



# **Assessment Plan and Report**

HCAS Program - Community and Regional Planning (BS)

## Unit Information

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**College/School**

College of Arts and Sciences

**Department**

Geography, Planning, and Environment

**Unit Type**

Educational Program

**Degree**

Bachelor's

**Program Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Bachelor of Science degree in Community and Regional Planning is to prepare students upon graduation with the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable them to secure professional employment, to perform effectively as planners, and to participate meaningfully in the planning profession.

# HCAS Program - Community and Regional Planning (BS): Assessment Plan and Report

## Development and Impact of Human Settlements

Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the development and impact of human settlements as it relates to planning.

**Outcome Status:** Currently Being Assessed

**Outcome Type:** Student Learning Outcome

**Start Date:** 08/01/2008

**5-Year Assessment Cycle:** 2016-2017, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2022-2023, 2023-2024

Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
<p><b>Means of Assessment Status:</b> Active  <b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Examination  <b>Means of Assessment:</b> PLAN 4099: Exit Exam with embedded questions regarding the development and impact of human settlements (2009; Revised 2/7/14)  <b>Criteria for Success:</b> 80% or more of the students will answer correctly 75% or more of the questions regarding development and impact of human settlements (revised 12/9/11).</p>	<p><b>Report Entry Date:</b> 04/28/2024  <b>Reporting Year:</b> 2023-2024  <b>Actions Taken:</b> - The Community and Regional Planning program offered a Summer Study Abroad program, Sustainable Urbanism in South Korea, in the summer of 2023. Two major topics of this program were “environment and transportation innovations for sustainable urban environments.” Students met planners and citizen activists and learned how Seoul has dealt with the balance between development and sustainability and the impact on its citizens.                      - With a new faculty specialized in environmental planning, the program could offer three additional environmental, ecological, and coastal planning courses to students.                      - Students in PLAN4305: Ecological Landscape Planning used CommunityViz, a GIS software that is used in various communities as a tool for scenario planning, suitability analysis, build out potential, and impact analysis. It was our first time utilizing this highly practical software in a class; the instructor has developed various scenarios based on the eastern North Carolina environment and development features.  <b>Results:</b> - Criterion met. 100.0% of students (all six) who took the exit exam scored 75% or more on this outcome; thus, the criterion 80% was met.  <b>Result Status:</b> Criterion Met</p>

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Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
	<p><b>Analysis of Results:</b> - Development and Impact of Human Settlement were approached in multiple core classes. The importance of this learning outcome was introduced in three basic core classes (PLAN3030, PLAN3020, and PLAN3032) and then reinforced in an upper-level core class (PLAN4065).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The successful summer study abroad program (the third year, focusing on environmental sustainability in Seoul, one of the most dense cities in the world) provided insights for participating students and lessons for class discussions.</li> <li>- The Development and Impact of Human Settlements were also assessed in the 2022-2023 academic year. The new faculty, diverse course offerings in the subject area with innovative approaches, and a successful study abroad program resulted in much improved student learning outcomes, which has shown the results (100.0% of students who took the exit exam scored 75% or more on this outcome in the 2023-2024 academic year while 83.3% of students scored in the 2022-2023 academic year).</li> <li>- Although the result of this outcome was satisfactory, it was observed that students scored relatively lower score for PLAN3032: Planning Legislation and Administration. One possible explanation is the mode of instruction—the class was offered asynchronously online with limited interactions between students and instructor.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions Planned Based on Analysis of Results:</b> - The BS Community and Regional Planning program witnessed a powerful implementation and potential for scenario planning in 2023-2024. Instructors will introduce the method in a basic class(es) and reinforce and apply the tool in upper-level courses. This will ensure students utilize the method/tool to connect how development impacts human and natural settlements, which will help them address such situations in their careers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The South Korea Summer Study Abroad program will include programs to showcase how waste is handled in Seoul (according to Statista, the average daily volume of waste in this 10-million city, Seoul, South Korea, was 12,235,000 tons between 2008 and 2021). Human settlements require effective management. After touring a waste resource recovery facility with a facility manager and visiting several re-generated sites of brownfields (former industrial waste treatment sites), students will be able to relate the impact of human settlements, construct how the tactics are used in the US, and, hopefully, change their behavior and ready to advocate/educate others in dealing with the waste.</li> <li>- The result of the exit exam will be shared with instructors to identify the weaknesses of student understanding and to reinforce their knowledge in such areas.</li> <li>- The program seeks to hire an instructor locally to teach PLAN3032. This will bring students excitement from engaging with the instructor in the classroom. The program values its planners-in-residence (PiR)—working professionals with real-life experiences. The program seeks a PiR who is in the public sector in the industry. He/she will connect students to the administrative aspects of public sector planning, which will greatly impact the development and impact of human settlements.</li> </ul>

