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Professor
Sociology
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Director’s Message

Dear students,

I am delighted to welcome you to the Masters in Interdisciplinary Studies in Urban Studies. The Urban Studies Institute was founded in 2017, and this is the inaugural year of our graduate program. You are the first cohort of students, and we will be working with you closely to ensure an exciting start of our program and a rewarding experience for all of you.

All of you are (or will be) assigned to a faculty advisor. This is the person who will be your first contact in the program and with whom you should consult on your classes, the direction of your studies, the topic of your thesis, your research interests, and so on. At the same time, I hope you will make contact with the other faculty and staff. The professors in the Institute, including Affiliate Faculty, are all top-flight scholars, recruited from leading universities, covering various areas of expertise and with considerable professional networks (in Atlanta, nationally, and globally).

You are starting the program with a strong group of student colleagues, and you will join them in a number of classes and projects. I encourage you to get to know each other, learn from each other, and enjoy life in graduate school. You are a diverse and talented group and we, the faculty and staff, are excited about having you in the program and in our classes.

Besides your classes and possible participation in research projects, you will be invited (and sometimes expected) to join events in the Institute such as our speaker series, symposia, as well as social gatherings.

I wish you a productive, rewarding, and enjoyable year!

Cordially,

Jan Nijman
General Information

This Handbook describes requirements for earning a MIS degree at the Urban Studies Institute. The MIS in Urban Studies will be administered in the spirit of the interdisciplinary nature and programming of the degree. Consistent with the multi-departmental composition of the USI Curriculum Committee that crafted the proposal, the administration of the degree program (admissions, curricular matters, etc.) is overseen and advised by the Degree Program Committee (DPC). The DPC includes the core faculty of the USI as well as one faculty member each from the departments of Sociology, Public Management and Policy, and Geosciences.

Graduate students in the Institute are expected to be familiar with all of the requirements, policies, and procedures described herein. The policies outlined here are additional to those found in the University’s Graduate Catalog (published online: http://www.gsu.edu/enrollment/catalogs.html). It is the student’s responsibility to know and meet the requirements of the University, the College, and the Institute. Your faculty advisor can help guide you through the requirements.

Mission and Goals
The MIS in Urban Studies prepares students for professional or research careers with specialized knowledge and skills in urban studies; students will develop a sophisticated understanding of urbanization and the making of cities; they will demonstrate strong analytical skills designed to promote best practices for solving complex challenges of urban environments and synthesize this information at local, national, and international scales.

Learning Outcomes

1. Core Knowledge - Students will be able to identify and interpret historical, current, and emerging urban issues, opportunities, and challenges in the U.S. and globally, particularly with regard to themes of economic resilience, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

2. Research Enterprise - Students will develop investigative research skills to analyze complex urban questions and utilize different analytical skills to create translational research with strong societal/policy relevance independently.

3. Scholarly Communication & Professionalism - Students will communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Students will engage in ethical practices and demonstrate ethical principles that comport with equitable and equal urban societies.

Admissions

Application for graduate study with the Institute is made through the University’s Graduate Office. This office handles the application file and checks to ensure the application is complete (see below “Application Requirements”) in conjunction with the Office of Academic Advising of AYSPS. The file is
then sent to the Department for review. When an initial admissions committee decision has been made, the file is forwarded to the Director for final decision.

Application Requirements

A completed application includes:

1. **Submitted Online Application.** All online applications must be submitted by the deadline. Paper applications are not available.
   
   1. Create a new account.
   
   2. In the drop-down menu of *Please select a college*, select **University Wide**.
   
   3. In the drop-down menu of *Please select a program*, select **Interdisciplinary Studies, Master of Interdisciplinary Studies**.
   
   4. In the drop-down menu of *concentration*, select **Urban Studies**.

2. **Application fee:** A nonrefundable fee of $50 is required for each application. This fee must be paid online by credit card.

3. **Goal statement:** The goal statement is your means of presenting yourself to the Graduate Admissions Committee. You should submit a short typed statement of personal and professional goals as they relate to the certificate or degree program you are seeking. Most applicants write two typed pages, summarizing their work experience, the reasons they have chosen the program, why they want to attend Georgia State, and how the degree fits in with their career goals.

