STANDARD 1: MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

The Program or the department in which it resides shall have a clearly defined mission supported by goals and measurable objectives appropriate to the profession of planning. The Program shall have a strategic plan for achieving its goals and objectives – either as a free-standing plan or as part of a broader departmental strategic plan – and must be able to demonstrate progress toward their attainment.

A. Strategic Plan: The strategic plan must address the Program’s vision; its definition of mission fulfillment; the elements identified as necessary to carry out the plan (including financial resources); the process by which the strategic plan is developed, refreshed, and disseminated; and a method for evaluating progress and making improvements. Programs must document participation in plan development by faculty, students, alumni, and practitioners. It is suggested that practitioners represent a broad spectrum of the profession who can be resources for the Program during plan development and implementation.

B. Mission Statement: The Program shall have a clear and concise mission statement that expresses the Program’s core values and fundamental purpose and role in training professional planners. The mission statement summarizes why the Program exists and the needs that it seeks to fulfill.

C. Program Goals: The goals shall identify the Program’s future aspirations in the context of its mission and that of the university. Goals must be meaningful in the sense that they aim toward excellence beyond that which may already exist, while taking into account the particular characteristics of a program, including its opportunities and constraints. Goals must be inclusively developed with participation of members of the program’s community.

D. Measurable Objectives: Each goal must have concrete objectives for goal attainment. The objectives should be measurable and framed in a way that can be easily evaluated by PAB and the Site-Visit Team.

A. Strategic Plan

The MS Planning Program Strategic Plan 2013 including Vision, Mission, Goals, and Strategies was developed under the framework of the UA CAPLA Strategic Plan 2013-17 with focus areas in Water, Energy, Habitat, Heritage, and emerging areas in Climate, Health, Transportation, and Investment. The University of Arizona 2013-18 “Never Settle” Strategic Plan http://provost.arizona.edu/files/UA_Strategic_Plan_12_15_2010.pdf includes goals to promote student diversity, educate future leaders who will address world grand challenges and engage students within the context of expanded community and industry partnerships in true interdisciplinary collaborations. A summary of The University of Arizona 2013-18 “Never Settle” Strategic Plan is presented in Supporting Documentation (Part IV. C. Standard 1).

The College of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture (CAPLA) Vision: CAPLA is developing a new model for educating the next-generation of design professionals and scholars by offering advanced professional education and research focused on the development of sustainable solutions and managing the reciprocal relationship between the
built environment and the major environmental challenges we face as a society. CAPLA alumni will be world leaders in sustainable design and planning, addressing major challenges facing humankind and the world at large—designing for energy and water conservation, planning for urban infrastructure, health care, and the preservation of cultural heritage and natural ecosystems. Supplemented by its new center in Downtown Tucson, CAPLA will serve as a 21st century, urban counterpart to the UA’s traditional agricultural experiment station, embracing Tucson and Arizona as a laboratory for urban sustainability. A copy of the 2012-17 CAPLA Vision is included in Supporting Documentation (Part IV. C. Standard 1).

The College of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture Mission: As a national leader in sustainable design, planning, and management for arid regions, CAPLA advances The University of Arizona as the state’s premier institution devoted to the environmental sustainability, entrepreneurialism, and health of built and natural systems. As a professional college, CAPLA’s Core Mission and strength is training architects, landscape architects, and urban planners to work effectively within a challenging array of social, economic, and environmental conditions in the Sonoran Desert and borderlands region of the American Southwest. While incubated within this geopolitical and ecologically extreme landscape this knowledge is easily transferrable to other regions throughout the world. As a campus leader in community engagement, CAPLA advances the University’s historic land-grant mission through design and planning assistance to diverse communities throughout the state of Arizona, the United States, and beyond. A copy of the CAPLA Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 is included in Supporting Documents (Part IV. C. Standard 1).

