(Program Assessment Report)

**PROGRAM INFORMATION**

Date submitted: May, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Program(s):</th>
<th>Master of Urban Planning</th>
<th>Department:</th>
<th>Urban &amp; Regional Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department Chair:</td>
<td>Prof. Asha Weinstein Agrawal</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>4-5875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Prepared by:</td>
<td>Rick Kos, AICP</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>4-5853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Self-Study due:</td>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
<td>E-mail:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rickkos@gmail.com">rickkos@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ARCHIVAL INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>WSQ 216E</th>
<th>Person to Contact:</th>
<th>Rick Kos</th>
<th>4-5875</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Bldg/Room #)</td>
<td>(Name)</td>
<td>(Phone)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OVERVIEW**

This report of program-level learning objectives (PLOs) for the Urban & Regional Planning Department includes most, but not all of our PLOs, consistent with similar reports from previous semesters and according to the general assessment schedule shown on the following page.

A comprehensive assessment that embodied all of our PLOs was prepared in spring 2011 since our program was being reviewed for accreditation at that time.

The department will be working in the coming academic year to reevaluate our PLOs in light of new accreditation standards published this semester from our external accreditation board.

---

1 Note: Schedule is posted at: http://www.sjsu.edu/ugs/programplanning/

2 Assessment schedule is posted at http://www.sjsu.edu/ugs/assessment
Please send any changes to the schedule or to student learning outcomes to Jackie Snell jacqueline.snell@sjsu.edu
## SCHEDULE OF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td></td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6c</td>
<td>C,D,I</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C,I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,I</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,D,I</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,D,I</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D,I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,I</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D,I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D,I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8c</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,D,I</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D,I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D,I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D,I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,I</td>
<td>C,D,I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>C,D</td>
<td>C,I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Codes:**  
- **C** = Collected Assessment Data;  
- **D** = discussed by faculty;  
- **I** = implemented changes  

*Note: This template is based on a five-year program planning cycle. If your program planning follows another cycle (e.g., based on accreditation), please feel free to add (or subtract) columns as necessary.
**PLO-1**

*Apply the history and theory of planning in relation to social and economic structures, including, but not limited to, such characteristics as income, race, ethnicity, and gender.*

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:
The Literature Review assignment in URBP-200 (Seminar on Urban and Regional Planning).

Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO.

**This PLO was first assessed in:**
Fall, 2005

**This PLO was subsequently assessed in:**
Spring, 2006
Fall, 2006
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011

**Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:**
- In 2007, a ‘City History Assignment’ and ‘Interview with Practicing Planner Assignment’ was used in place of the Ethics assignment
- Past instructors have considered further improving the directions in the assignment to make expectations clearer for the students
- Past instructors have considered adjustments to the grading rubric to better reflect the PLO.
- In 2011, the assessment tool was changed from the Ethics assignment to the Literature Review assignment for this PLO

**Evidence of student learning after the change:**
In Fall, 2005 65% of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better
In Fall, 2010 100% of students achieved the same.
In Fall, 2011 93% of students achieved the same.

**Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?**
One instructor noted: “need to create a separate assignment for PLO 1 – including as a part of the Literature Review assignment is not effective”.

Another instructor noted: “I provided detailed feedback on parts 1 & 2 of the Literature Review Assignment, which enhanced the quality of work. Part 2, however, was written in outline form so some writing issues were not caught. To improve this outcome, I will either change part 2 to prose or have students bring their almost final report to class for peer review”.
**PLO-2**
*Understand the ethics of professional practice and behavior, including the relationship to clients and the public, and the role of citizens in a democratic society.*

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:
The Ethics assignment in **URBP-200** (Seminar on Urban and Regional Planning).

Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO. Specifically, the criterion under consideration was to develop an understanding of the ethics of professional practice and behavior, including the relationship to clients and the public, and the role of citizens in a democratic society.

This PLO was first assessed in:
Fall, 2005

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:
Spring, 2006
Fall, 2006
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:
- In Spring 2007, an ‘Ethics Analysis Assignment’ was used in place of the Ethics assignment and a grading rubric was redesigned to specifically focus on the PLO. Students at that time needed to earn a grade of B+ or higher to meet the PLO. In that semester, 86% of students met the criteria. It appears that subsequent instructors returned to using a grade of ‘B’ as the threshold.
- Aside from the Spring 2007 semester described above, no other adjustments have been made to the curriculum because 97-100% of students met the criteria each semester since data collection began in Fall, 2005.

