

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Landscape Architecture
& Urban Planning

**Master's in Urban Planning
at Texas A&M University**



Frequently asked questions: Master's in Urban Planning (MUP) at Texas A&M University

1. **What is the application process for the MUP program like?**

You'll need to submit an online application, which includes official transcripts, three letters of recommendation, a statement of purpose, a resume, writing samples, and proof of English proficiency (international students only) such as TOEFL, Duolingo English Test, IELTS, ACT ENGL, SAT EVRW, or Pearson English Language. Sending your materials to faculty would only substitute for submitting some of your materials online through the application portal.

2. **What do you like to see in an applicant?**

A strong personal statement that clearly articulates the applicant's interest, motivation, and qualification, a writing sample showing the ability and potential to produce high-quality scholarly writing, a CV/Resume that is well-organized to offer relevant training, experiences, skills, and reference letters from those in the appropriate fields with sufficient knowledge about the application to provide specific and informative evaluations of the candidate and to help contextualize the candidate's qualifications/preparedness.

1. **How does the admissions process work?**

Prospective students must submit their application and all supporting documents by the application deadline. The admissions committee will make initial admission recommendations based on evaluating the entire application package. About 16-20 applicants are accepted into the program each year, and the admission results are complete by February.

2. **How many students does the program admit each year, and how diverse is the student body?**

The program accepts about 16-20 students per year.

3. **How do I track my application status?**

You can check the status of your application by visiting <https://applicant.tamu.edu/> or contacting the admissions office for updates.

4. **When will applications be reviewed for Fall 2024 admission and considered for scholarships and departmental funding?**

Applications received by January 15 will be reviewed for Fall admissions and considered for scholarships offered by the School of Architecture and for departmental funding. Applications received after January 15 may be considered for admission, but considerations for financial aid may be limited. We cannot honor applications from international applicants if they submit **after January 15**, as it takes time to issue visas.

5. **When can applicants expect a response letter regarding a decision on their application and funding?**

Applicants can expect a response letter from the department regarding a decision on their application sometime between mid-February and funding and assistantships offer in mid-March.



6. **When is the deadline for applicants to return offer letters to the department saying they will join the program?** The deadline for applicants to return offer letters to the department is April 15.
7. **Do I need to submit GRE scores?** We do not require the GRE for admission.
8. **What should I include in my statement?** Your statement should explain your research interests and goals for pursuing a master's in urban planning. It should highlight relevant experience and accomplishments and explain why you are a good fit for the program. We recommend seeing the faculty profiles, checking out research centers, and discussing Texas A&M University.
9. **Whom should I ask for references?** For admission consideration, you should submit three letters of recommendation from people familiar with your academic, work, or service performance and potential. You may submit references from a faculty member or non-academic references such as former employers/volunteer work.
10. **Where do graduates end up working?** Graduates of our program often pursue careers in government agencies and nonprofits, or they become influential leaders in private sector organizations that benefit cities, communities, and the development industry.
11. **Does the program have a strong track record of helping graduates find jobs in their field?** We connect with program former students through the university's Former Student Association and professional networking platforms like LinkedIn. Former students often provide valuable insights into their experiences with job searches after graduation and career development. Inquire about internship and practical experience opportunities offered by the program.
12. **How many credit hours are required for a master's?** A total of 48 credits, including 30 credits for the core course, six credits for spatial and communication electives, and 12 credits for area of emphasis/ certificate.
13. **How long is the program?** Students are expected to complete their degree in two years if they attend full-time. Most of our part-time students finish in three years.
14. **Do you require a thesis?** No. You can choose between doing a thesis or a professional paper. A thesis or a professional paper is essential to a student's education, allowing them to demonstrate their research, analysis and design skills and expertise in their chosen field of emphasis. Learn more about the thesis or professional paper in the [MUP Handbook](#).
15. **Are students required to have an undergraduate degree to apply for the master's program?** Students must have an undergraduate degree before beginning the master's program. Undergraduate students already in our department may be able to count some courses toward the master's if accepted



through our [3+2 program](#). Admitted applicants who are still earning the prerequisite degree are admitted contingent on the completion of that degree.

