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1. Curriculum

The MCRP program curriculum entails 60 credit hours of coursework that is typically completed over 2 years (4 semesters) with approximately 15 credit hours per term. Required courses account for 31 credit hours. Students are considered full time in the program if they are taking 14-16 credit hours on average.

a. Core

The core curriculum in C&RP is comprised of 7 regular class offerings (CRP 6000, 6100, 6400 in fall year 1; CRP 6300, 6500 in spring year 1; CRP 6600 fall year 2). For the seventh course, students take either CRP 6200 (spring) or CRP 5001 (fall); students may opt to take both whereby one will count toward elective credit. The regular core courses amount to 23 credit hours. Students must also take no less than 2 credit hours of the professional development seminar (CRPLAN 6191S). Note that all students not completing a thesis are required to pass the MCRP Comprehensive Exam as a graduation requirement. The exam will cover material from all core classes (with the exception of CRP 6200 or 5001) and students are required to pass each core section of the exam in order to pass the overall exam and graduate. If a student earns a B- or lower in a core class, the student is in danger of failing the comprehensive exam. In this case, it is recommended that the student consult with the instructor of the class to develop a plan to review the material from the core class.

b. Studios

Studio courses are practice oriented offerings focusing on one of five areas: comprehensive planning; urban design/physical planning; transportation; sustainability; and international development. All MCRP students must take at least one studio course and are encouraged to take more than one if their schedule permits. Unless a special invitation is extended, studio courses are not recommended for first year students.

c. Electives

MCRP students will have at least 29 hours of elective credit to gain depth in a concentration area (discussed below) or breadth in a variety of planning areas. Students may choose any graduate level course in the MCRP program to fulfill these hours. Up to 14 of the 29 credit hours may be taken outside of the CRP program but must also be graduate level (courses in CRP must be 5000 or above and students must enroll in the graduate section; if outside of CRP, courses must be 4000 or above and taught by a faculty member or lecturer) to count toward
the degree hours. If a student enrolls in a course which is cross-listed with CRP and another department, the student should enroll in the CRP section or the credit hours will count towards the maximum 14 external hours.

d. **Independent Studies**

Students may opt to take an independent study (CRP 6193) as an elective course option. Independent studies are a variable credit, S/U options that do not affect GPA. Typically, an independent study is between 1-3 credit hours depending on what has been agreed to with the independent study faculty member. The independent study can be any variety of topics such as a book review/critique; a review of MS Excel or Access; an extension of a class paper topic; a literature review in an area of interest. Students interested in the thesis option are encouraged to sign up for an independent study to draft a literature review and proposal.

Any faculty member may serve as the “instructor” for the independent study. Faculty have varied approaches to the study and students should approach the faculty member who is most allied with his/her independent study topic to ask if he/she would be ok with the student signing up under his/her call number. Computer related independent studies are typically done with Dr. Conroy and are self-guided instruction using a textbook. All students who do an independent study must first get approval from the intended faculty overseer. Then s/he must complete a Knowlton School Graduate Independent Study form (available from the KSA Knowlton School Student Services Front Desk and on the Knowlton School website) and return the signed form by the registration deadlines to the Graduate Coordinator to complete the enrollment.

e. **Practicum Courses**

Practicum courses may be best described as studio meets independent study. Students interested in a practicum must develop a proposal for the practicum faculty member that outlines the expected project(s) and deliverable(s). A practicum cannot be work that is done as part of a student’s internship efforts. Often students will do a practicum with a non-profit or other volunteer based organization to provide a planning related service (e.g., code review, design proposal, market analysis). The practicums, like studios, represent a significant amount of work. It is possible for a practicum to not to involve a client per se, though this will also need approval by the faculty member.
Practicums can also be a means by which a student **without** a formal (paid or unpaid) internship can gain both experience and needed internship hours for graduation. If a student is without an internship at the start of his/her second year, we recommend s/he first register for an independent study with the internship coordinator in the fall semester. This will allow for the student to sufficiently research opportunities that would reflect an internship level of contribution and effort. The outcome of the fall term is a formal practicum proposal with timeline and expected contributions. The student would then register for the practicum CPR 8300 in the spring term (again, with the internship coordinator) to carry out the proposal. Should an internship be found in either the fall or for spring, the student should discuss with the internship coordinator ways to adjust the practicum workload.

**f. Concentrations**

Students may elect to use their elective hours to delve into a particular area of interest. The program has 8 concentration areas (energy, environment and sustainability; geographic information systems and remote sensing; housing, real estate, and neighborhoods; international development; physical planning and urban design; planning policy and process; transportation; and urban and regional economics). Each concentration consists of 6 courses; one of the six is a studio, another analytic course. Concentration course recommendations are found on the Knowlton website.