Evidence of student learning after the change:
In Fall, 2005 **100%** of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.
In Fall, 2010 **100%** of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.
In Fall, 2011 **97%** of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?
One instructor noted: “I did a lecture session and activities on this element prior to submission of this assignment.”
PLO-3
Understand the role of government and citizen participation in a democratic society and the balancing of individual and collective rights and interests.

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:
The UrbanPlan assignment (Government/Citizen Participation component) in URBP-200 (Seminar on Urban and Regional Planning).

Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO. Specifically, the criterion under consideration was to develop an understanding of the role of government and citizen participation in a democratic society and the balancing of individual and collective rights and interests.

This PLO was first assessed in:
Fall, 2005

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:
Spring, 2006
Fall, 2006
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:
- In Fall, 2006 the instructor noted that “because the assignment used to assess this PLO overlaps with a similar assignment in URBP 225, another core course in the department, a new assignment will be developed for future semesters which will capture the same PLO, but in a manner that is not duplicated elsewhere in the curriculum. Also the threshold for determining PLO accomplishment would be raised from “B” to "B+.” This change was implemented in Spring, 2007 as described below.
- In Spring 2007, an 'Interview with a Professional Planner Assignment' was used in place of the Ethics assignment and a grading rubric was redesigned to specifically focus on the PLO. Students at that time needed to earn a grade of B+ or higher to meet the PLO. In that semester, 86% of students met the criteria. The slight decrease in the percentage of students achieving this PLO might be a result of raising threshold for achieving this PLO. More monitoring is required before further action is contemplated. It appears that subsequent instructors retuned to using a grade of ‘B’ as the threshold.
- Aside from the Spring 2007 semester described above, no other adjustments have been made to the curriculum because 100% of students met the criteria each semester since data collection began in Fall, 2005.

Evidence of student learning after the change:
In Fall, 2005 100% of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.
In Fall, 2010 100% of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.
In Fall, 2011 97% of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?
One instructor noted: “Use a different assignment for PLO 3 – while UrbanPlan covers these issues, I believe there are more effective mechanisms for students to learn about and demonstrate their learning on this issue.”. Another instructor noted: “I held a lecture on this topic to help students understand the process. Next time, I plan to include an activity on the pros & cons of hiring, appointment & election to ensure they understand the process.”
PLO-4
Interpret case laws relevant to the field of urban and regional planning and application of these laws to realistic hypothetical situations.

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:
The final exam in URBP-229 (Planning and Environmental Law).

Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO. Specifically, the criterion under consideration was to develop an understanding of interpreting case laws relevant to the field of urban and regional planning and application of these laws to realistic hypothetical situations.

This PLO was first assessed in:
Spring, 2005

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:
Spring, 2006
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
(not assessed in Fall, 2011)

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:
- In Spring, 2006 the instructor noted that more in-class participation needed to be encouraged to facilitate better understanding of this learning objective.

Evidence of student learning after the change:
In Spring, 2005 63% of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.
In Fall, 2010 100% of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?
- After the curriculum change listed above was implemented, the percentage of students meeting the learning objective increased from 83% to 94%, suggesting that the changes were beneficial.
- In Fall 2010 the instructor noted: “The Final was a very difficult one this semester, and I am surprised my students did so well. The only thing I might do differently in the future would be to make the exam more challenging. I also plan to make the class more interactive than it currently is, encouraging students to be more forthcoming with what they have learned and sharing it with their classmates”.

**PLO-5**

*Understand the contexts in which planning takes place, focusing particularly on agencies conducting planning or employing planners, and the processes by which plans are made and implemented.*

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:
The written portion of the final written assignment in **URBP-225** (Land Use and Urban Planning).

Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO. Specifically, the criterion under consideration was measured with an exercise in which students created a proposal for a planning effort within a community in the Bay Area as the basis for assessing the student’s understanding of:

- (a) key planning “tools” (i.e., mechanisms/techniques/approaches) studied in the course (including but not limited to General Plans, Specific Plans, Revitalization Plans, Redevelopment Area Plans, Policy Studies, Design Guidelines, Zoning, Development Agreements, etc.)

- (b) the context for the appropriate use of one of these mechanisms

- (c) the general process for creating and implementing one of these approaches

In general, this PLO assists students with developing an understanding of the contexts in which planning takes place, focusing particularly on agencies conducting planning or employing planners, and the processes by which plans are made and implemented.

**This PLO was first assessed in:**
Spring, 2006

**This PLO was subsequently assessed in:**
Spring, 2006
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011

**Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:**
- In Spring, 2006 the instructor noted that more emphasis was needed on the importance of following assignment instructions.
- In Spring, 2007 the instructor noted: “review of assignment instructions and reinforcement of course principles helped the students achieve PLO 5”.