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## Global Interdependence

Students will recognize the global interdependence of societies, economies, and environmental systems and the implications of his or her actions on the wider global environment, including the natural earth environment.

**Outcome Status:** Currently Being Assessed

**Outcome Type:** Student Learning Outcome

**Start Date:** 08/25/2010

**5-Year Assessment Cycle:** 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2020-2021, 2023-2024, 2024-2025

Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
<p><b>Means of Assessment Status:</b> Active  <b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Examination  <b>Means of Assessment:</b> Students in PLAN 4099 (Practicum in Planning) complete an Exit Exam with embedded questions about the interrelationships and interdependence of society, economy, and environment. (Added 12/9/11; revised 2/7/14)  <b>Criteria for Success:</b> 80% or more of students taking the exit exam will correctly answer 75% of the questions about interrelationships and interdependence. (Added 12/9/11; revised 2/7/14)</p>	<p><b>Report Entry Date:</b> 04/28/2024  <b>Reporting Year:</b> 2023-2024  <b>Actions Taken:</b> - The program has continued the faculty-led summer study abroad program in Seoul, South Korea. The program's theme is "sustainable urbanism," searching for innovative ideas for global sustainability. In 2023, nine students participated in the program, which was about 1/3 of BS Planning students. A student also participated in a semester-long study abroad in Italy.  - Materials, videos, and photos acquired from previous study abroad programs have been used in various Planning courses: PLAN1900, PLAN3020, PLAN3030, and PLAN4075.  - PLAN2030: Global Cities has been reassigned as a course for the program's study abroad program. PLAN2030 is a general education class with a global diversity credit. The change could encourage non-major students to study in the major.  - Throughout the SP24 semester, students in PLAN3030 were tasked with reading 11 articles from the Planning Magazine, sharing what they read in a small group orally, discussing lessons learned and related subjects, and writing a short descriptive summary weekly. The Planning Magazine is a monthly publication of the American Planning Association that contains innovative ideas and recent issues nationally and globally. More than 60% of the articles discussed among 19 students showcased global cases and how they tie with the US economy, environment, and society.  <b>Results:</b> - Criterion met. 100.0% of students (all six) who took the exit exam scored 75% or more on this outcome; thus, the criterion 80% was met.  <b>Result Status:</b> Criterion Met</p>

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Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
	<p><b>Analysis of Results:</b> - This outcome was assessed last time in the 2020-2021 academic year, with 85.7% of students who took the exit exam scoring 75% or more. This year's result confirmed improvements in student learning since then. In 2021, we planned to emphasize the global interdependence regarding climate issues. Environmental global dependency was a major subject discussed in PLAN3030: Intro Urban and Regional Planning. Intergovernmental strategies to combat global warming, clean water, clean air, waste management, and energy planning were introduced and discussed. Another planned action in 2020-2021 was continuing the faculty-led study abroad program, searching for innovative ideas for global sustainability. We offered the program each year, and the impacts were not only for those who participated but also for all planning students since the information was shared in many planning courses. The exit exam asked the aspects, and all students scored 100% for the questions.</p> <p>- With the significant improvement in the assessment, we believe what we do works. The instructors of PLAN3030: Intro Urban and Regional Planning and PLAN3020: Environmental Planning will reinforce the global interconnectedness in various environmental aspects and with international case studies.</p> <p><b>Actions Planned Based on Analysis of Results:</b> - The program will continue its effort to offer a study abroad program. The study abroad program will newly introduce the innovative Smart City Integration Technologies—a currently actively researched subject as the environmental and transportation solution to problems urbanization has brought. The program will also include waste management and energy planning in Seoul, South Korea. The information acquired from the study abroad program will be utilized in PLAN4075: Transportation Planning, PLAN3030: Intro Urban and Regional Planning, and others. Students will gain knowledge from the faculty and the students who have directly experienced studying abroad.</p> <p>- Planning courses have employed many indirect modes for effective learning, including documentary films, case studies, magazine readings, role plays, and so on. Instructors will continue incorporating global aspects in various planning-related issues by actively utilizing direct and indirect modes for effective learning.</p>

### Expertise in Specialized Planning

Students will demonstrate knowledge of at least one specialized area of planning such as community development, coastal development, environmental planning or urban design.

