Masters in City and Regional Planning Strategic Plan

2024–2029

Knowlton —— School

Masters in City and Regional Planning Strategic Plan

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THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

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Letter From The Grad Chair

Much has changed in the hundred years since city planning courses were first offered at a U.S. university. Our understanding of how cities are designed, governed, and lived in continues to evolve. With surging population growth both within the U.S. and globally, cities will continue to grow and evolve as they confront the challenges of surging population growth, housing and transportation needs, climate change and social inequality.

Programs such as the Master of City and Regional Planning (MCRP) at The Ohio State University have changed as well. The faculty has grown and evolved since the first planning degrees were awarded here, as have the expectations of students entering the program and profession of planning. These changes have required the faculty to reconceptualize what a master's in planning should offer and require. And, we as faculty have met that challenge by revising our curriculum, growing our faculty, areas of expertise and course offerings.

As we enter our seventh decade as a degree program, the faculty of the City and Regional Planning Section aims to attract, matriculate, and educate cohorts of dynamic, talented individuals who aspire to improve their cities and communities and larger world with skills and knowledge. This document is intended to provide a guide to the faculty and our partners within Ohio State on how we plan to continually enhance our program to meet the needs of the future.

We look forward to using this document to guide our choices for the next five years and revisiting this document at its sunset to see the progress that we have made.

Sincerely,

Harley Etienne

Harley F. Etienne, PhD, MSL
Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning
& Graduate Studies Committee Chair

Institutional & External Context

Overview

The faculty of the City and Regional Planning Section at The Ohio State University understands that the success of this Strategic Plan for the Master of City and Regional Planning (MCRP) Program is as influenced by the hard work and dedication of the faculty as it is by various institutional, national and global forces. In recent years, many graduate planning programs have experienced sharp declines in their enrollments while many colleges and universities struggle to return enrollments to pre-pandemic levels. The Section faculty have responded by implementing a major revision to the curriculum of the program that streamlines core program requirements, expands opportunities to pursue dual degrees, certificates, graduate minors and specializations, and providing opportunities to engage in research.

What follows in this section are summaries of the MCRP's context within the City and Regional Planning Section of the Knowlton School, the College of Engineering, The Ohio State University, and more. Also included are elements of the Strategic Plans of the City and Regional Planning Section and the College of Engineering, as well as the Shared Values Statement of The Ohio State University.

Institutional Context

The Ohio State University

Founded in 1870 as the State of Ohio's land-grant university, The Ohio State University has grown to become one of the nation's largest and most respected public universities. The institution is distributed between its main campus in Columbus and five regional campuses. In total, the university currently boasts an enrollment of 65,795 that consists of 51,377 undergraduates and 11,199 graduates in 2022-23.[1] With an annual budget of $8.2 billion, and a research budget of $1.36 billion, Ohio State ranks 12th nationally on the FY 2022 NSF HERD ranking.[2]

Ohio State University Strategic Vision (link)

Supporting Faculty, Students, and the Structures that Foster Their Success

Ohio State's future will be defined and driven by an unwavering commitment to our faculty, students, and the physical, administrative, curricular, and financial structures that foster their success. This commitment is founded in the overarching principles of the institution's vision, mission, values, and core goals.

Through its mission, the university is dedicated to:

- Creating and discovering knowledge to improve the well-being of our state, regional, national and global communities;

- Educating students through a comprehensive array of distinguished academic programs;

- Preparing a diverse student body to be leaders and engaged citizens;

- Fostering a culture of engagement and service;

- Understanding that diversity and inclusion are essential components of our excellence.

Ohio State's core values are: excellence; diversity in people and of ideas; inclusion; access and affordability; innovation; collaboration and multidisciplinary endeavor; and integrity, transparency and trust.

College of Engineering

The College of Engineering at The Ohio State University is home to eleven academic departments and research centers, including the Knowlton School, the local home of the City and Regional Planning Section. As of the Fall 2023 semester, the College is home to 11,111 students representing more than 18% of total student enrollment on the Columbus campus.[3] In 2023, the college awarded 1,881 bachelor's degrees, 505 master's degrees and 190 doctorates.[4]

The college is also home to 434 tenured and tenure track faculty and a research budget of $162 million in externally sponsored research.[5] The College's diversity programs and efforts have increased both the diversity of the faculty and of the student body since 2014. The approach has been two-fold: recruitment and retention. While the full-time faculty of the college has grown from 287 to 332 between 2015 and 2023, the number of underrepresented minority (URM) faculty has more than doubled from 18 to 42 during the same period.[6]

Within the College of Engineering, there are other units with which the CRP program shares, faculty, students, course offerings and research collaborations. The Department of Civil, Environmental, and Geodetic Engineering (CEGE) shares three jointly appointed faculty who offer courses, conduct research, and advise students in the areas of transportation planning, data analytics, and climate justice and environmental policy. CRP also maintains a joint MCRP + MS in Transportation Planning with CEGE.

Inclusive Excellence in the College of Engineering

Inclusive Excellence (IE) was developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) is defined as: "the action of making excellence inclusive requires that we uncover inequities in student (faculty and staff) success, identify effective educational (and operational) practices and build such practices; organically for institutional change."[7]

Instead of defining diversity solely through numerical goals, IE instead focuses on transforming institutions by embedding diversity in practices and policies so that all students feel welcome, a sense of

belonging and can thrive. To that end, IE uses a broad definition of diversity that includes dis/ability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, religion, nationality, age, perspective, and other important social dimensions that are part of a community. Thoughtful attention is given to those groups that have been historically excluded, underrepresented and marginalized.

Knowlton School

The Knowlton School is home to three academic sections: City and Regional Planning (CRP), Architecture and Landscape Architecture. Each section is home to an accredited undergraduate and graduate (professional master's) program. CRP is the only Knowlton program to also offer a doctoral degree.