**Evidence of student learning after the change:**
In Spring, 2006 **92%** of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.
In Fall, 2010 **100%** of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.
In Fall, 2011 **100%** of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.

**Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?**
The instructor noted: “Review of assignment instructions and reinforcement of course principles helped the students achieve PLO 5”.
PLO-6a

*Design and conduct first-hand research.*

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:

Scores earned by students earned in Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 on the masters project grading rubric. The two outcomes and their subsections are listed below. A minimum score of 8 is needed for Outcome 1, and a minimum score of 10 is needed for Outcome 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome 1. Demonstrates ability to conceptualize problems from complex, real world situations so the problems are meaningful to clients, and are research worthy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Are the research <strong>questions</strong> and/or <strong>goals</strong> well defined and clearly stated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does the author demonstrate in-depth familiarity with relevant <strong>literature</strong> on the subject?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is the <strong>methodology</strong> appropriate to answer the research question(s)?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome 2. Demonstrates ability to collect, analyze, and synthesize information from multiple sources.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Is the <strong>data collected</strong> sufficient in quality and depth to answer the research question?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is the <strong>analysis</strong> direct, competent, and appropriate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Are the <strong>conclusions</strong> sophisticated and based on the results of the analysis, as a logical extension of the findings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Does the author show how his/her analysis and findings fit into the larger <strong>context</strong> of the literature and current professional practice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This PLO was first assessed in:

Spring, 2006

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:

Spring, 2007
Spring, 2008
Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:

- Instructors emphasized the importance of designing and conducting first-hand research in Phase 1 of URBP 298.
- Increased the threshold so that now students need to obtain a score of 3 out of 4 on each of the Outcomes 1 to 6 of the URBP 298 grading rubric to achieve PLO # 6a.
- The URBP 298 grading rubric was substantially revised for Spring 2007.
- In order to improve the quality of the URBP 298 - Master’s Report (and thereby enhance the student learning on outcomes 6a, 6b and 6c) the faculty in Spring, 2007 decided to make several changes to the structure of the Master’s Planning report. The major one being strengthening the lecture component of the Phase 1 of the Planning Report (now called URBP 298 A). From Spring 2008 onwards the students would be required to attend a pre-298 workshop the semester before they plan on enrolling in URBP 298A. They would also be required to submit a preliminary research proposal few weeks before the beginning of the semester in which they plan on enrolling in URBP 298A.
- It was decided that students need to get a minimum of 8 out 12 on Outcome 1 to pass URBP 298.
- Instructors continued to strengthen Phase 1 of the Planning report (URBP 298A).

Evidence of student learning after the change:

- In Spring, 2008 **82.5%** of students met the learning objective.
By examining 67 grading rubrics for Fall, 2008; Spring, 2009; Fall, 2009; Spring 2010 and Fall, 2010, 95.5% of students met the learning objective by achieving the minimum score in Outcomes 1 and 2 on the masters project grading rubric.

By examining 15 grading rubrics for Fall, 2011, 100% of students met the learning objective by achieving the minimum score in Outcomes 1 and 2 on the masters project grading rubric.

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?

- Continue to promote effective first-hand research techniques in URBP-298A classes and in individual advising sessions with students
- Continue to log URBP-298B grading rubrics in a master database after each semester to track progress in meeting student learning objectives.
PLO-6b
Frame research questions and hypotheses.

The two assessment tools used to measure student learning are:
- Scores earned by students earned on criterion 1 in Outcome 1 on the masters project grading rubric. The outcome and criterion are listed below. Students need to earn a minimum score of 3 (on a scale of 1-4) in this section of the grading rubric to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning objective. A score of 3 of the rubric corresponds to a value of 1.5 (since the score is weighted with a value of 0.5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome 1. Demonstrates ability to conceptualize problems from complex, real world situations so the problems are meaningful to clients, and are research worthy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Are the research questions and/or goals well defined and clearly stated?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In URBP-204A (Quantitative Methods I), earning a score of 36 or greater (out of 40) on question #1 of the mid-term exam.

This PLO was first assessed in:
Fall, 2005

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:
Spring, 2006
Fall, 2006
Spring, 2007
Spring, 2008
Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:
- Instructors continue to emphasize the importance of framing research questions in Phase 1 of URBP 298.
- In Spring, 2006, increased the threshold so that now students need to obtain a score of 3 out of 4 on Outcome 1 to achieve PLO #6b.
- The URBP 298 grading rubric was substantially revised for Spring 2007.
- In order to improve the quality of the URBP 298 - Master's Report (and thereby enhance the student learning on outcomes 6a, 6b and 6c) the faculty in spring 2007 decided to make several changes to the structure of the Master’s Planning report. The major one being strengthening the lecture component of the Phase 1 of the Planning Report (now called URBP 298 A). From Spring 2008 onwards the students would be required to attend a pre-298 workshop the semester before they plan on enrolling in URBP 298A. They would also be required to submit a preliminary research proposal few weeks before the beginning of the semester in which they plan on enrolling in URBP 298A.
- In Fall, 2008 it was decided that students need to earn a minimum of 8 out 12 on Outcome 1 to pass URBP 298.

