



# Assessment Plan and Report

HCAS Program - Community and Regional Planning  
(BS)

# HCAS Program - Community and Regional Planning (BS): General Information

## 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.

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## 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</p> <p><b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Examination</p> <p><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)</p> <p><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> 05/15/2023</p> <p><b>Reporting Year:</b> 2022-2023</p> <p><b>Actions Taken:</b> - The Community and Regional Planning program offered a Summer Study Abroad program, Sustainable Urbanism in South Korea, in the summer 2022 (and will be offered again in the summer of 2023). Two major topics of this program were “environment and transportation innovations for sustainable urban environments.” Students visited research centers, the city government, and project sites to learn the innovative approaches in the highly-dense urban area—Seoul.</p> <p>- PLAN4025: Housing and Neighborhood Planning class conducted a class-wide project, Deferred Maintenance of Housing, Town of Bethel, NC, in Spring 2023 (client-based community engagement project). Students visited homes, measured the poor living conditions of rural homes, and interviewed the marginalized rural residents. Students witnessed the need for action in the rural ENC region from the project.</p> <p><b>Results:</b> 83.3% of students (ten out of twelve students) who took the exit exam scored 75% or more on this outcome; thus, the criterion 80% was met.</p> <p><b>Result Status:</b> Criterion Met</p> <p><b>Analysis of Results:</b> A faculty who taught higher-level planning courses in the environmental focus retired. Since then, we could only offer introductory environmental courses. Students only completed the questions that covered the introductory courses they took.</p> <p><b>Actions Planned Based on Analysis of Results:</b> - The BS Community and Regional Planning program has had limited “environmental” courses offered for several years due to the lack of faculty in the subject. We hired a new faculty last year, but he taught the graduate courses in the 2022-2023 academic year. We will carefully adjust the class schedules to cover the students’ needs for both BS and MS degrees.</p> <p>- PLAN4305: Ecological Landscape Planning class will be taught again in almost 10 years. The instructor received a Teaching Grant to develop the land use scenarios that students will exercise to review and compare comprehensively. Scenario planning is a process to support decision-making that helps urban and rural planners navigate the uncertainty of the future in the short and long term. Through these new and powerful tools, students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of development and its impacts on the environment much more effectively.</p>

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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
<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)	

## 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>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Examination <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. <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.	

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### 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

**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</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 embedded questions about theory and the legal basis of planning.</p> <p><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>	<p><b>Report Entry Date:</b> 05/15/2023</p> <p><b>Reporting Year:</b> 2022-2023</p> <p><b>Actions Taken:</b> - PLAN3032: Planning Legislation and Administration is a Writing Intensive (WI) class. The instructor requires students to choose cases to write a Federal Regulatory Program, a State Program Report, and a Local Government Ordinance report. These assignments allowed students to gain insights into planning legislation and administration. To fulfill the assignments, students identified and researched appropriate sources, reviewed the material carefully and wrote the major concepts and practices clearly.</p> <p>- In PLAN4065: Land Use Planning, the instructor required students to view/attend local government meetings involving a requested zoning change. From the actions, students witnessed how theory and legal aspects are practiced in local government—the local government boards (Planning Board &amp; governing body) review, solicit public input and act upon rezoning requests.</p> <p>- Two students in PLAN4099: Planning Practicum conducted their practicum projects focused on Policy reviews. They were “Cumberland County Land Use Policies Plan Update Recommendations, NC” and “Historic District Signage Policy Standards Recommendations for the City of Asheboro, NC” All practicum projects are client-based community-engaged projects.</p> <p>- To connect aspects of theory with current Planning practices, the instructor of PLAN3022: History and Theory in Planning has required students to attend a public planning meeting and interview a planner in their hometown.</p> <p><b>Results:</b> 50% of students (six out of twelve 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> <p><b>Analysis of Results:</b> The data analysis shows mixed results. Students performed well in PLAN3032 (legal) and PLAN4003 (theory), but needed some improvements in PLAN3022 (history/theory) and PLAN4065 (land use).</p> <p><b>Actions Planned Based on Analysis of Results:</b> - The Planning program will have a new Planner-in-Residence take the PLAN3032 class in Spring 2024. The new PiR from different specialties and professional backgrounds will bring a new perspective and expectations in addressing the legal basis of planning.</p> <p>- Based on student feedback, the PLAN3022 instructor will broaden the scope of the assignment. Students will be required to attend a public meeting in any town they are interested in and then interview a planner connected to that meeting. The changes will extend students’ knowledge by researching further and asking follow-up questions to the planner who presented the subject matter during the public meeting. The practice will allow students to connect the theoretical elements of planning they are studying in PLAN3022 with planning practices in the real world.</p>

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Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned

