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PREFACE

This Student Handbook is a resource for Urban Planning graduate students at the University of Kansas. It contains descriptions of procedures that have become standard practice in the Department, as well as some general guidelines and information. It is suggested that students keep this Handbook as a reference as long as they are in the Department of Urban Planning.

Students are also responsible for knowing certain policies and rules that govern all students at the University of Kansas, and that are reproduced in the Timetable published every semester. In particular, see the section pertaining to “Student Rights and Responsibilities.”

If you have any questions regarding matters discussed herein, or other topics that are not mentioned here, please contact the Department Chair. Any suggestions for improving or expanding this Handbook would also be welcome.

Stacey Swearingen White
Chair
Department of Urban Planning
DEPARTMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

ACADEMICS: ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES, AND GRADES

1. The faculty reaffirms that on the basis of academic freedom, the right to establish policies on assignments, deadlines, and grades for a course rests solely with the instructor(s) of the course, except when there are formal policies adopted by the University Senate or the Faculty Assembly of the School of Architecture, Design and Planning.

2. Each faculty member should have a policy on assignments, deadlines, and grades that is explicitly stated in the syllabus for each course.

3. This policy need not necessarily be uniform for all faculty members, or for all courses taught by a single faculty member.

4. The syllabi for all courses may be reviewed by the entire Urban Planning faculty. The faculty may recommend changes, but it is the prerogative of each individual instructor to make the final decision.

5. All students in a class must be given an equal chance to compete for a grade; that is, no student shall be given preferential treatment.

6. No assignment, deadline, or grade can be changed without the consent of the course instructor(s), except as provided in Section 2.3.2 of the Rules and Regulations of the University Senate. This section deals with cases of sexual harassment, academic misconduct, or clerical error where the faculty member is no longer available.

7. Under policy adopted by the Faculty Assembly of the School of Architecture, Design and Planning, a student may drop a course up to and including the last day of classes in the semester and receive either a W or an F for the course.

8. Under University rules, a student may not drop a course or receive a W after the last day of classes in the semester has passed.

9. At a time in the latter half of each semester, the Department Chair may contact each faculty member and inquire whether he or she would recommend that any student drop a course.

10. It is generally considered that a student should only be given extension of a deadline without penalty for circumstances clearly beyond the control of the student, such as illness, accident, or a severe personal crisis such as a death in the family. It is not generally considered that the pressure of other courses or a job is a legitimate excuse for failing to meet a deadline.

11. The foregoing statement is intended to be a guideline. Each faculty member has the right to decide what circumstances justify the extension of a deadline without penalty. In making such decisions, the faculty member should keep in mind
statement #5 (above). The faculty member may require documentation of the student's claim (such as a note from a doctor verifying illness).

12. No student has the right to a grade of I (incomplete). Any student who desires an I in a course should contact the instructor before the final deadline for assignments in the course. The instructor has the right to decide whether to give a student an I or a grade based on only the assignments completed.

13. Any student who believes an exception to an instructor's policies is justified, or who is dissatisfied with an instructor's actions regarding assignments, deadlines or grades, should first discuss the matter with the instructor.

14. If the student is still dissatisfied, he or she may bring the matter to the attention of the Department Chair. The Chair may, at his or her discretion, attempt to negotiate a compromise between the student and the instructor. The Chair does not have the right to overrule the instructor's decisions.

This policy statement was originally adopted on March 7, 1984.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

University Guidelines
The following statement on Academic Misconduct is taken from Article II, Section 6 of the University Senate Rules and Regulations:

2.6.1 Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes, threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another's work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for the treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research.

Academic misconduct by an instructor shall include, but not be limited to, grading student work by criteria other than academic performance, willful neglect in the discharge of teaching duties, falsification of research results, plagiarizing of another's work, violation of regulations or ethical codes for the treatment of human and animal subjects, or otherwise acting dishonestly in research.

2.6.2 After consultation with the department chairperson, an instructor may, with due notice to the student, treat as unsatisfactory (1) any student work that is a product of academic misconduct, or (2) a student's performance for a course when there are severe or repeated instances of academic misconduct as defined in Section 2.6.1. If an instructor deems other sanctions for academic misconduct by a student to be advisable, or if a student wishes to protest a grade based upon work judged by an instructor to be a product of academic misconduct, or if a faculty member is charged with academic misconduct in connection with the assignment of a grade or otherwise, the case shall be reported to the Dean of the College or School in which the course is offered and processed in accord
with applicable procedures.

2.6.3 If either party to a charge of academic misconduct or to a grade appeal involving a charge of academic misconduct is dissatisfied with the unit level resolution of the charge, he or she may seek review by the Judicial Board in accordance with applicable procedures.

2.6.4 Every instructor shall make clear, at the beginning of each course, his or her rules for the preparation of classroom assignments, collateral reading, notebooks, or other outside work, in order that his or her students may not, through ignorance, subject themselves to the charge of academic misconduct. An instructor has the authority to set reasonable rules for classroom conduct. When an instructor judges that a student's behavior is disruptive or obstructive to learning, the instructor can request that the student leave the classroom. Refusal to comply with a request to leave a classroom can itself be grounds for a charge of academic misconduct.