Evidence of student learning after the change:
- In Spring, 2008 **82.5%** of students met the learning objective for URBP-298A.
- In Spring, 2008 **74%** of students met the learning objective for URBP-204A.
- By examining 67 grading rubrics for Fall, 2008; Spring, 2009; Fall, 2009; Spring 2010 and Fall, 2010, **91%** of students met the learning objective by achieving the minimum score on criterion 1 of Outcome 1 on the masters project grading rubric.
- In Fall, 2010, **83%** of the students met the learning objective in URBP-204A.
By examining 15 grading rubrics for Fall, 2011, 100% of students met the learning objective by achieving the minimum score on criterion 1 of Outcome 1 on the masters project grading rubric.

In Fall, 2011, 95% of the students met the learning objective in URBP-204A

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?
- Continue to promote effective techniques for framing research questions and hypotheses in URBP-298A classes and in individual advising sessions with students
- Continue to log URBP-298B grading rubrics in a master database after each semester to track progress in meeting student learning objectives.
- In Fall, 2010 the instructor of URBP-204A noted: “Need to focus more on the difference between (1) concept and conceptions and (2) independent and dependent variables. Also need to focus more on the probable source of quantitative urban planning data.
- In Fall, 2011 the instructor of URBP-204A once again made the suggestion listed above and added, “Also need to expand the writing from the analysis”.
**PLO-6c**
*Analyze and synthesize data from multiple sources.*

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:
Scores earned by students earned in Outcome 2 on the masters project grading rubric. The outcome and its subsections are listed below. A minimum score of 10 is needed for Outcome 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome 2. Demonstrates ability to collect, analyze, and synthesize information from multiple sources.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Is the data collected sufficient in quality and depth to answer the research question?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is the analysis direct, competent, and appropriate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Are the conclusions sophisticated and based on the results of the analysis, as a logical extension of the findings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Does the author show how his/her analysis and findings fit into the larger context of the literature and current professional practice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This PLO was first assessed in:
Fall, 2005

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:
- Spring, 2006
- Spring, 2007
- Spring, 2008
- Fall, 2010
- Fall, 2011

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:
- Instructors continue to emphasize the importance of analyzing and synthesizing data from multiple sources in Phase 1 of URBP 298.
- The URBP 298 grading rubric was substantially revised for Spring 2007.
- In order to improve the quality of the URBP 298 - Master's Report (and thereby enhance the student learning on outcomes 6a, 6b and 6c) the faculty in spring 2007 decided to make several changes to the structure of the Master’s Planning report. The major one being strengthening the lecture component of the Phase 1 of the Planning Report (now called URBP 298 A). From Spring 2008 onwards the students would be required to attend a pre-298 workshop the semester before they plan on enrolling in URBP 298A. They would also be required to submit a preliminary research proposal few weeks before the beginning of the semester in which they plan on enrolling in URBP 298A.
- In Fall, 2008 it was decided that students need to earn a minimum of 10 out 14 on Outcome 2 to pass URBP 298.

Evidence of student learning after the change:
- In Spring, 2008 **82.5%** of students met the learning objective.
- By examining 67 grading rubrics for Fall, 2008; Spring, 2009; Fall, 2009; Spring 2010 and Fall, 2010, **98.5%** of students met the learning objective by achieving a minimum score of 10 on Outcome 2 on the masters project grading rubric.
- By examining 15 grading rubrics for Fall, 2011, **100%** of students met the learning objective by achieving a minimum score of 10 on Outcome 2 on the masters project grading rubric.

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?
- In spite of continuous increase in threshold for achieving this PLO, the percentage of students achieving this PLO has remained high.
- Continue to promote effective techniques analyzing and synthesizing data from multiple sources in URBP-298A classes and in individual advising sessions with students
- Continue to log URBP-298B grading rubrics in a master database after each semester to track progress in meeting student learning objectives.
PLO-7

Apply statistical and other analytic techniques, as well as computer methods, to define planning problems, generate alternatives, and evaluate their consequences. Use census data to inform policy formulation.

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:
The cohort-component model assignment in URBP-204B (Quantitative Methods II).

Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO. Specifically, the criterion under consideration is as listed above.

