

## FAQ's & Facts

### Distinguished Program

Year after year, SJSU Master of Urban Planning (MUP) students receive awards from the American Planning Association. For example, in 2008 students prepared a master plan for San Jose's Urban EcoPark that won the California section of the APA's Academic Award for planning achievement. A graduating student also won the national APA Student Planner Leadership Award in 2008.

### Career Connections

Students find internships or jobs while in the program (and for many, these internships lead to full-time employment). The department faculty, the SJSU Career Center, and peers help students find internships and jobs by posting job ads to an active e-mail list. The department also helps students network with alumni and other local professionals.

Graduates of the MUP program benefit from a strong alumni network of over 600 MUP graduates, many of them working in Northern California.

### Opportunities for Research and Publication

Faculty in the department hire MUP students as research assistants. In addition to providing training in research methods, these jobs offer some students publication opportunities. Past MUP students have teamed up with professors to co-author professional reports, conference papers, and journal articles.

### Flexible Program for All

The MUP program attracts a highly diverse student body—diverse in terms of ethnicity, age, and educational and professional background. Students enter the program with degrees in fields ranging from environmental studies, to political science, to engineering, to journalism, to business. Some students enter the program directly after completing their bachelor's degree, while others begin their MUP studies after having established themselves in a professional career.

The MUP program has been designed to accommodate both working professionals and full-time students. More than half of SJSU MUP students hold full-time jobs and attend the program on a part-time basis, while the others attend the program full-time. Students can decide each semester how many classes to take, allowing them flexibility to balance school, work, and family responsibilities. To accommodate students working full time, most classes meet just once a week and begin at 4:00 p.m. or later.

### San José State University | Department of Urban & Regional Planning

One Washington Square

San José, CA 95192-0185

p. 408.924.5882 f. 408.924.5872

<http://www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/>



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## What Do Urban Planners Do?

Planning professionals devise strategies to help local communities and regions develop in ways that are responsive to the present and future needs of society, socially equitable, and environmentally and economically sustainable.

The major issues planners work to solve cover a wide variety of objectives, including revitalizing neighborhoods, providing affordable housing for all community members, creating sustainable and efficient transportation systems for people and goods, and designing public spaces. Because planning is a highly interdisciplinary field, planners often collaborate with experts in other professions such as civil engineering, social work, public policy, and architecture.

To achieve these goals, planners take on widely varied tasks, from researching and developing policy programs, to designing physical urban landscapes, to facilitating community-based dialogues through which local people decide on the types of change they want to support in their communities.

A master's degree in urban planning equips students to work for many types of employers. Career opportunities exist at the city, county, regional, state, and national government levels, as well as with real estate development firms, transportation and environmental consulting firms, non-profit advocacy organizations, and



research and academic institutions. Alumni of the Master of Urban Planning (MUP) program at San José State University have worked in numerous different specialties within planning,



including work as land-use planners, community development specialists, non-profit and for-profit housing developers, GIS specialists, transportation modelers, and university professors. Many alumni reach the highest levels within their organization, whether serving as the planning director in their community or owning their own consulting firm.

## Graduate Education in Urban Planning at SJSU

San José State University's Department of Urban and Regional Planning offers master's and certificate degree programs in the following concentrations: Community Design and Development, Environmental Planning, Transportation and Land Use Planning, and Applications of Technology in Planning. The MUP degree is accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board. SJSU has the only accredited MUP program in Northern California that can accommodate the educational needs of both full-time students and working professionals who complete the program on a part-time basis.

Students in the department benefit from small class sizes (10-20 students), access to faculty

actively involved in research and public service projects, and classes that engage students in projects with local communities. Many classes work with San José CommUniverCity, a community-university-city partnership that brings together students and faculty to work closely with local residents and city staff in addressing core community issues. Among other achievements, past classes have developed comprehensive neighborhood plans that were later adopted as official city policy. Through these studio classes students get hands-on experience in planning practice and also serve local residents.



San José's location in the southern portion of the San Francisco Bay Area Region, at the heart of Silicon Valley, offers students direct access to local examples of cutting-edge planning practice, numerous lectures and conferences on planning topics, and a wealth of employers who hire students as interns and full-time employees.

## Requirements: MUP & Certificate Programs

The MUP program requires students to complete 48 units of coursework, as well as at least 180 hours of professional work experience in urban and regional planning or a closely related field. Full-time students complete the program in two years, while, part-time students spend either three or four years taking courses.

Certificate students complete 18 units of



coursework, usually over one or two years.

For more information, see <http://www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/programs/>.

## Applying: MUP and Certificate Programs

MUP applicants submit transcripts, three letters of recommendation, and a personal statement. The GREs are not required for students with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. International students who studied at a university where the primary language of instruction was not English must also submit TOEFL or IELTS scores.

Certificate students do not need to formally apply to the program but should consult with the department's Graduate Advisor about how to register for classes.

For more information, see <http://www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/admissions/>.