4. **Official GRE (Graduate Record Examination) scores:** Official scores must be reported to institution code 5251. More information can be found at our Admissions FAQ page or, to schedule the test, at www.gre.org. Applicants may be considered for a waiver of the GRE with departmental approval. Applicants eligible for a GRE waiver must have (1) a Master’s degree or (2) a minimum of 4-years professional work experience, generally in the public and/or nonprofit sectors, and a minimum undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.0. For consideration, applicants should complete the waiver form here.

5. **TOEFL or IELTS Academic scores (International applicants only):** All international applicants are required to submit official TOEFL or IELTS Academic scores.

6. **Two letters of recommendation:** All letters should be submitted through the online application.

7. **Copies of Official Transcripts from each post-secondary college/university attended:**
   
   - Official transcripts are not required at this stage of application review.**
   - Transcripts should be uploaded to the Academic History section of the online application and must be copies of university transcripts. This can either be an official electronic transcript, or a paper copy that you have scanned and uploaded.
o Copy of transcript must have one or more of the following features: registrar’s seal, registrar signature or watermark of the institution.

o Documents such as self-printed academic histories, web-based academic evaluations, or anything hand-written are not acceptable for the review process and should not be uploaded. Doing so will significantly delay the review of your application.

  o Submit one copy of your transcript for each post-secondary institution attended, regardless of the length of time you attended, your status, whether grades are listed, or where your final degree(s) were received. Post-secondary institutions include community colleges, study abroad programs, and AP credit. If you received college-level credit, a transcript should be submitted for review.

**Official transcripts will only be required if an applicant is admitted to the program**

Changing Semester of Application

Applicants who do not complete their application files by the appropriate application deadline may request that their applications be considered for the following semester. Such requests must be made in writing to the Office of Graduate Services. Applicants who request a change in the date of entry on their application for more than one semester or who request a change in the degree or major area for which they applied must submit a new application and fee to the Office of Graduate Services.

Graduate Office Web site: [https://graduate.gsu.edu/graduate-admissions-contacts/](https://graduate.gsu.edu/graduate-admissions-contacts/)

Tel.: 404-413-2444

Email: gradapply@gsu.edu

Admission Status

There are two main categories of admission to the Division of Graduate Studies: Full Graduate Status and Special Graduate Status. A student must achieve Full Graduate Status to be eligible for a graduate degree. The category of Special Graduate Status is designed to accommodate, when practical, applicants with promise who may have deficiencies in admission requirements. Once these deficiencies are completed the student can be moved to Full Graduate Status. There is an extensive “Guide for Admission” published by the Graduate Office (available on their Web site) that lists all the requirements and application procedures.

Transient Status Admission:

A student seeking admission as a transient student must be a graduate student in good standing at another institution. Admission requirements include a completed application, application fee, a list of desired courses, and a letter of good standing from the graduate dean or registrar at the student’s institution. Admission to Transient Status is for one semester only on a space-available basis. A student not in good standing or one who is ineligible to return to his/her home
institution will not be admitted. No guarantee is made that a transient student will be able to secure the courses desired. The reporting of grades earned to the student's institution is the responsibility of the student. The student should consult the current Graduate Catalog for other restrictions.

**International Students:**

A special information pamphlet for international students is available upon request from the Office of Graduate Services that indicates the degree programs available, admission requirements, fees, and other information helpful to applicants from other countries.

In addition to meeting the regular admission requirements, prospective international students must demonstrate proficiency in the English Language by taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

An international student whose native language is not English and who demonstrates proficiency in English on the appropriate examination may be exempted from the foreign language requirement.

