



Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences

Planning Program

Department of Geography

215A Brewster Building • East Carolina University • Greenville, NC 27858-4353

252-328-6465 office • 252-737-1527 fax • www.ecu.edu/plan

---

## EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

TO: Educational Policies and Planning Committee  
FROM: Jerry Weitz, Associate Professor and Director, Planning Program (Geography Department)  
DATE: January 30, 2013  
RE: BS in Urban and Regional Planning Degree – Discontinuance of the Certificate in Urban Design and Request to Modify Concentrations

---

This memorandum summarizes our request which is twofold: (1) Discontinuance of the Certificate in Urban Design; and (2) Revision of the “concentrations” and list of courses within concentrations.

### A. Discontinuance of the Certificate in Urban Design

On October 25, 2010, the planning program faculty approved the deletion of the urban design certificate. On October 29, 2010, the geography department faculty voted to approve the request for certificate discontinuance. On January 18, 2011, the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee voted to approve the discontinuance of the certificate in urban design. On February 10, 2011, the University Curriculum Committee approved this matter. These matters never proceeded beyond the UCC in 2011, hence they went back to the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee on December 4, 2012 and to the University Curriculum Committee on January 24, 2013, and were re-approved. We have supplied the proper form (attached) which includes rationale for discontinuance. We request that the EPPC approve the discontinuance of the certificate in urban design.

### B. Revision of the “concentrations” and list of courses within concentrations

The BS in Urban and Regional Planning degree requires that students either have a minor (24 sh.) or two “concentration areas” (24 sh.). The concentration areas have not been revisited by the program in several years. While well intentioned, these concentrations need reform. A few of the concentrations have rarely if ever been selected by a student. Some of the concentrations rely on courses that have prerequisites that make them unlikely to be selected and thus unworkable. Other concentrations list courses which are no longer available or are only rarely taught. Other courses listed in concentrations are somewhat difficult for our majors to enroll in given preferences given to other majors. Multiple substitutions have been granted by the program director in the recent past because of these issues. In short, these issues are extensive enough that we rarely advise a student to pursue two concentrations instead of a minor.

We seek to revise the concentrations not only because of these administrative and logistical problems, but also because we see opportunities to strengthen the knowledge/skill areas that our BS graduates should have, thus making them more competitive in the marketplace, which is mostly local government. We propose to eliminate concentration areas that have only remote relevancy to professional planning practice. And there are some additional opportunities for concentration areas that were previously undiscovered but which, if approved, will help our graduates gain employment because they will have skill/knowledge sets more specifically complementary to planning (i.e., attractive to local government employers). The table below provides a

summary of our proposed overhaul of the concentrations in comparison with what exists now in the catalog. We have a total of 12 possible concentrations in the current catalog. We propose to eliminate some and add new ones as shown below, for a total of 9 concentrations, as shown in the table below:

**Summary of Proposed Changes to Concentrations  
BS in Urban and Regional Planning**

<b>Existing Concentrations</b>	<b>Proposed Concentrations</b>
<del>Accounting and Public Finance</del>	
Coastal Resources	Coastal Resources
Community Health	Community Health
<del>Decision Science</del>	
<del>Economic Development</del>	
Environmental Resources	Environmental Resources
	<a href="#">Geographic Information Science</a>
<del>Historic Preservation and Design</del>	
International Development	International Development
<del>Land Use and Real Estate</del>	
<del>Personnel Management and Administration</del>	
	<a href="#">Public Administration</a>
Recreation	Recreation
	<a href="#">Rural Development</a>
<del>Societal Issues and Policies</del>	
	<a href="#">Urban Studies</a>
Total Concentrations: 12	Total Concentrations: 9

These concentration areas rely on many different departments on campus. We initiated a proposal in November 2011 and contacted affected departments and programs for their input and comments on that initial proposal. We did not proceed with that proposal, however, for a variety of reasons. Due to significant changes from the 2011 proposal, we re-initiated the notice to other departments and programs with courses that contribute to these concentrations. Another round of notices to departments was completed in January 2013. Notice to other departments and programs, along with any replies received, are attached to this memorandum. We have also attached the relevant portion of the undergraduate catalog with regard to these revisions, as presented to the University Curriculum Committee (minor modifications to course descriptions are pending) but do not affect the agenda items before EPPC).

We respectfully request approval by the EPPC of these changes to concentrations.

Attachments

- Form Requesting Discontinuance of a Certificate Program (undergraduate, urban design)
- 2012 and 2013 Correspondence with Other Departments and Programs regarding modifications of concentrations
- Catalog copy, BS in Urban and Regional Planning Degree