New undergraduate degree recently approved. Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies and Planning to replace Bachelor of Arts in Urban Planning

The University of Illinois Board of Trustees and the Illinois Board of Higher Education approved the new Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies and Planning, which will replace the Bachelor of Arts in Urban Planning in a phased implementation over the next two years. The new degree reflects two main changes from the old program. Students will now have a choice of four concentrations: Sustainability, Policy and Planning, Social Justice, and Global Cities. The other significant change is the addition of a capstone requirement. Additional changes include more choice in foundation course requirements, a reduced core of urban planning courses, and an increase in urban planning elective course requirements.

“Concentrations have been added in direct response to student requests. We are delighted to be able to offer this change to our undergraduate program,” said Alice Novak, Assistant Head, Academic Programs. “We expect that the new program will have sufficient flexibility so that some students might pursue two concentrations,” continued Novak.

Each of the concentrations follows a pattern of a gateway course, 6-8 credit hours of electives, and a senior workshop. The capstone requirement will include a new course, UP 301 – Capstone Preparation, during which students will work with their capstone advisor and prepare a proposal for the requirement. Students may meet their capstone requirement through a variety of options, including an internship, volunteer work, a consulting project with a client, summer research, and more. During their senior year, students will enroll in the one-hour UP 401 – Capstone Seminar, which will meet monthly in the fall and spring semesters. Students will be required to present a poster summarizing their capstone experience in a public setting such as a public engagement conference, public meeting or community meeting, McNair Scholars conference, James Scholar event, an Illinois American Planning Association meeting, or other opportunities.

The Minor in Urban Studies and Planning will require only two core classes, a reduction from four required classes in the previous minor program. Students will now be able to choose 14 credit hours of urban planning electives for the minor.