This PLO was first assessed in:
Spring, 2006

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:
Spring, 2006
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
(not assessed in Fall, 2011)

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:
- In Spring, 2006 and Spring, 2007 the instructor used the “Quality of Life Indicator Assignment” to measure this PLO – it has since been changed to the cohort-component model assignment
- In Spring, 2006 the instructor noted: “use census data to inform policy formulation….revise the relevant section of the syllabus and refine Excel spreadsheet template and its documentation.
- In Spring, 2007 the instructor noted: “this exercise was moved to the start of the semester instead of the end of the semester as was the case in past terms. This was a major mistake as the exercise was too difficult for several students who were not fully competent in Excel. In Spring 2008 this exercise will be returned to the end of the semester at which time all students will have more experience with Excel. Instructions will be revised and the Excel spreadsheet template will be revised to be clearer.

Evidence of student learning after the change:
In Spring, 2006 96% of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.
In Fall, 2010 100% of students earned a grade of ‘B’ or better.

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?
- In Fall, 2010 the instructor noted: “reinforce the need to think of the models as flexible methods and tools to be used throughout the planning field”
The assessment tools currently used to measure student learning are:

- The Literature Review assignment in URBP-200 (Introduction to Urban and Regional Planning). Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO. Specifically, the criterion under consideration is as listed above.
- Scores earned by students earned in Outcome 3 on the masters project grading rubric. The outcome and its subsections are listed below. A minimum score of 8 is needed for Outcome 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome 3. Demonstrates ability to communicate effectively in writing and by expressing concepts in visual terms (maximum score: 12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Is the material logically organized, so that a reader can easily follow the writer’s train of thought?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Is the writing grammatically correct and free of typos?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Do tables and figures add useful/important information for the reader?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Is the report attractive and professional in appearance?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Are citations included where appropriate, and are footnotes and bibliography properly formatted?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the past, other assessment tools were considered:

- In Spring, 2006 the instructor of URBP-204B gave a quality of life indicator assignment (this assessment tool has not been used since, though 96% of students achieved the PLO at that time).
- In Fall, 2006 the instructor of URBP-200 gave ethics analysis and planning commission analysis assignments (this assessment tool has not been used since, though 93% of students achieved the PLO at that time).

This PLO was first assessed in:

Fall, 2005

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:

Spring, 2006
Fall, 2006
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:

- In Spring, 2007 the threshold was increased so that now students needed to obtain a score of 3 out of 4 on each of the Outcomes 7 to 11 of the URBP 298 grading rubric to achieve PLO # 8a. Also, instructors have urged continued use of 298 proof-readers.
- Instructor to encourage out-of-class improvement in writing skills.
- Instructor of URBP-204B considered revising the relevant section of the syllabus including organizational guidelines for effectively relating theoretical concepts to conditions revealed by “ground truthing” observed conditions.
- Instructor of URBP-200 considered new grading rubrics that would be tailored to better reflect and capture student achievement as related to this PLO.

Evidence of student learning after the change:

For URBP-200:

- In Fall, 2005 68% of students met the criteria
In Fall, 2006 91% of students met the criteria
In Fall, 2010 82% of students met the criteria
In Fall, 2011 86% of students met the criteria

For URBP-298:
- In Spring, 2006 100% achieved a score of 8 out of 12 on Outcome 3 (thus achieving the PLO).
- In Spring 2007, 93% of students earned the same
- In Fall, 2010 97% of students earned the same
- In Fall, 2011 100% of students earned the same.

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?

- Continued faculty monitoring of completed 298-B grading rubrics
- Instructors to encourage out-of-class improvement in writing skills
- One instructor of URBP-200 in Fall, 2011 noted: “I provided detailed feedback on parts 1 & 2 of the Literature Review Assignment, which enhanced the quality of work. Part 2, however, was written in outline form so some writing issues were not caught. To improve this outcome, I will either change part 2 to prose or have students bring their almost final report to class for peer review.”
**PLO-8b**

*Communicate effectively by expressing concepts in visual terms.*

The assessment tools currently used to measure student learning are:
- The Statistical Data Presentation in **URBP-204B** (Quantitative Methods II). Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO. Specifically, the criterion under consideration is as listed above.
- The Final Project Poster Map assignment in **URBP-278** (Introduction to Geographic Information Systems). Students needed to earn at least 40 out of 50 points on the map design component of the final course project. This tool was added as an PLO measure in Fall, 2010.

**In the past, other assessment tools were considered:**
- In Spring, 2006 the instructor of **URBP-204B** gave a quality of life indicator assignment (this assessment tool has not been used since, though 96% of students achieved the PLO at that time). In Spring, 2007 this percentage dropped to 77%.