**Outcome Status:** Currently Being Assessed

**Outcome Type:** Student Learning Outcome

**Start Date:** 08/01/2008

**5-Year Assessment Cycle:** 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2023-2024, 2024-2025

Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
<b>Means of Assessment Status:</b> Active	<b>Report Entry Date:</b> 04/28/2024
<b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Examination	<b>Reporting Year:</b> 2023-2024

## HCAS Program - Community and Regional Planning (BS): Assessment Plan and Report

Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
<p><b>Means of Assessment:</b> Students in their last semester complete an Exit Exam with embedded questions about the specialized areas of planning. Students select one of the specialized areas and complete the questions.</p> <p><b>Criteria for Success:</b> 80% or more of students taking the exit exam will correctly answer 75% of the questions for their specialized area.</p>	<p><b>Actions Taken:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PLAN4025: Housing and Neighborhood Planning class conducted a class-wide project, Deferred Maintenance of Housing, Town of Bethel, NC, in Spring 2023 (stakeholder: The Town of Bethel and Pitt County Planning Department). Students visited homes, measured the poor living conditions of rural homes, interviewed the marginalized rural residents, and provided resources for further actions. Students identified the need for action in the rural ENC region from the project.</li> <li>- Students in PLAN4075: Transportation Planning completed a class-wide project on “Rural On-Demand Transportation Recommendations for Microtransit in Pitt and Beaufort Counties” in Fall 2023 (stakeholder: Pitt County Economic Development, Beaufort County Economic Development, and City of Wilson). The class was tasked with providing evidence and recommendations for how microtransit, an innovative public transit service that features dynamic routing, door-to-door service, and on-demand rides could connect rural job seekers to employment centers in the region. Students identified four key goals, and completed group work on each action item.</li> <li>- PLAN4003: Urban Form and Design promoted students’ engagement with social learning using Perusall. As a theory-based course, the instructor made the platform to ensure students read the course materials with critical perspectives and exchange their thoughts on the contents collectively.</li> <li>- Each student in PLAN3031: Quantitative Analysis in Planning chose a municipality, conducted secondary data analysis on demographic, housing, household, and economic analyses to complete a community profile report throughout the semester. From the practical quantitative analytical approaches with the most recent data, students gained skills that are required in planning a career.</li> <li>- The courses that require professional planning expertise have been taught by a Planner-in-Resident (professor in practice). The BS Community and Regional Planning program has five PiRs.</li> <li>- Two undergraduate students presented at ECU’s 2024 Research and Creative Achievement Week (RCAW) with research topics in specialized areas—housing and urban design.</li> <li>- Exit Exam questions on the emphasis areas were revised.</li> <li>- One out of three group projects in PLAN4096: Planning Studio (Fall 2023) and two out of eight individual practicum projects in PLAN4099: Planning Practicum (Spring 2024) were on environmental and coastal emphasis in planning. Faculty in the specialty and the community clients worked closely with the students in the project to guide them from the design to the completion.</li> </ul> <p><b>Results:</b> Criterion not met. 50.0% of students (three out of six students) who took the exit exam scored 75% or more on this outcome; thus, the criterion of 80% was not met.</p> <p><b>Result Status:</b> Criterion Not Met</p>

