**COVER SHEET**

**PLANNING NOTICE OF INTENT (PNOI) FOR**

**NEW GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Program Information |  |  |  |  |  |
| Academic Unit Name:  | Urban Studies Program |  |
|  |  |
| Institution: |  University of Washington Tacoma |  |
|  |  |  |
| College/School: |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Campus: |  [ ]  Bothell |  |  [ ]  Seattle |   |  X Tacoma |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Proposed Degree Title: | Master of Arts in Community Planning |
|  |  |
| Proposed Degree Option(s): |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Proposed CIP Code: |  |  | Total Quarter Credits:  | 60 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Proposed Start Date: | Fall *2015* |  |  |  |
| *(Quarter and year)* |  |  |  |
| Projected Enrollment (FTE) in Year One: |  *10-15* |  Full Enrollment by Year:  | 2017-2018 | ; |  *20-30* |
|  | *(#FTE)* |  | *(Academic Year)* |  |  *(#FTE)* |
| Proposed New Funding: |  | Tuition Tier or cost: | Tier II |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Funding Source: |  X State FTE |  |  [ ]  Fee-based |   |  [ ]  Other |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mode of Delivery / Locations |  |  |  |
| X Campus Delivery | Tacoma, WA |  |  |  |
|  |  |  *(enter locations)* |  |  |  |
| [ ]  Off-site  |  |  |  |
|  | *(enter location(s))* |  |  |  |
| [ ]  Distance Learning |  |  |  |
|  |  | *(enter formats)* |  |  |  |
| [ ]  Other |  |  |  |
|  |  | *(describe if applicable)* |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Scheduling | Attendance Options |  |  |
| X Day Classes | X Evening Classes | X Full-time |  |  |
| [ ]  Other *(describe)* | [ ]  Weekend Classes | X Part-time |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Contact Information (Academic Department Representative)  |
| Name: | Ali Modarres |  |  |
| Title: | Professor and Director |  |  |
| Address: | Pinkerton 317, Box 358437, 1900 Commerce St., Tacoma, WA 98402 |  |  |
| Telephone | 253-692-5706 |  |  |
| Email: | modarres@uw.edu |  |  |

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Endorsement by Associate Vice Chancellor Ginger MacDonald Date

**MA in Community Planning at UWT**

**Proposed by Urban Studies Program**

**Program Description and Rationale**

We are proposing to initiate a Master of Arts in Community Planning. At its basic level, Community Planning focuses on diverse methods of inquiry and analysis, combined with the active participation of end users, to shape planning strategies in a cross-sectional collaborative manner. Community planning is founded on the principle that "if you want to know how the shoe fits, ask the person who is wearing it, not the one who made it."[[1]](#footnote-2)

Our proposed graduate program responds to the growing desire for such a complex type of expertise by helping our students gain hands-on and theoretical skills to transform their passion for social change, equity, and justice into meaningful, professionally-driven actions that build community and create long term change. Our pedagogical logic rests on the principles akin to collaborative and communicative planning approaches that fully capture and incorporate the voice of the community in a positive and transformative manner.

It is the intention of this MA program to enhance students’ understanding of how communities and local governments work and the development of policy through community participation. As a part of their training, we will assist students in developing leadership skills to engage with communities, public institutions, and the civic infrastructure. An important role of the program will be to enable students to understand and impact institutional, community, and government decision-making processes.

The proposed MA in Community Planning plays a particular role in the overall educational experience of students in the Urban Studies Program. By focusing on particular skills that have not been acquired during their BA education, the MA program will help professionalize and equip them with abilities to engage with their passion for social change. Some of these skills will include: analyzing community landscapes, defining problems and injustices, strategic community problem solving, authentic civic engagement, and scenario planning. Students will learn how to dissect problems into discrete components, identify priorities, and determine how to create solutions with appropriate and effective strategies. Students will acquire the know-how to gather and analyze local voices to tell stories and build narratives (using diverse media, including documentary film) that can support effective advocacy and community building. This community-focused approach to qualitative information will be combined with training in quantitative and visual skills to develop powerful planning and policy documents, action designs, and civic strategies that can bring about deeply positive and community-based change and work across differences to achieve common goals. It is also important to note that while much of the immediate engagement with community planning will take place in the general Puget Sound region, the program will also emphasize international dimensions of ‘community’ and encourage students to make practical and theoretical connections with ‘community’ at other geographic scales and locations.

In general, the scope includes activities that provide the underpinnings for both the philosophical base for the program and the actual coursework and structure needed for implementation, with a focus on:

* qualitative research (interviewing, historical/archival research, visual and textual documentation);
* quantitative research (statistical/data analysis, info-graphics, presentation and formats for dissemination);
* the integration of research and action, the utilization of action research, and the integration of cross-sector qualitative and quantitative data;
* civic engagement and advocacy strategies; and,
* use of various media for communication purposes.

We consider it strategically important to integrate our graduate and undergraduate degrees, which we refer to as the vertical integration of our curriculum. As such, we will pay particular attention to the articulation of the proposed MA with the BAs in Urban Studies and Sustainable Urban Development.

