



# MPEPD

Master of Environmental Planning and Design

Physical Planning  
&  
Design of the Built  
Environment



COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENT AND DESIGN  
THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, ATHENS

This brochure contains general information about our program, including objectives, requirements and financial assistance. Application information along with the Graduate Bulletin can be found on the UGA Graduate School Website:

[www.uga.edu/gradschool](http://www.uga.edu/gradschool)

You are welcome to contact us if you have any questions, want to know more, would like to arrange for an interview, or to visit us and our graduate students.

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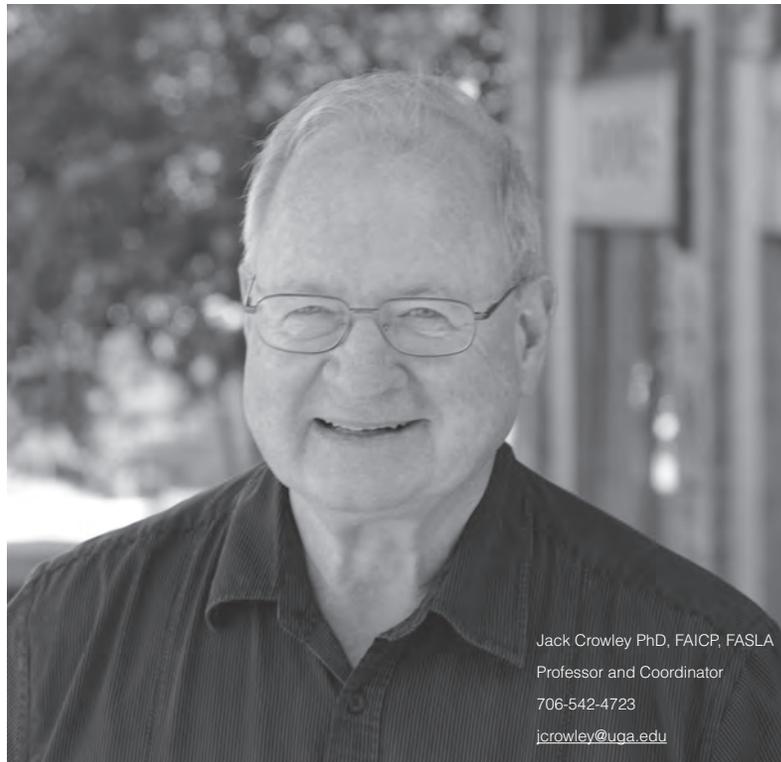
The idea of creating a professional graduate degree program focused on the physical planning and design of the built environment began in the early 2000s with the dean of the College of Environment and Design, who had practiced in the planning and development professions for more than thirty years. Government agencies and private practices were looking for planners who were capable of physically planning and designing urban development. The College was already home to one

of the country's largest, oldest, and highly respected programs in undergraduate and graduate Landscape Architecture. It understood studio based planning and design at the Landscape Architectural scales of site, park, campus, and neighborhood. At its inception, the program was designed to view the planning and design of neighborhoods, cities and regions as much larger, more complex and multifaceted "landscapes." The educational method was to build each of four academic terms of lectures, seminars, labs and directed research around a planning and design studio.

The intent was also to create the program to meet the accreditation standards of the planning profession where most of its graduates would practice. Qualified faculty were recruited who had also practiced in the profession for at least 10 years to be more suited to teach the studios blending both theory and practice.

Serendipitously, the original faculty all had international experience, or were themselves international, underlying another program focus that planning had become global. The student community that seemed naturally to follow were international as well as coming from all over the U.S. International planning and design studios followed in the near East and Latin America. This fortunate occurrence continues, supported by the prominence of the University of Georgia and its proximity to an airport that best connects to the rest of the country and all of the world.

Thank you for your interest in the  
University of Georgia's Professional  
Graduate Degree Program in  
Environmental Planning and Design



Jack Crowley PhD, FAICP, FASLA  
Professor and Coordinator  
706-542-4723  
[jcrowley@uga.edu](mailto:jcrowley@uga.edu)

## UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

The University of Georgia is a Land Grant and Sea Grant Institution with the mission of outreach to its Home State the Country and the World.



First State chartered public University in the U.S.(1785)

Current 35,000 students (2014) from across the U.S. and World in 17 Countries

A beautiful and historic learning environment with great architecture and landscapes next to vibrant downtown Athens, Georgia

A place of numerous cultural and sports events, art museums and Botanical Gardens

The College of Environment and Design (founded in 1969) is home to the MEPD program and also houses other complimentary master programs in Landscape Architecture (MLA) and Historic Preservation (MHP), along with certificate programs in Environmental Ethics, Cultural Landscape Historic Preservation Certificate and a Ph.D program.