As of the Autumn 2023 semester, the total enrollment of the Knowlton School was 752 students. The CRP Section comprises 22 percent of that overall total and has the largest graduate enrollment in the school.[8]

The school is led by a Director and Associate Director and staff that supports all three sections. Each Section is led by Section Head (e.g., comparable to a program chair). Those Section Heads are supported by Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Chairs. In the CRP Section, there is also a PhD Program Director who provides leadership to that program.

The current configuration for staff support for the MCRP Program is split between a Sections Coordinator who supports all three academic units of the school and the Graduate Coordinator, who is a member of the Student Services staff. That Graduate Coordinator is responsible for recruitment, orientation activities, academic advising and graduation applications and degree audits across the four graduate programs of the Knowlton School.

The City and Regional Planning Section

The City and Regional Planning Section is home to three degree programs, the Bachelor of Science (BSCRP), the Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning, and of course, the MCRP. Ohio State's City and Regional Planning Program is only one of five in the country to offer all three degree programs. With four new faculty added in the past two

academic years, the Section now boasts 18 full-time (FTE) faculty. The Section is also well placed in intellectual and discipline leadership. As of this writing, three leading journals are edited by Section faculty: the Journal of Planning Literature, the Journal of Urban Affairs, and Regional Studies. Other faculty hold leadership positions within the field's professional organizations such as the Ohio Chapter of the American Planning Association and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP). On campus, several faculty hold important positions within the college and university leadership.[9]

Within the Section, there are 110 students enrolled in the BSCRP program, 38 in the MCRP, and 24 in the Ph.D. program as of September 2023.[10] In recent years, the BSCRP program's growth has stabilized and interest in the Ph.D. program grown substantially. Unfortunately, program diversity among enrolled students has declined in recent years as the master's program along with the program size.[11]

CRP Goals

| Deliver the highest quality, evidence-based educational experiences in a diverse and inclusive community, accessible at all student levels, across all learning modalities. | Establish and grow productive partnerships and connections with alumni and external organizations for faculty, staff, and students. | Shape our research activities to optimize collaborative discovery, especially at the edges and intersections of disciplines. |

Build and nurture a community and culture of humanity that reflects our university values.

Cultivate and advance excellence in stewardship of resources across human capital, finance, infrastructure, and technology.

Source: Strategic Plan 2022-2027, College of Engineering

CRP Mission[12]

The mission of the City and Regional Planning Section is three-fold: to use planning knowledge, methods, and theory in practical settings to train students to become professional planners, to train planning researchers to set the agenda for the next generation of practice and

scholarship, and to create and contribute to new knowledge through path setting scholarship.

The City and Regional Planning Section strives to do this by maintaining its excellence in teaching and research in the context of a university whose mission includes both the attainment of international distinction in education and scholarship and the traditional role of a land grant university with a heritage of public service.

CRP Vision

We aspire to be the nationally and internationally recognized leader in city and regional planning through our excellence and impact in scholarship and education recognizing that diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential components of our graduate and undergraduate programs.

External Context

Within Ohio State, there are several other academic programs which are complementary to the MCRP. We have historically maintained dual degree programs with many of them. Our recent revisions to the MCRP degree substantially increases opportunities for students to pursue dual degrees, certificates and graduate minors / graduate interdisciplinary specializations.

In the College of Engineering, applications to all master's programs have dropped from their 2016 peak of 4,637 to 2,622.[13] A similar pattern can be found in Knowlton School application figures, peaking at 362 in 2015 and declining to 186 in 2023 across all departments and programs. This is consistent with a larger trend in decreasing enrollments, specifically at Very High Research Activities (R1) universities which saw a 6.0 percent decrease among first-time enrollment students.

Within Ohio, there are several other accredited master's planning programs. Given the differences in faculty expertise, program size, university and geographic context, the programs are quite different from one another and do not compete against one another for applicants.

Those schools are:

- Cleveland State University (PAB Accredited), Master of Urban Planning and Development

- University of Cincinnati (PAB Accredited), Master of Community Planning

Geographically, the MCRP program is well-situated within Ohio's capital city Columbus. According to the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) (link) the metropolitan region's 2020 population sat at 2.4 million residents and is expected to add 726,000 residents by 2050.[14] That growth will contribute to new housing demand and job growth which will present opportunities for planning firms and practitioners and our program. Additionally, the economic dynamism and projected growth of the city and region offers valuable opportunities for MCRP students to intern with planning organizations seeking to prepare for future growth.

Beyond Ohio State and Ohio

Like many comparable programs, the faculty of the CRP Section is concerned about larger trends in graduate program enrollment. The Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) data on accredited programs shows that enrollments including full-time and part-time masters students have declined 18 percent over the five years from 2014 to 2018, and 27% over the decade from 2009 to 2018. Foreign student enrollments increased 37% over the decade from 2009 to 2018, but decreased more recently, losing 18% from 2014 to 2018, mostly since the beginning of 2017. Part-time student enrollments dropped by 44% over the decade from 2009 to 2018, slowing to a 16% decrease from 2014 to 2018.[15]

Despite these trends, the job outlook for "urban and regional planners" remains positive. The trend estimates suggest four percent growth in the sector through the year 2032. Long-term occupational projections through 2030 suggest, on average, 70 annual openings in the State of Ohio and approximately 300 in the neighboring states of Indiana, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.[16]

In the wake of the recent Supreme Court decision involving affirmative action programs,[17] higher education is redesigning admissions policies and procedures and redefining what diversity means in our new legal and political landscape. As things evolve, we are employing the concept of inclusive excellence (see page 4) as a way to sustain our values and goals for an intentionally diverse and inclusive academic community.