2.6.5 The following sanctions may be imposed upon a student or an instructor for academic misconduct:

(1) **Admonition:** An oral statement that his or her present actions constitute academic misconduct.

(2) **Warning:** An oral or written statement that continuation or repetition, within a stated period, of actions which constitute academic misconduct may be the cause for a more severe disciplinary sanction.

(3) **Censure:** A written reprimand for actions that constitute academic misconduct. Censure may include a written warning.

Other sanctions which may be imposed upon a student for academic misconduct are:

(4) **Reduction of Grade for specific work:** Treating as unsatisfactory any work which is a product of academic misconduct. Reduction of grade may include the awarding of an F for that specific work.

(5) **Reduction of Grade for the Course:** Reduction of grade may include the assignment of an F in the course. If the charged student dropped or withdrew from the course prior to the outcome of the adjudication, the course will be reinstated and assigned the grade as determined by the outcome of the hearing.

(6) **Exclusion from Activities:** Exclusion from participation in specified privileged or extracurricular activities for a period not exceeding one school year.

(7) **Transcript Citation for Academic Misconduct:** The student’s transcript will state that the student has been cited for academic misconduct. This sanction will include a determination of the final grade in the course. This grade may be an “F.” The statement will be permanent unless the student applies to the University Provost for removal of the statement and the application is granted.
(8) **Suspension from a specific course:** An instructor may suspend a student from the instructor’s section of a course for academic misconduct. In cases involving physical violence or disruptive behavior, the suspension should occur immediately. *In cases where a physical threat is made, the suspension should be reported to the KU Police Department.* During suspension, a student is not permitted to withdraw, pending decision by the hearing committee. A suspended student may complete work for the course only if reinstated. Conditions for re-instatement to the course shall be stated by the instructor at the time of the suspension. These initial conditions are subject to review by the hearing committee. When suspending a student, the instructor shall, before the next meeting of the course, inform the chairperson of the department in which this course is offered. The department chairperson shall notify the student in person or by certified mail (postmarked on or before the day of the next class meeting) of the opportunity to be heard on the suspension. The department chairperson shall also inform the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and other appropriate offices according to guidelines of the academic unit involved. If the student requests a hearing, the appropriate procedures (See Section 2.6.2) of the School or College, or at the department level where feasible, shall be initiated within five working days. The suspension will remain in effect pending review. Because this sanction places an immediate burden upon the suspended student, the department is obligated to act promptly. Options in such review include: reassignment of the student to another section of the course; reinstatement of the student into the course; upholding the suspension. In case of suspension through the end of the semester, a grade will be assigned by the instructor, subject to review by the hearing committee.

(9) **Suspension:** Immediate exclusion from all courses and other specified privileges or activities for a definite period not to exceed two years, subject to review by the hearing committee. The student’s transcript will state that the student is suspended for academic misconduct. The statement will be permanent unless the student applies to the University Provost for removal of the statement and the application is granted.

(10) **Expulsion:** Termination of student status for an indefinite period. The conditions of readmission, if any, shall be stated in the order of expulsion. The student’s transcript will state that the student is expelled for academic misconduct. The statement will be permanent unless the student applies to the University Provost for removal of the statement and application is granted.

Other sanctions which may be imposed upon an instructor for academic misconduct are:

**Recommendation of Suspension:** Recommendation to the Chancellor that an instructor be excluded from teaching and other specified privileges or activities for a definite period not in excess of two years.

**Recommendation of Dismissal:** Recommendation to the Chancellor that an instructor be dismissed from the University staff for an indefinite period.

More than one sanction may be imposed upon a student or an instructor for the same offense or offenses.
2.6.6 All sanctions of Reduction of Grade for Specific Work, Reduction of Grade for the Course, Exclusion from Activities, Transcript Citation for Academic Misconduct, Suspension from a Specific Course, Suspension, and Expulsion that are applied by the College and the Schools or their designated departments will be communicated to the Office of the Provost.

2.6.7 Students who receive a D or F in a course as a result of a sanction of Reduction of Grade for the Course due to a finding of academic misconduct by a unit, school, or Judicial Board hearing body may repeat the course but are not eligible for the grade-replacement provisions of USRR 2.2.8.

Department Guidelines

The following statements are additional specifications to the university guidelines to address academic misconduct.

Department Principles - The Department of Urban Planning is a professional program that aims to prepare students for the urban planning profession. Thus, the Department serves as a screen to prepare to offer the profession graduates that intellectually and ethically demonstrate the profession's standards of honesty, fairness, and truthfulness.

Department Specific Misconduct Definitions - Except as otherwise explicitly allowed by an Instructor, the academic misconduct guidelines shall cover the use of reference materials during examinations, unauthorized collaboration between students on assignments prepared outside of class, and the use of materials previously prepared for another course.

Instructor Responsibility - The instructor shall establish explicit guidelines for academic misconduct in each course syllabus.

Review of Misconduct in Classwork

1) If an instructor decides that a student has been involved in minor academic misconduct, the instructor may give either an admonition or a warning. Such minor violations are typically the result of students misunderstanding of their responsibilities in regard course guidelines.

