GRADUATE CENTER
for
PLANNING and the
ENVIRONMENT

CITY AND
REGIONAL
PLANNING

HISTORIC
PRESCRIPTION

SUSTAINABLE
ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS

URBAN
PLACEMAKING
AND MANAGEMENT
The mission of the Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment (GCPE) is to provide a professionally oriented education to a student body with diverse cultural, educational, and professional backgrounds. Using a multidisciplinary approach, GCPE teaches participatory practice as the best way to support and advocate for just, equitable communities. Students graduate equipped with the knowledge of theory, technical capacity, collaborative skills, and radical critical thinking abilities necessary to plan for ethical, healthy, resilient and inclusive communities.
GCPE is a unique alliance of four graduate-level programs with shared values placed on urban sustainability and community participation, defined by the “triple bottom line” of environment, equity, and economy. Each of the four masters programs—City and Regional Planning, Historic Preservation, Sustainable Environmental Systems, and Urban Placemaking and Management—maintains its degree requirements and research expertise. However, GCPE students may attend courses from any of the four programs to explore cross-disciplinary interests. The result is that students are empowered to create a unique and multifaceted degree specialization themselves.

Eighty percent of GCPE students accept an internship or fellowship during their program, often through one of the close alliances GCPE maintains with community-based organizations and municipal agencies. On-campus, we work closely with the Pratt Center for Community Development, which develops innovative strategies toward an equitable and sustainable NYC. The Spatial Analysis and Visualization Initiative (SAVI), another partnership, is a Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-centered research hub that uses mapping, data, and design to understand urban communities and provides GCPE students with educational and professional networking opportunities outside of the classroom.

Another distinct element of a GCPE masters program is interdisciplinary studio coursework. Studios emphasize teamwork and integrative thinking as a method of acquiring professional skills. Each studio typically involves a real client and culminates in a professional-grade proposal that is evaluated by an array of distinguished practitioners and community leaders. Studios emphasize applied research and students often see an immediate impact on public policy and community action.

Through internships, partnerships, studios, and coursework, GCPE programs give students ample opportunity to apply their skills to real-world issues. Most GCPE courses are designed to allow students time during the day for internships, fellowships, and full-time jobs whenever possible. Additionally, GCPE students have access to courses in the Construction Management, Facilities Management, and Real Estate Practice programs at the Pratt Manhattan campus. City and Regional Planning students can earn a dual Master of Science / Juris Doctor from the Brooklyn Law School.

Lastly, study at Pratt Institute, one of the nation’s top art and design schools in the great borough of Brooklyn, allows for a truly interdisciplinary experience within one of New York City’s most dynamic neighborhoods.

As you look through the following pages, you will read about our vision for educating the next generation of urban leaders. If that resonates with you, I hope you’ll consider joining the GCPE community!

Eve Baron, Chair
August, 2018
CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING
Since its inception over 50 years ago, the City and Regional Planning Program (CRP) has remained dedicated to an education that emphasizes practice over theory, participatory planning over top-down policy making, creativity over boilerplate, and advocacy over technocracy.

The 60-credit, Planning Accreditation Board-certified MSCRP is the oldest of four affiliated programs within Pratt’s Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment (GCPE). We train students as practicing urban planners whose knowledge encompasses communities, cities and regions. The curriculum aligns with the design-centered programs in the School of Architecture, with a further focus on practice, equity, sustainable development, participatory planning, and social change.

Students take 40 credits of required coursework in skills, economics, law, history and theory, research, methods, studio, and thesis. Electives can be taken from CRP’s broad range of courses, or from any of the other three GCPE programs: Historic Preservation; Sustainable Environmental Systems; and Urban Placemaking and Management, or from sister programs Construction Management, Facilities Management and the new Real Estate Practice program.

Students have the option to specialize in one of six areas of focus: Community Development and Policy; Physical Planning; Placemaking and Transportation; Sustainability and Resilience; Preservation Planning; or Progressive Real Estate Practice.

