

Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy, Ph.D.

Today's complex urban, social, and environmental issues can best be understood by researchers who can work across disciplinary boundaries, and who understand the relationship of research to action. For example, efforts to control transportation problems by building neighborhoods that encourage alternatives to the automobile require an understanding of travel behavior and human interactions with the built environment. Understanding how to reduce tobacco use requires an appreciation of how behavior is shaped by programmatic interventions, community settings and norms, and policy tools. Environmental cooperation across national borders often requires understanding of political processes, infrastructure systems, and metropolitan structure and governance in regions, such as the U.S.-Mexico border, where population is concentrated in urban settlements that span the border. And, issues of public safety are increasingly related to the design of public and private spaces, and how those spaces are used and regulated.

In all of these areas, public and private officials are increasingly working on topics that span the boundaries of several traditional academic disciplines. The Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy (UEPP) doctoral program at the University of California, Irvine trains scholars for national and international prominence in the analysis of social problems related to the built, natural, and institutional environments. Faculty members and students combine perspectives from urban planning, public policy, and design behavior. The Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy Ph.D. is based on the Department's internationally prominent research and teaching strengths, including design-behavior research, environmental policy, health promotion and policy, and urban and community development. Students in the Ph.D. program take a common core of classes, and then specialize in study related to their research interests. Students may design their own specialization or may follow the guidelines provided to specialize in Policy and/or Urban and Regional Planning. In either case, the elective courses must be approved by the student's faculty advisory committee.

Program Details

The Ph.D. program consists of four components: course work, comprehensive exams, advancing to candidacy, and dissertation research, writing, and defense. Each component is described below. A typical pattern for completion of requirements is the following:

Years 1 and 2: Take required departmental courses supplemented by electives.

September after year 2: Take comprehensive exams.

Year 3: Finish required course work, write and defend dissertation prospectus, advance to candidacy.

Years 4–6: Dissertation research and writing (students are expected to complete and defend their dissertations within nine quarters of advancing to candidacy).

Students must also TA for at least one quarter. The normative time for completion of the Ph.D. in Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy is six years, and the maximum time permitted in seven years.

Requirements

The following courses are required of all students and must be completed before advancement to candidacy:

A. Complete the following:

UPPP 297	Research Design
UPPP 209	Qualitative Research Methods: Overview
SOCECOL 264A	Data Analysis (or equivalent)

B. Complete one advanced research methods course

C. Two courses providing disciplinary/theoretical orientation

D. Two quarters of UPPP 298 or UPPP 299

E. Nine electives

Graduates with a doctorate degree in Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy are employed in a wide array of activities, ranging from university teaching and research, to administrative and research-oriented positions in governmental agencies, international organizations, nonprofit organizations, and private consulting practices.