2) The instructor can decide that the student's misconduct to be a substantial violation. Substantial violations include but not limited to:

   a. The unauthorized copying of another student's work (written, mathematical, spreadsheet, etc.).
   b. Copying the work of existing authors without proper citations.
   c. Downloading text from the Internet into a student report without proper acknowledgment.
   d. Submitting a paper that has already received credit in another course.
   e. Using unauthorized materials (books) and equipment (palm pilots) in comprehensive exams.
3) The instructor will prepare a censure, a written warning, to the student. This censure along with the incriminating evidence will be become part of the student’s permanent file. A censure will involve the instructor issuing a reduction in grade.

4) If the Department Chair decides that the violation merits further sanctions, the Chair can mandate either disciplinary probation or suspension as defined by the University’s guidelines for misconduct.

Review of Misconduct in Comprehensive Examinations

1) If three or more students witness another student using unauthorized materials during a comprehensive exam, they may submit a written, signed statement to the Department Chair. This statement will be their account of the observed academic misconduct.

2) If a written statement is submitted, a committee consisting of the Department Chair, the Comprehensive Exam Monitor, and an additional Urban Planning faculty member will meet and question both the plaintiff students and the accused student. The committee will make a decision on the student’s innocence or guilt and will enter a written statement of their determination into the student’s file. If the committee declares the student’s guilt to be substantial, the written statement will be a censure.

3) If the student is found guilty and it is a first offense, the student must wait to retake the exam during the next scheduled exam period. No special time will be allotted for the student to retake this exam.

Censures and Expulsion

1) If the student receives two censures, the Department Chair has the authority to recommend the student’s permanent expulsion from the Department.

2) If the student disagrees with a declaration of a censure or expulsion, the student may seek review by the University’s Judicial Board.

ADVISING

The Chair of Urban Planning initially advises all students unless a student has already chosen a specialization. When they have chosen a specialization, students are expected to consult with a faculty member who is in the student’s specialization. Regular consultation with your advisor will help ensure you are on track for a timely graduation. We are available, and want to help.
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

I. Objectives of the Comprehensive Examination (Non-Thesis)
   A. To test a student's competency in what the faculty considers to be the central and major issues in the various areas in which students are tested.
   B. To provide a learning experience that encourages students to synthesize the knowledge gained through coursework.
   C. The comprehensive exam allows students to demonstrate that they have the necessary foundation upon which to build a planning career. The exam consists of the student responding to a scenario or case study where students are asked to synthesize knowledge gained coursework and apply it within a particular context.

II. Qualifications to Take Exam
   A. Core Curriculum – The student has completed all courses in the core curriculum. If a full-time student began one’s studies in the spring semester and is in the fourth semester of studies, the student must have completed all core courses and be currently enrolled in UBPL 763 and UBPL 850.
   B. Specialization – The student must have completed the theory and policy course and the methods course in the chosen specialization.

III. Exam Scheduling
   A. Students will receive the exam at 8:00 AM on a Friday and have until 5:00 PM the following Monday to complete the exam. The exam shall be submitted electronically to the specialization advisor. Students are subject to the code of conduct outlined in the Student Handbook.

COMPUTERS

While Urban Planning students will likely find it helpful and convenient to have their own personal computer or laptop, student purchase of specialized software is not expected. When used in Urban Planning courses, such software is made available on computers in the UBPL Student Lab and/or in the School of Architecture, Design, and Planning computer labs.

In addition to the UBPL Student Lab, Urban Planning students have access to the computers in the Bridge Lab (223 Marvin) and the lab in 312 Art and Design at any time those rooms are not scheduled for other activities. Those computers include SPSS and ArcGIS software, as well as a variety of other programs Planning students may find helpful.

The University of Kansas does have software discounts available to students for certain products. See the KU Information Technology web site at http://technology.ku.edu/software/ for more information.
DIRECTED READINGS COURSES

Every semester the Timetable lists a course called "UBPL 701 - Directed Readings," which meets by appointment with an instructor "to be arranged." A Directed Readings course (sometimes called "independent study" at other universities) is a one-on-one course involving a single student and a single instructor. It may be any student and any faculty member. The subject matter is determined by mutual agreement between the student and instructor. Credit may be anything from one to six hours, depending on the amount of work expected of the student.

In the past there has been some confusion concerning the concept of Directed Readings courses. Consequently, the following set of guidelines was prepared to clarify the proper use of such courses:

1. It is the intent of a Directed Readings course to enable a student to undertake independent study, under supervision of a faculty member, in a subject area that is not covered (or only superficially so) by an organized course offered by the University.

2. The initiative for arranging a Directed Readings course rests with the student, and the student should prepare a written proposal. When a student comes to a faculty member and says, "I want to take Directed Readings. What should I do?", then probably there is no justification for Directed Readings.

3. No faculty member is obligated to supervise a Directed Readings course. It is a teaching overload, and not an efficient way to use a faculty member's time. Faculty members are most likely to agree when the subject matter is of personal interest to them.

