to GIS in Urban Planning (3)

Examines relational databases in the context of urban and environmental planning and focuses on geographic information systems for collecting and displaying spatial information.

UPEP 812 - Theories of Urban Form and Design (3)

Discusses idealized urban forms, theories and models of urban form as they relate to the function and location of urban activities.

UPEP 813 - Introduction to Land-Use Planning (3)

Introduces students to the organization and conduct of local land-use planning as practiced in Texas. The course covers Texas statutes and the General Plan, specific plans and how to prepare them, and how to manage a planning department.

UPEP 821 - Comparative International Topics in Transportation (3)

Encompasses comparative planning and policies in transportation and compares various models of transportation in developed and developing countries. Examines the effects of and relationship between transportation and economic development.

UPEP 841 - Application of Geographic Information Systems in Urban Planning (3)

Focuses on GIS and its application to both urban planning and environmental policy. Topics will include data discovery, databases design, construction, modeling and analytical measurements.

UPEP 844 - Multivariate Analysis Method (3)

Multivariate statistical methods are used to analyze land use, environmental and other large data sets. Topics include multiple regression analysis, non-linear models, path analysis and log-linear models. Causal modeling of cross-sectional data is emphasized.

UPEP 850 - Urban Infrastructure, Planning and Policy (3)

Analyzes and examines methods and procedures used in planning basic urban infrastructure systems. Centralized and decentralized systems are compared and case studies are utilized.

UPEP 851 - Waste Management and Remediation: Air, Water and Soil (3)

Examines current approaches to the disposal of hazardous wastes and the management and disposal of urban waste, focusing on alternatives such as recycling.

UPEP 852 - Environmental Impact Assessment (3)

Explores environmental impact assessment processes and methods from a theoretical and applied perspective. The philosophy and statutory basis of the assessment process is reviewed; the broader planning processes for jurisdiction are emphasized.

UPEP 860 - Theory, History and Practice of Community Development (3)

Explores the theory, history, methods and practice of local community development and examines the historical roots of community involvement and action.

UPEP 861 - U.S. Housing Planning and Policy (3)

Surveys the residential environment from economic and sociological perspectives and discusses the behavior of individuals and institutions in the housing and mortgage markets. Emphasizes the impact of federal, state and local policies on housing markets, housing availability and family welfare.

UPEP 862 - Sustainable Communities (3)

An examination of sustainable communities and the environmental, social, economic, political and design standards that underlie them. Case studies of cities, towns and development projects are utilized.

UPEP 863 - Citizen Participation in Planning Process (3)

Examines the role of citizens and citizen organizations in the city planning process, the effectiveness of different organizational models in various situations and models for citizen involvement.

UPEP 864 - Introduction to Real Estate (3)

An introduction to methods of financial analysis for real estate investment. Topics include methods of valuation, each flow forecasting, computer modeling, and taxation and leverage structure. Emphasizes the financing of individual projects.

UPEP 871 - Environmental Values and Ethics (3)

A detailed exploration of the normative debate surrounding environmental issues – the foundation of environmental economics, questions about the value of endangered species, concerns of future generations and obligations toward equity.

UPEP 872 - Methods of Project Analysis (3)

Provides an understanding of planning evaluation methods and processes employed in the review of development proposal, site plans and public policies.

UPEP 873 / 874 / 875 - Special Topics (3) Focuses on selected topics.

UPEP 889 - Thesis (3) Independent research approved by a faculty committee.

UPEP 890 - Internship (3) Internship with a local planning agency or firm.

A successfully completed thesis indicates that students are capable of independent research and have mastered the theory, methods, and understanding that underlie a particular area in urban planning and environmental policy.