Student Handbook

College of Urban and Public Affairs
Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning

Master of Urban Studies

September 2011
This handbook provides Master of Urban Studies (MUS) students with important information about University and USP requirements pertinent to pursuit of the MUS degree.

Students should also consult relevant discussion in the University Bulletin, particularly the section on graduate studies, which covers regulations not contained in this handbook.

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I. COLLEGE OF URBAN AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
The College of Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA) of Portland State University is organized under three Schools:

Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning (USP)
- Urban Studies Ph.D.
- Urban Studies/Regional Science Ph.D.
- Master of Urban Studies (MUS)
- Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP)
- Graduate Certificate in Real Estate Development
- Graduate Certificate in Transportation
- Graduate Certificate in Urban Design
- BA/BS in Community Development
- Minor in Urban Sustainability
- Minor in Real Estate Development

Mark O. Hatfield School of Government
- Ph.D. in Public Administration and Policy
- MS in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- MA/MS in Political Science
- Master of Public Administration (MPA)
- Master of Public Health (MPH)
- BA/BS in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- BA/BS in Political Science
- Minor in Civic Leadership

School of Community Health
- Master of Public Health (MPH) in Health Promotion
- MA/MS in Health Studies
- BA/BS in Health Studies

Institutes, centers and public service units in the College:
- Center for Urban Studies
- Population Research Center
- Institute on Aging
- Senior Adult Learning Center
- Center for Transportation Studies
- Center for Public Health Studies
- Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies
- Institute for Non-Profit Management
- Criminal Justice Policy Research Institute
- Institute for Tribal Government
- Northwest American-Turkish Research Institute
- National Policy Consensus Center
- Executive Leadership Institute.
II. TOULAN SCHOOL OF URBAN STUDIES AND PLANNING

About the Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning

“The mission of the Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning is to assist in the development of healthy communities through an interdisciplinary program of teaching, research and public service. Faculty and students engage the intellectual, policy and practice aspects of urban studies and planning from the local to the international levels and actively participate in the analysis, development and dissemination of the innovations for which Portland and the Northwest are known.”

Adopted by the Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning Faculty on March 17, 2000.

The Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning (USP) administers the Master of Urban Studies (MUS) degree. The School includes faculty whose appointments are solely with USP, as well as faculty who are jointly appointed with other departments, schools, and research units in the College of Urban and Public Affairs and elsewhere in the University.

The Master of Urban Studies Program

The MUS degree provides training for students seeking employment in government, public and private research, non-profit, public interest, and community organizations, community colleges, and development agencies. MUS students admitted to the USP Ph.D. program while undertaking or having completed the Masters degree are normally permitted to apply earned MUS credits and core courses (with minimum “B” grades) toward fulfillment of the Ph.D.
Progression of the MUS Program

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MUS Faculty Concentrations
The School faculty as a whole oversees the curricula, requirements, and examinations, but subgroups of the faculty have specific responsibilities. Faculty members are organized within field area groups that offer specializations within the MUS program. The current field areas and the faculty associated with them are listed below.

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**Field Areas:**
CD = Community Development  PA = Policy Analysis
SD = Social Demography  GE = Gerontology
ED = Economic Development  TR = Transportation
III. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

A. Master of Urban Studies (MUS) Degree Overview
The MUS degree requires a total of 52 credits, plus a thesis and defense or a field area exam and paper:
- Core courses: required courses dealing with the analysis of urban phenomena (25 credits)
- Field Area courses: coursework in a designated field or one designed by the student in consultation with the field area committee chair (21 credits).
- Research paper: individual research leading to a thesis or field area paper (6 credits)
- Defense or Exam: Students who pursue a thesis must complete an oral defense of the thesis. Students who pursue a field area paper must complete a written exam in their field area (no credits).

The degree provides for a specialized option in Social and Policy Research. Students may also choose to pursue one of the Certificates offered by the School.

B. Core courses
(25 credits) ***please note we are moving to a new numbering system. See Course Planning Schedule in back of handbook and consult your adviser if you have questions
The core area requirements for the MUS degree include the following courses:
- USP 613 Urban Economic and Spatial Structure (3 credits)
- USP 614 History and Theory of Urban Studies (3 credits)
- USP 617 Sociology and Politics of Urban Life (3 credits)
- USP 630 Research Design (4 credits)
- USP 634 Data Analysis (4 credits)
- USP 683 Qualitative Analysis (4 credits)
- USP 697 Urban Studies Seminar (4 credits)

The first six courses are prerequisites for USP 5/697, which are normally taken at the beginning of the second year. A minimum grade of “B” in USP 597 is required in order to continue in the program.