4. Directed Readings courses normally take one of two forms:
   a. The student conducts a research project or prepares a research paper, meeting with the supervisor as necessary.
   b. The student carries out a program of readings specified by the supervisor and meets with the supervisor regularly to discuss the readings (typically once every two weeks).

5. Be forewarned that a Directed Readings course does not automatically result in a grade of A. The basis for grading should be negotiated by the student and supervisor at the beginning of the course. The supervisor may require the student to take an examination.

6. In general, Directed Readings courses are not scheduled during the Summer Session. The time frame is too condensed, and such courses usually lead to incompletes.

7. In general, faculty members should not give Directed Readings courses in subjects that are being covered in organized courses during the same academic year. It is not the purpose of Directed Readings to reschedule courses for a student's convenience.
8. Exceptions have been made to these guidelines in the past, and undoubtedly some will be made in the future. It is intended to hold the number of exceptions to the minimum and grant them only in cases of genuine hardship.

In many cases a Directed Readings course can provide a highly beneficial experience for a student who is motivated to pursue independent study in a subject of personal interest. This statement is not intended to discourage such courses, but only to prevent some misunderstandings that may occur.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

The Graduate Council has a ruling concerning enrollment for graduate students. It reads as follows:

All graduate students enrolled in master’s graduate programs must be enrolled the semester they complete master’s degree requirements. Master’s students who complete degree requirements during the first week of summer session or within the first 2 weeks of the fall or spring semester are not required to be enrolled for that term unless they were not enrolled during the previous semester.

FACULTY MEETINGS

The elected president of KAPS (Kansas Association of Planning Students) is specifically invited to faculty meetings and is entitled to vote at them. The University of Kansas has a rule requiring student representation on all committees other than Promotion and Tenure. It is also the president’s responsibility to convey the concerns of the students, and a faculty meeting is often the appropriate occasion to do this.

Faculty meetings are open (with the exception discussed below), and any student is welcome to attend. However, no special effort is made to publicize the meetings, other than to notify the president of the student organization.

The faculty goes into closed session, and students are asked to leave, when matters are brought up involving individual persons whose privacy should be protected. Examples of such matters are:

1. Applications for admission
2. Evaluation of the performance of individual students
3. Petitions or grievances from individual students

If you have a concern that you want brought before the entire faculty, you should inform either 1) the president of the student organization, or 2) the Department Chair. Formal petitions are normally given to the Department Chair.
GRADING

The Graduate School uses a grading system based on the letter grades A, B, C, D, and F. A designates above-average graduate work; B, average graduate work; C, passing but below-average graduate work; C-, D and F, failing graduate work. Any course in which a student receives a C-, D or an F cannot be counted towards a graduate degree. A student who receives a grade below C in a required course must take the course again and receive a grade of C or above. However, both grades for the course will count in the student's cumulative grade point average.

Each college and school of the University has its own policy on whether to use the suffixes + or - on grades. The School of Architecture, Design and Planning does use + and - suffixes and they count in grade point averages. However, the University does not permit the grade of A+. Following are the grade points given for each letter grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<td>etc.</td>
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A graduate student is expected to maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0. If a student's cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0, the student may be placed on academic probation for the following semester. If a student on academic probation does not raise his/her cumulative grade point average to 3.0 at the end of the semester, the student may be terminated or continued on probation, at the discretion of the faculty. Each semester the entire Urban Planning faculty reviews the academic records of students and decides on what action to take in problem cases.

A grade of I for Incomplete is given only when unusual circumstances prevented the student from the completion of the course. Examples would be a death in the family or severe illness. A grade of I is not to be given simply because a student did not complete the course work on time. Granting a grade of I is at the discretion of the professor who may place conditions upon this grade, such as the amount of time to complete the work.

To receive the Master of Urban Planning degree, a student must present a record of 48 relevant credit hours and achieve a graduate level grade point average of at least 3.0. This is a requirement of the Graduate School and may not be waived by the Urban Planning faculty. All graduate-level courses must be included in the grade point average.

JOB PLACEMENT

The Department of Urban Planning is not large enough to have a regular job placement officer. Following are some things you can do to help yourself find a job:
1. Prepare a resume and have it evaluated by a faculty member (the Department Chair will be glad to do this). Guidelines for preparing a resume are also covered in the Professional Practice course.

2. Consult the many helpful resources available on-line and in person at the KU Career Center.

3. Systematically check for advertisements of planning jobs. The American Planning Association operates a job listing on its web site. Many magazines advertise planning jobs at least occasionally. For those students interested in pursuing careers with the Federal government, it is encouraged that you visit the official source of jobs for the United States government at www.usajobs.opm.gov. This site allows you to search positions by agency, position title, or by profession.

4. Attend professional meetings and conferences and try to meet practicing planners. News of many jobs is spread by word of mouth, often well in advance of the official advertisement of the openings. Employers are more likely to respond to your resume if they know you personally. APA's National Planning Conference includes a highly organized Job Market, which may be helpful to job seekers.

5. Let the Department Chair know you are in the market and what your interests are. Sometimes phone calls and letters come in that require response within a few days. We try to contact the students whose interests and skills seem to best fit the openings.