Concentration areas are not formal. That is, they do not appear on a student’s transcript. Therefore, students may shape the elective components of the concentration based on discussions with their advisor and a review of alternative courses across the university. Concentrations do not expand the restriction on elective hours outside the program.

**g. Professional Development Seminar (CRP 6191S)**

The professional development seminar is a 1 credit hour course offered in both fall and spring semesters focused on professional preparation and practice. **All MCRP students, regardless of their internship status, are required to take at least 2 semesters of the seminar.**

**h. Academic status**

Students must maintain a 3.0 or better cumulative graduate GPA to remain in good standing with the University. Should a student fail to achieve a 3.0 overall,
regardless of his/her GPA in the CRP program specifically, s/he will be given an academic sanction by the Graduate School. The student, his/her advisor, and the Graduate Studies Chair, will receive notification of the sanction. A student has 1 term in which to bring his/her GPA to or above the 3.0 standard. Probationary students are recommended to take the Graduate School minimum load for full time status (8 credit hours), and that all such hours are graded work. Independent studies or other P/F or S/U course grading options have no positive influence on a student’s GPA and, therefore, those courses will likely diminish the time a student can dedicate to graded courses. If a student fails to reach a 3.0 by the end of the next grading period, they may be dismissed from the University. A petition option is available for students who have shown significant progress toward increasing their GPA to 3.0 or more, and the Graduate School that student as able to reach good standing with one additional term. Petition approval is at the Graduate School’s discretion. Students failing to reach a 3.0 by the end of the second term are automatically dismissed from the University. A letter of petition should be submitted to the Graduate Studies Chair. If the Graduate Studies Chair approves the petition, he or she must petition the Graduate School on the student’s behalf. Details regarding academic standards can be found in the Graduate School Handbook.

Students on academic probation are not permitted to remain in their internship positions during the probationary period (no allowable hours for the 560 minimum can be credited during this period). The Graduate Studies Chair will notify the internship coordinator of the student’s status, and the internship coordinator will contact the student’s internship supervisor to inform him/her of the change in status. Students who return to good standing, may rejoin their internship as long as it is desired by all parties. Internship sponsors are under no obligation to rehire students following their probation.

i. Course waivers
If a student feels that s/he has had the graduate level equivalent of a core course in the curriculum, that student may be waived from the requirement. The student must provide the syllabus of the course taken for the MCRP faculty member teaching the core course to review. The decision as to whether there is sufficient overlap to warrant a course waiver rests with the MCRP faculty instructor. Should the waiver be granted, the student is waived only from the course requirement. The waiver does not give the student the course credit hours, meaning the student must make up the hours with other graduate-level
credit. If the waiver is approved, the student must obtain the Course Waiver form from the Knowlton School Student Services front desk and return the form signed by the instructor and the Graduate Studies Chair to the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

2. MCRP Milestones

The following applies to most MCRP students with the exception of part-time or dual degree students, or students starting in the spring or summer terms.

a. By the end of year 1
After spring semester of the first year, MCRP students will have completed all but one core course and have the foundation laid for their specific interest area, or generalist approach to their planning education. Students interested in a thesis option should at this point have their committee set and proposal drafted. Students planning on a dual degree should submit their dual degree plan to their advisors and the graduate school.

b. Year 2
The second year of the program focuses on areas of specialization and potentially dual degree coursework. Expectations for the second year are that students wrap up core course work in the fall term and take one or two studio courses. Students who have not found a paid or volunteer internship should begin work on their internship practicum proposal via an independent study in fall and practicum in spring.

c. Final term
Students on a regular two-year program cycle will enter their final term in spring of their second year. Students will need to submit an application to graduate; this process is overseen by the Graduate Programs Coordinator office and the form is online at GRADFORMS.OSU.EDU. The form must be submitted and approved (student’s advisor and Graduate Studies Chair – unless they are the same person, at which time it would be advisor and Section Head) no later than the third Friday of the semester. The Graduate Programs Coordinator will typically request the forms be submitted earlier than this deadline and will contact students via email regarding the process.
3. **Comprehensive Exam**

All MCRP students must complete an exit exam in order to graduate. Most MCRP students opt to take the comprehensive exam; the alternative is a thesis and associated defense.

   a. **Timing**

      All students are expected to sit for the comprehensive exam in the term in which they are graduating, typically, spring of the second year. The comprehensive exam is only offered in fall and spring terms; there is no summer comprehensive exam. The exam will be offered between the 8th and 11th weeks of the fall and spring semesters. The exam forms are generated by the graduation applications and so all students who applied to graduate in that term are automatically listed for the exam. Students cannot sign up to take the comprehensive exam while on academic probation.