C. Field Area
(21 credits)
Students generally select a field area from among those offered in the Urban Studies doctoral program. However, a student with the support of the faculty adviser may self-design a field area.

D. Research Paper
(6 credits)
The MUS degree provides for thesis and non-thesis options:
- The non-thesis option (field area paper option) requires registration for 6 credits of USP 501 Research and the completion of a field area paper and a written field area exam.
- The thesis option requires registration for 6 credits of USP 503 Thesis and completion of the formal thesis process, which results in a written thesis and an oral thesis defense.

E. Options: Social and Policy Research Specialization; Certificates
Students with an interest in enhancing their urban research skills may choose to specialize in Social and Policy Research. Students selecting this option must produce a thesis. This option requires the completion of the following courses:
- USP 536 Policy Evaluation Methods (3 credits)
- PA 555 Program Evaluation and Management (3 credits)
- Additional courses within the field (11 credits)

The School also offers Certificate programs for students who wish to pursue additional recognition in non-degree areas of special interest.
IV. MUS PROGRAM PROCEDURES

A. Initial Adviser
Once admitted, students are assigned a faculty adviser. Students should contact the adviser before registering to discuss requirements and program options and to set out a tentative course of study. As students become more familiar with the program, specializations, and faculty, it may be appropriate to request a different adviser. The student should meet with the adviser at least once a quarter to discuss progress and to update/revise the student’s course of study.

B. Program Proposal
The student, in consultation with the adviser and the faculty members who will form the student’s program committee, prepares individual programs of study. The MUS program committee consists of the faculty member who will supervise the field area exam and field area paper or the thesis option, and a second faculty member to serve as reader of the field area paper or thesis. Both committee members must be regular or affiliated members of the USP faculty.

As a general rule, students should develop their official proposed program of study as soon as possible after completing 27 credit hours of coursework. Program proposal forms are available in the USP office and on the School’s website (www.upa.pdx.edu/USP). Students are responsible for completing the proposal and submitting it to the USP office.

Students must have a program proposal, approved by the program committee and School Director, and must have completed all coursework prior to undertaking either the field area exam and paper or the thesis option.

C. Thesis / Field Area Requirements
Students pursuing the non-thesis degree option must complete a written field area exam and a field area paper. Students pursuing the thesis degree option must complete a written thesis and an oral defense of their thesis.

D. Non-Thesis Degree Option
Field Area Examination
The field area examination tests competency in the student’s chosen field area. The exam may not be scheduled until after the program proposal is approved. It is the student’s responsibility to arrange the date of the exam with the two selected USP faculty examiners (field area committee). The exam may not be scheduled during breaks between terms, final exam week, or summer. The office coordinator must be informed of the exam date at least one week in advance in order to prepare the exam materials and, if necessary, reserve a room for the exam.

Students prepare for the field area exams by:
● writing an extensive annotated bibliography in the field area, which must be approved by the field area committee, and
● critically discussing and assessing the theoretical, methodological, and case literature in the field through reading and conference courses with committee members at least one term prior to the exam.

Upon satisfactory completion of a field area annotated bibliography, the exam can be scheduled.

Exam Procedure
The field area exam will be two days (from 8 am the first day to 4:45 pm the second day) and can be taken in any location preferred by the student.

The field area exam topics are developed by the examination committee in close consultation with the student well in advance of the scheduled exam. The number of exam questions and the expected length of the responses are at the discretion of the exam chair.
The exam chair will notify the office staff of the exam date, so that the staff can distribute the exam questions at the scheduled time. Answers are expected to be word processed and delivered in person in both hard copy and electronic format (the precise format to be determined by the exam chair) to the appropriate School office staff member, who will make copies for the exam committee, student, and student file.

On-time delivery of the completed exams is the responsibility of the student. This should be anticipated in choosing a location for writing the exams.