The MS Planning Strategic Plan was developed through various participatory methods involving stakeholders including faculty, students, alumni, and practitioners. The Director facilitated several faculty meetings toward the development of the Strategic Plan and sought council from the professional advisory group, the Friends of Planning. In March 2012 Dr. Barbara Becker, former Program Director, current Dean of the School of Urban and Public Affairs at the University of Texas, Arlington and PAB Board Member (Chair) was invited to the School to meet with the faculty, alumni, and practitioners and provide insights on the PAB criteria and the self-study report. Her visit created the forum for School engagement and visioning workshops with CAPLA administration, faculty, students, alumni, and practitioners. In the spring semester 2013, Assistant Professor Iris Patten engaged with the students in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis process aimed at developing a strategic plan from the students’ perspective; presented in Supporting Documents (Part IV. C. Standard: 1).

The MS Planning Strategic Plan was recently refreshed as the University has asked Deans and Directors to dive deeper into action plans in accordance with the specific goals outlined by The University of Arizona 2013-18 Never Settle Strategic Plan that was presented in August 2013. The faculty also developed the MS Planning Learning Outcomes Assessment Action Plan 2013 in accordance with PAB requirements as related to specific tactics and metrics for measurable outcomes as a means to determine Program Mission fulfillment. The MS Planning Program will continue to evaluate and refine the MS Planning Strategic Plan (2013) with input from various stakeholders and proceed with further development and implementation of the MS Planning Learning Outcomes Assessment Action Plan 2013. This will be disseminated through the CAPLA website.
The MS Planning Program Strategic Plan 2013

The MS Planning Program Overview: The MS Planning Program exemplifies the spirit of the land-grant mission imbedded in the missions set forth by the University of Arizona and the College of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture. This accredited professional degree program focuses on social, economic, and environmental areas of concern specific to the region and the State of Arizona with applications that extend globally.

B. Mission Statement

The MS Planning Program Vision: To be nationally recognized as a leading urban and regional physical planning program through exemplary teaching, research, and community engagement with meaningful contributions in sustainable urban and regional planning. To this end, the Program aligns itself with the College Mission centered on environmental sustainability for arid regions and beyond with focus areas in Water, Energy, Habitat, Heritage, Climate, Health, Transportation, and Investment. The Program recognizes its responsibility in educating and equipping the next generation of leaders in the planning profession with the most engaging and forward-thinking experience possible so they may pursue solutions to some of the world’s most pressing challenges.

MS Planning Program Mission: The Mission of the MS Planning Program is to provide diverse and interdisciplinary learning experiences in graduate education. The mission is aimed at preparing future leaders in urban and regional planning who can cultivate the development of sustainable cities and regions around the world. The Program utilizes Tucson and our unique environments in the Sonoran Desert as learning laboratories for applied research and relevant community engagement involving a variety of stakeholders including government and private partnerships, native nations, and the regions diverse population. This platform strives to create a culture of scholarship and professional practice aimed at advancing the profession of planning, and equipping its workforce, with the skills necessary for the 21st century. Through community and industry partnerships paired with faculty expertise, the Program is well equipped to provide expertise to each student’s planning degree in the concentration areas of Land Use and Urban Development, GeoDesign, Environmental and Regional Planning, and Heritage Conservation.

MS Planning Core Values:

- The culture of learning focuses on integration of teaching, research, and community engagement.
- Interdisciplinary partnerships in teaching, research, and community engagement are essential to success.
- Place-based learning focuses on sustainable practices for arid environments; these strategies are transferable to other regions.
- Technological integrations and skillsets are central to meeting the needs and challenges of the 21st century workforce.
- Preservation of environmental health and resiliency, economic vitality, human health and well-being, and cultural heritage and identity are critical components central to the public interest in the State of Arizona and globally.
C. Program Goals:

1. Future-Focused Curriculum

   **Goal:** *Provide and maintain a robust curriculum that teaches proven and forward-thinking planning and design principles that foster sustainable cities and regions within ethical, social, and environmental realms as articulated by the profession and the Program’s faculty and its advisors.*

1.1 **Objective:** Continuously evaluate and adaptively manage the Program curriculum to reflect new planning theories, technologies, methods, strategies, and best planning practices as these relate to fostering sustainable cities and regions. Emphasis may focus on those advancements specific to arid environments and those which focus on the interactions between built and natural systems.

