



Student Learning Outcomes for B.A. in Urban Studies

Students will understand and be able to describe the character of urban problems and city life in general. These problems include:

1. The causes and consequences of gang and other distinctively urban criminal behavior;
2. The unique character of urban environmental problems (e.g., toxic and hazardous waste disposal, polluted urban water runoff, air pollution);
3. The difficulty in providing affordable housing to residents of cities;
4. The reasons for transportation congestion in urban regions; and,
5. The reasons public supported schools have a difficult time garnering sufficient fiscal resources in cities.

By the end of the program, students will be able to identify and distinguish:

6. What discipline(s) or field(s) of urban study would be most usefully consulted if one wanted to locate expertise to help solve the problem (e.g., political science, economics, sociology).
7. The basic social science tools (research design, statistics, field observation methods) might be employed to confirm or disconfirm certain claims about these urban problems being made in the article.
8. The interdisciplinary and applied approaches (e.g., community studies, environmental design) might be needed to help solve the problems discussed in the article.

Students will be able to assess and evaluate—in an essay employing a thesis statement and empirical evidence—the characteristics of different theories about how to improve cities and urban life. Specifically, they will be able to describe and discuss:

9. The major intellectual trends in the field from the 18th- through early-21st centuries and their principal characteristics;
10. The “utopian thinker approach” to urban analysis prevalent in early studies in the fields of economics and urban design, for example);
11. The role of post-World War II urban-centered social upheavals in influencing the way scholars thought about the causes, consequences, and needed solutions to urban problems.

Students who will be to organize and assemble complex arguments—in writing and verbally—that can describe and the global challenges of urbanization and the analytical skills needed for addressing them. For example, they will be able to:

12. Analyze interconnections among the physical, environmental, social, economic, and political dimensions of cities and urban life.
13. Discern among alternative approaches to solving urban problems – including being able to identify and critique the advantages and possible disadvantages of different approaches to solving these problems.
14. Summarize the facts and underlying commonalities of global urbanization.
15. Productively engage the concepts and controversies in one or more main substantive areas within urban studies, including: (1) urban and community development, (2) urban governance, (3) urban & environmental sustainability, and (3) urban & environmental design in an effort to describe these global challenges.

Students will be sensitized to the growing roles of socioeconomic disparities in multicultural, multi-ethnic metropolitan regions as challenges in solving urban problems such as:

16. Providing employment and educational opportunities through the application of new technologies in industries and services.
17. Revitalizing older central cities in ways that are publically acceptable.
18. Meeting urban growth and transportation needs while complying with increasingly stringent environmental regulations that can safeguard the population's health and quality of the diverse natural environments.
19. Reshaping the urban design and landscape of communities as building stock ages and the need to redevelop intensifies.