**This PLO was first assessed in:**
Spring, 2006

**This PLO was subsequently assessed in:**
- Spring, 2007
- Fall, 2010
- (URBP-204B not assessed in Fall, 2011)
- (URBP-278 not assessed in Fall, 2011 since course was not offered – data will be collected after spring, 2012 semester)

**Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:**
- In Spring, 2006 the instructor of URBP-278 proposed revisions to geographic information systems map documentation and instructions; revisions included the provision of instructions for integration of maps, charts, photos, tables and text.

- In Spring, 2007 the instructor of URBP-204B moved the exercise to the start of the semester instead of the end of the semester as was the case in past terms. This was a major mistake as the exercise was too difficult for several students who were not fully competent in Excel. In Spring 2008 the exercise was returned to the end of the semester at which time all students had more experience with Excel. Instructions were revised and the Excel spreadsheet template was revised to be clearer.

**Evidence of student learning after the change:**

For **URBP-204-B**:
- In Spring, 2006 **96%** of students met the criteria
- In Spring, 2007 **77%** of students met the criteria
- In Fall, 2010 **94%** of students met the criteria

For **URBP-278**: (assessment tool instituted in Fall, 2010)
- In Fall, 2010 **94%** of met the criteria.

**Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?**
- In Fall, 2010 the instructor of URBP-204B noted: “stress the point of knowing the audience to refine the level of complexity in all visuals”
In Fall, 2010 the instructor of URBP-278 noted: "Include additional lecture material prior to commencement of final project (i.e. week 12 or 13 of the semester) that places more emphasis on the importance of map clarity to communicate to the intended audience, and include additional, specific techniques to achieve this objective. Also consider including examples of poor cartography to emphasize the points".


**PLO-8c**  
*Communicate effectively through public speaking.*

The assessment tools currently used to measure student learning are:
- The Informational Presentation Assignment in **URBP-213** (Communication Skills for Planners). Students needed to earn a ‘B’ or higher on this assignment to achieve the PLO.

This PLO was first assessed in:
- Fall, 2005

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:
- Spring, 2006
- Fall, 2006
- Fall, 2010
- Fall, 2011

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:
- In Fall, 2005 the instructor of URBP-213 noted: “Although most students completed acceptable work, the instructor plans to devote more time to presentation skills in future semesters to further improve their skills.
- In Spring, 2006 the instructor noted: “Instructor has made various changes in the course that are designed to improve students’ mastery of public speaking, either directly or indirectly:
  - Added a new homework exercise where students assess their vocal delivery style.
  - Slightly increased the time spent in class discussing vocal delivery.
  - Added several short lecture segments that repeat and reinforce a central idea introduced early in the class -- the need to focus a speaking assignment around a central purpose and thesis.
  - Reorganized the semester schedule so that the instructor meets one-on-one with students the second week of class. In the meeting, the instructor gives them feedback on a writing draft they submit. These meetings have several objectives: (1) To show students that the instructor is interested in them as individuals, and thus hopefully to increase their participation level in the class overall. (2) To model the level of careful attention to detail the instructor expects in all their class work, including public speaking assignments.

Evidence of student learning after the change:
- In Fall, 2006 84% of students met the criteria
- In Fall, 2010 73% of students met the criteria
- In Fall, 2011 75% of students met the criteria

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?
- In Fall, 2010 the instructor of URBP-213 noted: “Almost everyone improved from the first presentation”, which suggests that students benefit from multiple applications of similar assignments so that they can learn from their mistakes.
**PLO-9**

*Work effectively as members and leaders of planning teams, and to apply an understanding of interpersonal and group dynamics to assure effective group action.*

The assessment tools currently used to measure student learning are:

- Peer evaluation of teamwork in URBP-201 (Community Assessment). Students are asked to rate the effectiveness of their colleagues in a confidential, anonymous, end-of-semester evaluation. Students complete a rubric using a scale of 1 (ineffective) to 5 (highly effective) with a score of more than 3.5 (between “average” and “above average”), indicating that the students have met the learning objective. The rubric considers these criteria:
  - Participated effectively in group discussions or meeting **during** class sessions
  - Participated effectively in group discussions of meetings **outside of** class sessions
  - Helped keep the group focused on the task
  - Contributed useful ideas
  - **Quality** of work done
  - **Quantity** of work done

- In Fall, 2011, the rating criteria were changed so that students could rate their peers using these criteria:
  - Quality of group meetings discussions
  - Shared useful ideas with one another
  - Assigned individual tasks equitably
  - Conducted work on time
  - Conducted effective QA/QC (e.g., proofreading maps and reports)
  - Easily handled problems as they arose
  - Communicated with one another effectively
  - Prepared useful notes
  - Team leadership was focused

