

Archived: August 11, 2020

Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Programs

Master of Community Planning

Location Offered:

Nanaimo

Credential:

Master Degree

Program Length:

2 Years

The Program

The Master of Community Planning (MCP) is an applied program that is fully accredited by the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP). Graduates are eligible to apply for student membership with CIP while at VIU and can apply for full membership post-graduation."

The program focuses on:

- Small city and town planning;
- Community and urban design, including a strong GIS component;
- Rural/urban interface planning;
- First Nations planning (with attention to the issues relevant to the First Nations of Vancouver Island and coastal British Columbia);
- Sustainable economic issues, including tourism; and
- Emerging issues such as climate change and planning for post-fossil fuel communities.

This is an intensive program with many opportunities to apply the skills and techniques learned in the program to "real life" planning questions and problems. Students will be engaged in self-directed learning and group studies, seminars and discussions, and will have many opportunities to meet and learn from professional planners. There is also a strong focus on urban design and visual representations of community planning, including GIS.

The MCP is a 2 year program (September to April in Year 1 and September to April in Year 2). Students may be involved in field work and research in the summer semesters between Year 1 and Year 2. The program is a cohort model intended to be completed over two years. However, students may take additional semesters to complete their program if their thesis or major project has not been completed by April of Year 2.

By program completion, our graduates will have a broad interdisciplinary knowledge of how planners can influence the futures of neighbourhoods, small communities, and rural areas both locally and world-wide. Our graduates will have new skills that will enable them to serve citizens and communities as they respond the social, economic, environmental, and sustainability issues that shape our world.

Program Outline

Year 1

Fall Semester	Credits
PLAN 501 - (Introduction and History of Planning)	3
PLAN 504 - (Community Design)	3
PLAN 506 - (Planning Practice)	3
PLAN 601 - (Citizen Participation and Consultation)	3

Spring Semester	Credits
PLAN 502 - (Planning Theory and Policy)	3
PLAN 504 - (Community Design)	3
PLAN 505 - (Planning Law and Regulations)	3
PLAN 507 - (Research Methods)	3

Year 2

Fall Semester	Credits
PLAN 503 - (Ethics and the Public Good)	3
PLAN 600 - (Advanced Studio)	3
PLAN 690 - (Major Project) or, PLAN 691 - (Thesis)	9
Electives*: PLAN 602 - (Planning for Sustainability) PLAN 603 - (Fundamentals of GIS) PLAN 620 - (Topics in First Nations Land Use and Community Planning) PLAN 621 - (Topics in Design and Aesthetics) PLAN 624 - (Issues in Community Planning)	varies

Spring Semester	Credits
Electives*: PLAN 604 - (Literature of Planning) PLAN 606 - (Advanced Planning Practice) PLAN 622 - (Topics in Municipal and Regional Planning) PLAN 623 - (Topics in Evolving Issues in Planning) PLAN 624 - (Issues in Community Planning) PLAN 650 - (Directed Study)	varies
Total Program Credits	48

** The number of elective credits required will vary. Students must complete 48 credits in the program.*

Completion Requirements

Grades for individual courses are awarded as described in the Grading Scale section of this Calendar. The Thesis and Major Project will be graded as a Pass or Fail.

Graduation requires the successful completion of 48 credits including all required courses, sufficient optional and specialization courses, and a Thesis or Major Project.

Admission Requirements

To be admitted into the program, students must hold a baccalaureate degree from a recognized university in any discipline, and meet the following admission criteria:

- A minimum average of "B" calculated in the last two years of the undergraduate degree, with a review of the entire degree.
- Applicants whose previous degree was obtained in a country where English is not the primary/official language and from a university where English was not the language of instruction must meet one of VIU's English Language requirements for Graduate Programs.
- Acceptance and satisfactory review of the following items by the Admissions Committee:
 - Résumé
 - Three letters of reference (from academic or professional referees) as well as a statement of interest addressing each of the following areas:
 - Areas of research interest;
 - Statement of career interest; and
 - Statement of volunteer and/or career experience.

Meeting these minimum requirements is no assurance of admission: admission will be a competitive process with the selection of candidates depending on an intensive review process. Students who meet or exceed the minimum admission requirements may not necessarily be admitted to the program.

Recommendations for Admission

It is recommended that students interested in admission to the Master of Community Planning obtain volunteer or paid experience relating to the specialization areas of this program prior to submitting their application. Students must also give careful consideration to their proposed area of research interests: lack of an interest that fits with the focus of this program may negatively impact the student's application.

Notes on Admission

Preference will be given to candidates with:

- An area of research interest that meshes with the focus areas of the Program.
- A statement of career interest that shows a clear understanding of the opportunities available in Planning.
- A statement of volunteer or career experience that supports the two previously referenced documents.
- Evidence of high academic achievement.

Transfer from other Institutions

All requirements for the Program must be completed at Vancouver Island University; transfer from other institutions will be accepted only in extraordinary circumstances.

Applicants whose previous degree was obtained in a country where English is not the primary/official language and from a university where English was not the language of instruction must meet one of VIU's [English Language requirements for Graduate Programs](#).

Career Opportunities

Graduates from accredited planning programs work in a variety of placements, from local governments (current and long range planning, sustainability planning, parks, heritage, social planning, and more) to provincial agencies (community affairs,

environment, lands, and parks) to federal and international organizations (non-profit and non-governmental organizations, international government agencies). Accredited planners also work in private industry, providing skills and advice to all levels of government, developers, citizens, and agencies.

In addition, planners may be employed in less traditional environments where they can apply their skills in policy development and change management. They work in both private and public agencies across a wide spectrum- on issues such as economic development, social sustainability, environmental protection, and cultural awareness. In short, the knowledge and skills gained at an accredited program are highly transferrable to many career and employment opportunities.

Start Date and Application Deadline

The program starts in September of each calendar year and is completed over sixteen months (September to April with no enrollment required for May to August, then enrollment for the second year from September to April).

Applications are accepted anytime between the first business day in October and February 28 for enrollment in the following September. Applications received after February 28 are considered late and will be processed as space permits.

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