How long it will take you to find an acceptable job depends on many factors, one of which is how flexible you are. If your demands are very specific and narrow, it's likely to take you a lot longer. This is particularly true with regard to geographical location. Obviously you've got the best chance if you're willing to go anywhere in the country.

Faculty members occasionally receive job announcements to share. These announcements are circulated to interested alumni and graduating students via e-mail. Be sure to update your e-mail address and read the section on "Using Faculty as References."

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The national organization of planners is called the American Planning Association. It has more than 30,000 members and offices in Washington and Chicago. Membership is open to anyone who pays the dues; members include not only professional planners, but also planning commissioners, city councilpersons, other public officials, and citizens interested in planning.

APA is divided into Chapters, most of which correspond with states. There is a Kansas Chapter and a Missouri Chapter. The Kansas Chapter holds meetings several times a year.

Some of the larger Chapters are subdivided into Sections. Our region has a unique arrangement: There is a Metropolitan Kansas City Section which is a subdivision of both
the Kansas Chapter and Missouri Chapter. The Section usually meets once a month in Kansas City, Missouri or its suburbs. Attending Section meetings is an excellent way to meet practicing planners and, among other things, find out about employment opportunities.

APA has a subsidiary organization intended only for professional planners called the American Institute of Certified Planners. To become a member, a person must meet certain education and experience requirements and pass a written examination (which is a multiple-choice exam administered by Educational Testing Service). A candidate with a master’s degree from an accredited planning school is eligible to try the examination after two years of professional planning experience. The Department of Urban Planning at the University of Kansas is accredited.

Students verified by our Department will have free membership in the American Planning Association for their first year and a reduced membership fee the second year.

There are many other professional and scholarly organizations to which planners belong. Those interested in real estate development often belong to the Urban Land Institute. Those with scholarly interests in urban and regional theory may join the Regional Science Association. Some belong to organizations in related fields such as the American Economic Association, the Association of American Geographers, and the American Sociological Association. Relatively few students join such organizations until after they graduate, although many of them have reduced fees for students.

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

These assistantships are not part of the regular University budget that is funded with appropriations from the State Legislature. They are funded with research grants awarded either to individual faculty members or to research units of the University, such as the Transportation Center or the Energy Research Center. The awards are made by government agencies at all levels, by non-profit organizations, and by private companies.

Since the Department of Urban Planning is an academic unit and not a research unit, no grants are made directly to the Department and it does not employ any research assistants. When faculty members receive research grants, it is the practice for them to select and supervise their own research assistants. When grants are made to research units rather than individual professors, the director of the unit hires the research assistants. Therefore, if you are interested in securing a research assistantship, you should identify and contact those professors who have research proposals pending and also the directors of research units like the Transportation Center. Note that the tenure of research projects does not necessarily coincide with the academic year; some projects may start and/or end in mid-year.

It is important to understand that a research assistantship is a job. It differs from a fellowship, which is essentially an outright gift to a student, in return for which the student is only expected to do well in courses. The sponsor of a research project pays to have specific research performed; research assistants are hired to help the faculty carry out the tasks required to fulfill the contract with the sponsor.
Faculty members who need research assistants are most likely to hire the students they think will be most useful in carrying out the specific tasks required for the project. These may be students having specific practical skills such as writing, or computer programming. Knowledge of specific subjects, such as zoning law or statistics, may be the determining factor. Professors often hire students who have done well in the courses they teach. Many professors prefer to hire students who are already at the University and have proven that they are good graduate students. This means that entering students coming from another university are not often offered research assistantships, unless they have outstanding records. It also means that students who come to KU without financial assistance and do well their first year have a better chance of obtaining a research assistantship for the second year. Still, such assistantships rely on scarce external grant funding.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION

The Kansas Association of Planning Students (KAPS) is our department's student organization. All UBPL students are encouraged to be active KAPS members. Among the functions of KAPS are: to organize academic-related activities, such as UBPL brown bag lunches; to plan social and volunteer events; to gather input and suggestions from students to present to the faculty; and to plan student travel to the annual APA conference. KAPS by-laws are included in Appendix A of this document.

Since KAPS is entirely student-led, its level of activity varies from year to year, depending on the commitment of its members and officers. KAPS elects a president each year. The KAPS president is invited to faculty meetings, where s/he reports on student business, and is eligible to vote on most matters at those meetings.

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

Urban Planning graduate students typically look for summer jobs in planning between their first and second years of study. These jobs are not required, and do not offer academic credit. They do, however, provide excellent work experience that will aid students in their eventual job searches.

Sometimes a student's academic-year internship continues in the summer, with an expansion of available hours. Our faculty Internship Coordinator also shares information received about other pertinent intern positions. Students seeking internships are strongly encouraged to consult with the Internship Coordinator, and to make sure s/he has a current copy of your resume. The Department chair is also happy to visit with students about internship possibilities.

The department does not usually offer summer courses, although other KU departments may have summer course offerings that are of interest to our students.
To complete requirements for the Master of Urban Planning degree, each student must demonstrate attainment of a level of competence adequate for entry into the planning profession. This may be accomplished in either of two ways: 1) passing a comprehensive written examination, or 2) preparing a master's thesis. This set of guidelines concerns the latter option.