Athens is a fast growing city of about 120,000 located 70 miles from Atlanta and an airport that connects UGA to the World

Located in the historic Tanner Building, the MEPD program is only two blocks from the downtown Athens

The University is an hour drive from the great urban laboratory that is Atlanta, within a short drive of the Appalachian Mountains and Savannah at the Georgia coast

## THE CITY

Athens, known for its Music and the Arts, is a great urban laboratory for our students in Environmental Planning and Design.



Athens is home to the professional graduate degree program in Environmental Planning and Design (MEPD) and the University of Georgia. Its city-county government and population of 120,000 serve as a great urban laboratory, along with nearby Atlanta, whose metropolitan edge touches Athens. A vibrant downtown which lies adjacent to the MEPD's studios includes more than 100 pubs and restaurants in its 16 blocks and is the arts, music and entertainment center for Northeast Georgia. Five thousand students and residents call the downtown home. Athens is home to two regional hospitals, the Universities' medical college and one of the country's largest facilities in veterinary medicine. In addition to two other smaller colleges, and a technical school are located here as well.

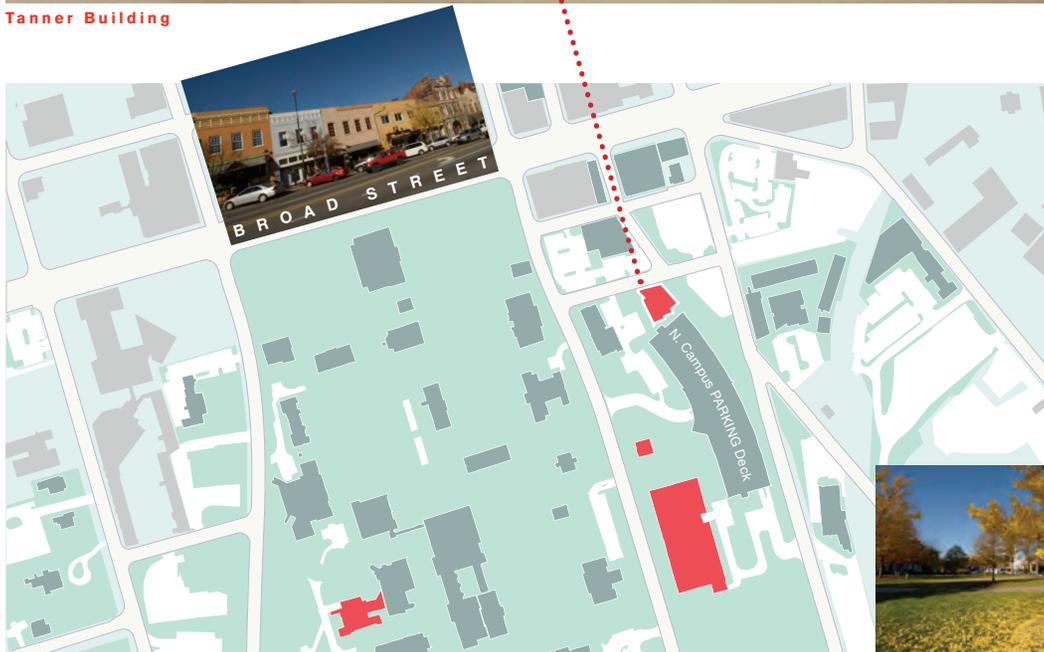
It is a great college town fueled by a major university's cultural and athletic presence. It attracts both the young in their education, and the retired seeking climate, culture, and quality of life. Athens is directly connected to the rest of the world through its largest airport only an hour and twenty minutes' drive away. Jittery Joes' coffee company is two blocks from the MEPD studios front door.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND DESIGN

We built our studios in a re-purposed historic hardware store on the edge of a great university campus, abutting vibrant downtown of Athens.



Tanner Building



The Master of Environmental Planning and Design is a new (2009) Professional Graduate Degree Program in the College of Environment and Design at the University of Georgia. The aim is to improve life and ecosystem health in regions and urban centers incorporating sociocultural, historic, political, economic, and natural and design elements. Service learning is applied involving community and client engagement in developing plans.

The MEPD curriculum prepares students for broad-based careers at State and Federal agencies, private consulting and development firms, city and regional planning departments, and non-profit agencies. It also offers preparation for doctoral work in city and regional planning.

The 58 semester credit hour program has been designed to meet the requirements of the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) and is candidate for its initial professional accreditation in 2016. The MEPD degree itself has been approved by the Graduate College and the University of Georgia which is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

# CURRICULUM

The Planning and Design Studio is central to each semester



PLAN 6000 ORIENTATION: Intro to City Planning & Design 1

The first year of the program is focused on acquiring basic knowledge and understanding of the history, law, theory, and practice of planning, ecology, geographic information systems (GIS), research, graphic communications, and community engagement.