      There are only two circumstances in which a student may take the exam up to two terms in advance of his/her graduation. In each of these cases, the student must register with the Graduate Programs Coordinator to sit for the exam; the Coordinator will send out a notice for exam sign ups no less than 1 month prior to the exam. First, if a student intends to graduate in the summer session, s/he will necessarily take the exam in the spring prior to that summer term. Second, if a student is part of a dual degree program in which the second program also has an exit exam requirement, the student is permitted to take the MCRP comprehensive exam 1 term in advance of their graduation. Therefore, if a student has a dual degree with Public Policy, for example, and will take that program’s exit exam in fall term, they may sign up for the MCRP comprehensive exam for the preceding spring term. In each of these exception cases, the Graduate Programs Coordinator will verify and the Graduate Studies Chair will approve the early exam.

   b. **Format**

      The comprehensive exam consists of a two-part online exam given on 2 different days addressing the core curriculum of the program: history, law, theory, site planning, statistics, data and forecasting, spatial models, and project evaluation. The exam is designed to provide an outcome-based assessment of students’ fundamental comprehensive and applied understanding of the core curriculum.

      The first part of the exam is a multiple choice based test in a format akin to the AICP professional exam and is intended to ensure a comprehensive fundamental
understanding of the core curriculum. The exam consists of 5 questions per core area (40 total); students must answer 3 of 5 correctly per core area to pass the exam. The exam is closed book/closed note with the exception of 1 sheet of notes for statistics and 1 sheet of notes for data and forecasting. Students have 3 hours to complete it. Students who pass all sections of the multiple choice portion are allowed to sit for the second part of the exam. If a student does not answer 3 of 5 correctly in 1-3 sections, s/he sits for a follow up of 5 new questions per missed core section; students have 1.5 hours for the follow up exam. Students passing all sections of the retake are eligible for the second part of the comprehensive exam. In the case of a student failing a retake section, that student will need to return in the subsequent term (or end of term if the exam was in spring) to sit again for the missed section(s). Students failing the second round of retakes would be dismissed from the program. If a student fails 4 or more sections of the multiple choice exam, s/he is not eligible for a retake during the same term and must return the subsequent term for a retake. The student is encouraged to use the extended time for additional review/remedial work focused on the core curriculum.

The second part of the exam is a scenario based essay which covers includes 3 areas of the core curriculum, one of which is quantitative (statistics, data and forecasting, spatial models, project evaluation). The essay is intended to ensure students are able to apply the knowledge they have gained in the core curriculum to a real life situation, making decisions regarding appropriateness of methods, history, theory and law. Students who fully pass the first part of the exam (multiple choice) are informed of the focus areas in advance and are allowed books and notes into the test. The essay exam is offered approximately 1 week after the multiple choice exam. Students will have 4 hours to complete the essay portion of the exam. The essay is graded on a high pass, pass, low pass, fail standard. Students must pass all sections of the multiple choice and essay to graduate.

Students who earn a high pass in at least 2 of the 3 areas, and who passed all sections of the multiple choice exam without retakes, are deemed to have passed the comprehensive exam with distinction.
4. Thesis

MCRP students with an interest in independent research may opt to write and defend a master’s thesis to fulfill the exit exam requirement. Students selecting this option will not take the comprehensive exam.

a. Timing

The thesis option represents a significant amount of planning and effort. Ideally, a student would approach a possible thesis advisor (not required to be the assigned faculty advisor) about the potential of a thesis during his/her first semester in the program. Students would then sign up for CRPLAN 7300 or CRPLAN 6440 in the second semester of their first year to draft a literature review and preliminary proposal. The student should have a proposal and committee (minimum 2 faculty members, one of whom is the advisor) set by the end of the second semester of their first year. A thesis committee form, available from the Graduate Programs Coordinator office, should be submitted once the committee is set. Data gathering would ensue during the break between first and second year. Analysis and thesis writing would start in the third semester and continue into the fourth semester with the culmination of the final document and defense. Students should sign up for Master’s Thesis hours (CRPLAN 6999) in fall and spring terms to account for their analysis and writing; students are expected to have a minimum of 6 total thesis hours prior to graduation. Students must complete at least 3 courses (9-12 credit hours) dedicated to their thesis focus area.

b. Approvals

The approval process for the Master’s Thesis option is primarily between the student and his/her advisor. When a student applies for graduation, he/she would select the Master’s-thesis option. An exam form and a document form will be generated for the student’s committee to approve. Sign off by the committee on the exam form upon a successful defense is the equivalent of passing the comprehensive exam and has the same graduation deadline submission timing. In addition, a copy of the thesis should be submitted to the Graduate School for approval. Guidelines and submission processes can be found on the Graduate School’s website.