**Application Deadlines**

Application deadlines for the program are provided on the Andrew Young School Graduate Office Web site. The current dates are:

- **For entering in Fall:** February 15 (priority); April 1; June 1 (late); and July 15 (space available)

- **For entering in Spring:** October 1 & November 1 (late)

**Enrollment and Funding**

**Course Load and Continuous Enrollment**

The maximum course load for graduate students is five courses per semester. Generally, three to four courses per semester is deemed the normal course load for full-time students. (Part-time study is possible.) Students who hold a graduate research or teaching assistantships (GRA; GTA) and receive a tuition waiver are required to be registered for a minimum number of credit hours for every semester that they hold a GRA or GTA position [18 hours during fall and spring semesters for MIS; 9 hours during the summer semester for MIS students; these credit hours will include generally 9-12 credit hours of classes (3-4 courses) and then an additional 6-9 hours by registering for URB 8999]. URB 8999 Master’s Research-Urban Studies allows GRAs/GTAs to reach the 18 hours for the fall or spring semesters or the 9 hours for the summer semester, in addition to their normal course load.

To graduate, students must be registered in the program of study during the semester they finish degree requirements for graduation. Students who do not register for an entire year (12 months) and
are not on official leave or covered by other exceptions will be made inactive in the program, and if they wish to continue, are required to apply for reentry. Re-acceptance into the program is not guaranteed. Reentering students are subject to the regulations of the Graduate Catalog and the degree program current at the time of reentry. Time limits for all academic requirements will remain unchanged. Exceptions or adjustments to the requirements of continuous enrollment necessitate an appeal to the Graduate Petitions Board or official approval for a leave of absence.

**Transfer Credit**

A maximum of six hours of approved graduate credit from other institutions may be accepted toward a master's degree program. Students requesting transfer credit must submit a Request for Transfer of Graduate Course Credit Form to the Office of Academic Assistance. The acceptance of transfer credit is not automatic; it must be approved by the student’s faculty advisor and then the DPC Chair. Transfer credit must be approved no later than the end of the second semester of full graduate status. We ask students to email their faculty advisor with their intent to submit the request for transfer for pre-approval.

**Academic Warning and Dismissal**

A graduate student whose cumulative grade-point average falls below 2.7 at the end of a semester will receive a warning from the Office of Graduate Services. If at the end of the next 18 semester hours of enrollment a 2.7 cumulative grade-point average is not achieved, the student will be withdrawn by the Office of Graduate Services.

**Graduate Research Assistantships**

The Institute can offer a limited number of graduate assistantships to qualifying students. Assistantships are prioritized for graduate students seeking a degree within the Institute.

Students are eligible to receive tuition waivers if they a) are funded at a minimum of $4,000/year, b) are registered as full-time students (18 credit hours in each the fall and spring semesters and 9 credit hours in the summer), and c) are in good standing (e.g., GPA above 3.0). Other factors that are considered include GPA, GRE scores, letters of recommendation for incoming students, progress in the program, teaching effectiveness, and GPA at Georgia State for continuing students. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 may have graduate assistantships withdrawn. In addition to graduate assistantships offered by the Institute, students may be eligible for assistantships offered by other Departments or units at the University to work with other faculty, including USI Affiliate Faculty.

Although the University requires nine credit hours to count as full-time, it is a College requirement that students receiving an assistantship must be registered for 18 semester hours of credit during the semester (fall/spring) in which they receive support. One of those courses may be URB 8999; these credits will not count toward the total credit hours required for the Master’s degree.

Part-time students (those taking fewer than 9 credit hours of classes) are not eligible for GRAs or departmental funding.
The University and Andrew Young School of Policy Studies offer various scholarships for eligible students. Information can be obtained from the Office of Student Financial Aid. Students are also encouraged to contact the Office of Student Financial Aid to obtain additional information on Pell Grants and various federal loan programs.

Advising

Students will be assigned a faculty advisor when they begin the program. The advisor is intended to be a contact person who can provide general advice and guidance on graduate school and the history of the program. Initially, the advisor will be assigned to the student by the Institute. Students may approach another faculty member (including Affiliate Faculty) at any time to ask that faculty member to become his or her advisor, but students should recognize that faculty may already have substantial advising obligations. Students are encouraged to identify and get to know the faculty in their areas of interests (regardless of advisor status). Students are expected to initiate contact with their advisors during the first week of classes of their first semester in the program. Additional advising is provided at the college level, within the Office of Academic Assistance (Michelle Lacoss). See Appendix 2 for contact information for specific topics.