   **1.1.1 Strategy:** Program faculty will monitor and assess the curriculum on an annual basis to ensure that courses meet the ever-changing needs of the profession and requirements established by its accrediting body, the PAB. The evaluation aims to identify and develop innovations that advance the planning profession and the proficiencies of MS Planning students in areas of practice, enabling technologies, analytical methods, and communication, as these relate to sustainable cities and regions throughout Arizona and beyond.

   **1.1.2 Strategy:** Modify and implement the *CAPLA Strategic Faculty Hiring Plan for 2014-15* as presented in Supporting Documentation (Part IV. C. Standard 1). This plan calls for hiring three tenure-track planning faculty that specialize in sustainable practices. Strategic areas include sustainable transportation planning, climate, health, and GeoDesign technologies that advance interdisciplinary decision making processes and best practices in urban and regional planning.

1.2 **Objective:** Continue curricular integration and the development of GeoDesign related content, methods, practice, and enabling technologies. The Program aims to produce interdisciplinary collaborators equipped with the skillsets to employ various technological platforms such as GIS, BIMs, additional spatial analysis models, and 3D visualization tools uniquely positioned to aid in solving real-world problems.

   **1.2.1 Strategy:** Continue to develop GeoDesign related course offerings to further support a robust concentration in GeoDesign; all contributing toward the establishment of an online Certificate in GeoDesign.

   **1.2.2 Strategy:** Continue to invest in computing and technological infrastructure critical to enhancing the Programs capabilities, including future expansion of the GeoDesign lab.

1.3 **Objective:** Optimize Physical resources and virtual reach to enhance delivery mechanisms and exposure to local and global audiences.

   **1.3.1 Strategy:** Expand IT capacity to meet instructional, research, outreach, and administrative requirements.

   **1.3.2 Strategy:** Develop programs for improving online teaching and course-building skills for local and global students.

   **1.3.3 Strategy:** Enhance technology and other modes of delivering educational content.
1.3.4 Strategy: Update classrooms for active learning with appropriate technology and furniture layout.

1.4 Objective: Improve Program prominence through improved performance, branding, and marketing.

1.4.1 Strategy: Increase nominations of faculty, administrators, and students for local, national, and international awards

2. Curricular Diversification:

Goal: Provide and maintain a professionally rooted curriculum that is effectively delivered; students graduate with confidence in their mastery of the Knowledge, Skills, and Values which are needed to enter the profession, or advance their education by entering PhD programs; in both scenarios the Program aims to produce future leaders and/or educators in sustainable urban and regional planning.

2.1 Objective: Produce graduates who can enter professional practice or PhD programs with core Knowledge, Skills, and Values such that they are prepared for professional employment, valued by their employers, or are able to succeed in PhD programs. The Program aims for graduates to advance toward leadership roles in sustainable urban and regional planning.

2.1.1 Strategy: Continue to explore opportunities for interdisciplinary curricular integration in the planning, landscape architecture, and architecture programs.

2.1.2 Strategy: Increase faculty affiliation with UA Graduate Interdisciplinary Programs (UA GIDP) such as the Arid Lands Resource Sciences doctoral program, the School of Natural Resources and the Environment, the Institute on the Environment, the School of Geography and Development, and other units on campus offering PhD programs and grant funding for MS Planning graduates.

2.1.3 Strategy: Actively advise and engage students interested in pursuing doctoral work by establishing degree expectations, application development, and skillset development through mentoring with Program faculty via independent study, terminal project/thesis development, and/or graduate research assistantships.

2.2 Objective: Through coursework, rigorous pursuit of research and scholarship in sustainable planning practices, and high levels of innovation in community engagement, faculty and students contribute collectively to the body of knowledge, theory, and application in the profession of urban and regional planning.

2.2.1 Strategy: To the extent possible, faculty will explore the possibilities for including project-based learning and practice-orientated partnerships in their courses. Inclusion of such mechanisms may ultimately contribute to enhancing planning applications for the partners and Program alike by leveraging pooled resources.