Planning Accreditation
Board Standards

Planning Accreditation Standards

(effective January 1, 2023)

The most current PAB Standards suggest ways in which programs can deliver instruction and content that is understood to be essential and critical planning knowledge and skills that are important for practicing planners in our current age. While no individualized project can address all of the competencies and skills outlined by PAB, they are presented here to help students understand the breadth of skills and knowledge that we aim to deliver through our degree program.

Guiding Values

1. **Equity, Diversity, Social Justice, and Inclusion**: key issues of equity, diversity, and social justice, including planners' role in expanding choice and opportunity for all persons; planning for the needs of disadvantaged groups; reducing inequities through critical examination of past and current systems; and promoting racial and economic equity.

2. **Sustainability, Resilience, and Climate Justice:** environmental, economic, and social/political factors that contribute to sustainable communities, reducing impacts of climate change, and creating equitable and climate-adapted futures.

3. **Professional Ethics and Responsibility:** key issues of planning ethics and related questions of the ethics of public decision-making, research, and client representation (including the provisions of the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, and APA's Ethical Principles in Planning).

Required Knowledge and Skills of the Profession

1. **General Planning Knowledge in Global Context:** The comprehension, representation, and use of ideas and information in the planning field, in the U.S. (or Canada) and internationally including appropriate perspectives from history, social sciences, design, and other allied fields.

    a. **Planning History and Theory:** The evolution and current practice of planning in communities, cities, regions, and nations; how planning has advanced and hindered the attainment of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; expectations about planning outcomes in different local and national contexts; conceptual models about what planning is and how it works; past and present conceptions of the future, including the relationship between planning and the future; the role of planning in responding to the global climate crisis.

b. **Planning Law and Institutions:** Behaviors and structures available

to bring about sound planning outcomes; mechanisms and practices for ensuring equitable and inclusive decision making; legal and institutional contexts within which planning occurs in the U.S. and/or internationally.

c. **Urban and Regional Development:** Political, economic, social, and environmental explanations of and insights on historical, present, and future development; relationships between the built and natural environments and individual and community health and wellbeing; planning responses to mitigate climate change, reduce risks, and recover from climate exacerbated impacts; interactions flows of people, materials, ideas, and cultures across world regions.

2. **Skills and Tools for Planning Practice:** The use and application of knowledge to perform tasks required in the practice of planning.

a. **Planning Process and Engagement:** Planning process and community and stakeholder engagement; plan creation and implementation; methods of design and intervention to understand and influence the future.

b. **Analytical Skills and Tools:** Research and critical analysis skills for preparing and conducting research; quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, analysis, and forecasting; methods of geospatial analysis, mapping and data visualization; data analytics and urban technology.

c. **Professional, Communication, and Leadership Skills:** Ability to work in teams and with professionals in allied fields; professional leadership in the planning context; written, oral, and graphic communication.

Current Degree Structure

2023 Revision Process and Current Degree Structure

In the spring of 2023, Ohio State University's Council of Academic Affairs approved a substantial revision to the Master of City and Regional Planning degree program. Recognizing that our program required more credit hours than our Big 10 and aspirational peers and lacked the flexibility that made joint or dual degree possible, the faculty of the City and Regional Planning section sought to update the MCRP curriculum. That update involved replacing one core course requirement with a skill-based course, "Introduction to Geographic Information Systems," combining our Planning Theory and History courses and reducing the overall number of elective credit hours in order to reduce the overall credit hour requirement from 60 to 48 credit hours. Lastly, we eliminated our comprehensive examination as an exit option. All students matriculating after the Autumn 2023 semester must either write a thesis or an applied planning research paper. What follows is a short summary of the current degree structure and degree requirements.

Core Courses

CRPLAN 5001 – Introduction to GIS for Planning
CRPLAN 6000 – Historical Foundations of Planning
CRPLAN 6200 – Graphic Visualization
CRPLAN 6300 – Law and Planning I: Land Use
CRPLAN 6400 – Site Planning and Development
CRPLAN 6500 -- Plan Making and Analysis Techniques
CRPLAN 6600 – Evaluation Methods in City and Regional Planning
CRPLAN 6191 - Professional Development (2)

Electives

Students in the MCRP program are required to take 16 credit hours of elective credits. Those hours should be taken within the City and Regional Planning Section however students are permitted to take some of those credit hours in cognate fields. Students are not required to select a specialization however, the MCRP program courses are organized into Areas of Focus which assists students in selecting courses that help them develop an area of expertise. The Areas of Focus are as follows:

- Community Development and Housing
- Economic Development
- Environmental Planning and Sustainability
- International Development
- Transportation and Mobility
- Urban Design and Physical Planning

Studio Courses

Planning studios engage students in a variety of academic and research activities that put ideas to work for communities. We believe that it is critical for students to learn how to effectively engage their communities in the design and planning process. All courses expose students to community engagement, critical thinking, and design-by-research as a way to inform planning policy and design.

Studio courses are practice-oriented, focusing on comprehensive planning, urban design/physical planning, transportation, sustainability, or international development. All MCRP students are required to take a studio course in fulfillment of their degree requirements.

The goal of the planning studio is to develop deliverables that make a positive impact on socioeconomic conditions and human health factors while generating connections between social networks and the built environment.

Studio topics vary by semester depending on client proposals and teaching needs. Studios generally topically fit into one of the following course numbers:

CRPLAN 6910 Community Development Studio
CRPLAN 6920 Urban Design & Physical Planning Studio
CRPLAN 6950 Sustainability & Resiliency Studio
CRPLAN 6960 Transportation Studio
CRPLAN 6970 International Development Studio

Exit Projects

All MCRP students must complete a unique, independent, culminating project. Our program offers two options: a thesis and an applied planning research paper (APRP).