5. Dual Degree and Graduate Minors

City and Regional Planning is inherently an interdisciplinary undertaking. As such, many students will take elective courses outside the program (up to 14 hours towards the
total minimum 60 credit hour requirement) to supplement their interests. Some students may wish to gain further depth in a specialty area by opting for either a graduate minor or a second master’s degree (dual degree).

a. Options
There are a number of formalized dual degree plans: African-American and African Studies, Civil Engineering (Urban Transportation), Environment and Natural Resources, Environmental Science, Geography, Landscape Architecture, Law, Public Affairs, Social Work. Additionally, students may create a customized dual degree plan upon the agreement and sign off by an advisor and the graduate studies chair in each program.

b. Timing
It is advised for students to, if possible, take a graduate level course in the intended dual degree program in their first or second semester. This allows a student to confirm his/her interest as well as to begin a search for an advisor in the dual program if necessary for the other program. A student should also be prepared to submit their dual degree approval form before the end of their first spring term and no later than a semester prior to graduation; discussions with the student’s advisor should begin as soon as there is intent to pursue the dual plan. Some dual degrees can be completed in two years’ time, with additional semester hours and summer courses. Other dual degrees take 3 or more years to complete.

c. Approval Process
Students who wish to pursue a dual degree must be admitted to both programs. If a student is already admitted to the MCRP program, typically the second program only requires that the Knowlton School Graduate Programs Coordinator submit a copy of the MCRP application to the second program. As some programs may require additional application materials, students interested in a dual degree should research the admission requirements of the second program. To officially enroll in the dual degree, students must submit the online the dual degree form via GRADFORMS.OSU.EDU which must be approved by each program. The form requires students to outline proposed courses. Guidelines are explained below. If courses change, the form should be updated and reapproved.

d. Guidelines
Any dual degree program must follow certain guidelines for approval. These guidelines pertain to credit hour distribution and core course assignment. The approval form requires course identification for core courses in each program,
plus dually counted courses. The courses applied uniquely to one program must total no less than half the total credit hours for that program (e.g., no less than 30 for CRPLAN since the degree requires 60). With few exceptions, the core course listing corresponds to the core courses plus studio discussed earlier in the guide and which total 31 credit hours.

The minimum total number of credit hours required for the dual degree plan is the number of credit hours of the degree program with the highest credit hour requirement, plus half the credit hours of the other degree program. So, if a student were interested in a dual degree with Environment and Natural Resources (total credit hour requirement of 36 hours), s/he would have a minimum total requirement of 60 + 18 = 78 credit hours. Further, since 31 hours would be in CRP core, and 18 (minimum) would be in ENR core, a student would likely have approximately 78 – 31 = 47 hours of dually counted credit hours.

Additionally, the sum of the unique program hours plus the dually counted credit hours must be no less than the total credit hours required for each program. Given the previous example, the 31 core hours in CRP plus the 47 elective hours, would be 78 total which is over the needed amount of 60 hours. Similarly, the 18 core hours in ENR plus the 47 elective hours, is similarly over the 36 required hours in ENR. The student may find s/he has fewer courses appropriate for dual credit hours. In such cases, the distribution of core – dual courses may necessarily be adjusted so long as the prior requirements are still met. If, for example, a student had more CRP dedicated courses for the dual with ENR, s/he could shift more electives into the CRP core section so long as the dually counted courses meets the joint total requirement with ENR (so, 18 minimum).