16. **Do you offer dual-degree programs?** The TAMU School of Architecture offers multiple dual-degree programs to consolidate the graduate-level curriculum. It typically allows students to earn two master's degrees in three years. Visit the website at <https://www.arch.tamu.edu/academics/graduate-programs/dual-degree-programs/>.
17. **Is the master's in urban planning program at TAMU a designated science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) program?** Over the past several years, some planning programs have changed their Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) reporting code away from the traditional code for planning to other codes listed on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) STEM Designated Degree List, including the code for Sustainability Studies. Still, the MUP Program at TAMU has not changed its CIP code. The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) applied to have the CIP code used by most planning degree programs added to the DHS STEM list, allowing international students to receive up to two additional years of temporary employment authorization in the United States. The ACSP will know the outcome of the application in the summer of 2024.
18. **What are the areas of emphasis covered by the program?** We have three emphasis areas: (1) Transportation Planning and Policy, (2) Resilient Communities, and (3) Housing, Community, and Economic Development.
19. **Do you have certificates?** We have the following certificates: (1) Sustainable Urbanism, (2) Environmental Hazard Management, (3) Transportation Planning & Policy, (4) Historic Preservation, (5) Health Systems Design & Planning, and (6) Facilities Management.
20. **Does TAMU University offer an online program?** No, we do not offer an online master's program.
21. **Are the courses offered online, in-person, or in a mixed format?** Many courses are taught in person. Very few are online.
22. **Could you provide information on whether class times are scheduled in the evening or adhere to the regular (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) timeframe?** Class times are throughout the day. Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
23. **Are there academic advising services for graduate students?** Graduate Advisors are essential to the success of TAMU's graduate and professional students. Your insight and guidance help students stay on track to meet their academic goals and complete their programs on time. Visit the [Graduate and Professional School](#) to learn more.
24. **Are there specialized resources for my field of study?** Numerous resources are accessible in your field because TAMU is one of only three three-tier



research universities in the state. These include free academic coaching, tutoring, workshops, supplemental instruction, free career advising and workshops, resume review, and mock interviews offered by the Academic Success Center. Additionally, there are open computer labs and free textbook rentals for select books at the University Libraries.

25. **Does a recognized accreditation body accredit the program?** A recognized body accredits the program. The master's Urban and Regional Planning curriculum is accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB).
26. **What is the program's ranking in the field of study? Rankings** vary yearly; visit [the MUP Measures of Student Achievement webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information.
27. **What is the student retention rate, and are there high dropout rates?** Rates vary yearly; visit [the MUP Measures of Student Achievement webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information.
28. **What percentage of students graduate from the program?** The percentages vary yearly; visit [the MUP Measures of Student Achievement webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information.
29. **What is the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) pass rate for graduates at TAMU?** These vary year by year; visit [the MUP Measures of Student Achievement webpage](#) to get the most up-to-date information.
30. **What kind of research does the faculty undertake?** The faculty undertakes research funded by federal agencies and activist research that engages directly with study communities.
31. **Do I need to contact individual faculty members in advance before applying?** You do not need to, but you can get individual faculty members who can be your mentor(s) in advance via emails or conference meetings.
32. **Who can students work within the department's graduate faculty?** Students may work with any member of the department's graduate faculty, which includes all tenure-track and tenured faculty, as well as academic professional tracks (APT) faculty who have petitioned and been added to the graduate faculty. However, each faculty member takes on several mentees at once. Availability may also depend on the grant support available.
33. **Does TAMU University offer any research opportunities for master's students?** Yes, TAMU offers many research opportunities for master's students. These include faculty-led research projects, research internships, and student-led research initiatives.
34. **What are the requirements for an assistantship?** The requirements vary depending on the specific job responsibilities. Generally, strong academic performance, relevant coursework or experience, and excellent communication skills are essential criteria. Teaching, graduate, and research assistants often



work in collaborative environments, so working well with others and contributing to a team is vital.

35. **Does TAMU offer scholarships to students?** Yes, TAMU University provides a variety of scholarships for students. All students who apply are considered automatically for a scholarship. The LAUP program offers multiple financial aid forms, including externally funded grants, departmental assistantships, and university fellowships. Graduate assistants (non-teaching) receive **\$1,000 monthly** for 20 hours of work. For more information on Federal/Texas College Work Study, the Community Service Program, or Texas A&M University, visit [Jobs for Aggies](#) or [Aggie One Stop](#).