In most cases, the faculty does not encourage students to write a thesis. The reason for this is that most students do not anticipate the amount of time and effort involved, not to mention the expense and the discipline of having to meet rather exacting requirements. Experience indicates that most students who have successfully completed theses have had to spend an extra semester in Lawrence. Some students have left Lawrence to take jobs, planning to complete their theses at a later time. Few have actually done so; most of these students never obtained their degrees. This is why the non-thesis, comprehensive examination option was introduced several years ago.

Of course the above statements are not universally true. For example, some of our joint degree programs require a thesis. There have been students who wrote theses and completed their studies in two years. There have also been students who took jobs and finished their theses later.

Since the thesis is a scholarly work, it is most appropriate for those students who wish to go on to study for a doctoral degree. This generally means that the student desires a career in teaching and/or research rather than in professional practice. It is probably true that a student who has written a thesis will have an advantage in applying to a Ph.D. program.

The Urban Planning faculty has adopted the following rule: "Permission for a student to pursue the thesis option is contingent upon the student's achieving a grade point average of 3.5 or better over the first two full semesters of study." The idea behind this rule is that a student with a grade point average below 3.5 is unlikely to gain admission to a doctoral program.

Six hours of course credit is given for the thesis; thus, a student who prepares a thesis need complete only 42 hours of formal courses. The thesis course (UBPL 806) carries variable credit ranging from one to six hours. It is possible to take all six hours in a single semester. The pattern usually recommended is to take three hours in each of two semesters.

**SELECTING A TOPIC**

The thesis is a written report of original research conducted by the student. It is generally understood in the academic world that a Ph.D. dissertation contains a substantial contribution to knowledge in the field, while a master's thesis shows the student's potential for making such a contribution. A review of the literature is not by itself sufficient for a thesis (although most theses include a literature review as one chapter). The application of standard methods and procedures (such as preparation of a comprehensive plan for a particular community) is also not acceptable. However, the
preparation of a plan that involves new methods or an innovative approach would be considered to represent original research.

A student should not elect the thesis option without a strong interest in at least a general subject area. Do not attempt a thesis on a topic about which you feel lukewarm or you will probably never finish it. Narrow your interest down to a topic that is concrete and can be "packaged." Some students initially choose a topic that is overly ambitious and could not be completed in a year of full-time effort. Before proceeding to write a proposal, ask yourself the following questions about your topic:

1. Are the necessary data available?
2. Are there pertinent references available?
3. Are you competent in the methodology you propose to use?
4. Are there faculty members available who know something about the topic and are willing to work with you?
5. Would the research cost money, and if so, where would you get it?
6. Can the project be completed in the time you have available?

There is no single type of topic or format that applies to all theses. The classical model is to state a hypothesis (based on the theory in the field), collect data, and test the hypothesis. Many master's theses do not fit this pattern. Following are some other general types of topics:

1. Evaluation of a planning technique, administrative program, or piece of legislation.
2. Conducting a survey (perhaps by questionnaires or interviews).
4. Application of methodology borrowed from another field to a planning problem.
5. An historical account, such as the biography of a pioneer planner.
6. A case study or set of short case studies.

This list is not exhaustive.

THE PROPOSAL

After selecting a topic, the student should write a brief proposal in consultation with a faculty member who is the prospective supervisor for the thesis. This should include:

1. A general description of the proposed research.
2. Formal statement of hypotheses to be tested (if relevant).

3. Description of the methodology to be used.

4. Explanation of the expected importance of the findings.

5. A condensed outline of the chapters.

6. A list of the most important references.

The proposal must be submitted to the Faculty Thesis Committee no later than the first day of classes of the semester prior to the semester in which the student plans to graduate. The Committee must approve the proposal for the student to pursue the thesis option. For spring (May) graduates, the proposal must be submitted by the start of classes of the preceding fall semester, and the Committee will decide by September 15. For fall (December) graduates, the proposal must be submitted by the start of classes of the preceding spring semester, and the Committee will decide by February 5.

THE COMMITTEE

If the proposal is approved, then the student selects an individual thesis committee to supervise and assist in the research and preparation of the thesis document. This committee shall consist of three persons, as follows:

1. The chairperson of the committee must be a member of the Urban Planning faculty.

2. A second member should also be from the Urban Planning faculty.

3. The third member is to be from outside the Urban Planning faculty in order to provide a broader perspective. Usually this is a faculty member from another department in the University, but it may also be a qualified practitioner who is not connected with the University.

Note that part-time faculty and non-faculty members are not routinely eligible to serve on thesis committees. It is necessary to process a special appointment for such a person to be on a committee, and this requires some proof that the person is qualified by reason of education or experience.

The committee chair is the key individual in supervising the student’s work. The other two committee members (sometimes called the minor members) may do nothing but read and comment on a completed draft of the thesis. However, it is often useful to have a minor member who is especially knowledgeable in methodology you intend to use (such as statistical analysis or computer programming).