Currently, we are exploring similar graduate degrees at other universities. In preparation for designing our MA, we will interact with some of these universities over the course of the next two months. Here are three such examples:

* **MA in Community Development and Planning at Clarke University**

(Self description: “The Community Development and Planning (CDP) program prepares current and future community development practitioners, activists, and scholars to take on the challenges and struggles facing urban areas in the United States. In the program, students learn alternative ways of thinking and transforming communities to achieve greater equity and social justice”).
* **MA in Community Planning at the University of Maryland**

(Self description: “The Urban Studies and Planning (URSP) Program offers the Master of Community Planning (M.C.P.), a professional degree accredited by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning and the American Planning Association. More than 450 students have earned M.C.P. degrees since 1973, when the program began at the University of Maryland's Baltimore campus. The aim of the program is to prepare planning practitioners who will be generalists with a specialization. The core curriculum emphasizes student understanding of the political, institutional and social context in which professional planners develop and implement programs. Areas of specialization include housing and economic development, land use, growth management and environmental planning, transportation planning, and social planning”).
* **MA in Community Planning at the University of Cincinnati**

(Self description: “The Master of Community Planning (MCP) program is a two-year professional program that accommodates various geographic scales as well as different planning subjects related to planning and the design of innovative futures. The program recognizes the wide range of students’ undergraduate backgrounds and trains professionals for distinguished practice in planning and development. It integrates academic and professional practice with a deep concern for community development and environmental quality. A special feature of the program is global exposure and opportunities provided by several School of Planning programs, including two in association with the Peace Corps. The school also offers joint degrees with the Department of Geography and the College of Law”).

In order to assist us with finalizing the design for our proposed MA, we are also exploring the following programs:

* New School – Leadership and Change
* New School – Urban Policy Analysis
* Hunter College – Masters in Urban Affairs
* Emory University – Program in Civic Engagement

**Structure**

This will be a two-year graduate program, culminating in a capstone MA project. The capstone project will include a written thesis component.

**Demand for the Program**

In 2012, there were 38,400 planning jobs in the U.S. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, planning-related professions will have an average annual growth rate of 10% through 2022. This means the job market for planning-related degrees is growing. However, there are two important issues to be considered. First, the entry-level degree for obtaining well-paid positions in planning is an MA. For our students, this makes a graduate degree a must. Second, while urban and regional planning have grown into mainstream planning degrees, the number of universities offering MAs in community planning is still small, even though jobs in this category are growing.

Community planning has become increasingly important to public, private and non-profit organizations, as decentralized, networked forms of governance have become more prevalent. A number of organizations in the country have begun to recruit community planners, as opposed to traditional urban planners, due to their understanding that a community planner can act as an important liaison between policy development, planning, and community engagement. Furthermore, community planners are capable of working across sectors and organizational scales, and are trained to build capacity that is not just physical and financial, but also operational: social, cultural, and experiential knowledge resources that enable communities to engage the democratic process and create sustainable places and programs.

The market for this degree is rapidly expanding as well. Job categories such as Outreach Coordinator, Community Liaison, Project and Program Manager, Planner, Marketing and Government Relations, Community Organizing, and Field Organization Manager have become more regularly advertised.[[2]](#footnote-3) The for-profit sector has a growing interest in Community Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility, which involves diverse analytic and problem solving skills which would be good fits for students completing this graduate program. Within the policymaking arena, legislative staff members also need the type of training we plan to offer. Many of the advertised positions in these sectors require a graduate degree from a professionally oriented, multi-disciplinary program. While our undergraduate students have been able to acquire jobs in various organizations, including the Tacoma Housing Authority and city planning office, they will need to finish a graduate degree to move up the proverbial organizational ladder and assume positions of increased responsibility.

**Preliminary Budget**

Given the national market, we will begin with a modest goal of admitting 10-20 students per year, as resources allow. This will be a Fall-only admission, permitting us to assign graduate faculty mentors to each student. Given the project/thesis requirement for graduation, it is important that the student/faculty ratio remains at a level that produces the most positive result for our students.

Based on our preliminary assessment, we believe that one additional faculty position will adequately address our needs. A number of our current faculty members will be able to contribute to this MA program.

Below is a list of required resources, a brief explanation for each, and the related estimated costs:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Resource** | **Description** | **Budget** |
| ***Faculty and*** ***Staff*** |  |  |
| Tenure Track | We have received permission to begin the recruitment process for this position. The announcement will be circulated by the end of September. We hope to make the offer no later than mid-December.  | $70K + Benefits  |
| Graduate Recruiter | Half-time position to help with recruitment | $25K + benefits + travel funds |
| **Space** |  |  |
| Faculty Office | Pinkerton lacks additional space to accommodate new faculty members. We will work with our campus to determine a suitable office for the new faculty member. | Unknown |

Given the technical nature of this degree program, we will opt for Tier II tuition.

1. www.communityplanning.net [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Examples of current jobs in the region illustrate the growing importance of acquiring a degree in Community Planning:

Associate Director of Planning and Public Policy United Way - Seattle, WA

Assistant Director of Property Management, Plymouth Housing Group - Seattle, WA

Community Manager, Geocaching - Seattle, WA

Lead Organizer - Corporate Social Responsibility Campaign, Brass Tactics - Seattle, WA

Outreach & Training Specialist, City of Seattle - Seattle, WA

Conservation Program Manager, Washington State Chapter, Sierra Club - Seattle, WA

Home Visiting Manager, Neighborhood House - Seattle, WA

Housing Operations Manager, Solid Ground (formerly Fremont Public Association)-Seattle, WA

Young Jewish Federation (YJF) Associate Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle - Seattle, WA

Program Coordinator, YMCA of Greater Seattle - Seattle, WA

Program Director, Washington Alliance for Better Schools - Shoreline, WA

Veterans Outreach and Marketing Coordinator, Hopelink - Bellevue, WA

Examples of community planning positions outside our region:

Community Planner, Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation, San Francisco, CA

Community Planner, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania [↑](#footnote-ref-3)