Thesis - The thesis is an independent research project that uses empirical, quantitative, or quantitative analysis to speak to a conceptual or practical planning problem. This option is best for students who wish to pursue further study beyond the MCRP degree or wish to further hone their planning research skills.

Applied Planning Research Papers (APRPs) - These exit projects are comparable to the thesis but differ in that they are planning practice-facing and focus on problems and recommendations with practical significance. These projects are best suited to students who wish to

explore and analyze a practical topic or problem to prepare them for their post-MCRP planning careers.

To aid students in conceptualizing their APRPs, the faculty has defined five distinct types of APRP projects:

1. Applied Research Paper
2. Client-Project Paper
3. Small Area Plan / Plan Update
4. Urban Design and Physical Planning Project
5. Specialized Project

Measuring Progress:

Goals, Metrics, Benchmarks, and Action Items

Goals

Vision

We aim to be a leading graduate program which delivers a rigorous and flexible curriculum in an inclusive and supportive environment and that richly prepares our students for careers of consequence in the field of city and regional planning.

Mission

The mission of the Master of City and Regional Planning program is to attract and educate talented individuals into field of city and regional planning and prepare them for professional practice that improves living conditions for all through environmental stewardship, inclusive planning processes, and evidence-based planning. The program aims to prepare students to effectively practice planning in Ohio, the United States and globally.

MCRP Program Goals

For our Graduate Program (MCRP), we articulate the following broad goals:

MCRP Goal 1: Provide a professional planning program with a rigorous curriculum connected to communities and situated in a global context.

MCRP Goal 2: Create an intentionally inclusive learning community.

MCRP Goal 3: Prepare and support students in pursuing professional planning career paths by fostering self-directed learning and connecting them to the practitioner community.

MCRP Goal 4: Systematically evaluate student work to assess MCRP program performance and alignment with preparation for professional planning practice.

MCRP Goal 5: Expand interest in the MCRP degree.

High Priority Action Items

1. Offer all MCRP students opportunities to engage in individualized and student-driven research projects through the degree program's exit project options.

2. Increase the selectivity of the MCRP admissions classes by increasing the number of applications and the degree program options available.

3. Revive and increase applications to the dual BSCRP + MCRP degree program by or before the 2024-25 academic year.

4. Enhance MCRP student connections to the American Planning Association and Ohio Chapter of the American Planning Association by facilitating their attendance and participation in annual meetings, conferences, meetings and trainings.

5. Expand opportunities for learning in a global context through international opportunities including courses, studios, and research opportunities.

6. Realign its dual degree options based on the revised MCRP curriculum with key academic partners across campus,including Civil, Environmental, and Geodetic Engineering (CEGE), the Glenn College of Public Affairs, the School of Environment and Natural Resources, Moritz College of Law, Department of Geography and the other Knowlton sections, Architecture and Landscape Architecture.

7. Provide students with professional development instruction which prepares them for the profession and connects them to Ohio State Career Services like internships, alumni mentoring programs, and job search supports (provided through the Knowlton School and the College of Engineering).

8. Identify and implement an MCRP enrollment target that balances the land grant mission with program resources.

MCRP Goals in Detail & Objectives

MCRP Goal 1: Provide a professional planning program with an rigorous curriculum connected to communities and situated in a global context.

Goal 1.1: Deliver a rigorous curriculum connected to planning practice.

- Action Item 1.1.1. Define and enhance the learning objectives and outcomes for all core courses.

- Action Item 1.1.2. Complete and regularly update a curricular map of all MCRP core courses.

- Action Item 1.1.3: Provide information and resources to all students and advising faculty on guidelines for required exit projects.

- Action Item 1.1.4. Track learning outcomes for MCRP core courses at the conclusion of each semester and for all MCRP exit projects.

- Action Item. 1.1.5. Update course descriptions for all core courses, studios, and professional development courses.

- Action Item 1.1.6. Host a research "bootcamp" as a part of the MCRP orientation programming at the start of each academic year.

Goal 1.2: Deliver a curriculum connected to communities.

- Action Item 1.2.1. Ensure that the studio selection process enables connections to a diversity of communities in Metropolitan Columbus, Ohio, global communities and a diversity of planning topics.

- Action Item 1.2.2: Include local (Columbus, Ohio & Midwest) topics in learning objectives of MCRP core courses.

Goal 1.3: Deliver a curriculum connected situated in the global context.

- Action Item 1.3.1. Include global topics into learning objectives of MCRP core courses.

- Action Item 1.3.2. Ensure that all MCRP students have access to information on travel courses/studios and funding opportunities in a timely manner.

- Action Item 1.3.3. Offer international learning opportunities (e.g., travel courses and international planning studios) on a regular basis.

MCRP Goal 2: Foster an intentionally inclusive learning community that reflects the social, cultural, and economic diversity of our state and region.

Goal 2.1. Cultivate and actively recruit a diverse student body to enhance the richness of our learning community .

- Action Item 2.1.1 Establish and maintain relationships with Ohio-based Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Minority Serving Institutions/Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

- Action Item 2.1.2. Collaborate with the Undergraduate Studies Committee and PhD Program Director on joint ef-forts to enhance the diversity profile of all CRP programs.

Goal 2.2: Incorporate into the graduate curriculum knowledge and skills needed to support a diverse society.

- Action Item 2.2.1 Biannually assess the inclusion of scholar-shipfrom historically underrepresented minorities, women, and global scholars in syllabi of MCRP core courses.[18]

- Action Item 2.2.2 Coordinate with student groups, Baumer Lecture committee, Student Services staff and others to invite a diversity of speakers to CRP.