Curriculum

Coursework and other requirements specified by both the department and the individual concentrations are described in this section of the handbook. All students are expected to complete the departmental core curriculum within two semesters of entering the program. Descriptions of these course can be found in the graduate catalog, under the Andrew Young School - Masters Programs: https://catalog.gsu.edu/graduate20182019/andrew-young-school-of-policy-studies/#masters-programs

All students take the following 4 departmental core courses (3 credit hours each):

- URB 8010 Urban Theory and Praxis
- URB 8020 Global Urban Trajectories
- GIS Course (GEOS 6532 or PMAP 8561) Methods Course: PMAP 8121
  - Or another statistics course of a similar or higher level, with the approval of the faculty advisor in plan of study (e.g. GEOS 8002 or SOCI 8010)

ELECTIVES (choose 12 credits- four courses at 3 credits each)

- ANTH 6200 Urban Anthropology
- ECON 8310 Economics Educational Policy
- ECON 8300 Urban Economics
- GEOS 6515 Qualitative Methods in Geography
- GEOS 6020/URB 8060 Urban Environments
- GEOS 6764 Urban Geography
- GEOS 6768/HIST 6320: Metropolitan Atlanta
- GEOS 6774: Contemporary Urban Theory & Issues
- GEOS 8007: Urban Environmental Geography
GEOS 8010: Seminar in Urban-Economic Geography
HIST 8630: The American Built Environment
LAW 7251 Law & Social Welfare
PH 7140 Social and Behavioral Aspects of Public Health
PH 7297 Global Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
PH 7340 Built Environment and Health
PH 7300 Urban Health
PMAP 8010 Social Policy
PMAP 8021 Scope and Theory of Planning
PMAP 8311 Urban Demography and Analysis
PMAP 8321 Economic Development, Policy and Planning
PMAP 8331 Urban Development and Sustainable Cities
PMAP 8351 Local Government and Management
SOCI 8020 Research Methodology
SOCI 8212 Race and Ethnic Relations
SOCI 8226 Urban Sociology
SW 7300 Methods of Community Research
SW 8350 Economics of Poverty & Public Policy
SW 8440 Global Social Work Practice, Policy, Research
WGSS 8002 Globalization and Gender
(or other possible courses with the approval of your faculty advisor in your plan of study)

CAPSTONE (6 credits total)
Research track: Two research papers (URB 8110/8120 6 credits)
OR
Professional track: professional research project/paper (URB 8120 3 credits) and
internship/assistantship (URB 8130 3 credits)
These options can be chosen after completing 12 credit hours in the degree program.

The Capstone Experience

Students should review the requirements for the capstone experience soon after enrolling in the
program and discuss whether they might opt for the research or professional track option with their
faculty advisor during their first semester. Students should review the syllabi for the research paper, the
professional research project/paper, and the internship/assistantship before discussing these options
with their advisor. Capstone modules may be supervised either by either a core or affiliate USI faculty
member.

The syllabi for the capstone modules are located here:
URB 8110 (Research track paper syllabus)
URB 8120 (Professional research project/paper)
URB 8130 (Internship/assistantship)
Waiving Required Courses

Students who have taken similar graduate courses previously and believe that any of the required core courses should be waived must submit a petition [here](#) in addition to writing to their faculty advisor by the end of their first semester of study. Typically, such requests are made when a student has taken a similar graduate course elsewhere. Students must make such requests should attach syllabi and a transcript indicating the grade in the course to the waiver form online. It is expected that the student received a “B” or better in the course to be considered for a waiver and that the course was taken within the previous five years. Once approved by the faculty advisor, the waiver form will need to be approved and signed by the DPC Chair. You may also use the waiver form to select an elective not currently on the prescribed list. Note: A waiver for a required course does not provide a student with credit hours for that course: substitute credit hours must be attained via additional electives. It is possible that a student receives transfer credits for a course that fulfills a core requirement. (See instructions for transfer credit above.)