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	<p><b>Analysis of Results:</b> - Although the criterion was not met, the score has improved from the last assessment in 2020-2021—only 28.6% of students who took the exit exam scored 75% or more on this outcome previously. The planning faculty realized the exit exam questions were outdated. The updated exit exam questions were used to assess students' performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning faculty shared their concerns of students using post-produced analyses instead of producing their own by applying skills and expertise previously. Students were challenged to create community profiles by utilizing secondary data sources in PLAN3031—a core class, which is a prerequisite for both capstone classes. The instructor offered three individual tutorial sessions for all students in the course, with close monitoring of each student's proficiency in utilizing data and reporting the findings professionally. The confidence was exhibited in students' capstone project reports and presentations, as well as in the exit exam.</li> <li>- Two specialized courses (PLAN4025 and PLAN4075) offered client-based community-engaged projects. They provided students with opportunities to work on a class-wide group project with unique research experiences. Student's learning was proven in their exit exam, as described in the last bullet below.</li> <li>- When comparing Exit Exam results among specialized courses, it seems that students performed better in a content-based course (PLAN4003) than in project-based courses (PLAN4025 and PLAN4075). Each approach has pros and cons, and it could be worth revisiting how to assess expertise in specialized planning in the future.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions Planned Based on Analysis of Results:</b> - During the 2023-2024, the Planning program identified the need to move the Local Government Budgeting to a proper class. The subject area has been introduced in PLAN3031: Quantitative Analysis in Planning. The oddness of talking about local government budgeting in a highly analytical class was simply because the former instructor of the class specialized in Economic Planning. Faculty will discuss further to find a class that fits the contents better, and the instructor will successfully establish the subject contents in the Planning curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The BS Community and Regional Planning program faculty will initiate efforts to assess expertise in specialized planning more effectively. The efforts would include consultations with the Planning Accreditation Board and reviewing how other accredited Planning programs perform.</li> <li>- Students must apply the fundamental research methods in PLAN4099: Planning Practicum in all projects. The BS Community and Regional Planning program will revisit the PLAN4099 project evaluation form to identify how to assess the fundamental research methods much more effectively and in a structural way.</li> </ul>

### Theory and Legal Basis of Planning

Students will identify issues related to planning theory and legal basis of planning decisions.

**Outcome Status:** Currently Being Assessed



# HCAS Program - Community and Regional Planning (BS): Assessment Plan and Report

**Outcome Type:** Student Learning Outcome

**Start Date:** 08/01/2016

**5-Year Assessment Cycle:** 2017-2018, 2021-2022, 2022-2023

Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
<p><b>Means of Assessment Status:</b> Active  <b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Examination  <b>Means of Assessment:</b> Students in PLAN 4099 (Practicum in Planning) complete an Exit Exam with embedded questions about theory and the legal basis of planning.  <b>Criteria for Success:</b> 80% or more of students taking the exit exam will answer 75% or more of the theory and legal questions correctly.</p>	

## Skills of Planning

Students will demonstrate the ability to prepare plans and conduct and present research.

**Outcome Status:** Currently Being Assessed

**Outcome Type:** Student Learning Outcome

**Start Date:** 02/07/2014

**5-Year Assessment Cycle:** 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2021-2022, 2022-2023

Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
<p><b>Means of Assessment Status:</b> Active  <b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Presentation  <b>Means of Assessment:</b> Students in PLAN 4096 (Planning Studio) work as a team to complete a planning project. Faculty and professionals serve as jurors on the group presentations and complete an evaluation rubric.  <b>Criteria for Success:</b> 80% of students score a B grade based on the evaluation rubric (attached).</p>	
<p><b>Means of Assessment Status:</b> Active  <b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Presentation, Research Paper</p>	

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Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
<p><b>Means of Assessment:</b> Students in PLAN 4099 (Practicum in Planning) write a capstone paper on an issue in planning. Faculty and professionals serve as jurors for the presentations and complete an evaluation rubric.</p> <p><b>Criteria for Success:</b> 80% of students score a B grade on the rubric (attached).</p>	

### Ethical Principles

Students will demonstrate knowledge of key issues of planning ethics.

**Outcome Status:** Currently Being Assessed

**Outcome Type:** Student Learning Outcome

**Start Date:** 08/25/2010

**5-Year Assessment Cycle:** 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2019-2020, 2021-2022, 2024-2025

Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
<p><b>Means of Assessment Status:</b> Active</p> <p><b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Examination</p> <p><b>Means of Assessment:</b> Students in PLAN 4099 (Practicum in Planning) complete an Exit Exam with three or more questions relating to ethics of the planning profession. (Added 12/9/11; revised 2/7/14)</p> <p><b>Criteria for Success:</b> 80% or more of students will answer at least 66% of embedded ethics questions correctly. (added 12/9/11; revised 2/7/14)</p>	