It is the student’s responsibility to find committee members and to secure their consent to serve on the committee. No faculty member is compelled to be on a thesis committee.
CARRYING OUT THE WORK

The first step in implementing a thesis proposal is to conduct a thorough search of the literature to learn what has already been published about your subject. You do not want to repeat something that has already been done. Of course, if you have a truly original idea, you may find little or nothing has previously been written about it. But you should not assume this until you check. Anyway, there is probably background material or related work that you should know about.

Keep careful notes as you do your literature search. Put down all the data that you will need to prepare a formal bibliography. It is annoying to have to recheck the sources later to get items that you neglected to record. You may want to write a draft of your literature review chapter right away. However, it is likely that you will come across additional references later and will have to rewrite this.

How you should proceed from this point will vary according to the nature of the research. It may be that the next step will be collecting data from secondary sources, designing a survey form, administering interviews, or simply thinking hard about what you have read. If you are in doubt, consult your committee chairperson. No blanket rules can be given.

As you continue with the work, you should keep your chairperson regularly informed of your progress. There is nothing more disturbing to a faculty member than to have a student disappear for a year and then come in one day and dump a completed thesis draft on his/her desk. Most thesis chairs like to have the student submit drafts of individual chapters as they are completed, so that there will be some warning if the student is headed in the wrong direction. However, your committee chair may prefer a different arrangement.

Many students find it relatively easy to conduct the research, but very difficult to write it up. A period of procrastination before putting anything down on paper is common. There is no magic solution to this problem, but here are some suggestions that may work for you:

1. Don't try to write a perfect version the first time. Accept the fact that you will go through several drafts.

2. Just get something--anything--down on paper and don't worry about whether it is any good, it's organized right, or you have made grammatical and spelling errors.

3. When you have completed a rough draft of a chapter, put it away and work on something else for a while. After some time has elapsed (at least several days), pick it up again and edit it. You may be surprised how good it sounds. Anyway, for most people it is easier to edit something than to write it the first time.

4. Although Chapter One should be short, some students find it the most difficult chapter to write. Some students write other chapters before Chapter One. Another approach is to write a rough draft of Chapter One the first thing and then file it away until you have finished all the other chapters. Then will be the time to rewrite it.
THE EXAMINATION

According to the Graduate School Catalog, "a final general examination in the major subject is required of all candidates for (a master's degree)....In programs where a thesis is written, a thesis defense may be a part of the requirements for the degree; however, such a defense does not take the place of the required general examination in the major field."

It is the practice of the Department of Urban Planning to require each student who prepares a thesis to take an oral examination before the student's thesis committee. This examination consists in part of a defense of the thesis, in which the committee members ask questions and make comments about the thesis draft. The examination also includes a review of the entire course work taken by the student to assure that the student is competent in areas other than the subject of the thesis. No written examination is required of students who prepare a thesis.

Note that the examination is a formal step required by the Graduate School. The Graduate School must be notified in advance of the scheduled date of the examination and must be notified of the results afterwards.

Committee members should receive a complete draft of the thesis at least two weeks before the examination. Each committee member should get an individual copy. Usually the committee members write comments on their drafts and return them to the student at the time of the examination.

The thesis draft submitted for the examination is not the final version of the thesis. It is unknown for a committee to accept a draft at the examination without finding some errors or requesting some changes. These may be relatively easy to make, such as deleting some sections and rewriting certain paragraphs. They may also be difficult, such as reorganizing the entire thesis or writing new chapters. The committee has the option of rejecting the entire thesis and failing the student on the examination.

Passing the examination is not equivalent to acceptance of the thesis; that is a separate step. As discussed above, the student always has some changes to make after the examination. The committee gives its final acceptance of the thesis by signing the title page in the copies that are submitted to the Graduate School.

PREPARING THE FINAL VERSION

After the student passes the examination, he or she makes the changes requested by the committee and then prepares the final version that will become a permanent record of the student's work. The Graduate School has specific rules for the final copy; they are stated in a hand-out that you should obtain. These rules must be strictly observed. If the margins are not large enough, the thesis will be rejected and you will not graduate until the entire thesis is retyped.

While the Graduate School specifies physical things like paper and margins, it does not specify style. Ask your committee chairperson whether you should follow a particular style manual. If not, you may select from any of at least half a dozen style manuals available in any college bookstore. It is important to be consistent throughout the thesis; for example,
don't have the format of your footnotes vary randomly from page to page.

The final step is to submit four hard-bound copies of the thesis to Urban Planning. Two copies are placed in Watson Library, one is kept by Planning, and one goes to the chair of your thesis committee. Refer to the Graduate School hand-out for specific requirements about the bound copies. There is a deadline each semester, usually about five weeks prior to graduation day. If you miss this deadline, you will not graduate until the following semester.

You will probably want to make some extra copies to keep, give to your family, use in job-hunting, etc. It would be courteous to give a copy to each minor member of your thesis committee (although this is up to you). Faculty members sometimes spend a great deal of time on a student's thesis, but at the University of Kansas they do not receive any recognition in terms of salary or relief from other assignments.