Studio courses generally combine two or more of the concentrations of the program. Often, studios relate to the ongoing work of the Pratt Center for Community Development, one of the nation’s first and foremost university-based research and technical assistance organizations in the service of low- and moderate-income communities.

Studios involve real clients facing real challenges, consistent with the CRP’s emphasis on participatory planning and equity issues. Past and current studios have taken students to work on plans for historic downtown Havana, Cuba; to collaborate with community stakeholders in Red Hook, Brooklyn on an equity-building, integrated flood protection system; and to create policy recommendations responding to the Jackson Heights, Queens community goal to transform below-ground residential floor area into safe, affordable housing. The CRP Program offers a unique chance for students to have an immediate impact on policy and decision-making as they complete a first-rate education.

Through experiential, hands-on learning, CRP students make an immediate impact on policy and decision-making.

Credits Snapshot:
Total: 60
Required: 40
Elective: 20

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
The 47-credit Master of Science in Historic Preservation (HP), offered at Pratt’s School of Architecture on the Brooklyn campus, is designed to meet today’s increasing demand for preservation professionals. Students learn the interdisciplinary skills needed to assess contemporary preservation issues and contribute greatly to an ever-expanding field. The Historic Preservation program aims to train preservationists that are highly knowledgeable in the field as well as critical enough to push the boundaries of the discipline. Rather than focusing on the preservation of the past, the program focuses on diverse strategies to manage change in the present. Even though preservation focuses predominantly in the past, it is a truly forward-looking profession fueled by the possibility and the need to find creative solutions that protects cultural resources by ensuring their use and continuity through time.

The program offers a unique approach to preservation education in which students spend their first year in intensive coursework focused on the core elements of historic preservation practice, and their second year specializing in a particular aspect of urban preservation and built environment management. Historic Preservation at Pratt strives to go beyond the physical aspects of preservation in order to understand what role our discipline plays within a larger context of community planning and sustainable practices. For this reason, after an intense year of core courses that provide a solid foundation in the critical areas of historic preservation practice, students are encouraged to develop their particular interests. Students spend their second year on a Thesis project and elective courses within their chosen Area of Focus where we seek to help them develop their own passions and expertise. Students graduate with a body of knowledge that can inform and contribute to the profession.

Upon the successful completion of a Thesis, students become qualified historic preservation practitioners with a focus that at once broadens their knowledge base and deepens their expertise – thus enhancing their skills and the range of work that they are equipped to handle as they enter this transdisciplinary field. In addition, students have the option to explore international studios and practice from the other programs. A required internship in the field of historic preservation rounds out the program and ensures that students leave Pratt with relevant “real world” work experience as well as a network of professionals in preservation.

The program takes on a values-based approach to historic preservation. This means that rather than just looking at preservation through a curatorial lens, it recognizes the need to take on a more holistic approach to preservation. The values-based approach proposes that cultural issue are critical to the understanding and the conservation of the built environment. Moreover, it establishes that social memory is a critical aspect of dealing with historical value because it can help bridge spaces and times by focusing on the users and not just the object.

Credits Snapshot:
Total: 47
Required: 33
Elective: 14

Program Coordinator
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SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS
Sustainable Environmental Systems, is a 40-credit, STEM-designated Master of Science with a curriculum focused on the integration of environmental design, policy, and science within cities.

Our interdisciplinary exploration of urban environmental systems is rooted in a “triple bottom line” approach, giving equal importance to the environment, economy, and social equity.

Our faculty members are leading practitioners and scholars in sustainability and urban studies. Their practice-oriented approach to teaching offers intellectual rigor and professional know-how. Our faculty support students to engage in applied research of sustainable urbanism with a focus on social and environmental justice.

Furthermore, our practice-based approach allows for 80% of students within the SES program to gain professional experience in the form of internships, fellowships and/or employment within their area of interest during their studies.

These opportunities come from our extensive partnership network of civic and community-based organizations, nonprofits, architectural, planning and engineering firms, and City agencies. It is within these sectors that the majority of our graduates find employment after graduation.

