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2019

School of Urban
and Regional
Planning Periodic
Program Review:
ONE-YEAR FOLLOW-UP REPORT

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1. Setting the Context

1 a. Program / Degree Information

Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning (B.U.R.Pl.)

The School of Urban and Regional Planning (SURP) offers three professionally accredited undergraduate programs that award a *Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning* (B.U.R.Pl.) degree:

1. a four-year baccalaureate program (PLAN);
2. a two-year accelerated baccalaureate program (PLAB); and
3. a two-year post-diploma degree completion program (PLAD).

The School of Urban and Regional Planning also offers a professional graduate program in Urban Development in a one-year stream and a two-year stream format, with a **Master of Planning - Urban Development (M.Pl.)** degree awarded on program completion.

1 b. Program Description

SURP programs provide professional skills, particularly in project management and interpersonal communication; practical knowledge in planning legislation and public sector decision-making procedures; and academic knowledge in the history of the profession, planning theory, planning research and societal trends relevant to the profession. Students are provided a foundation on topics such as land use planning, environmental planning, community planning, transportation planning, housing, real-estate, and planning research. A description of each available SURP program is provided below.

Full-Time, Four-Year Undergraduate Program (PLAN)

The PLAN program is a four year (eight semester) professional curriculum designed to prepare students for the field of planning, and involves learning about both planning theory and knowledge application in a workplace setting. Students must acquire 41 course credits, including 14 liberal, professional, and professionally-related course credits, in order to graduate. The full-time program typically involves 15 hours of class per week during academic semesters 1 and 8, 17 hours per week of in-class work in semesters with 5-hour studio courses (i.e., 2, 3, 4, & 6), and 18 hours per week in semesters (5&7) with both studio and field research courses.

Two-Year Post Baccalaureate Program (PLAB)

The PLAB program provides an option for postsecondary students who have completed a degree in another related field to pursue a B.U.R.Pl. Degree in an intense two-year curriculum (involving a summer course and four additional semesters) instead of the regular four-year PLAN program. The PLAB program was created on the advice of planning professionals in order to make the B.U.R.Pl. Degree more accessible to university students specializing in a field other than planning. Students must successfully complete a summer course on “Foundations of Planning” in order to enter the program. PLAB students are then required to complete a

curriculum nearly identical to the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth semesters of the PLAN program (above), in addition to completing the course Applied Ecology for Urban Planners (PLG 240) and Introduction to Microeconomics (ECN 104).

The program typically involves 18 hours of class per week in the first and third semesters, 17 hours of class per week in the second semester, and the same course load as PLAN students in the eighth semester with 15 hours of class per week. Students must acquire 21 course credits, including 6 professional course credits, in order to graduate.

Two-Year Post-Diploma Degree Completion Program (PLAD)

The PLAD program provides an option for postsecondary students who have completed a College diploma in the planning technology field to pursue a B.U.R.Pl. Degree in an intense two-year curriculum (involving a summer course and four additional semesters) instead of the regular four-year PLAN program. The PLAD program was created on the advice of planning professionals in order to make the B.U.R.Pl. Degree more accessible to planning technician students from college. Students must successfully complete a summer course on “Foundations of Planning” in order to enter the program. PLAD students are then required to complete a curriculum nearly identical to the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth semesters of the PLAN program, in addition to completing the course Applied Ecology for Urban Planners (PLG 240), Introduction to Microeconomics and Senior Research Paper (PLE 806).

The program typically involves 21 hours per week of class work in the first semester, 20 hours per week in the second semester, 18 hours per week in the third semester, and 15 hours per week in the fourth semester. Students must acquire 24 course credits, including 8 liberal and professional course credits, in order to graduate.

1 c. Periodic Program Review (PPR) 2016

On March 6, 2018 the Academic Standards Committee presented the School of Urban and Regional Planning Periodic Program Review to Senate. In its evaluation, ASC concluded that a thorough, analytical and self-critical program review was conducted. The Committee added that the School did an excellent job of integrating into the developmental plan the feedback from students, alumni, employers and the peer reviewers, and outlined a comprehensive plan for program enhancements moving forward.

The Academic Standards Committee recommended that the program provide a one-year follow-up report that included the following:

- an update on the initiatives outlined in the developmental plan.
- a complete set of recent course outlines (dated) of all required and elective professional courses.
- up-to-date CVs (dated) of all RFA and CUPE instructors teaching required and elective courses in the program as of 2016-2017.
- an update on any decisions made by the School regarding revising or deleting the

academic standing variation that is outlined in the Ryerson Calendar.