USING FACULTY AS REFERENCES

Most students use one or more of their professors as references when applying for jobs. The following are points of advice with respect to this process.

1) Be sure to ask the professor in advance if he or she is willing to serve as a job reference. If they feel they cannot provide a good recommendation for you, a professor will usually suggest that you find someone else.

2) You should inform the professor in advance as to whether the recommendation will be confidential or not.

3) Let the professor know whether you wish to use them as a reference for a single job, or whether they will be serving as a reference for multiple job applications. The professor may appreciate knowing a bit about the job(s) to which you are applying, so as to be prepared to provide a more appropriate reference.

4) Remember, references are only one part of the job application process. The impression you make in an interview, for example, is likely to be more important.
APPENDIX A

Kansas Association of Planning Students (KAPS)
By-Laws (revised March 6th, 2009)

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND CONSTITUENCY SERVED
The name of this organization is the “Kansas Association of Planning Students” and it serves the students enrolled in the Department of Urban Planning at the University of Kansas.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE
The purposes of this organization are:
1. To advance the art and science of planning through student participation;
2. To encourage the exchange of information among student members;
3. To make recommendations to the Kansas and Kansas City Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) and the national student division of APA on matters concerning planning students;
4. To encourage and advise planning students;
5. To help member students participate in the APA;
6. To advance and advocate the collective educational and professional interests of student members;
7. To facilitate access to faculty decision making process.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP
1. Membership is comprised of all graduate students in urban planning who choose to participate.
2. In addition, student members are encouraged to join the national APA, but it is not a requirement for KAPS membership.

ARTICLE IV: FINANCES
1. A fiscal budget, approved by a majority of KAPS membership will be submitted to the Graduate Student Organization. This budget will be submitted in order to gain funding for KAPS. Said funds are subject to GSO limitations and requirements. (See Treasurer for details.)
2. Finances shall be allocated by the Treasurer or the President.
3. Dues may be made a requirement through the amendment process.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND DUTIES
1. The officers of KAPS will be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, APA State Student Representative, APA National Student Representative, and First-Year Student Representative. All KAPS officers must be enrolled for the full academic term.
2. Duties: the duties of the officers will be:
   a. President
i. Call meetings to order;
ii. Appoint, create, and discharge special committees;
iii. Appoint members to any committee
iv. Act as official spokesperson for KAPS
v. Attend, vote on, and give reports at monthly faculty meetings;
vi. Carry grievances to faculty;
 vii. Attend Advisory Board meetings and maintain correspondence with the Dean;
viii. Turn in all official KU forms including reregistering the organization with the University including updating participating officers;
ix. Perform such duties as are customary to the office.

b. Vice-President
i. Actively assist the President;
ii. Act as facilitator of KAPS meetings;
iii. Act as the President in the absence or incapacity of the President;
iv. Act as nominated liaison to other student organizations;
v. Plan social and recreational activities of the organization.

c. Secretary
i. Create and set agendas for KAPS meetings;
ii. Notify members of meeting time and dates;
iii. Keep minutes and a record of the meetings;
iv. Maintain correspondents with agencies when contributions have been made;
v. And maintain an electronic and hard copy of the organizations records.

d. Treasurer
i. Collect and receive dues;
ii. Keep accounts of all funds;
iii. Attend Graduate and Professional Association meetings and Treasurer training;
iv. Purchase lab supplies;
v. If dues are levied, disburse all money for the ordinary and authorized charges in connection with KAPS.

e. APA State Representative
i. Serve as liaison to Kansas APA and the Kansas City APA;
ii. Plan and help organize student participation in the state, regional APA meetings; and

f. APA National Representative
i. Responsible for communication and coordination with the National APA;
ii. Encourage KAPS members to join the National APA;
iii. Plan and help organize student participation in the state, regional, and national APA meetings; and
iv. Cooperate with the state representative on APA matters.

g. First-Year Student Representative
i. Be a liaison between KAPS officers and first-year students.

ARTICLE VI: ELECTIONS
1. Nominations should be accepted from the membership at large.
2. Officer elections will be conducted in the first week of April. No person may hold more than one office concurrently unless the membership votes specifically to exempt the nominees from such restriction.
3. Nomination periods should not extend longer than two weeks. Nomination for one position does not exclude nomination for another.
4. Terms for all officers will be for one (1) year, serving from May 1st to the end of April of the following year.
5. If an officer becomes ineligible during her or his term in office, such office shall be replaced by means of an election by the KAPS members.

ARTICLE VII: CHAPTER MEETINGS
I. Meeting time and location will be at the discretion of the KAPS Vice-President and President.
II. Additional meetings, as needed, may be called by the sponsor.
III. The Secretary will communicate to the membership meeting specifics including time and location.
IV. Ten percent of the Urban Planning student body shall constitute quorum for voting purposes.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS
Upon authorization by the sponsor and the members or upon petition signed by 2/3 of the voting members, any proposed amendments to these by-laws shall be submitted to the Secretary. Two-thirds of the KAPS members shall be required to vote “yea” for an amendment to be adopted. Any proposed amendments to the by-laws shall be announced one (1) meeting prior to the voting thus allowing at time for discussion and drafting.