Our ideal student candidates are designers, researchers, urbanists, advocates, scientists, and entrepreneurs, passionate about becoming interdisciplinary, problem-solving professionals in the emerging and rapidly growing fields of systems thinking, climate-change adaptation and mitigation.

Our student body is diverse in both educational and professional backgrounds. Students trained in design, as well as social and environmental sciences, are all engaged by our interdisciplinary approach. Each student is able to uniquely build upon their backgrounds while collectively gaining new insight into resilient and sustainable systems for urban environments.

Both the curriculum and the Graduate Center’s collaborative model offer flexibility and diversity in areas of academic focus, allowing each student to uniquely tailor their graduate study experience. In addition to the in-depth study areas of City Planning, Urban Placemaking, Historic Preservation, and Facilities Management, the SES program delivers extensive academic and professional experience in sustainable design, green infrastructure, and environmental justice.

Credits Snapshot:

Total: 40
Required: 28
Elective: 12

Program Coordinator
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URBAN PLACEMAKING AND MANAGEMENT
In the past 10–12 years there has been a paradigm shift in thinking about planning and urban design, from a primary focus on buildings to a focus on the spaces between buildings: "public space." Rather than allowing these spaces to be formed as an afterthought of building design, Placemaking sees the creation of successful public spaces as the starting point, which in turn dictates the siting and design of other components of the urban fabric.

Placemaking approaches public space from a people perspective, based on community needs and programming. It incorporates a wide variety of professional and technical skills such as community building, economics, sustainability, management, urban design, and landscape design. "Placemakers" need to understand the role that each of these disciplines plays in creating and maintaining successful public spaces and be able to manage the process of placemaking. Case studies of successful public spaces demonstrate the importance of placemaking in supporting successful communities and in the livability and health of a city.

The program is ideal for students with professionally oriented undergraduate education, professional degrees, or professional experience in architecture, engineering, environmental, landscape design, urban planning and related studies. Students are immersed in the core skills of analysis, conceptual design, and management of the public realm in cities. The 40-credit program equips students to qualify for employment in a range of institutional, governmental, nonprofit, and private-sector settings.

Students gain a broad theoretical knowledge of the historical, political, and social frameworks with which to conceptualize the public realm, while developing skills to analyze urban space and understand the relationship of public space to public policy and private development. Through studios and internships, students gain further practical understanding of the planning and design of public space, including management and the integration of the principles of sustainability into public-space development.

An approach to the creation and management of public space from a people perspective, based on community needs and programming

Credits Snapshot:
Total: 40
Required: 26
Elective: 14

Program Coordinator
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The Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment offers linkages to the undergraduate Construction Management program and the graduate programs in Facilities Management and Real Estate Practice, all available at the Pratt Manhattan campus.
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

Like business management, Construction Management is the planning, coordinating, and building of a project from conception to completion. The Construction Manager’s raw materials are often a vacant piece of land, a set of construction drawings in digital or hand copy, and a project manual. Construction Management students learn all aspects of the profession from assembling a virtual factory for construction; contending with numerous local, state, and federal regulations; and coordinating skilled and unskilled craftspeople, unions, contractors, subcontractors, architects, engineers, planners, consultants, and the owner/developer.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The Facilities Management program prepares students to assume leadership roles in managing an organization’s built environment, either as internal employees or as external service providers and consultants. The program equips students with the competencies to effectively manage a facility throughout its life cycle: They can direct planning, design, and construction activities and ensure that they meet the corporate needs for operations, maintenance, and services functions. They promote that the organization’s concern for a fiscal and social responsibility and environment sustainable practices as reflected in how the organization’s facility assets are operated, maintained, and serviced.

REAL ESTATE PRACTICE

The goal of Pratt’s MS in Real Estate Practice program is to develop students with the capacity to practice the business of real estate with a focus on public/private partnership, as well as housing and urban development, with a commitment to achieving The Three E’s of sustainability—economy, equity, and environment. A key objective is to educate graduate students as real estate practitioners with the core skills to secure professional employment in the field of real estate business.
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