The 2018-2019 academic year has been an extraordinarily active year in the School of Urban and Regional Planning. The School has had an Interim Director and an Interim Graduate Program Director since June 2018; significant faculty resources were committed to the first formal Program Review of the Graduate Program throughout the year; additional resources were committed to a search for a Tenure Track Position in Environmental Planning; two full-time faculty were on Sabbatical Leave; and much of the Winter Term was taken up by budget reduction planning requirements of the University.

The cumulative impact of these activities has made it difficult to assign the highest priority to many of the short-term tasks identified in the Planning Periodic Program Review. Most of these short-term tasks have now started to be addressed and are 'on-track' following a robust end-of-year May Days 2019 set of faculty meetings and discussions

This report represents the one-year follow-up report.

The next section addresses the status of the Developmental Plan Areas identified in the PPR with particular emphasis on short-term (1-2 years) timelines: (i) Students and Alumni; (ii) Program Delivery; and (iii) Faculty Development.

A set of up-to-date CVs of all RFA and CUPE Instructors teaching in the program as of 2018-2019 is included in Appendix A.

Appendix B provides a complete set of recent course outlines for 2018-2019.

It should also be noted that the academic standing variation requiring that a second failed grade in any given course will lead to a REQUIRED TO WITHDRAW Standing has now been removed.

2. Update on Program Review Developmental Plan Areas 2018-2019

2a. Students and Alumni

Development Plan Area Students and Alumni	
Sub-Area of Focus Intake	Focus Secondary School Recruitment
Goal Provide greater support for university and other efforts to recruit secondary school students and promote urban planning as a field of study	
Objectives To increase the number and quality of applicants to the planning program from high school graduates and increase awareness of urban planning as a field of study and a career path.	
Timeline/Status Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor applicant-to-enrollment data and the percentage of students with over 80% entering average metrics in relation to Ryerson and FCS averages Work with Ryerson recruitment and admissions to identify feeder High Schools and support their efforts Create effective local outreach initiatives and develop web-recruitment materials to attract quality candidates Continue to support and expand the "RU a Planner?" Program Work with the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, the Canadian Institute of Planners, and the Association of Canadian Urban Planning Programs to support their efforts to promote planning as a field of study and a profession 	
Timeline/Status Medium Term/Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider changing admission requirements, such as mandatory high school courses or a portfolio if the number of applicants continues to grow at a sustained level and there is no academic standing rate improvement. Develop and grow minors in Urban Design, Real Estate, and other subjects to become attractors to the program. Focus on the program's differentiation strengths around studio teaching, as well as in subject areas of urban design, transportation planning, private development, environmental planning in order to attract high-quality allied-discipline applicants from other high demand programs across Ryerson. 	

Development Plan Area Students and Alumni	
Sub-Area of Focus School Identity and Reputation	Focus Community Building
Goal Improve the School's Identity and Student Community	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	
Objectives Foster a sense of investment and community within the School of Urban and Regional Planning and offset issues associated with a "commuter" campus as many students do not live downtown and commute daily from suburbs in the GTHA.	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Tasks/Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host additional RAPS meet and greets/events early in first year – ACHIEVED/ONGOING • Bring alumni to speak in first year classes on the strengths of the school and the importance of peer work, encourage student participation in events – ACHIEVED/ONGOING • Update website to include client-based studio activities – ONGOING • Invite alumni and community stakeholders to SURP lectures and other events – ACHIEVED/ONGOING • Link current student body and alumni together through specific events that feature alumni – ACHIEVED/ONGOING 	

Development Plan Area Students and Alumni	
Sub-Area of Focus School Identity and Reputation	Focus Employment Skills Preparation
Goal Improve job-finding skills and opportunities	
New / Continued Identified as an issue in the 2016 PPR Student and Alumni Surveys	
Objectives Improve the ability of students to successfully find employment upon graduation from the planning program.	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host additional RAPS meet and greets/events with alumni and employers in upper years of study– ACHIEVED/ONGOING • Support student ability to attend the annual alumni event • Continue to work with the Career Center to host employment finding seminars in fourth year • Expand Professional learning series from the fourth year to third year using our asset of experienced practitioners to increase employment and professional learning skills • Seek advice from the Advisory Council • Work with the Ontario Professional Planners Institute and the Canadian Institute of Planners to support their efforts to promote job recruitment and networking 	

