

May 13, 2017

Ann Weaver Hart, Ph.D.
President
The University of Arizona
Old Main, Room 200
1200 East University Boulevard
P.O. Box 210021
Tucson, Arizona 85721-0021

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Dear Dr. Hart:

On behalf of the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB), I am pleased to inform you that the Board acted at its May 5, 2017 meeting to accredit the *Master of Science in Planning* degree at the University of Arizona for a five-year term, effective January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2022. A certificate designating this accreditation term will be mailed under separate cover.

In its report the Site Visit Team noted many areas of excellence; the Program should be proud of its accomplishments. More specifically, the Site Visit Team found: a cohesive program identity combining policy and design; good relations with the local and state APA chapters; strong support from the administration, demonstrated by excellent start-up packages to new faculty; and an innovative studio model that integrates other units on campus.

Given this action, the Program will be scheduled for its next accreditation review during the 2021 – 2022 academic year; the Self-Study Report will be due in 2021. PAB reserves the right to change this to an earlier time as a result of new or additional information, changes in the activities of the Program, or changes needed in the accreditation review schedule. The Program will be notified of any change in advance of the time of the next review.

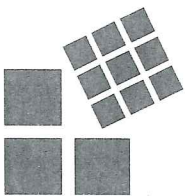
In its future Self-Study Report, the Program should clearly provide evidence of compliance with the following standards and criteria:

Standard 3 / Faculty

Criterion 3B / Faculty diversity

“The Program shall foster a climate of inclusivity that appreciates and celebrates cultural differences through its recruitment and retention of faculty members. Faculty shall possess, in the aggregate, characteristics of diversity (e.g., racial and ethnic background) that reflect the practice settings where graduates work or where professional needs exist in the Program’s region of recruitment and placement. Notwithstanding, the demographic mix is not a static concept, and all planning programs should seek to be in the forefront of a diverse society.”

The Site Visit Team assessed this criterion as unmet, citing a lack of gender and racial diversity in the core faculty.



P A B

Planning
Accreditation
Board

2334 W. Lawrence Ave.
Suite 209
Chicago, IL 60625

Phone 773.334.7200
773.334.7210

The Board concurs with this assessment, while acknowledging progress has been made in terms of gender diversity in the adjunct faculty. In its Self-Study Report the Program should provide evidence of efforts to recruit and hire, when possible, tenure-track faculty that contribute to diversity of its faculty.

Standard 4 / Curriculum and Instruction

Criterion 4B / Areas of Specialization and Electives

The Program shall have sufficient depth in its curriculum and faculty in the specialization areas and electives it offers to assure a credible and high quality offering.

1. ***Specializations:* When a program includes specialization fields, it is assumed that they are built on top of the general planning foundation and that courses in the areas of specialization add significantly to the basic planning knowledge, skills and values. Programs must demonstrate that there are enough courses in the areas of specialization that students get the depth and range of materials to give them a level of expertise.**

The Site Visit Team assessed this criterion as partially-met, citing the recent departure of two faculty members that contributed to the specializations.

The Board assessed this criterion as met, noting that the two recent hires in the Environmental Planning and GeoDesign specialization and the current faculty in place for the Heritage Conservation specialization should provide the coverage necessary for the specializations.

Standard 4 / Curriculum and Instruction

Criterion 4B / Areas of Specialization and Electives

The Program shall have sufficient depth in its curriculum and faculty in the specialization areas and electives it offers to assure a credible and high quality offering.

2. ***Electives:* The curriculum shall contain opportunities for students to explore other areas such as exposure to other professions, other specializations, and emerging trends and issues.**

The Site Visit Team assessed this criterion as partially-met, citing the limited number of credits available for students to pursue electives.

The Board concurs with this assessment. In its Self-Study Report the Program should provide evidence of students' exposure to other professions and emerging trends and issues.

Standard 5 / Governance

Criterion 5B / Program leadership

"The administrator of the degree program shall be a planner whose leadership and management skills, combined with education and experience in planning, enables the Program to achieve its goals and objectives. The administrator shall be a tenured faculty member with an academic rank of associate professor or higher."

The Site Visit Team assessed this criterion as partially-met, citing the School Director's lack of planning education and credentials while acknowledging her reputation as a strong, effective leader.

The Board assessed this criterion as unmet. In its November 24, 2014 decision letter, PAB stated that "the Program should provide evidence of a program administrator more aligned with planning." This has not occurred, although the Board acknowledges that the School Director is competent and dedicated. In its Self-Study Report the Program should provide evidence of an appointment of a program administrator with the qualifications as stated in the criterion.

Standard 5 / Governance

Criterion 5E / Promotion and tenure

“The Program shall publish policies and procedures for making decisions about the promotion and tenure of faculty, and shall provide junior faculty with the support that they need to advance professionally within the Program. The Program shall provide mentorship opportunities for all junior faculty, including women, racial and ethnic minorities, and members of other under-represented groups.”

The Site Visit Team assessed this criterion as partially-met, noting that the program has developed written Promotion and Tenure guidelines through a broad participatory process. At the time of the Site Visit the guidelines had not yet been approved by the College and University.

The Board assessed this criterion as met, citing approval of the Promotion and Tenure guidelines at the College level.

If an accredited program undergoes a substantive change, it is obligated to provide written notification thereof to PAB. Substantive changes are defined in the PAB Policies and Procedures Manual, are typically reported via the Annual Report, and include, but are not limited to: a new degree offering, a significant change in curriculum requirements, credit hours, and/or the method of delivery of courses; a significant change in enrollment or faculty count or demographics; or the appointment of a program administrator who does not have an educational background or substantial experience in planning. The Board may, at its discretion, request additional information. If PAB determines that a program may no longer be in substantial compliance with any accreditation standard, it may initiate an interim review to re-consider the Program’s accreditation status. Additional information about substantive changes is available on our website (www.planningaccreditationboard.org).

PAB appreciates the commitment and dedication to quality planning education demonstrated by your participation in the accreditation process. If you have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact PAB Executive Director Shonagh Merits.

Sincerely,



Bruce A. Knight, FAICP
Chair
Planning and Development Director
City Of Champaign
102 N. Neil Street
Champaign, IL 61820-4018
bruce.knight@champaignil.gov

Copies:

Andrew C. Comrie, Ph.D., Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Mary Hardin, Ph.D., Interim Dean, College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture

Lauri Macmillan Johnson, Ph.D., Professor and Director, School of Landscape Architecture and Planning