The student will be notified of the results of the exam within two weeks of its completion. If the student has failed, a retake is permitted. The student must wait at least three months, but no longer than one year, before the retake. A student failing the exam a second time will be dropped from the program. A student passing the exam conditionally must satisfy the condition imposed by the examiners. Conditions must be satisfied within 6 months of receipt of the outcome. An additional six-month extension may be granted because of extenuating circumstances by the School director. If conditions are not satisfied, the grade for the exam is changed to Fail.

Urban Studies students who withdraw from the Ph.D. program will be allowed to count the Ph.D. field area exams toward completion of an MUS degree. The MUS exam, however, is not a substitute for any part of the Ph.D. field area exam requirement.

**E. Field Area Paper/Project**

MUS students doing field area papers must:

1. Find a chair who will accept responsibility for supervision.
2. Register for a total of 6 credits of USP 501 Research. The chairperson will assist in completing a by-arrangement form for this purpose.
3. Select, with the advice of the chair, one additional faculty member to complete the committee. Evaluation and approval of the paper proposal by both committee members is required. (The final product need not be limited to a written text. A video, along with a script and notes, for example, may be deemed appropriate to fulfill the field area paper requirement.)
4. The paper should be of publishable quality, containing a definition of the problem and the terminology employed, theoretical explication, analysis, and a discussion of results and their social significance. The field area paper represents original research and should result in the development of an original idea. Four bound copies of the field area paper should be delivered by the student to the School. Copies of field area papers are on file and available for review in the USP office, as well as in the CUPA library.

**F. Thesis Degree Option**

The thesis committee consists of three faculty members. The chair of the committee and at least one other member must be regular or affiliated members of the USP faculty; the third member may be any member of the University faculty. The chair must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher, or otherwise approved by the Graduate Office. The thesis committee must be selected, at the latest, during the term prior to that in which the student intends to graduate. A form to request appointment of the committee is available in the USP office and on the school web site.

Students develop a formal proposal of their thesis research that outlines the problem, the theoretical and conceptual foundations of their study, and the proposed research methodology. The thesis represents original research and should result in the development of an original idea. The thesis must meet the standards of accepted scholarship in the relevant field. This includes a critical discussion of the literature related to the chosen problem, a discussion of pertinent theory and
research methodology, a presentation of the research results, and a discussion of the implications of the results for future research.

The faculty committee members will review the proposal. If they approve it, the committee chair sends a letter to the School director indicating approval. Approval of the proposal must occur no later than the term prior to that in which the student intends to graduate.

If the research involves primary data collection from human subjects, the student will request approval from the Human Subjects Research Review Committee, which must be obtained prior to any data gathering. HSRRC may refuse to approve a proposal if the student began collecting data before securing approval.

The Graduate Office must formally appoint the committee and authorize the scheduling of the thesis defense. The adviser must submit a GO-16M form to the Office of Graduate Studies no later than the date indicated on the Graduate Candidates’ Deadline announcement for the intended term of graduation (in general, about a week before finals week of the term before the student hopes to graduate).

The student must deliver a complete readable, typed defense draft of the thesis to all members of the approved committee no fewer than 14 days before the oral defense. All appointed members of the committee must be present for the oral examination, which must be held at least five weeks prior to the end of the term.

Students selecting the thesis option must register for 6 credits of USP 503 Thesis. Requirements for preparation of the thesis are outlined in the PSU Bulletin; style guidelines are available from the Office of Graduate Studies.

G. GO-12 Form

Masters students must prepare a GO-12 form for the Office of Graduate Studies. It should be done immediately following approval of the program proposal. This form can be obtained from the USP office and the USP web site (http://www.upa.pdx.edu/USP/forms) and the Office of Graduate Studies web site (http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/ogs-forms.html). It lists all the coursework the student intends to count towards the degree in the order courses were taken and using the course numbers and titles as they appear on the transcript. The student and the adviser sign this form. The student submits the GO-12 form to the USP office and it will be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies. An approved program proposal must be on file before the USP office will accept a GO-12 form. The GO-12 form must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies by the end of the first week of the term during which the student intends to graduate.

H. Transfer of Credit

A maximum of 18 transfer credits may be requested for the MUS degree. Transferable credits are graduate credits with a grade of at least "B." Transfer credits will be granted only for courses that clearly fit into a student’s program. The student’s program committee and the School Director determine preliminary acceptability of transfer credit as part of a student’s program.