Choosing Electives and Completing Your Plan of Study Form

Generally, MIS students are expected to complete 12 hours of elective credit from the list of electives above. With the approval of their faculty advisor, students may choose a course as an elective not on this list. Also, if a student has a required core waived, they may need to take more than 12 hours of electives. In a student’s first semester they need to complete a Plan of Study (see attached form in Appendices) together with their advisor. The form must be signed by their advisor and by the DPC Chair. Changes to the Plan of Study (Appendix 1) should be submitted to their advisor for signature and forwarded to the DPC Chair by the first week in their last semester of the program.

Administrative Resources & Procedures

Completion of Degree Requirements

All credits presented for the Master’s degree must have been earned within seven calendar years of the date of admission.

Students who fail to complete requirements within the limits specified by the College of Arts and Sciences may file a Petition for Deviation with the Office of Graduate Services of the College of Arts and Sciences. Petition forms are available on the Office of Graduate Services website.

Reentry Students

Former students of Georgia State University who were not registered at Georgia State University for regular courses during the previous 12 months are required to file a reentry application with the Office of Graduate Services by the deadline published in the appropriate semester Schedule of Classes bulletin. Students who have attended other colleges and/or universities must have official transcripts of all work completed sent to the Office of the Registrar prior to the reentry deadline for the appropriate semester.
Graduation

Students must apply for graduation with the Graduation Office at least one semester prior to the semester in which they expect to graduate.

Plagiarism

The preparation and presentation of formal papers is a vital exercise at all levels of graduate education. Such papers are intended to guide the student in the development of skills in locating, evaluating, and recording information and in digesting, composing, and explaining his/her findings. It is the most completely developed form of independent study and, if properly done, requires students to organize their thoughts, to relate facts to ideas, and to appreciate the intellectual demands of intensive investigation.

Students who evade the effort required to develop these skills damage their own education. Plagiarism—claiming as one’s own the words and ideas of another person—damages not only the student but other fellow students as well. It will be the policy of all members of this department to assign the grade of “F” for each piece of work submitted by any student which is, in fact, not that student's own work. Further action shall be at the discretion of the course instructor.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty refers to the personal acceptance of and responsibility to a strict standard of values for your work and life in the academic world. Written rules and regulations cannot encompass all the ramifications of such a system of ethics and values. Academic honesty includes respect for your own work and the work of others; complete truthfulness in all your interactions with faculty, administrators and fellow students; and care and respect for the academic resources in our libraries and labs. Academic honesty is not completely “academic” as the underlying principles extend to values and ethics you should carry with you to your future business and professional life. Your adherence to a high standard of values in this regard will be a significant factor in our evaluation of your potential as a professional.

Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation from the faculty will be needed in most cases if you proceed to further graduate study or seek employment. Bear in mind that these letters will speak to your integrity, character, cooperativeness, accomplishments, etc., as well as to your potential in further professional or academic pursuits. It is important to seek agreement from faculty before listing faculty as references.

Summer Plans

Your summer plans should be made with a view to completing your degree program in the shortest possible time. Summer is the time when a graduate student can make great strides in his or her research. You can be free of the day-to-day demands of coursework, Graduate Assistant responsibilities, etc. To do this, you must be free of other responsibilities and able to devote time to your research project.
Students not planning to spend a significant part of the summer on thesis/dissertation-related research should carefully review their plans with their advisors.

Almost all faculty members in the Institute are on nine-month contracts to the University and are not employed for regular university business during the summer. During the summer semester, they are likely to be away from campus for extended periods for research, teaching field camp, and other professional pursuits. Students should make their summer plans sufficiently in advance to be sure that faculty members are available when necessary.

Library & University Resources

Library

Mr. Joseph Hurley (jhurley@gsu.edu) is the Library liaison to the Urban Studies Institute and he may be contacted for specific and non-routine questions. You are encouraged to meet with Mr. Hurley so that you may make the most of the library’s resources.

