

Undergraduate Program in
Community and Environmental Planning
Rowan University
Department of Geography, Planning and Sustainability

Strategic Plan
2020-2025
(2023 Revision)

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.

[Note: the intent of this goal is for our curriculum to be engaged with and responding to the rapidly shifting realities of our time. The climate crisis, global pandemics, environmental collapse and social upheaval are all issues that the field of planning has a foundational role in addressing. We emphasize the importance of our curriculum remaining relevant and updated with these most pressing issues]

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 31280; 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 (studio) and/or internships including GEOG 16391.

Objective 2.3: Engage the Planning 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 diversity plan that prioritizes hiring full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty that represent populations in the region that the CEP program primarily serves. Monitor progress each year.

Objective 3.2: Hire and retain a full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty holding AICP and PP credentials so that the faculty is at least 50% AICP certified and 25% PP certified within 5 years.

Objective 3.3: Support teaching excellence by requiring all program faculty to participate in at least 1 professional development activity related to teaching each semester.

Objective 3.4: Recognize teaching excellence, research, and community engagement activities during each personnel review cycle through regular feedback, and publish faculty highlights in marketing materials and the newsletter each semester.

Objective 3.5: Immediately create and implement a faculty mentoring plan that includes all faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty). Complete at least one mentoring activity each semester.

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

Objective 4.1: Increase recruitment in the program to achieve a student body of 20 students per cohort in 5 years.

Objective 4.2: Increase the diversity of the students enrolled in the program (in terms of racial and ethnic background) by 25% over the next 5 years, so that the student body more closely reflects the composition of the regional population in which the program is located.

Objective 4.3: Develop and implement a recruitment plan and marketing materials for the planning program within 2 years.

Objective 4.4: Build connections with the Departments of Geology and Environmental Science 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 responsibility culture for faculty to regularly share news and information to keep the Web site fresh and up-to-date.

Goal 5: Generate and support a culture of diversity and inclusive excellence

Objective 5.1: Conduct a climate survey amongst faculty and students in the Community and Environmental Planning Program every 2 years. Analyze and disseminate results. Initiate actions in response to lessons learned.

Objective 5.2: Conduct a diversity 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: Promote a culture of inclusive excellence by providing diversity and inclusion statements, policies, and resources in all program syllabi and internal- and public-facing documents within 1 year. Maintain these presences.

Objective 5.4: Offer at least 1 DEI training session to program faculty and staff each semester. Document that faculty and staff attend, and provide evidence of how the results are impactful.