2b. Program Delivery

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Course Offerings	Focus Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Goal Incorporate a greater diversity of opinions and people in the classroom particularly in terms of Human Rights and Indigenous People (duty to consult is required by law)	
New / Continued Identified as an issue during the Feb 1st (2016) staff meeting and supported by results of 2016 PPR Alumni Survey; mandated by law; needs to be consistent with Ryerson's Academic Plan	
Objectives To address lack of emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion, per Ryerson Academic Plan; and how this manifests through specific curriculum content in social planning, indigenous perspectives, human rights, and international planning (Professor Altrows' retirement has left a gap in some of these areas while others are new requirements).	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority High
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement hire needed for Prof. Altrows to address this gap in the curriculum – ACHIEVED WITH HIRING OF DR. MAGDALENA UGARTE • Include mandatory content in relevant core courses regarding human rights and indigenous perspectives • Facilitate projects, assignments and revised course content to focus on planning issues related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion–ONGOING • Repurpose PLG700 capstone methods course as Human Rights and Planning to offer this content in tandem with planning ethics course (pilot tested in Fall 2016) • Offer PLE765 International Development elective (Professor McCartney) – ONGOING • Offer elective or independent study elective in Aboriginal Planning & Indigenous Perspectives. • Link field trip and field camps with elective courses and studios to directly work on projects with clients in communities, increase experiential learning in international and/or Indigenous communities. 	

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus Integration of SRC Activities into Teaching
Goal Enhance the link between faculty SRC and student learning	
New / Continued Continued from the 2008-2013 Academic Plan. Progress has been made to include SRC Activities into upper-year client-based studios. There is an opportunity to expand this integration into electives.	
Objectives While research activities and projects are commonly connected to upper-year client-based studios, and in research methods courses, it is relatively uncommon to include SRC in other courses (left to the discretion of the instructors). Opportunities exist to bring more SRC activities into the classroom and to enhance opportunities for students to participate in faculty SRC.	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make greater use of PLE775 Independent Study, especially as PLE806 is eliminated as an annual class loaded to one faculty member • Explore ways to reward faculty efforts to engage undergraduates in their SRC via Research Assistantships or other incentives for supervision and training of our students. • Link elective and studio offerings to faculty SRC 	

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus Experiential & Applied Learning
Goal 1. Explore opportunities to increase hands-on “making and building”, fabrication in the core curriculum 2. Explore additional professional contacts to increase Placement and Studio opportunities	
New / Continued 1. New, as the model-making component of PLG420 has been lost concomitant with growth across campus in other programs (e.g. FCAD FabLab, Architecture modelling lab, DME etc). This training needs to be folded into each core studio of our program. 2. Continued from the 2006 PPR and identified as a valuable experience and major strength of the planning program in 2016 PPR Alumni Survey	
Objectives 1a. Introduce opportunities and assignment support for modelling in urban design, land use planning and ecological design; explore collaborative potential with FCAD and DAS, DME. 1b. Establish in house resources for fabrication and space to work on and store during making of these “made and built” explorations and studies. 2a. Ideally, placement could be made available to all SURP students in their final semesters without a competitive application process; this would require a full-time placement coordinator (which could be shared for cost-effectiveness with the graduate program which has a required placement / internship in place). This could involve the expansion of placement into a mandatory part of the curriculum to enhance professional exposure prior to graduation, which would enhance program strength through differentiation.	
Timeline/Status Long & Short Term/Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1a. Introduce a DME / digital media experience boot camp and/or explore collaborations with similar platforms in FCAD, DAS where possible (short term) • 1b. Consider shared modelling and fabrication lab space or moving into a faculty where those assets can be shared (long term) • 1c. Establish studios as places for students to work on, securely store and display “made and built” materials • 2a. Plan and greet/social event hosted at SURP to explain placement program and benefits to prospective placement hosts • 2b. Create recruitment strategy for new placement hosts with Alumni and Partners • 2c. Work with Ryerson’s Office of Cooperative Education to explore a formal co-op education program – ACHIEVED/ONGOING	

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus Technology
Goal Enhance the training, use, application and platform availability of technology; introduce specific technology-based learning as discrete and cumulative skills-based components of the program	
New / Continued This is a long-standing and growing problem facing the program. Identified in the 2006 PPR, Feb 1st (2016) staff meeting, and 2016 PPR Alumni and Student Surveys.	
Objectives The core curriculum should introduce and reinforce technology use, training and application, from GIS to data visualisation and graphic representation, as analytical and communicative strategies used by professional planners. The program must provide relevant software platforms and up-to-date hardware, and allow those who want to be proficient in specific technologies (e.g., GIS, AutoCad, Adobe Suite) to do so via elective offerings. This objective is concomitant with Design Thinking and Visual Communication.	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority High
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLG320, 420 and 520 to be restructured with significant technology components and requirements, similar to the technology module included as part of PLG220 and the AutoCAD components of PLG320; so that these core studios explore all of the technologies (e.g., GIS, AutoCad, Adobe Suite) through what they require of the students and tie these into “making and building” objectives related to data visualisation, graphic representation and 3D modelling (i.e. model making and building, both physical and digital) • Encourage and provide funding for RAPS to offer software specific workshops with DME with peer-peer training support for current students (pilot tested in Fall 2016) • Continue to offer GIS elective annually and work with faculty to develop an advanced AutoCAD Design and Infrastructure elective • Explore collaboration with DME and FCAD or DAS to offer a visual communication, graphic representation, GIS boot camp orientation course prior to fall term • Introduce visual communication content into lower year-courses as platform for growth while supporting PLAB and PLAD students through an advanced boot camp orientation course prior to fall term 	