The website for the University Library is http://www.library.gsu.edu/. You can use Interlibrary Loan (ILL), which is a borrowing service for GSU students, faculty, and staff to request books, articles, and other materials that are not found in Georgia State University collections. The Web site for ILL is http://library.gsu.edu/78.html.

Information Systems and Technology Open Labs

The University has multiple open access computer labs on the downtown campus. The labs all have IBM compatible computers connected to a local area network and laser printers, with a few that contain Apple computers. Information on these labs software/computers can be found here.

http://technology.gsu.edu/technology-services/it-services/labs-and-classrooms/computer-labs/pantherprint/

Additional there is a collaborative workspace for visualization in Library South, CURVE (Collaborative University Research and Visualization Environment). It is a technology-rich discovery space supporting the research and digital scholarship of Georgia State University students, faculty, and staff.

CETL- Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

CETL advances a university community where the best practices of engaged teaching and learning are supported through a range of programs for all instructors, from first-time graduate assistants to longtime faculty. They have training opportunities, instructional support and information technology tools available for graduate students: https://cetl.gsu.edu/resources/graduate-students/
Other University Resources

Office of Student Financial Aid
102 Sparks Hall
(404) 413-2400

Office of Disability Services
230 Student Center
(404) 413-1560 (Voice/TDD)

Health Services
147 Sparks Hall
(404) 413-6219

Office of the University Ombudsperson
215 One Park Place South
(404) 413-2510

Transportation and Parking
University Center, 2nd floor
(404) 413-9500

Locker Rentals
Student Center, 3rd floor
(404) 463-9115

Textbook Link
http://www.efollett.com/

Welcome Center
Room 134 of Dahlberg Hall
30 Courtland Street
(404) 413-2063

Office of Academic Assistance
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
14 Marietta Street NW, Suite G52
Atlanta, GA 30303
e-mail: admissions@gsu.edu
(404) 413-0027

University Housing
Suite 250 - University Center
(404) 413-1800

Commuter Housing
Suite 400 - University Center
(404) 413-1515

Office of Student Activities
218 University Center
(404) 413-1750

Counseling Center
75 Piedmont Ave, N.E.
Suite 200A - Counseling & Testing Center
Suite 240 - Student Health Promotion
(404) 413-1640

University Bookstore
University Center, 3rd floor
(404) 413-9700

Campus Safety and Security
One Park Place South
(404) 413-2100
APPENDICES
## Appendix 1- Plan of Study

This is a downloadable document that you should complete together with your faculty advisor.

https://urbaninstitute.gsu.edu/mis-program-of-study_04242018/

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Planned Term Yr</th>
<th>Term Taken</th>
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<th>Credit Hours</th>
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</table>

Graduate Coursework in Urban Studies: 30 Hours

2. Elective Courses (12.0 hours):

Students should consult and obtain approval for any course substitutions from primary faculty advisor.

3. Capstone Experience: Select Internship & Paper or Two Paper option (6.0 hours)

A minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate coursework is required for the master's program in Criminal Justice. This program plan should be on file by the end of the first semester or before eighteen (18) semester hours of coursework have been completed.

1. Student

   Date

2. Faculty Advisor

   Date

3. Dan Imergluck

   Date
Appendix 2- Departmental/Program Contacts

The information below is a guide on when you should contact a particular personnel:

*Your faculty advisor*
Planning course of study, initiating possible course waivers, transfer credits, electives not currently on electives list, etc.= Individual Faculty Advisor

*Laura Castelli* [lcastelli@gsu.edu](mailto:lcastelli@gsu.edu)
404-413-0034, 810 (55 PP)
Course registration logistics, IT service, financial related questions (assistantships)

*Office of Academic Advising (AYS)*
Michelle Lacoss, [mlacoss@gsu.edu](mailto:mlacoss@gsu.edu)
Course registration

*AYS/GSU Career Services*
Colleen Perry & Brian Mitchell
[cperry@gsu.edu](mailto:cperry@gsu.edu) & [bmitchell@gsu.edu](mailto:bmitchell@gsu.edu)