- Action Item 2.2.3. Ensure that all MCRP students have access to information on dual-degree programs, graduate minors, graduate certificates, cross-listed courses, and relevant coursework and events in cognate fields.

Goal 2.3: Provide easy ready access to program information and opportunities to all students.

- Action Item 2.3.1. Publish the updated MCRP Handbook every August 1st ahead of the Autumn academic term.

- Action Item 2.3.2. Ensure the MCRP handbook contains links and information about is regularly updated to reflect current social and cultural support resources at OSU.

Goal 2.4: Create and maintain an environment in which diverse student populations can succeed.

- Action Item 2.4.1. Ensure there is CRP faculty representation and engagement with Student Services Mentoring Program efforts.

- Action Item 2.4.2 Collaborate with Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access (DEIA) Committee to ensure that CRP student groups, issues and concerned are engaged.

- Action Item 2.4.3: Ensure newly matriculated students understand the resources to register with Student Learning and Disability Services.

MCRP Goal 3: Prepare and support students to pursue professional planning career paths by connecting them to planning practitioners and fostering self-directed learning.

Goal 3.1: Provide an integrated Professional Development Seminar for 1st-year MCRPs.

- Action Item 3.1.1. Biannually update learning objectives of CRP 6191, Professional Development to include trending topics from planning practice in order to best prepare students for job opportunities.

Goal 3.2: Offer and coordinate a professional internship program and robust career placement and job search support.

- Action Item 3.2.1. Work with Engineering Career Services (ECS) to survey internship employers regarding desired skills and competencies for MCRP internship seekers.

- Action Item 3.2.2. Collaborate with ECS on the tracking of MCRP internship employer recruitment efforts and student matches at the close of each academic semester.

- Action Item 3.2.3. Ensure that accurate and up-to-date information on ECS services and resources are included in each update to CRPHUB and the MCRP Handbook.

Goal 3.3: Support engagement between individual students, student organizations, and professional associations and CRP alumni.

- Action Item 3.3.1. Work with the American Planning Association - Ohio Chapter to ensure that current students have mentoring from area professionals/alumni.

- Action Item 3.3.2. Ensure that students have access to information on national awards and competitions (e.g., emails, CRPHUB, MCRP Handbook, etc.)

- Action Item 3.3.3. Collaborate with student groups (e.g., CRPSA and GPS) to host on-campus alumni panels and engagement events.

Goal 3.4: Provide robust career placement and job search support

- Action Item 3.4.1. Collaborate with ECS and Knowlton School Student Services to track job matching and job outcomes.

Goal 3.5: Provide research opportunities and pathways for students.

- Action Item 3.5.1. Make graduate research associateship opportunities through the sponsored research of faculty more available to students interested in research opportunities.

MCRP Goal 4: Systematically evaluate student work to assess MCRP program performance and alignment with preparation for professional planning practice.

Goal 4.1: Assess students' skills and knowledge to produce and evaluate city/community/regional plans and programs.

- Action Item 4.1.1. Establish a subcommittee of the Graduate Committee to assess and track competency indicators in core courses and MCRP student exit projects.

Goal 4.2: Select and promote high-quality student work as exemplars for the CRP community (students, faculty, and stakeholders).

- Action Item 4.2.1. Provide all MCRP students with relevant information on resources to produce high-quality research projects, (e.g., academic advisinng, writing and library resources, research funding and award opportunities).

- Action Item 4.2.2. Review and nominate exemplary applied planning research papers (APRPs) and theses for Knowlton School, APA-Ohio, and national awards.

MCRP Goal 5: Expand interest in the MCRP degree.

Goal 5.1: Provide additional pathways into the MCRP program for prospective Ohio State students and possible degree enhancements for current students.

- Action Item 5.1.1. Revive and increase application to the joint BSCRP + MCRP degree program by or before the 2024-25 academic year.

- Action Item 5.1.2. Create targeted recruitment strategy for early-career BSCRP students (e.g., first- and second-year BSCRP students).

- Action Item 5.1.3: Revive and renegotiate dual-degree, certificate and graduate minor options based on the revised MCRP curriculum with key academic partners across campus, including: Civil, Environmental, and Geodetic Engineering (CEGE), the Glenn College of Public Affairs, the School of Environment and Natural Resources,

Moritz College of Law, Department of Geography and the other Knowlton sections, Architecture and Landscape Architecture by the 2025-26 academic year.

Goal 5.2: Increase the selectivity of the MCRP admissions classes by increasing the number of applications through targeted recruitment.

- Action Item 5.2.1. Expand recruitment efforts at current and aspirational feeder schools.

- Action Item 5.2.2. Work with Knowlton Marketing and Communications staff to expand and enhance CRP online and social media presence.

Implementation Matrix

Table 1. MCRP Goals, Metrics, Benchmarks, and Action Plans

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
MCRP Goal 1: Provide a professional planning program with a rigorous curriculum connected to communities and situated in a global context.					
Goal 1.1: Deliver a rigorous curriculum connected to planning practice.					
Metric 1.1.1: Did the MCRP program adequately prepared to use tools and methods to understand and plan for cities & regions?	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	100%	70%	Action Item 1.1.1. Define and enhance the learning objectives and outcomes for all core courses.
Metric 1.1.2: MCRP exit projects reflect successful attainment of defined learning objectives	% of exit projects demonstrating proficiency in learning outcomes	Direct	New	75%	Action Item 1.1.2. Complete and regularly update a curricular map of all MCRP core courses.
Metric 1.1.3: Students demonstrating proficiency of core course learning objectives	% Students demonstrating proficiency in learning outcomes in core courses	Direct	New	80%+	Action Item 1.1.3. Provide information and resources to all students and advising faculty on guidelines for required exit projects.
Metric 1.1.4: Use tools and methods to understand and plan for cities & regions	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	73.7%	80%+	Action Item. 1.1.4. Track learning outcomes for MCRP core courses at the conclusion of each semester and for all MCRP exit projects.
Metric 1.1.5: Use the latest information technology to analyze and solve planning problems	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	100%	100%	Action Item 1.1.5: Update course descriptions for all core courses, studios, and professional development courses.
Metric 1.1.6: Please rank your satisfaction with tools for pragmatic planning practice	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	100%	100%	Action Item 1.1.6. Host a research "bootcamp" as a part of the MCRP orientation programming at the start of each academic year.
Metric 1.1.7: Please rank your satisfaction with the studios	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	100%	80%+	
Metric 1.1.8: Did the MCRP program adequately prepare you to enter professional practice with a portfolio of real-world experiences?	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	100%	80%+	
Metric 1.1.9: Did the MCRP program adequately prepare to work in interdisciplinary teams, collaborate with clients, the public, and work teams?	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	94.7%	90%+	