2.3 Objective: Faculty aspire to continuously evolve their teaching in the pursuit of excellence and innovation in teaching scenarios that strive to integrate research and scholarship within the context of real-world community outreach projects.

2.3.1 Strategy: Continue to develop P&T guidelines that incentivize projects that integrate teaching, research, and community engagement.

2.3.2 Strategy: Continue to deepen faculty mentoring and career development programs targeted on integration of teaching, research, and community engagement.
2.3.3 Strategy: Continue to develop faculty formal and informal affiliations with CAPLA’s Drachman Institute.

2.4 Objective: Provide and maintain a professionally rooted curriculum which focuses on enhancing student confidence in their mastery of the Knowledge, Skills, and Values which are needed to enter the profession.

2.4.1 Strategy: Utilize and expand the *MS Planning Alumni Satisfaction Survey* as presented in Supporting Documentation (*Part IV. C. Standard 6*) to assess student confidence with respect Knowledge, Skills, and Values, employer value, and career advancement as demonstrated by alumni becoming leaders in the profession of sustainable urban and regional planning. Continue to establish metrics and monitor outcomes toward meaningful program improvement. Utilize findings to inform curricular and instructional improvements.

2.4.2 Strategy: Implement hiring of College Assessment Coordinator who will work with the faculty to collect and analyze data as initiated in the *MS Planning Learning Outcomes (LOC) Assessment Action Plan 2013* as presented in Supporting Documentation (*Part IV. C. Standard 6*).

2.5 Objective: Prepare graduates who demonstrate commonly held professional and global ethics based upon the principles of sustainable planning for human health, quality of life and habitation, natural resource and wildlife conservation, striking an ecological balance, and the integration of natural and built systems within local, regional, and global frameworks.

2.5.1 Strategy: Utilize and expand the *MS Planning Alumni Satisfaction Survey* as presented in Supporting Documentation (*Part IV. C. Standard 6*) to access ethical competency and student confidence with respect knowledge, skills, and values, as it relates to professional and global ethics.

2.6 Objective: Emphasize graduate workforce development as to prepare the next generation of planning professionals.

2.6.1 Strategy: Develop a survey to discern skillsets desired by employers.

2.6.2 Strategy: Adapt the *MS Planning Alumni Satisfaction Survey* of recent graduates to inquire about additional professional skillsets that they would desire and benefit from in the profession.

3. Graduation Success:

Goal: *Achieve the highest possible graduation rate for students entering the Program.*

3.1 Objective: Graduate all students within 4 years of entering the Program.

3.1.1 Strategy: Strengthen faculty advising and career mentoring programs.

3.1.2 Strategy: Continue to support and develop the CAPLA Student Advising Center; continue to develop methods to monitor student progress and assess early on when students may be in need of financial or other assistance that would cause early withdrawal from the Program.

3.2 Objective: Optimize student success.

3.2.1 Strategy: Identify and enhance approaches that increase first year retention via consulting with students on challenges they face and threats to their successful degree completion.
4. Preparation for Professional Success:

**Goal:** Prepare students to work as professional planners; who are productive and innovative within a wide range of physical, legal, political, economic, social, and psychological contexts. Students should be able to engage with diverse citizen participants and collaborate with allied professions and disciplines from architecture, landscape architecture, real estate development, business management, public health, and the social and natural sciences.

**4.1 Objective:** The Program believes that students are exposed to innovation and heightened levels of professionalism when they are engaged through excellence in interdisciplinary teaching, collaborative research, of which the results are widely distributed, and innovative community interaction. The Program aims to cultivate such opportunities as the planning outcomes are valued by our external community and students gain valuable skills and added confidence in their professional competency.

**4.1.1 Strategy:** Continue to develop and strengthen partnerships with the City of Tucson, Imagine Greater Tucson, Pima County, Native Nations, the National Park Service, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and other entities, in service learning and research partnerships that engage stakeholders, students, and faculty.

**4.1.2 Strategy:** Continue to match students with appropriate professional planning internships that align with their academic and career goals. Additionally, the Program recognizes the importance of this placement for satisfying all requirements set forth by the PAB, The University of Arizona, and the MS Planning Program.

