

# URBAN STUDIES

## What can I do with this major?

### AREAS

#### GOVERNMENT

Demography  
Social Statistics  
Public Administration  
Policy Analysis  
Research  
Community Development  
Program Development  
Human Services  
City Planning  
City and Town Management  
Law Enforcement  
Lobbying  
Political Campaigns  
Journalism

### EMPLOYERS

Federal departments and agencies such as:  
Departments of Agriculture, Education,  
Interior, Commerce, & Defense  
Health and Human Services  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Housing and Urban Development  
Veterans Affairs  
National Institutes of Health  
National Institute of Aging  
State and local government  
Planning and development commissions  
National, state, local parks, or recreation  
departments  
National, state, or local news sources  
Housing authorities  
Transportation departments  
Social service agencies  
Peace Corps and Americorps

### STRATEGIES

Supplement curriculum with coursework in statistics and social research. Consider obtaining a minor in political science, public administration, or other relevant field.  
Develop exceptional computer, communication, and research skills.  
Complete an internship with the federal government.  
Seek leadership roles in relevant campus or community organizations (e.g. IBM SMARTER Cities).  
Develop a specialty such as aging, family, criminal justice, or healthcare.  
Become familiar with the government application process. Utilize applicable websites and seek assistance from your college career center.  
There are a large number of specialized agencies within the federal government. Do extensive research to find the area that best fits your interests.  
Earn a graduate degree to qualify for more job opportunities.

#### REGIONAL AND URBAN PLANNING

Transportation  
Demography  
Housing  
Community Development  
Historic Preservation  
Urban Design  
Architecture  
Urban Renewal  
Environmental/Regulatory Issues  
Economic Development  
Land Use  
Research Design  
Program Development

Federal, state, and local government  
Architecture firms  
Engineering firms  
Local planning agencies  
Real estate and development contractors  
Investment companies  
Transportation agencies  
Zoning administration  
Utility companies  
Non-profit organizations  
Historical restoration or preservation agencies  
Neighborhood revitalization initiatives  
International development organizations

Enhance curriculum with courses in business, social sciences, and statistics.  
Earn a graduate degree in urban or regional planning from an accredited planning program.  
Gain experience through internships with employers of interest.  
Develop strong computer skills.  
Learn another language to communicate with diverse community members or to work abroad.  
Plan to work corroboratively with a wide array of professionals and local citizens.  
Understand that most planners work for local governments.

**AREAS**

**EMPLOYERS**

**STRATEGIES**

**NONPROFIT**

Administration/Management  
Fundraising/Development  
Public Relations  
Policy Analysis  
Research  
Grant Writing  
Community Development  
Advocacy  
Programming  
Direct Service:  
    Counseling  
    Case Management

Community service agencies  
Advocacy groups  
Federal, state, and local government  
United Way agencies  
Religiously-affiliated service organizations  
Private foundations  
Adoption and child care agencies  
Nursing homes and retirement communities  
Hospitals and wellness centers  
Halfway houses  
Vocational services  
Educational information services

Gain experience and develop helping skills through volunteer positions.  
Spend summers working at camps, The YMCA, or other social service agencies.  
Work with diverse populations to get exposure to multi-cultural issues. Learn a second language in order to interact with non-English speakers and increase marketability.  
Develop excellent communication skills.  
Concentrate course work in an area of interest such as youth, gerontology, or poverty.  
Serve as a peer mentor, resident assistant, or other student leadership position.  
Investigate term of service or service corps positions as a way to gain entry into the field.  
Earn a master's degree in social work, counseling, or other related field to increase employment opportunities.  
Most states require licensure or certification for positions involving the direct provision of therapeutic services to clients.  
Research organizations' values to find a good fit with yours. Become knowledgeable about and committed to the work you plan to do.

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**BUSINESS**

Real Estate:  
    Construction  
    Management  
    Development  
    Sales  
    Leasing  
    Consulting  
Management  
Sales  
Finance  
Human Resources  
Underwriting and Claims Management  
Market Research

Real estate firms  
Rental properties  
Construction and development companies  
Insurance firms  
Retail stores  
Banks  
Staffing agencies  
Manufacturing companies  
Credit management companies and organizations  
Service industries  
Healthcare organizations  
Consulting firms  
Other business corporations

Earn a minor in business or supplement curriculum with courses in accounting, finance, and management.  
Gain business experience through part-time jobs, summer work, and internships.  
Develop excellent computer skills. Learn to use software applications such as spread sheets, databases, and word processing.  
Hone written and oral communication skills.  
Join related professional associations.  
Seek leadership roles in student organizations.