If graduate courses taken while an undergraduate at Portland State and not used in a bachelor’s degree are to be considered for use in the graduate program, the Reservation of Graduate Credit form GO-10 must be filed in the Office of Graduate Studies no later than the term following admission to the graduate program. If transfer credit from Portland State and/or another institution is to be presented, the Proposed Pre-Admission Transfer Credit form GO-21 must be filed in the Office of Graduate Studies for approval. This form should be submitted early in the student’s program; it must be approved before the GO-12 can be approved. These forms are available in the USP office and online.

See the discussion about pre-admission and transfer credit in the Graduate Studies section of the PSU Bulletin for additional information.
I. Waivers
Students may request to waive one or more required course(s) based on previous academic work. The faculty member teaching the course for which the waiver is sought approves waivers. Note that in the case of an approved course waiver, the student must take the equivalent number of credits in other courses.

J. Miscellaneous Regulations and Procedures
1. Continuous Enrollment
Students must be continuously enrolled for at least three credits per term (excluding Summer), unless on an approved leave of absence, including the terms during which they take comprehensive field area examinations or complete a thesis or field paper. The School Director has the discretion to grant exceptions; these will be granted largely for students who have completed all requirements except a field paper or exam. If unable to maintain continuous enrollment, fill out the Leave of Absence request form (see Appendix) for approval by the School Director. Leaves may be granted for a period of one to three terms, and extended for an additional three terms. A maximum of six terms of leave may be granted during the student’s tenure in the program.

2. Grades
Students must receive a grade of at least “B−” in all core courses. A student receiving nine credit hours of grades below “B−” after admission to the program will be dropped.

3. Use of 400/500 level courses
It is strongly advised that no more than 12 credit hours of courses offered simultaneously at the 400 and 500 levels be used as part of a student’s program. This recommendation is designed to insure that coursework is largely at the graduate level and in classes where the majority of other students are graduate students. Students whose programs require a significant amount of coursework in other departments may need to exceed the recommendation, and may do so with the consent of their committee.

4. Time limits
For all Master degrees at Portland State University, all work must be completed within seven years, and no work more than seven years old may be accepted towards the degree. This rule applies equally to terminal Master degrees, to Master degrees taken en route to a Ph.D., and to transfer credits applied to a Master degree.

5. Limit on “Credit By-Arrangement” Hours
Admitted Master students may include no more than 12 credits of By-Arrangement classes (501, 503, 505) in their programs. In cases where more than 12 credits are needed because of the lack of regularly scheduled classes, a waiver must be submitted for approval by the Director after a review by the relevant Executive Committee. It is expected that such credits will be commensurate with the demands of regular course offerings, approximately 3.5 hours of work per week for each credit hour. Students are permitted to arrange a readings and conference course (USP 505) to earn credit that may be related to a particular work experience, however, it is expected that such credits will reflect the normal expectations of a by arrangement course mentioned above, and will not be granted solely for the work experience.

6. Guidelines for Incomplete Grades
All students seeking a grade of "I" in a USP course should fill out a standard form prepared by the School. Completion of the form involves crafting an acceptable statement about when and how the Incomplete will be removed within the university’s one-year limit. The form must be signed by the instructor and a copy retained for the instructor’s records. In the absence of such a signed form, the instructor will assign a grade on the basis of work completed. If the student does not remove the Incomplete within the time agreed upon, the instructor will also assign a grade based on work completed to that point. Petitions for removal of Incomplete grades beyond the one-year deadline set by the University will be approved by the School only in the case of extenuating circumstances.
7. Dual Degrees
All coursework taken in the School or accepted for advanced standing while working on one of the USP degrees will count toward any other USP degree if: (1) the coursework meets the current curricular requirements of the second degree applied for, and (2) the coursework is approved by the faculty at the time of admission. If students in the Masters program wish to enter the Ph.D. program, they must formally apply and go through the admissions process.

8. Graduate Assistantships and Internships
The Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning offers a limited number of graduate assistantships, reviewed and awarded annually, for qualified MUS students. Assistantships can be held for a maximum of two academic years. It is necessary to reapply each year. Graduate assistants divide their time between their studies and various assignments, such as assisting faculty members in research, classroom instruction, or related work in one of the research centers. In return, they receive a small monthly stipend and tuition waiver for their services. Graduate assistants must successfully complete a minimum of 9 credit hours per term. Continuing students must apply for assistantships by February 1 of the preceding academic year. The necessary forms are available in the School office and online (http://www.upa.pdx.edu/usp/forms). Students with a conditional admission or not in good standing are not eligible for assistantships. Students are also encouraged to make inquiries from the School director about paid and unpaid internships with outside firms, non-profits, and government agencies.

