

Master in Urban Planning International and Comparative Planning Concentration 2026-2027

Concentration Advisor: [Magda Maaoui](#)

This concentration within the MUP program is intended to provide a solid professional and academic preparation in the field of international planning. The concentration responds to three global concerns. The first is the rapid population growth and territorial expansion of cities in the developing world, where most of the planet's populations now reside. The second is the increasing importance of urbanization in the national development trajectories of those countries. Accelerating urban growth directly impacts employment opportunities, health and livability conditions, infrastructure priorities, and investment needs, among other factors. Likewise, these transformations call into question the social, economic, and political practices and institutions that scarcely a few decades ago were as likely to focus on rural as urban problems, offering both challenges and opportunities for citizens and governing authorities to chart a new future through planning, design, and the management of cities and their hinterlands. The third motivating concern is the fact that cities and regions in the developing world have been drawn into extractive networks, transnational civil society connections, global governance agreements, and multilateral institutional arrangements that can either enable or constrain their relative autonomy to pursue planning priorities of their own choosing. In this sense, the fate of citizens who live in the developing world must be seen as internationalized, for both good and bad, thus challenging the ghettoization of international development planning as a concern for only the poorer countries seeking to 'catch up.' Because of this, the concentration recognizes that planners can draw profound lessons from a comparative perspective on urban, regional, and national phenomena, drawing across South-South as well as North-South experiences of different countries and across diverse urban environments, and understanding the parallels and the relations among cities around the globe.

Within the concentration, students can focus broadly on international planning or concentrate on several subthemes that speak to pressing problems related to different developmental conditions. The latter topics might include informality, poverty, environmental sustainability, service scarcities (especially in transportation, housing, water, and health services), social exclusion, and governance, including the potential for participatory planning.

FALL 2026 APPROVED COURSES:

COURSE #	COURSE TITLE	UNITS	TYPE	FACULTY
5464	Do No Harm: Dilemmas in Planning for Health	4	Lecture	Maaoui
5514	At Home and Abroad: Housing in Comparative Perspective	4	Seminar	Maaoui
5527	Shaping Chinese Megacity Regions: Design, Policies, and Planning	4	Lecture	Hou

SPRING 2027 APPROVED COURSES:

COURSE #	COURSE TITLE	UNITS	TYPE	FACULTY
4530	Transition as Condition: Reconstruction in Times of War + Environmental Crisis	4	Seminar	Blau
5409	Climate Justice	4	Lecture	Spinak
5502	Urban Governance and the Politics of Planning in the Global South ¹	4	Lecture	Silva
5515	Comparative Planning Regulations ¹	4	Lecture	Hou

1. May count toward an Area of Concentration OR the Legal and Institutional Methods Requirement, but not both.