**4.1.3 Strategy:** Identify and develop new interdisciplinary research and outreach partnerships via conducting local needs assessments, reviewing organizational missions for potential alignment, leveraging professional relationships, and actively searching Requests For Proposals (RFPs).

**4.1.4 Strategy:** Expand study abroad and international engagement opportunities.

**4.1.5 Strategy:** Continue to advance the University of Arizona Downtown (UAD) Sustainable City Project that serves as a hands on learning venue for students in the integrated urban planning/design capstone studios.

**4.1.6 Strategy:** Strengthen initiatives made with practitioners from the *Friends of Planning* and *APA Az*; these include the student practitioner mentoring program, scholarship support for Graduate Research Assistantships, internship support, guest lectures, and project reviews.

**4.1.7 Strategy:** Continue to seek opportunities for joint degrees and interdisciplinary studies, as well as collaborative grant opportunities that focus on providing students and faculty with opportunities to engage with other disciplines from the academy and industry.

**4.1.8 Strategy:** Continue to work with other UA units to provide dual degree options, joint faculty appointments, certificate programs, and jointly held required and elective courses.

**4.1.9 Strategy:** Continue to utilize outstanding practicing professionals as adjuncts to provide students opportunities to interact with professionals and engage in activities that expand traditional classroom settings.

**4.1.10 Strategy:** Continue to utilize and develop Shadow Day where students are put in contact with local planners who serve as mentors; students spend the day following the daily activities of practice.
5. Meeting the Demand:

**Goal:** Manage enrollment to produce, in combination with other graduate planning programs, the number of graduates needed to fill the demand produced by growth and retirement in the profession both in the US and in the State of Arizona.

5.1 Objective: Matriculate 17-20 students per year per the Enrollment Management Study (Pivo 2013).
   
   5.1.1 Strategy: Continue to develop recruiting strategies for securing outstanding in state, out-of-state, and international students from diverse backgrounds.
   
   5.1.2 Strategy: Conduct annual curricular review, provide greater advising support and maintain a streamlined time to degree.
   
   5.1.3 Strategy: Increase the number of accelerated degree students; Accelerated Master’s Program (AMP) degrees.

5.2 Objective: Align curricular goals with workforce and knowledge needs of the profession.

   5.2.1 Strategy: Increase number of professional certificate programs and certificates conferred.
   
   5.2.2 Strategy: Enhance curricular alignment with professional certification exams such as the AICP.
   
   5.2.3 Strategy: Work with business and community leaders to prepare students to be ready for the workforce.

6. Workforce Diversification:

**Goal:** Strengthen the diversity of graduates and under-represented groups entering the planning profession.

6.1 Objective: Support greater access into the MS Planning Program and retain and graduate a diverse student body.

   6.1.1 Strategy: Strengthen efforts to recruit under-represented candidates through a multi-focused approach including presentations to under-represented student populations, career events, open house socials, marketing and website development, social networking, peer-peer venues, and increased financial aid.
   
   6.1.2 Strategy: Continue to reach out to minority organizations on campus and inform University of Arizona undergraduates about Accelerated Master’s Program (AMP) opportunities in planning. Develop new AMP (programs) that target underrepresented undergraduates on campus such as American Indian Studies.
   
   6.1.3 Strategy: Implement hiring of CAPLA Communications professional staff for marketing efforts and website management—increasing availability of information to underrepresented recruits.

6.2 Objective: Optimize diverse student access through the provision of support resources.

   6.2.1 Strategy: Identify and leverage financial aid and scholarships from sources such as the McNair Scholars Program.
   
   6.2.2 Strategy: Enhance partnerships with community college and undergraduate programs for promoting Accelerated Master’s Program (AMP) offerings.
   
   6.2.3 Strategy: Expand online courses and programs.
7. Faculty Diversity:

**Goal:** Assemble and maintain faculty that can expose students to multiple views and visions such as ethnic, racial, and gender perspectives related to urban and regional planning strategies that consider socio-cultural factors and preservation of heritage.