MCRP Goal 1: Provide a professional planning program with an experiential curriculum connected to communities and situated in a global context.

Goal 1.2: Deliver a curriculum connected to communities

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
Metric 1.2.1: Studio topics and geographies vary and intersect with the MCRP Areas of Focus	# of studio clients/projects in each Area of Focus every three years	Direct	New	1 / Area of Focus every 3 years	Action Item 1.2.1. Ensure that the studio selection process enables connections to a diversity of communities in Metropolitan Columbus, Ohio, global communities and a diversity of planning topics.
Metric 1.2.2: "Did the MCRP program adequately prepare you to advocate for interests on behalf or with a group in the community?"	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	73.7%	75%	Action Item 1.2.2: Include local (Columbus, Ohio & Midwest) topics in learning objectives of MCRP core courses.
Metric 1.2.3: "Did the MCRP program adequately prepare you to have cultural competencies in engaging in practice?"	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	63.2%	75%	

Goal 1.3: Deliver a curriculum connected situated in the global context.

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
Metric 1.3.1: Program helped me connect local and global issues	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	100.0%	100%	Action Item 1.3.1. Include global topics into learning objectives of MCRP core courses.
Metric 1.3.2: Number of students participating in education abroad programs	% of Students	Indirect	20%	20%	Action Item 1.3.2. Ensure that all MCRP students have access to information on travel courses/studios and funding opportunities in a timely manner.
Metric 1.3.3: Number of CRP Section education abroad opportunities for students	# of study abroad or international studio opportunitie	Direct	3	2+	Action Item 1.3.3. Offer international learning opportunities (e.g., travel courses and international planning studios) on a regular basis.
Metric 1.3.4: "Did the MCRP program adequately prepared to understand the big picture, while thinking creatively and innovatively to solve micro- and macro-level planning problems?"	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	94.7%	75%+	

MCRP Goal 2: Foster an intentionally inclusive learning community that reflects the social, cultural, and economic diversity of our state and region.

Goal 2.1. Cultivate and actively recruit a diverse student body to enhance the richness of our learning community.

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
Metric 2.1.1: Diversity of feeder schools in applicant pool	% of applicants from schools beyond Ohio	Direct	New	40%	Action Item 2.1.1 Establish and maintain relationships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Minority Serving Institutions and Hispanic Service Instutions.
Metric 2.1.2: My MCRP classmates reflected a diversity of life, academic, and work backgrounds/experiences.	% of Students answering "Yes"	Indirect	New	70%	Action Item 2.1.2. Collaborate with the Undergraduate Studies Committee and PhD Program Director on joint efforts to enhance the diversity profile of all CRP programs.

Goal 2.2 Incorporate into the graduate curriculum knowledge and skills needed to support a diverse society

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
Metric 2.2.1: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement "The program helped me develop skills to …" - Understand the historical and contemporary analysis of global and American urbanization	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	50.0%	75%+	Action Item 2.2.1. Biannually assess the inclusion of scholarship from historically underrepresented minorities, women, and global scholars in syllabi of MCRP core courses.
Metric 2.2.2. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: "The program invited a diversity of professionals and speakers to lectures, colloquia, alumni panels, and networking events."	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	New	70%	Action Item 2.2.2. Coordinate with student groups, Baumer Lecture committee, Student Services staff and others to invite a diversity of speakers to CRP.
Metric 2.2.3: Did the MCRP program adequately prepare you to understand the interdisciplinary nature of planning?	% of Students answering "Yes"	Indirect		70%	Action Item 2.2.3. Ensure that all MCRP students have access to information on dual-degree programs, graduate minors, graduate certificates, cross-listed courses, and relevant coursework and events in cognate fields.

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
MCRP Goal 2: Foster an intentionally inclusive learning community that reflects the social, cultural, and economic diversity of our state and region.					
Goal 2.3 Provide easy ready access to program information and opportunities to all students.					
Metric 2.3.1: Quality and use of accessible platform for student information (e.g., CRPHUB, MCRP Handbook)	# of MCRP Handbook downloads from Carmen-CRPHUB, KS Website	Direct	New	50+	Action Item 2.3.1. Publish the updated MCRP Handbook every August 1st ahead of the Autumn academic term. Action Item 2.3.2: Ensure the MCRP handbook contains links and information about is regularly updated to reflect current social and cultural support resources at OSU.
Goal 2.4. Create and maintain an environment in which diverse student populations can succeed.					
Metric 2.4.1: Annual student retention rate	% of students	Direct	85.0%	90%	Action Item 2.4.1. Collaborate with Knowlton Student Services staff on improving advising and mentoring program efforts.
Metric 2.4.2. Did you feel that the MCRP program adequately considered the needs and concerns of students?	% of Students answering "Yes"	Indirect	New	70%	Action Item 2.4.2. Collaborate with Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access (DEIA) Committee to ensure that CRP student groups, issues and concerned are engaged.
Metric: 2.4.3: Did the MCRP program adequately provide me with information about resources within Knowlton, the College of Engineering and Ohio State University to support my learning needs?	% of Students answering "Yes"	Indirect	New	70%	Action Item 2.4.3: Ensure newly matriculated students understand the resources to register with Student Learning and Disability Services.

