

Urban Planning, PhD

ARPUPPHD

Learn how to use geography and planning to address complex challenges. This interdisciplinary program is a laboratory for engaging in pressing issues related to planning, including autonomous vehicles, climate change and social equity.

Program description

Degree awarded: PHD Urban Planning

The PhD program in urban planning educates scholars for positions in leading universities; research institutions; nongovernmental organizations; international multilateral institutions; national, state and local governments; and high-level consulting firms. The program provides a strong foundation for undertaking research in planning, urbanism, urban design and urban sustainability.

The School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning maintains close relationships with many of the communities in the Phoenix metropolitan area that are leading the way on issues like urban climate change, sustainability and transportation planning. Students have opportunities to interact with planning leaders, mentors and community organizations. Students conduct research alongside faculty; take classes focused on current issues in the field; conduct research and reports for local clients; and start building their professional network across the public, private and nonprofit sectors.

Students benefit from a wide variety of coursework and research opportunities in five broad interdisciplinary themes that span the expertise of the faculty within the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning:

- city building and urban structure
- environmental and resiliency planning
- housing, neighborhoods and community development
- spatial analytics and smart cities
- transportation planning and policy

At a glance

- **College/School:** [The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences](#)
- **Location:** [Tempe](#)

Degree requirements

84 credit hours, a written comprehensive exam, an oral comprehensive exam, a prospectus and a dissertation

Required Core (6 credit hours)

PUP 710 Current Planning Theory and Practice (3)

PUP 724 Planning Methods for Doctoral Students (3)

Electives and Research (64 credit hours)

Other Requirement (2 credit hours)

PUP 701 Urban Planning Colloquium (1)

Culminating Experience (12 credit hours)

PUP 799 Dissertation (12)

Additional Curriculum Information

Students take two semesters of PUP 701 for a total of two credit hours.

When approved by the student's supervisory committee and the Graduate College, this program allows 30 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree to be used for this degree.

Up to six credit hours of 400-level courses may be applied to the plan of study.

Admission requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a master's degree in a related field such as urban studies, geography, environmental studies, sustainability, architecture, public policy or public administration from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program and a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. personal statement
4. resume
5. three letters of recommendation
6. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of [English proficiency](#) regardless of their current residency.

The personal statement must be 600 words or fewer and explain the applicant's interest in planning at the doctoral level; academic and professional background and, if appropriate, preparation for the selected area of specialty, which may include written samples or a portfolio; and educational and professional objectives.

Letters of recommendation should be from three faculty members who can attest to the applicant's academic achievements.

Tuition information

When it comes to paying for higher education, everyone's situation is different. Students can learn about [ASU tuition and financial aid](#) options to find out which will work best for them.

Application deadlines

Fall

[expand](#)

Career opportunities

Professionals with expertise in planning research, theory and practice are in high demand across sectors and industries, including institutions of higher education, planning consulting firms and community organizations. Skills in environmental impact assessment, geographical data analysis and community resiliency planning are valuable to organizations and institutions that rely on research-based approaches to solve complex real-world problems.

Career examples include:

- chief sustainability officer
- city and regional planning aide
- environmental restoration planner
- transportation planner
- urban and regional planner
- urban planning teacher, postsecondary

Professional licensure

ASU programs that may lead to professional licensure or certification are intended to prepare students for potential licensure or certification in Arizona. Completion of an ASU program may not meet educational requirements for licensure or certification in another state. For more information, students should visit the [ASU professional licensure](#) webpage.

Contact information

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