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus Design Thinking
Goal Enhance the training, use, application and platform availability of design-thinking into the core curriculum in ways that capitalize on existing and new faculty capacity for teaching and research related to design. Note that “design” as used here includes design of policy, landscape and built-form alike. (This goal is distinct from but related to specific technology-based learning as discrete and cumulative components of the program.)	
New / Continued Ongoing discussion at undergraduate curriculum meetings; and identified at Feb 1st (2016) staff meeting and 2016 PPR Alumni and Student Surveys.	
Objectives The core curriculum should introduce and reinforce the importance of design thinking in contemporary planning education and training. From policy design to landscape and built-form design, students must be introduced explicitly to theory of design thinking, employ design thinking through projects along with relevant skills and technologies to support visual communication and graphic representation strategies used by professional planners. Allied professions have a ratio to teach these courses of 1:15, as SURP did when it began. SURP ratio in core studios with increased enrollment is currently 1:57. Accordingly, the program must provide the associated and relevant software platforms and up-to-date hardware, optimize student to faculty ratios in core studios and allow those who want to be proficient in specific supporting technologies to do so via multiple elective offerings.	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority High
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce design-thinking and visual communication curriculum content into first year planning studio and/or explore as a separate required 1st year course • Adapt all core studios to include design-thinking and visual communication curriculum content and build on this content throughout the program • Continue to offer GIS, Urban Design and Ecological Design electives annually and facilitate updated curriculum content in this context; work with faculty to develop an advanced Design-Thinking & Visual Communication elective • Build-on growing faculty expertise in research and teaching capacity for design-thinking content, e.g. Profs. McCartney (visual communication, graphic representation, urban design, built-form modelling); Robinson (open data, citizen science, civic technology); and Lister (data visualisation; landscape modelling, graphic representation; visual communication) 	

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus Program Specializations
Goal Offer official program specializations within the undergraduate program.	
New / Continued Identified in the 2006 PPR, discussed in the Feb 1 (2016) staff meeting and further emphasized in responses to 2016 PPR Alumni Survey	
Objectives Develop official program specializations based on clusters of related electives in areas of transportation, private development, environment & ecology, and urban design.	
Timeline/Status Medium Term/Ongoing	Priority High
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop curriculum clusters with faculty– ACHIEVED/ONGOING WITH THE FIRST ‘TRANSPORTATION PLANNING’ CLUSTER RECOGNITION FOR GRADUATING STUDENTS IN WINTER 2019. • Work to strengthen and develop Urban Design Minor (currently being developed with DAS and Interior Design), Real Estate Minor, and other relevant minors • Define nature of recognition for completing specialization • Undergo approvals process for integration specializations into curriculum • Clearly communicate specializations to students and the process for acquiring them when they are implemented. • Implement additional courses required for the clusters (if needed) • Ensure that electives are offered in a two-year rotation so that students can complete a cluster over a two-year term • Link to be developed between courses regarding Indigenous Planning and Economic Development to certificate programs at the Chang School 	

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus Electives
Goal Increase the number and breadth of PLE elective course offerings. Where funding becomes available to do so, consider open electives to facilitate cross-pollination of curriculum and collaborative potential	
New / Continued Identified in the 2016 PPR Student and Alumni Surveys and in learning objectives mapping.	
Objectives Address survey results that note important topics are being left out of the curriculum; i.e. Design Thinking & Visual Communication, Health Planning, Food Systems Planning, Aboriginal Planning & Indigenous Perspectives.	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority High
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which topics should be incorporated into core courses versus offered as a standalone elective Offer electives on a two-year rotation schedule to ensure a variety of electives are taught without sacrificing teaching or financial resources - ACHIEVED/ONGOING Open electives to students from other Schools and Departments; in order to ensure there are enough students to offer more electives (contingent on increased funding to do so). 	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus Learning Outcomes
Goal Address deficiencies identified in introducing, reinforcing and ensuring proficiency of learning objectives across core and elective courses	
New Identified in mapping of Learning Objectives across courses through 2016 PPR	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase emphasis on the history of planning within core curriculum in lower years of the program- ACHIEVED/ONGOING 	