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
MCRP Goal 3: Prepare and support students to pursue professional planning career paths by connecting them to planning practitioners and fostering self-directed learning.					
Goal 3.1. Provide an integrated Professional Development Seminar for 1st-year MCRPs					
Metric 3.1.1: Rank experience with the Professional Development course sequence	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	100%	90%+	Action Item 3.1.1: Biannually update learning objectives of CRP 6191, Professional Development to include trending topics from planning practice in order to best prepare students for job opportunities.
Goal 3.2 Offer and coordinate a professional internship program.					
Metric 3.2.1: How many students participated in an internship program	% of active students who hold internship positions	Direct	68.9%	75%	Action Item 3.2.1. Work with Engineering Career Services (ECS) to survey internship employers regarding desired skills and competencies for MCRP internship seekers.
Metric 3.2.2: How did your internship/practicum help you prepare for your planning career?	out of 5 positive outcomes, students will choose at least 3 different outcomes	Indirect	100%	75%	Action Item 3.2.2. Collaborate with ECS on the tracking of MCRP internship employer recruitment efforts and student matches at the close of each academic semester.
Metric 3.2.3: Are you satisfied with the placement and the experience as an indicator of your achievement?	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	84.2%	90%	
Metric 3.2.4: Did the MCRP program adequately prepare you to enter practice based on my studios and other applied coursework?	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	63.2%	70%	Action Item 3.2.3. Ensure that accurate and up-to-date information on ECS services and resources are included in each update to CRPHUB and the MCRP Handbook.
Goal 3.3 Support engagement between individual students, student organizations, and professional associations and CRP alumni.					
Metric 3.3.1: Students planned to find a job related to their degree after graduation	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	50.0%	75%	Action Item 3.3.1. Work with the American Planning Association - Ohio Chapter to ensure that current students have mentoring from area professionals/alumni.
Metric 3.3.2: Student projects nominated for regional, state and national awards	# of projects nominated for awards	Direct	N/A	3+	Action Item 3.3.2. Ensure that students have access to information on national awards and competitions (e.g., emails, CRPHUB, MCRP Handbook, etc.).
Metric 3.3.3: The MCRP Program sponsored on-campus events that helped expose me to practitioners	% of Students answering "Yes"	Indirect	New	70%	Action Item 3.3.3. Collaborate with student groups (e.g. CRPSA and GPS) to host on-campus alumni panels and engagement events.
Metric 3.4.2: Students who responded to the exit survey had already secured a position prior to graduation or were actively seeking a position	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	50.0%	**50%**	

MCRP Goal 3: Prepare and support students in the professional career paths connecting with planning practice and fostering self-directed learning

Goal 3.4. Provide robust career placement and job search support

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
Metric 3.4.1: The program provides opportunities for career guidance and mentorship	% Students Selecting Agree + and/or Satisfied +	Indirect	75%	100%	Action Item 3.4.1. Collaborate with ECS and Knowlton School Student Services to track job matching and job outcomes.
Metric 3.4.4. Rank experience with ECS	% Students Selecting Satisfied +	Indirect	70%	70%+	
Metric 3.4.5 CRP Alumni employment status	% of alumni currently employed in planning or planning-related position (or are pursuing another degree in planning or a cognate field)	Direct	100%	85%+	

Goal 3.5: Provide research opportunities and pathways for students.

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
Metric 3.5.1: The thesis / applied planning research paper was a useful exit requirement for assisting me in enhancing skills and developing expertise	% of Students answering yes	Indirect	60%	70%	Action Item: 3.5.1: Annually update and distribute information on thesis/APRP guidelines to incoming and continuing students and CRP faculty.
Metric 3.5.2: My committee members / advisors provided sufficient assistance	% of Students answering yes	Indirect	N/A	75%	

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Bench-mark	2022	2024-2029 Goal	Action Items
MCRP Goal 4: Systematically evaluate student work to assess MCRP program performance and alignment with preparation for professional planning practice.					
Goal 4.1 Assess students' skills and knowledge to produce and evaluate city/community/regional plans and programs.					
Metric 4.1.1. Percentage of students/student projects demonstrating mastery of learning objectives in core courses and exit projects	% of students demonstrating mastery	Direct	New	75%	Action Item 4.1.1. Establish a subcommittee of the Graduate Committee to assess and track competency indicators in core courses and MCRP student exit projects.
Metric 4.1.2: Percentage of alumni who take AICP test who pass within 5 years of graduating	% of alumni	Direct	NA	75%	
Goal 4.2. Select and promote high-quality student work as exemplars for the CRP community (students, faculty, and stakeholders).					
Metric 4.2.1: Provide MCRP students with relevant information on resources to produce high-quality work, e.g., research funding and award opportunities	% of students responding that they received information regarding research opportunities and resources	Indirect	100%	100%	Action Item 4.2.1. Provide all MCRP students with relevant information on resources to produce high-quality research projects, (e.g.,academic advising, writing and library resources, research funding and award opportunities).
Metric 4.2.2. Review and nominate exemplary applied planning research papers (APRPs) and theses for Knowlton School, APA-Ohio, and national awards	# of nominations of student work	Direct	NA	5+	Action Item 4.2.2. Review and nominate exemplary applied planning research papers (APRPs) and theses for Knowlton School, APAOhio, and national awards.

MCRP Goal 5: Expand interest in the MCRP degree program.