**7.1 Objective:** Establish a diverse faculty body which reflects a heterogeneous compilation of experts from various ethnic, racial, socio-cultural, and gender affiliations commensurate to the diverse populations the Program serves.

**7.1.1 Strategy:** Implement and further adapt University, CAPLA, and Program specific diversity hiring plans.

**7.2 Objective:** Increase the number of opportunities for students to engage with underrepresented demographic community groups and learn from the perspectives of faculty and practitioners from diverse cultural backgrounds.

**7.2.1 Strategy:** Continue to engage with Native American and Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods and communities toward development of community plans targeted at preservation of cultural identity and heritage.

**7.2.2 Strategy:** Employ visiting professional planners and guest speakers who are representative of diverse populations.

8. Faculty Excellence:

**Goal:** Assemble and maintain a core faculty with a balance of faculty ranks, with the time and background to effectively manage the Program, teach the core courses, and maintain a program of research, service, leadership and community engagement. Engage practicing professionals and other university faculty in order to enrich the core faculty capabilities and expose students to a variety of views and insights on planning subjects.

**8.1 Objective:** Increase the full-time Planning faculty headcount to a minimum of 5 professors with PhDs in City and Regional Planning or its equivalent.


**8.1.2 Strategy:** Explore the feasibility of developing a faculty retention program which links the Annual Performance Review (APR) process with performance-based incentives targeted for the advancement of this strategic plan in coordination with the CAPLA and UA strategic plans.

**8.2 Objective:** Promote core strengths, areas for research, and concentration areas.

**8.2.1 Strategy:** Identify existing scholarly and research strengths while focusing on further emphasizing depth in these areas.

**8.2.2 Strategy:** Maintain and increase sponsored research faculty and funding.

**8.3 Objective:** Expand interdisciplinary scholarship collaboration.

**8.3.1 Strategy:** Identify interdisciplinary partners for scholarship and research.

**8.3.2 Strategy:** Increase large multi-investigator, multi-site proposals and awards.

**8.4 Objective:** Increase diversity of external sources of research support.

**8.4.1 Strategy:** Increase external sources.
8.4.2 Strategy: Increase public private research partnerships with industry and private organizations.

8.5 Objective: Improve support for development of major research initiatives.
8.5.1 Strategy: Increase access to research instrumentation infrastructure and support materials such as staff, RFP searches, and partnering with foundations and/or centers.

8.6 Objective: Adapt the land-grant mission for contemporary and global strategies for addressing grand challenges and issues central to Arizona.
8.6.1 Strategy: Position the Program to serve as a preferred consultant for local, state, national and international project work.

8.7 Objective: Develop, expand, and sustain community and industry partnerships locally and globally.
8.7.1 Strategy: Improve internal processes to facilitate community and industry partners.
8.7.2 Strategy: Expand roles of community and business partners in academic and research programs.
8.7.3 Strategy: Expand roles of faculty to participate on local and global advisory boards and panels.

The Outcomes Assessment Action Plan 2013 (Table 2. 1.) was developed in accordance with the MS Planning Strategic Plan 2013. The Faculty has identified Metrics/Measurement that will be used to develop benchmarks and time frames for reaching goals. The MS Planning Strategic Plan 2013 was recently refreshed as the University has asked Deans and Directors to dive deeper into action plans in accordance with the specific goals outlined by The University of Arizona 2013-18 “Never Settle” Strategic Plan that was presented in August 2013. The faculty developed this Outcomes Assessment Action Plan 2013 in accordance with PAB requirements as related to specific tactics and metrics for measurable outcomes as a means to determine Program Mission fulfillment. Through the leadership of President Ann Weaver Hart, Provost Andrew Comrie, Vice Provost Gail Burd, and Dean Janice Cervelli, the University, College, and Program strategic plans are viewed as working documents that do not sit on the shelf but require revision and refinement. The MS Planning Program will continue to evaluate the MS Planning Strategic Plan 2013 and further develop and revise our Outcomes Assessment Action Plan 2013.