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus Research Methods Stream
Goal Revise the entire research methods stream to ensure appropriate content and timing. Specifically, consider earlier introduction of research design course in which both qualitative and quantitative methods are considered in a multi-methodological context; consider adding a qualitative methods component into the upper stats course. This should address late timing in the delivery of research methods courses beginning only in upper years of the PLAN program curriculum	
New / Continued Ongoing issue identified within PLAN curriculum; raised annually by the undergraduate curriculum committee with various proposals offered, raised again at May Days meetings for the last two years; raised in Feb 1st (2016) faculty meeting (PLG700 is now resolved; repurposed for contemporary issues in planning and can be used for Human Rights following pilot test in F16; see “Diversity Equity and Inclusion” focus.)	
Objectives Resolve weighting of qualitative and quantitative methods; offer an earlier introduction to research design (as a framework for methods) in the PLAN program curriculum; streamline and update all courses in research methods and research design.	
Timeline/Status Short Term/Ongoing	Priority High
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-evaluate the timing and delivery of research methods courses including both stats/quants courses (PLG 310 and 410) and PLG600 Research Design • Redirect PLG700 to Human Rights as mandated by law / planners’ duty to consult (as per Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Focus) • Allow students to pursue research interests via PLE775 Independent Study as opposed to PLE806 due to consistently declining enrolment • Resolve issues arising from changes in timing of delivery of research methods courses as they relate to the PLAB/D curriculums 	

Development Plan Area Program Delivery	
Sub-Area of Focus Curriculum Development	Focus 2 year PLAB/D programs
Goal Revise and optimize delivery of PLAB and PLAD programs	
Continued An ongoing problem that has been raised annually by the undergraduate curriculum committee with various proposals offered, raised again at May Days meetings for the last two years; raised in Feb 1st (2016) faculty meeting	
Objectives Address deficiency in visual communication and graphic representation skills of PLAB students and poor research/writing skills of PLAD students	
Timeline/Status Medium Term/Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate the former PLAD capstone individual research paper/project course PLG805 due to persistent inability of PLAD students to successfully complete; replace PLG805 with a liberal arts / English writing skills course in the first semester of the PLAD program to improve writing skills and address this recognised weakness among PLAD students. • PLG420 to be substituted within PLAB program once PLG420 content is revised to address deficiency in visual communication, design-thinking and associated technical skills; requires resolution of scheduling and may shift course timing within the program • Renew agreements with PLAD feeder colleges (Fanshawe and Mohawk) contingent on the replacement of PLG805 with a writing skills class at the onset of the program. 	

2c. Faculty Development

Development Plan Area Faculty Development	
Sub-Area of Focus SRC Activities	Focus Measurement
Goal Track and expand SRC activities	
Continued Identified in 2006 PPR, 2008-2013 Academic Plan, and current Academic Plan.	
Timeline/Status Ongoing	Priority Moderate
Objectives Increase the quantity and quality of published and recognised Faculty SRC activities.	
Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate and promote faculty SRC: on the website, featured in weekly news banners, with links to new and merging faculty labs (Lister’s Ecological Design Lab, Mitra & Sweet’s TRANSform Lab, Robinson’s Open Data Sandbox, McCartney’s +CityLab and others); at the “front door” in hard copy and posters; on our website in the Ryerson News and FCS News whenever possible using an active communication strategy assisted by the Departmental Assistant • Begin measuring progress based on 2011 ACSP and allied disciplines’ as well as FCS indicators annually • Improve communication of existing and growing faculty SRC; recognise the full range of venues and formats through which planning faculty publish and mobilize their peer-adjudicated SRC; research and professional organisations to include but are not limited to (e.g.) ACSP, AAG, APA, IFLA, CSLA, ASLA, OALA, OAA, CIP, AIA, and others • Celebrate and promote studios that feature SRC: where faculty SRC is explicitly linked to advanced planning studios in which student-faculty projects are outputs, these projects need to be enumerated and highlighted in a separate section on the SURP website (in addition to and cross-linked to faculty research labs, some of which already do this) • Explore ways to provide greater support for faculty research via capital and infrastructure incentives and spaces for collaboration within and between these faculty labs • Incentivize faculty supervision of RAs, GAs, and undergraduate research • Continue to support FCS activities related to faculty grants, conference attendance, editorial support, writing circles, etc. 	