In the past, other assessment tools were considered:

- Fall, 2005: Instructor in one section each of URBP 201 and URBP 203, using the “Peer Evaluation of Team Work” form.
- Spring, 2006: Internship instructor asked the Internship Supervisor to rate the student interns on a scale of 1 to 5 and measured the number of students obtained a score of 3 or above (thus achieving the PLO).
- Fall, 2006: Instructor in two sections of URBP 201 administered teammate peer review evaluation, entire team performance evaluation, and personal reflection and evaluation; objective was to measure the number of students who achieved a score of 4 or higher (thus achieving the PLO).
- Spring, 2007: Assessment of this learning objective was conducted using the "Internship Supervisor’s Evaluation of Student Intern Performance." The students needed to achieve a score of 3 or better on Questions 1 and 4.

This PLO was first assessed in:

Fall, 2005

This PLO was subsequently assessed in:

Spring, 2006
Fall, 2006
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011
Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:

- In Fall, 2005 the instructor of URBP-201/203 noted: “The instructor has observed (and received informal comments from students) that a larger number of students in fact perform below the ‘satisfactory’ level. Other instructors and professionals who take active part in the class project will supplement peer reviews with evaluations. Additional guidelines and practice sessions on providing constructive criticism will be introduced in class.

Evidence of student learning after the change:

- In Spring, 2006 100% of students met the criteria
- In Fall, 2006 91% of students met the criteria
- In Fall, 2007 100% of students met the criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Fall, 2010 97% of students met the criteria. This was calculated using the grading rubric as described in the first section, above, using results from two sections of URBP-201 with 33 students total.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Fall, 2010 students were also asked to complete open-ended comments to describe their participation in the three project phase teams. Selected comments are listed below, which were chosen based upon the insights they reveal into team dynamics and suggesting improvements to pedagogical methods and/or changes to the evaluation rubric:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student x was the hero here. She did a fantastic job of organizing and motivating the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There was a bit of laziness and thus lost time in this group. Roles were not clearly defined until the very end, so no one knew exactly what they were responsible for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This group worked very well together. Unfortunately we were not a complete group the entire time because members missed class during this phase. However, we communicated well and everyone held up their end of the work. Student x was also a GREAT help in this group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This group worked well together. Everyone had fairly clear goals and objectives. However, due to time constraints and the holidays I think we were all rushed in the end. Overall everyone did a good job...some worked more than others! This group had the most difficult tasks to complete as compared to my other two groups and we did a great job at it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Although this team was productive and completed a large amount of work, it was extremely hard to get people to perform at a level that was expected. Some people missed eternal deadlines, did not always respond to emails, and some people simply slacked off on most class dates. The level of respect for teamwork was not experienced to the level it was in phase 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- I felt this writing phase experienced a lack of a strong leadership role and direction/focus. We faced a lot of frustration w/lack of communication from other class members outside of this group. With what we had (only 4 people and missing info), I felt our team pulled together a well-collaborated document effort. Although if we had the needed assistance ad information from outside our group it could have been much stronger of a final document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- We were getting over feet wet, but not as effective as we could have been had we a better idea of the end product, but all-in-all did good based on the knowledge we had at the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Our team really divided into two teams. I’m impressed by the quality of the work they produced though. The three of us have different working approaches, ideas, processes etc. but I think we managed to work well together. I think we all just had different ideas and a bit of a personality clash but that’s what makes this fun.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Student x was an awesome team leader but I feel like she put a lot of work onto herself despite offers from other team members. I think she is a great editor so her leading this team was a good fit. The team as a whole was a bit disconnected at times only because we pretty much took on individual tasks, but overall we communicated well. The only
member I felt was a bit negative was Student x - he seemed to find our tasks (especially the style guide) less than useful for the project so Student x and I had to edit it.

- I felt bad for Student x since this team had a hard time, partly due to waiting on final edited chapters but I think it was also too many people for too few tasks. I think he did a wonderful job as a positive and encouraging team leader and I think Student x and I were especially helpful as we helped create covers, logos and edit graphs for the presentation. Student x received low scores because I don't think he helped with any layouts and Student x was very negative in this team. He seemed very frustrated as well, so perhaps there were underlying reasons I didn't know of.

- So much data work was completed. This team really went above and beyond. Distribution of work was initially even, but a couple people did end up pulling in more work. Some quiet individuals may have felt comfortable to sit back and let the team direct/carry the weight.