PLAN 6520 Environmental Planning & Design Studio I	4
LAND 6210 Representation	3
EDES 6270 GIS and LAB	3
LAND 6310 Landscape Ecology	3
EDES 6650 City Planning	3
	<b>16</b>

PLAN 6540 Environmental Planning & Design Studio II	4
PLAN 6124 Research Strategies	2
EDES 6640 History-Theory American Urban Planning	3
EDES 6540 Ideas of Community	2
Elective	3
	<b>14</b>

OPTIONAL Elective

In the second year students begin to focus on specific area of the planning profession as well as shaping their Master's thesis or practicum. Each semester involves bringing real world urban and environmental projects into the design studio, beginning with the large or regional scales, the mid-sized town planning scale, and the neighborhood scale.

PLAN 6560 Environmental Planning & Design Studio III	4
LAND 6900 Ethics, Justice and Professional Practice	3
PLAN 6200 Planning Law	3
Elective	3
	<b>13</b>

PLAN 7300 Thesis or	
PLAN 7200 Practicum	9
Elective	3
Elective	3
	<b>15</b>

The program has a studio-centered curriculum on the physical planning and design of Cities; Built and Natural Environments



It features Planning and Design Studios in each of its four semesters (regional, city, neighborhood, and personal concentration scales). The core faculty all have considerable planning practice experience in various locations throughout the U.S., Spain, Turkey, Venezuela, Honduras Guatemala, Nicaragua and Dubai. Planning and Design Studios have been conducted in a number of these countries annually.

At the large, medium, and small scales, all planning and design studios focus on actual projects which commonly involve a public client and community engagement. This outreach and service learning approach is also in keeping with the mission of the university, which is a land grant and sea grant Institution. One of the studios each year has been held at an international sites (Turkey and Honduras).

A PhD in Environmental Design and Planning in the College will begin in the fall of 2016.



## COLLABORATIVE AND SERVICE LEARNING

The MEPD program offers wide-ranging opportunities for collaborative learning and program concentrations.



Situated in the College of Environmental and Design (CED), which houses well-established and highly-rated graduate programs in Landscape Architecture (MLA) and Historic Preservation (MHP), the MEPD program is enriched in its academic and student adjacency. The College is also home to certificate studies in Environmental Ethics, Historic Preservation, and Cultural Landscapes.

In addition, students can take courses and qualify for other certificates in concentrations offered throughout the University. Areas commonly engaged by MEPD students are GIS (Geography), Water Resources (Forestry), Conservation and Sustainable Development (Ecology), and Sustainable Food Systems (Agriculture, Public Health and CED). While a concentration is not required these studies enhance the interdisciplinary nature of Planning and Design.

Numerous Planning and Design Service Learning opportunities are offered through informal and institutionally established organizations in the College.



#### **Cultural Landscape Laboratory - CLL**

[www.ced.uga.edu/cll](http://www.ced.uga.edu/cll)

A public service lab is structured around long-term partnerships with organizations and people who steward nationally significant cultural landscapes and heritage conservation. It involves faculty-student teams.

#### **The Center for Community Design & Preservation - CCDP**

[www.ced.uga.edu/psd](http://www.ced.uga.edu/psd)

The Center serves as the College's Public Service and Outreach office with "real world" planning and design projects engaging faculty and students and delivers conceptual community design services.

#### **UGA Archway Partnership**

[www.archwaypartnership.uga.edu](http://www.archwaypartnership.uga.edu)

It is a University of Georgia community engagement platform to address the state's critical community economic development needs and provides students practical experience outside of the classroom.

#### **The Carl Vinson Institute of Government**

<http://www.cviog.uga.edu>

This institute provides legislatively required training of elected officials and other appointed members of boards and commissions. MEPD Graduate Assistants provide staff support for this institute also helping small towns with planning and "Main Streets" work.

## STUDY ABROAD

We are focused on the physical planning and design of neighborhoods, cities and regions, and we view these from an international perspective.



### Study Abroad

<https://international.uga.edu>

The University owns residential and classroom facilities in Oxford, England, Cortona, Italy, and Monteverde, Costa Rica. Planning and Design programs are generally focused in the Italy and Costa Rica programs. Two of the four full-time core faculty are international (Turkey and Venezuela), as well as many of the MEPD students.

The MEPD Program sponsors Planning and Design Studios with its faculty and students in Turkey and Honduras.

## STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

Our students come from all over Asia and the Americas, as well as from many different states and universities in the U.S.

