

URBAN STUDIES

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

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

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

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.

BUSINESS

Real estate:
 Construction
 Management
 Development
 Sales
 Leasing
 Consulting
Management
Sales
Finance
Human resources
Underwriting and claimsmanagement
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.

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, etc.).
Academic affairs (e.g., Academic support services, Advising, Educational advancement programs, Honors programs, etc.).
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.