9. Graduation
Once the student has completed all requirements, a Recommendation for Degree (GO-17) is completed and submitted by the School to the Office of Graduate Studies. Complications, such as Incompletes, library fines, etc., may hold up graduation. Note that students must apply for graduation during the first week of the term in which they intend to graduate. The student is officially notified and receives a diploma soon after graduation exercises.

10. Graduate Governance
All matters of graduate study are subject to University-wide policies and procedures established by the Faculty Senate upon recommendation of the Graduate Council. The Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies is responsible for conducting the affairs of the Office of Graduate Studies and for certifying to the Registrar candidates who have fulfilled the requirements for the MUS degree. The School Director coordinates both programs, and the Dean of the College of Urban and Public Affairs has ultimate authority over their administration. The faculty of the School is responsible for its curricula and special degree requirements. Students are involved in governance as elected members of the Faculty Evaluation Committee, Executive Committees, and the Admissions Committee, and as representatives at faculty meetings. Elections are held in Spring term for service the following academic year.

11. Student Responsibility
Students are responsible for knowing all regulations and procedures required by the University and the appropriate Master program. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because of ignorance of the regulation or the assertion that the adviser or other authority did not inform a student. Students should be familiar with information published in the PSU Bulletin, including the sections listing requirements for the degree. Programs have additional degree requirements beyond those listed in the Bulletin. The University reserves the right to require the withdrawal of students who fail to accept their responsibilities, as evidenced by conduct or scholastic achievement.

12. Academic Honesty and Integrity
Graduate students have a primary and unique relationship and responsibility to the faculty of their academic program, upon whose recommendations master degrees are awarded. A major feature of their responsibility is adherence to the principles of academic honesty and integrity. The University
assumes that students are honest; that all coursework and examinations represent their own work, and that all documents supporting their admission and graduation are accurate and complete. Academic honesty is a requirement for all graduate activities and any violation is grounds for disciplinary sanctions as provided by the University Student Conduct Code. Violations of this policy include, but are not limited to:

**a. Cheating:** in examinations and course assignments: the willful use or provision to others of unauthorized material in written or oral examinations or in course assignments.

**b. Plagiarism:** the appropriation of language, ideas, and products of another author or artist and representation of them as one’s own original work; failure to provide proper identification of source data; use of purchased or borrowed papers in graduate courses without complete identification of the source.

**c. Selling or offering to sell course assignment materials:** knowing, or under circumstances when a reasonable person has reason to know, that all or a substantial part of the material is intended to be submitted by another person in fulfillment of a course requirement.

**d. Academic fraud:** furnishing false or incomplete information to the University with the intent to deceive; forging, altering, or misusing university documents or academic forms which serve as the basis for admission, course study, or graduation; misrepresenting a person’s identity to an instructor or other University official.

Allegations of violating any part of this policy that cannot be resolved within the School shall be submitted to the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies. If the Vice Provost concludes there are grounds to believe the allegations are well founded, the matter shall be referred to the Graduate Council.

Following procedures established by the Graduate Council, the allegations and a student’s response shall be considered. The decisions of the Graduate Council are final. If a violation is established, the following academic actions may be taken:

1) Denial or rescinding of credit for the course in which the violation occurred.
2) Academic probation for one calendar year, during which the student cannot apply for advancement to candidacy, receive or continue to hold a graduate assistantship, or register for more than nine graduate credits in graded courses.
3) Academic disqualification for one to three calendar years, during which the student cannot register for any graduate courses at PSU and cannot apply any PSU coursework completed during the disqualification to any graduate degree or certificate program. The student’s admission to any graduate degree or certificate program will be canceled. The student must petition for readmission after the completion of the period of disqualification.
4) Denial or rescinding of the award of the graduate degree.

After final action by the Graduate Council, all materials related to the violation are forwarded to the Office of Student Affairs to determine if violations of the Code of Student Conduct have occurred.