"I had the pleasure of being in the inaugural class of the MEPD program at UGA. Despite being a new program, the College of Environment and Design had the expertise and the resources to provide an exceptional educational experience out of the gate both in the classroom and in the community. After graduation, I immediately got a job at the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department working as a Planner II, and have since been promoted to a Planner III. Over the last 5 years, I have also had the pleasure of interacting with each of the new classes of MEPD students, all of whom are talented, intelligent, inquisitive, and critically engaged with current planning and design issues."

Craig Page, Class of 2011

"As a working Landscape Architect in Atlanta, I chose to return to UGA for the MEPD program because it offered me the chance to obtain my master's degree and continue working in the professional realm. The program allowed me to focus more on practical applications of planning which has proven to be more beneficial in my current position as a project manager for a large comprehensive trail and trail project in the city of Atlanta."

Meghan Injaychock, Class of 2012

"The MEPD program prepared me to enter the professional world of planning. With an emphasis on real-world projects, collaboration with other disciplines, and the design elements of planning, I was given unique opportunities to leverage my skills to gain employment in the planning field. Under the direction of Dr. John Crowley and with support from his excellent faculty and staff, the UGA MEPD program was invaluable in my development as a planner; it was the best decision of my career."

John Tankard, class of 2013

"I graduated from with the MEPD degree in December 2014. My experience in the program has been amazing! I loved every bit of it. I do have a bachelor's degree in Architecture from India and planning was one field that I really wanted to explore - And the MEPD program really put my planning education into perspective. To summarize my inputs, I think MEPD has an edge over other planning programs because it focusses on both, design (highly interactive studios) and policy - compared to most universities that focus too much on policy. As planning students, we at CED are required to take classes in various departments - this precisely broadens our horizons to diverse approaches in the field of planning. Unlike other professions, planning is multidisciplinary in nature and I believe that the program has developed multiple skills in me. We also have an extremely dedicated team of professors whose experience and expertise is always very helpful. Although I have graduated from the program, I still contact them for educational and career advice."

Manasi Parkhi, Class of 2014

2011  
2012  
2013  
2014



2015  
2016  
2017



"While I was searching for a master's program to apply to in the United States, the MEPD program called my attention due to its design approach to planning. Coming from a background in Architecture and Urbanism, this was particularly appealing because there are very few programs out there with a focus on design. Moreover, I believed that the exposure to design enables planners to think beyond policy, and to further engage in the understanding of space and form. And thankfully this program proved I was right. As an alumni I feel that the MEPD program has enabled me to recognize that decision-making in planning involves the recognition of the inherent complexities of environments as they relate to scale, space, time and society. Furthermore, it is a program geared towards practice, therefore, as I moved on to a PhD program it has prepared me to look deeper into ways of bridging the gap between academia and practice, seeking to aid planners to make informed decision upon complex and diverse environments."

Mariana B. Alfonso , Class of 2014

"I cannot express enough thanks and gratitude to the Masters of Environmental Planning and Design Graduate Program at the University of Georgia . Not only did I find the program professional and technically fulfilling, I also greatly enjoyed working with the highly intelligent and thoughtful faculty. Because of this program, I was able to successfully apply planning theories, principles, knowledge, and skills to my career as an urban planner."

Stephen Morgan, class of 2015

"The MEPD program at UGA, for me, was a most formative and enriching academic and professional experience. The curriculum is rigorous and the faculty is knowledgeable and accessible. Professor Crowley has put together an excellent team. The work/study construction of studio projects provided me with hands-on experience necessary for me to thrive in my professional role as a land-use planner."

Hugh Harker, class of 2015

"I am thoroughly glad I chose the Environmental Planning and Design program at UGA. The variety in the course material and the backgrounds of the teachers form a solid foundation for us students here. The lectures are engaging and the physical planning studios provide a platform for us to express our individual creativity. I hope to work internationally and all faculty members have worked in different countries academically and professionally and, moreover, several are from outside the U.S. I wanted to be exposed to different perspectives and my cohort provides that; no more than two of my classmates come from any one undergraduate background--from historic preservation to food systems to architecture."

Matthew M. Nahrstedt , class of 2016

## ADMISSIONS AND APPLICATIONS

### Applying to Master of Environmental Planning and Design Program



The online graduate school application, instruction and fee payment are found at the Graduate School admissions website: [www.grad.uga.edu](http://www.grad.uga.edu)

The UGA School code is 5813. Transcripts, resume and letter of intent are uploaded on the application website when the student applies.

**Graduate School Admission Office**  
The University of Georgia  
320 E. Clayton Street, Suite 400  
Athens, GA 30602-4401



For specific questions about applications deadlines and procedures please visit [www.grad.uga.edu](http://www.grad.uga.edu) or contact:

Donna Gabriel  
[donnag@uga.edu](mailto:donnag@uga.edu)  
706-542-4720  
College of Environment and Design  
285 South Jackson Street  
Athens, GA 30602