- Some aggressive/ineffective communication between some group members = tense environment

- Great team - efficient, flexible and worked well together to power through the work. The only "PLOtdown", understandably, was related to maps (some errors and last minute revisions made) Otherwise, great group effort and team dynamic

- We didn't really need much discussion outside of class as everyone knew what they were responsible for. I am not aware of the amount of work submitted by each person because I never saw the finished deliverables as a whole. Good group, well-focused, clear responsibilities and exchange of ideas

- I really disliked working in this group. An incompetent leader ran it as a dictatorship. The focus was minimal, the exchange of ideas were spoken and then quickly crushed by the iron fist of the almighty leader. I was extremely frustrated by the lack of direction and collaborative effort. I could have easily followed an idea if it was well thought out and consistent but that was about as opposite of reality as it could have been.

- One important thing to note is that our team basically split off into two, almost entirely separate groups. As such, it is hard for me to completely evaluate the efforts of the other half of the group. Student x was in the sort of difficult position of being the "learner" in the mapping group, but he was very responsive and patient. He was a great map proofer.

- Some (most really) of the conflicts that arose in phase 1 became massively amplified throughout phase 2. The stresses of the interpersonal dynamics of this phase have, honestly, left me feeling scarred. I am choosing to use this as a learning experience, but I feel that Student x's passive-aggressive email missives really soured this class for me. He endlessly criticized our work (especially during presentations) but offered no solutions and managed to do very little work himself. We tried rather extensively to avoid bringing the instructors into the process, but when communication failed we came to you - THANK YOU for stepping in.

- This group was an enlightening experience. However, it was also unsuccessful. My time, respect, and integrity were ruthlessly disregarded, possibly because of personal differences & miscommunication and perhaps to redirect accountability. Despite all the drama, none of the maps created were of professional quality - I personally re-did them during the Presentation phase (phase 3). The tension in the group was apparent from the start, and I feel as if "set myself up" by letting Student x & Student x leave the group

---

**FALL 2011**

- In Fall, 2011 100% of students met the criteria. This was calculated using the grading rubric as described in the first section, above, using results from two sections of URBP-201 with 22 students total. The average ratings for each criterion were:

  - Quality of group meetings discussions 4.05
  - Shared useful ideas with one another 4.42
  - Assigned individual tasks equitably 3.68
  - Conducted work on time 4.53
  - Conducted effective QA/QC (e.g., proofreading maps and reports) 4.32
  - Easily handled problems as they arose 4.16
  - Communicated with one another effectively 4.47
Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?

- In Fall, 2010 the instructor of URBP-201 noted:
  - Students might benefit from knowing the criteria with which they will be evaluated, earlier in the semester.
  - Since the work in URBP-201 takes place in three phases, it might be better to have students complete evaluations after each phase while their experience in the phase is fresh in their minds.
  - Instructions for completing the evaluation rubrics should be clearer – some students evaluated themselves (which they were not supposed to do).
  - The qualitative comments that the students add to the evaluation forms appear to be far more useful for assessment purposes than the 1-5 scoring system.
  - The evaluation rubric should be revised to better capture team leader rankings, since almost all students in the class have an opportunity to serve as a team leader across the project’s three phases.
  - Continue with the instructor-led conversations at the beginning and end of the course designed to elicit student concerns, fears, goals, successes related to effective interpersonal and group dynamics. Bolster this by adding one additional discussion on these topics midway through the semester, as a “check in” to gauge effectiveness and to address group dynamic problems earlier in the semester.
**PLO-10**

*Synthesize planning knowledge and apply it to actual planning problems.*

The assessment tool used to measure student learning is:
The "Internship Supervisor’s Evaluation of Student Intern Performance" form that is completed at the end of the internship. The students needed to achieve a score of 3 or better on Question 9, which asks intern supervisors to rank a student on a scale of 1 (very low performance) to 5 (very high performance) on this criterion: “Ability to synthesize planning knowledge and apply it to actual planning problems”.

This PLO was first assessed in:
Spring, 2006

This PLO was most recently assessed in:
Spring, 2007
Fall, 2010
(not assessed in Fall 2011)

Past changes made to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning:
Since 100% of students in past reviews met the criteria of synthesizing planning knowledge and applying it to actual planning problems, no changes were warranted.

Evidence of student learning after the change:
No changes to curriculum or pedagogy were instituted (see above). In Fall, 2010 the internship supervisor evaluation forms from Fall, 2007 to Fall, 2010 were collected. 99% of students during this period met the learning objective. (only 1 student out of 99 did not)

Looking ahead, what further changes might be considered to improve student learning?
Not applicable: students have consistently met this learning objective over the years since data collection began.