

2025-2030 Strategic Plan for Community and Environmental Planning Program

Department of Geography, Planning, & Sustainability

Rowan University

*Adopted on June 4th, 2025 by CEP Committee Members Megan Bucknum,
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Program Mission and Guiding Principles

Mission

The undergraduate Community and Environmental Planning (CEP) Program at Rowan University prepares students for a career in planning or related fields by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and values of the planning profession. Graduates of the program will be able address the environmental and community challenges found within our regional location through a study of people, place, and the environment. By utilizing collaborative, place-based, and participatory approaches students engage with regional residents and stakeholders in ways that increase awareness of the need for planning, facilitate community development and secure a sustainable future that is more just and livable.

Guiding Principles

Foundation in the Discipline of Planning: The undergraduate CEP Program seeks to provide students with an introduction to and reinforcement of core concepts in the history, theory, and method of planning.

Introduction to Practice: The undergraduate CEP Program seeks to link students to the world of practice. This includes experiential classroom environments, explicit discussion of ethics within planning, and internship opportunities. In addition, faculty will include explicit discussions of AICP certification in class to create a culture of professional standards.

Fostering Supportive Learning Environments: The undergraduate CEP Program seeks to provide safe spaces where students, faculty, and staff can recognize, express, and achieve their fullest educational potential. To this end, the program seeks to create and maintain collaborative and collegial interactions with staff, faculty, and students.

Establishing an Environment where Creativity can Flourish: The program prioritizes creative and innovative assignments and projects. The value of all creative expressions that advance the profession and help people and communities will be explored and engaged. Program faculty will strive to identify and remove barriers to creative expression encountered by our students.

Emphasis on Sustainability: The undergraduate CEP Program seeks to foster a sustainable future. With respect for and understanding of the past, the CEP Program advocates for an environmentally livable present and future, as well as environmental justice for all.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - Manifest creative planning responses to contemporary challenges.

It is the CEP Committee's intention that our curriculum engage with and respond to the rapidly shifting realities of our time; i.e. planning implications of the climate crisis. We recognize the importance of our curriculum remaining relevant and updated with these most pressing issues and will look to the CEP full-time faculty to define these over time and reference the annual APA "Trends Report" within these discussions.

- **Objective 1.1:** Conduct a curriculum audit every 3 years to document the extent to which the curriculum addresses contemporary local and global planning issues. Respond to audit to ensure that at least every core course engages at least 1 contemporary planning issue.
- **Objective 1.2:** Cultivate relationships with local, state and regional entities that are on the front lines of climate resilience actions, just and equitable sustainability and food systems. Document how these relationships impact and benefit students each academic year.
- **Objective 1.3:** - Survey core faculty to document education regarding current trends in New Jersey Planning related to climate change, conservation, social justice, and environmental regulation into PLAN 31385, PLAN 31389, departmental programming, and extracurricular opportunities for students. Increase educational offerings until there is at least 1 for each topic in each venue each semester.

Goal 2: Prepare Students for professional and academic success in planning by providing exposure to professional ethics and responsibilities, equity, diversity, and social justice, community engagement and governance, environmental sustainability and healthy communities both inside and outside the classroom.

- **Objective 2.1:** Expose the students to careers in planning in the public, private and non-profit sectors by inviting professional planners as guest speakers in the following courses each time the course is offered (annually); PLAN 31351, PLAN 31380; PLAN 31383; PLAN 31386; PLAN 31385; PLAN 31495 and/or PLAN 31486.
- **Objective 2.2:** Provide service/experiential learning opportunities through class projects in courses such as PLAN 31495 (Planning Studio) and/or internships including PLAN 31390 (Planning Clinic).
- **Objective 2.3:** Engage the CEP Program Advisory Board to review the program's curriculum every other year, as well as review and assess student studio projects and internship reports annually by utilizing a standardized rubric.
- **Objective 2.4:** Support, facilitate and help organize the Student Planning Organization to build partnerships with the NJAPA Chapter and local section, as well as program alumni to organize at least two events each year for planning students that focus on networking, mentoring and career development.
- **Objective 2.5:** Instruct and assess students in planning ethics and social justice using AICP case studies in PLAN 31380.

Goal 3: Recruit and retain diverse full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty with exceptional planning experience and credentials (i.e., AICP, PP); and support full-time faculty's development in the practice of planning.

- **Objective 3.1:** Immediately develop and implement a department recruitment plan that focuses on recruitment of full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty that reflect diversity in all aspects of their identities.
- **Objective 3.2:** Hire and retain, quality full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty with a preference to those holding relevant professional credentials, such as AICP and PP.
- **Objective 3.3:** Support teaching excellence by supporting the participation of all program faculty in professional development activity related to teaching each academic year.
- **Objective 3.4:** Recognize teaching excellence, research, and community engagement activities during each personnel review cycle through regular feedback, and communicate these activities to the department, college/school, and broader community.
- **Objective 3.5:** Maintain the faculty mentoring plan that includes all CEP faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty).

Goal 4: Recruit, retain and graduate high-quality and diverse students.

- **Objective 4.1:** Engage in recruitment efforts that maintain a CEP cohort enrollment goal of at least 35-50 students.
- **Objective 4.2:** Target a demographic composition of the CEP student population that reflects the composition of the regional population in which the program is located.
- **Objective 4.3:** Track community engagement activities that involve youth stakeholders– defined as K-12 students – to learn how these activities could translate to future CEP student enrollments.
- **Objective 4.4:** Build connections with the affiliated programs of the School of Earth and Environment, College of Science and Mathematics, and Rowan University broadly to recruit additional students to Planning elective courses.
- **Objective 4.5:** Annually review and improve the program's web presence to ensure that information is current and attractive. Create a culture for faculty to regularly share news and information.

Goal 5: Generate and support a culture of respect for diverse backgrounds and perspectives and inclusive excellence.

- **Objective 5.1:** Determine an agreed upon method of regularly soliciting student and faculty sentiment of the Community and Environmental Planning Program in a manner that is aligned with both the university standards for student and faculty surveys and a modality that allows for responder anonymity.
- **Objective 5.2:** Conduct an audit of course readings and departmental programming every 3 years to determine the diversity of authors, viewpoints, planning approaches and methods, and geographical location/focus. Increase diversity within the curriculum until no single metric/framework dominates (i.e., has a majority).
- **Objective 5.3:** Maintain a culture of inclusive excellence by sharing policies, and resources relating to inclusive practices in internal and public-facing documents.
- **Objective 5.4:** Offer at least 1 training session to program faculty and staff each academic year on inclusive excellence and respect for lived experiences. Document that faculty and staff attend, and provide evidence of how the results are impactful.