Goals & Metrics	Measurement	Direct or Indirect	2022	2024 - 2029 Goal	Action Items
Goal 5.1: Provide additional pathways into the MCRP program for prospective Ohio State students and possible degree enhancements for current students.					
Metric 5.1.1: Number of applications into the BSCRP+MCRP Program	# of applications	Direct	New	10+	Action Item 5.1.1: Revive and increase application to the joint BSCRP + MCRP degree program by or before the 2024-25 academic year. Action Item 5.1.2. Create targeted recruitment strategy for early career BSCRP students (e.g., first- and second-year BSCRP students).
Metric 5.1.2: Percent of students interested in pursuing dual-degrees with the MCRP	% of accepted students pursuing a dual or joint degree (e.g., BSCRP+MCRP, MCRP+MS in CEGE, etc.)	Direct	New	10%+ of incoming MCRP cohort	Action Item 5.1.3: Revive and/or renegotiate dual-degree, certificate and graduate minor options based on the revised MCRP curriculum with key academic partners across campus, including: Civil, Environmental, and Geodetic Engineering (CEGE), the Glenn College of Public Affairs, the School of Environment and Natural Resources, Moritz College of Law, Department of Geography and the other Knowlton sections, Architecture and Landscape Architecture by the end of the 2025-26 academic year.
Goal 5.2: Increase the selectivity of the MCRP admissions classes by increasing the number of external applications through targeted recruitment.					
Metric 5.2.1: Diversity of undergraduate institutions represented in applicant pool	# of unique institutions (4 year-degree)	Direct	New	20+	Action Item 5.2.1. Expand recruitment efforts at current and aspirational feeder schools.
Metric 5.2.2: Number of students participating in in-person and virtual open houses in an admissions cycle (October - April)	# of registered students	Direct	New	75+	Action Item 5.2.2. Work with Knowlton Marketing and Communications staff to expand and enhance CRP online and social media presence.

Conclusion

Conclusion

The 2024 - 2029 Strategic Plan for the MCRP Program reflects the CRP faculty's aspirations for the program. The document's stated goals and objectives are as practical as they are aspirational. They consider our current environment and anticipate future opportunites and challenges to grow and enhance an already strong program.

As presented on the preceding pages, our priorities are on enhancing the learning experience, its outcomes, connections to communities and practice, and expanding interest in our program. This document will guide the work of the Graduate Studies Committee for the next several years and communicate our ambitions to our partners within the Knowlton School and Ohio State as well as our external partners and stakeholders within the planning profession and academy to meet this plan's objectives.

Notes

Endnotes

1. Ohio State University, "Statistical Summary," Accessed at: https://facts. osu.edu/statistical-summary. December 1, 2023.

2. Ohio State University, "Ohio State sets new record with $1.38 billion in annual research expenditures," Ohio State News. Accessed at: https:// news.osu.edu/ohio-state-sets-new-record-with-138-billion-in-annual- research-expenditures/. December 1, 2023.

3. Ohio State University, College of Engineering, "Enrollment and Degrees At A Glance," Accessed at: https://engineering.osu.edu/about/ annual-statistical-report/enrollment-and-degrees-glance. December 1, 2023.

4. ibid.

5. Ohio State University, College of Engineering, "Research Expenditures," Accessed at: https://engineering.osu.edu/about/annual-statistical-re port/research-expenditures. December 1, 2023.

6. Ohio State University, College of Engineering, "Faculty Profile," Accessed at: https://engineering.osu.edu/about/annual-statistical-re port/faculty-profile. December 2, 2023.

7. Ohio State University, College of Engineering, "Inclusive Excellence, Accessed at: https://engineering.osu.edu/inclusive-excellence. December 3, 2023.

8. Ohio State University, College of Engineering, "Enrollment and Degrees At A Glance," Accessed at: https://engineering.osu.edu/about/ annu al-statistical-report/enrollment-and-degrees-glance. December 1, 2023.

9. Professor Rachel Kleit is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for the College of Engineering. (see her full profile here: https://knowlton. osu.edu/people/kleit.1). Jason Reece is Associate Vice Provost for Urban Research and Community Engagement for Ohio State University. (See his full profile here: https://knowlton.osu.edu/people/reece.35)

10.   Ohio State University, College of Engineering, "Enrollment and Degrees At A Glance," Accessed at: https://engineering.osu.edu/about/annual-statistical-report/enrollment-` and-degrees-glance. December 1, 2023.

11.   ibid.

12.   The CRP Vision and Mission are taken directly from the adopted Strategic Plan for the CRP Section, adopted by the faculty in May 2023. Please follow this link to read that complete document: https://knowlton.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/crp_strategic-plan_20230522_interactive.pdf. December 3, 2023.

13.   Ohio State University, College of Engineering, "Enrollment and Degrees At A Glance," Accessed at: https://engineering.osu.edu/about/annual-statistical-report/enrollment-` and-degrees-glance. December 1, 2023.

14.   Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) "2024-2050 Population Growth Forecasts," Accessed at: https://www.morpc.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Population_Growth_Forecast_2024-50.pdf

15.   Assocation of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) "Report on Race, Ethnicity, and Foreign Origin Data for ACSP, 2018," Accessed at: https://www.planningaccreditation board.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2018Diversity.pdf

16   U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Occupational Outlook Handbook: Urban and Regional Planners," Accessed at: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/urban-and-regional-planners.htm. December 8, 2023.

17.   Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. vs. President and Fellow of Harvard College, 600 U.S. 181 (2023)

18.   For the purposes of clarity, "biannually" means every two calendar years.

Unless otherwise indicated, all photos were provided by the Knowlton School.

Master of City and Regional
Planning

Strategic Plan

2024–29

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Knowlton —— School