## AREAS

## EMPLOYERS

## STRATEGIES

### LAW

*See also What Can I Do With This Major in Law?*

Prosecution  
Defense  
Contractual  
Corporate  
Nonprofit or Public Interest  
Government  
Mediation  
Law Assistance  
Other Specialties

Federal, state, and local government  
Private practice  
Corporations  
Special interest groups  
Universities and colleges  
Legal aid societies  
Nonprofit and public interest organizations, e.g.  
    ACLU, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Legal  
    Services Corporation  
Legal clinics  
Other private legal services

Develop strong research skills and attention to detail.  
Participate in debate or forensic teams to hone communication skills.  
Choose courses or a minor to specialize in a particular area of law, e.g. a minor in business for a career in corporate law.  
Find part-time or summer work in a law firm.  
Shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties.  
Get involved in pre-law student organizations.  
Plan to attend law school and earn a law degree (J.D.).  
Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations. Prepare for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test).  
Obtain specialized certification for paralegal positions.

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### EDUCATION

Teaching  
Research  
Administration  
Student Affairs, e.g. Student Activities, Leadership Development, Admissions, Orientation, Career Services, Residence Life, Multi-cultural Affairs, Study Abroad, International Student Services  
Academic Affairs, e.g. Academic Support Services, Advising, Educational Advancement Programs, Honors Programs  
Library Sciences

Colleges and universities  
Vocational-technical educational programs  
Adult education providers

Earn a graduate degree for post-secondary teaching & research.  
Assist a professor with research and take extra courses in research and statistics.  
Develop exceptional written and oral communication and interpersonal skills.  
Secure strong personal recommendations, particularly from professors, and maintain a high GPA.  
Earn a master's degree in a specialized area e.g., College Student Personnel, Higher Education Administration, or Library and Information Sciences to work in other roles at post-secondary institutions.  
Seek campus leadership positions such as peer mentor, orientation leader, or resident assistant.

## AREAS

## EMPLOYERS

## STRATEGIES

### SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Data Analysis  
Demography  
Market Research  
Clinical Research  
Information Sourcing  
Publishing

Universities  
Government agencies  
Research institutes  
Non-profit organizations  
Private industries  
Advertising and marketing firms  
Consulting organizations  
Information brokers  
Newspapers, magazines, news agencies  
Public opinion research polls

Develop exceptional quantitative, statistical, and writing skills through coursework and research projects.  
Learn to use statistics software packages as well as database and spreadsheet programs.  
Earn a minor in statistics to assist in research analysis.  
Volunteer to help a professor with research or complete an independent study.  
Gain experience working on teams.  
Network with professionals working in areas of interest.  
Consider earning a graduate degree in one of the social sciences, statistics, or related field to qualify for more positions.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- Urban Studies majors develop an understanding of modern cities, as well as the social, historical, political, economic, and cultural forces shaping urban areas.
- Urban Studies is an interdisciplinary program that draws upon fields such as sociology, economics, and political science.
- Consider earning a second major or minor in another field of interest.
- Many transferable skills such as analytical, organizational, research, interpersonal, computer, leadership, teamwork, and oral/written communication are associated with the urban studies degree.
- Internships, part-time jobs, summer jobs, and/or volunteer experiences are critical for gaining experience and developing a career path.
- An undergraduate degree is sufficient for entry-level positions in business, non-profit, and government sectors, however a graduate degree is likely to be more desirable in a competitive market.
- An undergraduate degree in urban studies is good preparation for graduate or professional education in law, planning, architecture, business, public policy, social sciences, and other related fields. Research pre-requisites for graduate or professional programs of interest.
- To enhance graduate or professional school opportunities, maintain a high grade point average, secure strong faculty recommendations, join student or professional organizations, and gain relevant experience outside of the classroom through work, internship, volunteer, and research opportunities.
- A Ph.D. is required for teaching at four-year universities.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals working in areas of interest.