6. Internships

All students in the MCRP program are required to complete 560 hours of a planning practice internship with the exception of students completing a practicum in place of the internship. While this can be completed in 2 semesters, the intention of the program is that the interns remain in their position for the full two years in which they are in the program. The internship program coordinator will collect resumes and submit them to the collection of internship sponsors that work with the MCRP program. Students may also secure their own internship independent of the MCRP coordinator. Once an internship is secured, students should fill out the Internship Registration Form and send it to the internship coordinator for approval and record keeping. See the MCRP Internship Handbook for details. Eligibility
Students must be in good standing (3.0 cumulative GPA) in order to participate in an internship. Students who were admitted conditionally may not participate in an internship until their conditions of admission have been met. Students must be considered full-time in the MCRP program (14 hours per semester) in order to hold an internship and use the hours towards the 560 hour requirement. The Graduate School has an alternate definition of “full time” (8 credit hours) and it is not applicable for the internship program consideration.

a. Resumes
Students must submit a 1 page (and ONLY 1 page) resume and the Internship Introduction Form to the internship coordinator (as of fall 2013, Assistant Professor of Practice Kimberly Burton). The resume must include the student’s current status as an MCRP student as well as their availability date. The focus of the experiences listed in the resume should be on the skills that would be well applied to planning. Each term, the internship coordinator will send out an email to request resumes from students seeking internships.

b. Course
In addition to the 560 hour requirement, students must take the professional development seminar (CRPLAN 6191S) two times.

c. Expectations/Issues

Students are expected to work at their internship position for 20 hours per week on average; some weeks may be more, some less. As required courses in the first year curriculum are held on Tuesdays and Thursday, first year students are expected to participate in their internships on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The one required course in the second year curriculum is on Wednesday and Friday. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. They are not only representing themselves, but also the program. Any poor conduct will be reported by the supervisor to the internship coordinator for discussion and review. Students who are consistently problematic may be dismissed from their internship; if hours are still needed, the student must find another position.

The internship sponsors are all planning focused or related entities. Interns are expected to grow in their positions over the course of his/her tenure with the sponsor. That said, interns – especially those in their first term – will likely be expected to complete tasks such as copying, filing, etc. If these tasks constitute the majority of the intern’s experience over the course of a few months, the student should speak with his/her supervisor to reconfirm the job description of
the specific internship. If this does not resolve the issue, the student should contact the internship coordinator who can advise and reach out to the supervisor directly. A similar approach should be taken if there are other issues (e.g., consistent weeks over 20 hours).

d. Internship Tuition and Fee Waivers
The CRP program has a limited number of tuition and fee waivers that are associated with the internship program generally. To be considered for a waiver, a student must 1) secure an internship for the term in which s/he receives the waiver by the stated deadline (typically 1 week prior to the start of the term in which the award will be dispersed); 2) have a 3.5 minimum GPA (either in the program or coming into the program if the student will be in their first semester); and, 3) be an in state resident. Out-of-state students are eligible for the waiver only if their internship is on-campus in the form of a Graduate Associateship. Not all students meeting the minimum requirements will receive a waiver. Waiver decisions are made by the section head in conjunction with the MCRP Chair and internship coordinator. There is no application to be considered for a waiver. Decisions are typically made in July for the upcoming academic year. Waivers are usually offered for both the fall and spring semesters.

e. Hours Verification
Following every semester in which the student is employed (or volunteers) as an intern, s/he should submit the Internship Record form to the internship coordinator. The form should list the number of hours worked that term and must be signed by the intern’s supervisor. Once a student has reached the 560 hour requirement, no further verification will be sought from the supervisor, though the student is encouraged to remain as an intern if all parties are happy with the arrangement.

7. Advisors
Students entering the MCRP program are assigned a faculty advisor, typically based on their area of interest and advisor availability.

a. Expectations
Students usually interact with their advisor if they have questions about the program, are looking for course or professional advice, or need an advisor signature on a form. Some advisors are more proactive about meeting regularly with their advisees than others.

b. Changing
Students may wish to change advisors because they have changed interest areas, or have formed a more comfortable relationship with another faculty member. The procedure for changing advisors requires a student to fill out an advisor
change form, which can be obtained from the Knowlton School Student Services front desk. We also encourage students to let their current advisor know of the pending change. Faculty members understand that these changes happen and the notification is seen as a professional courtesy.

8. Knowlton School Faculty and Staff
In addition to your advisor, there are others in the Knowlton School who are available to assist you:

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Section Head
The City and Regional Planning (CRP) Section Head serves as the head of the CRP program at the Knowlton School and handles the higher level administration of the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Graduate Studies Chair
The Graduate Studies Chair (GSC) serves as the head of the Master’s and PhD programs at the Knowlton School. Any forms and petitions including course substitutions, course waivers, credit hour increases, etc. typically must be signed off by the GSC.

Master’s Program Chair
The Master’s Program Chair handles admissions and recruitment efforts for the MCRP program as well as other administrative functions for the program.

Graduate Programs Coordinator
The Graduate Programs Coordinator is a useful resource for students in navigating the administration of the programs and clarifying program requirements in addition to policies and procedures.