### 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</p> <p><b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Presentation</p> <p><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.</p> <p><b>Criteria for Success:</b> 80% of students score a B grade based on the evaluation rubric (attached).</p>	<p><b>Report Entry Date:</b> 05/15/2023</p> <p><b>Reporting Year:</b> 2022-2023</p> <p><b>Actions Taken:</b> - In the Fall of 2022, students conducted four client-based community projects together in teams. Students worked with a client and identified a range of solutions to their project.</p> <p>- Unlike previous semesters where students chose their projects, the PLAN4096 instructor assigned a project to each student team. The projects were prearranged from various screenings and meetings between the clients, the Community and Regional Planning program, and the PLAN4096 instructor during the summer of 2022. The instructor further pre-determined student groups for the identified project based on students' capabilities and interests in the career. These actions allowed students to maximize their strengths for a properly scaled project.</p> <p>- To carry out the projects, the instructor offered four phases of instructions—1) the practice of Planning within the profession, 2) the importance of writing, mapping, teamwork, and oral communication skills, 3) the elements of the deliverable and the visual communications, and 4) the project completion leading to presentation.</p> <p>- During the final presentations, the instructor formed a team of jurists composed of the Planning faculty, practicing planners from various local and state governments, and community partners to provide constructive feedback to students.</p> <p>- During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Community and Regional Planning program submitted several curriculum changes, which include PLAN4096 and PLAN4099 prerequisites changes. The prerequisites for PLAN4096 and PLAN4099 will include PLAN3021: Planning Techniques, PLAN3031: Quantitative Analysis in Planning, and PLAN2410: Fundamentals in Geographic Information System. With the prerequisites, students should be able to master the skills through these capstone classes.</p> <p><b>Results:</b> 100% of students (12 out of 12 students) scored a B grade based on the evaluation rubric in PLAN4096: Planning Studio.</p> <p><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> - Planning Studio provides a student-driven experimental learning opportunity. Students are helping small townships, rural Counties, or non-profit organizations that do not usually have resources otherwise.</p> <p>- The quality of the student projects and their impact on the community are proven by a success story for the Town of Maysville in Jones County (<a href="https://news.ecu.edu/2023/02/02/ecu-student-planning-project-helps-town-revitalization/">https://news.ecu.edu/2023/02/02/ecu-student-planning-project-helps-town-revitalization/</a>). The town received the award of an \$850,000 American Rescue Plan grant to revitalize its main street, which was one of the PLAN4096 projects in the Fall of 2021.</p> <p><b>Actions Planned Based on Analysis of Results:</b> - Although no geographic boundary exists for the site selections, the projects have often been in ENC. The instructor will expand the “call for proposals” to other areas using the NC Planners Listserv and the American Planning Association-North Carolina Chapter.</p> <p>- In Fall 22, some project groups showed a lack of leadership. The Planning program will adopt the transferrable leadership strategies in classes, highlighting effective communication, effective reasoning, teamwork, and accountability as highlighted in ECU’s “Guided Reflection On Work (GROW).” Leadership components will be exercised through various class activities, which will build competencies in leadership in the senior capstone class like PLAN4096.</p>
<p><b>Means of Assessment Status:</b> Active</p> <p><b>Means of Assessment Category:</b> Presentation, Research Paper</p> <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>	<p><b>Report Entry Date:</b> 05/15/2023</p> <p><b>Reporting Year:</b> 2022-2023</p> <p><b>Actions Taken:</b> - The same instructor (one of our Planners-in-Residence) teaches both PLAN4096 and PLAN4099. Many actions and strategies taken in PLAN4096 in Fall22 were applied in PLAN4099 in SP23 as well, such as client-based community projects, pre-determined projects (and instructor-engaged project choices), and jurist selections.</p> <p>- Understanding the importance of effective visual communication skills, the instructor of PLAN4096/4099 has required students to create their final report using Adobe InDesign. A guest speaker was invited to instruct the computer application in previous semesters. However, it was quite challenging for students to use the application without prior experience. To address the difficulties, the instructor of PLAN3021/3031, who was selected as an Adobe Digital Literacy Grant recipient created a two-weeks training module in her class in Spring 2023. The software will be introduced to students early in the BS degree curriculum, mastered in other classes and activities, and then reinforced in students’ capstone classes (PLAN4096/4099).</p> <p>- The Spring 2023 cohort of PLAN4099 students shared the desire to get assistance in GIS in their practicum projects. Unfortunately, the faculty who taught PLAN2410: Fundamentals of GIS resigned, and the Department of Geography, Planning, and Environment lacks the resources (i.e., GIS faculty members) to help students. Instead, the instructor arranged for a Pitt County GIS specialist to help students.</p> <p><b>Results:</b> One student received an “incomplete” due to health issues. For the remaining ten students, 100% of students scored a B grade based on the evaluation rubric in PLAN4099: Planning Practicum.</p> <p><b>Result Status:</b> Criterion Met</p> <p><b>Analysis of Results:</b> Like PLAN4096, PLAN4099: Planning Practicum independently provides a student-driven experimental learning opportunity. Students helped small townships and rural Counties. From working with the communities, the rural residents and the community leadership often showed appreciation. Students did their bests not only for their degrees but also for the community’s quality of life and their future.</p>

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Means of Assessment & Criteria for Success	Actions Taken, Results, Analysis, & Actions Planned
	<p><b>Actions Planned Based on Analysis of Results:</b> - The Community and Regional Planning program hired a new faculty to teach PLAN2410: Fundamentals in GIS. The new faculty will establish an instructional plan to assist students in PLAN4099 with GIS needs.</p> <p>- The Community and Regional Planning program will submit a proposal to host a round table during the American Planning Association-North Carolina Chapter with selected student projects. The student presentations at a professional conference will boost participating students' self-esteem. This also will encourage future students in PLAN4099 to take ownership of their projects to achieve their professional career preparedness.</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>	