

**Iowa State University**

**Graduate Student Handbook**

**Master of Community  
Development**

**Last revised: August 2024**

**Department of Community and Regional Planning**

**College of Design**

**Iowa State University**

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## Message from the Program Coordinator

Dear Incoming Graduate Students,

Welcome to the Master of Community Development program (MCOMDV) at Iowa State University. The faculty and staff in the Community Development program in the department of Community and Regional Planning are dedicated to helping you have a productive and enjoyable experience in graduate school. As part of that effort, we have prepared this handbook to help you get settled into the Community Development program. The handbook covers topics ranging from orientation through faculty collaboration to graduation. We also encourage you to meet faculty members to discuss your interests and your course of study.

The information contained in this handbook is intended to expand on but not replace other university documents such as the Graduate College Handbook (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/common/handbook/>). If you still have questions or concerns after perusing these documents, please do not hesitate to contact Susan Bradbury ([bradbury@iastate.edu](mailto:bradbury@iastate.edu)) CRP department chair and Program coordinator, or the appropriate university office.

Although the MCD program will demand a lot of time and work, we sincerely hope you enjoy and benefit from the program.

Sincerely,

Susan Bradbury  
Professor & Program coordinator

## Getting Started

### Registration

All students who attend classes at ISU must register and pay assessed tuition and fees. A major professor will be assigned to you at the beginning of the program who will assist you in registering for classes. Registration for classes takes place via Workday, ISU's online resource for accessing important and confidential university information and web applications. Further information on Workday is available via the Graduate College at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/resources/workday>. Visit <http://classes.iastate.edu> for the schedule of classes (which will give information on current course offerings, meeting times, instructors, and course web sites). Visit <http://catalog.iastate.edu/> to access the course catalog, which will give course descriptions, of all the courses available at ISU.

#### 1. *Confirm your registration:*

You should have received a registration confirmation letter via email containing your University ID number and password to login to your Workday account. If you are a continuing student, you can verify your registration using Workday. Here is a link to a webpage that provides a Workday registration overview [https://iastate.service-now.com/esc?id=kb\\_article&sysparm\\_article=KB0022857](https://iastate.service-now.com/esc?id=kb_article&sysparm_article=KB0022857)

#### 2. *Request an ISU ID card:*

If you wish to have a physical ISU ID card mailed to you, please contact [distance@iastate.edu](mailto:distance@iastate.edu) to request it.

#### 3. *Set up your accounts:*

Once you have received the email with your University ID number and temporary password, you will need to [set up the student accounts](#) listed below to access important account and course information.

- [ISU NetID Setup](#)-Unique identifier which you will use to access many accounts at ISU.
- [Okta](#)-One-stop dashboard to access most ISU applications.
- [Student Email](#)-Primary method of communication at ISU via Outlook.

You may go to [ISU IT](#) and follow the steps in the [Get Started section](#).

#### 4. *Login to Workday:*

Workday is your secure, personalized online resource for accessing important and confidential university information such as your class schedule, U-Bill, grade reports, and transcripts. Iowa State no longer mails paper bills or grade reports, so students are required to log into Workday to view this information. You can login to Workday from the ISU homepage <https://www.iastate.edu> under Sign ons (located at the top right of the page). Students should become familiar with this system as soon as possible.

#### 5. *Purchase your textbooks:*

Textbooks for the courses can be viewed and ordered online through Workday under the Student tab – Class Schedule page. Students are also free to contact the [University Bookstore](#) directly or order textbooks online through any source.

### 6. *Visit ISU library's distance learning guide:*

Get acquainted with the [ISU Library](#)'s online services.

### 7. *Test your computer:*

Before your class begins, it is wise to review our [Computer Requirements](#) to ensure your device will meet the technical demands of your online class.

### 8. *Login to Canvas:*

Most online courses at Iowa State University are delivered via *Canvas*, and you can login with your NetID and password. If you are having troubles accessing Canvas, here is a link to a Canvas user guide <https://www.celt.iastate.edu/learning-technologies/canvas-isu/>

## **Graduate Handbook**

The Graduate College publishes a Handbook for all Iowa State University graduate students. The Handbook is a comprehensive resource for policies and procedures that pertain to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. It contains important information and answers to many of your questions and is updated annually. It is perhaps the single most useful source of information about graduate study. Members of the graduate faculty craft policies through their elective representatives on the Graduate Council. Faculty and staff in the Graduate College implement the policies as efficiently and fairly as possible. Students and faculty are invited to collaborate with their representatives on the Graduate Council to enact policy changes that may improve graduate education at Iowa State University. The Handbook is hosted on the Graduate College website and is fully downloadable (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook>).

In addition to the Graduate College Handbook, it is important to be aware of important dates and deadlines related to your degree. Information on Graduate College deadlines and events can be found here: <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student#deadlinesandevents>

## **Important University Publications**

These materials contain information useful to you as you progress toward your degree. All are available online. You are encouraged to bookmark the Graduate College Website (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu>). It is your primary source of information regarding requirements, procedures, deadlines, and forms.

<b>Publication</b>	<b>What is it?</b>	<b>Web access</b>
University Directory	Contact information for students, faculty & staff	<a href="http://info.iastate.edu/">http://info.iastate.edu/</a>
University Catalog	Undergraduate & graduate courses and programs	<a href="http://catalog.iastate.edu/">http://catalog.iastate.edu/</a>
Schedule of Classes	Current course offerings	<a href="https://classes.iastate.edu">https://classes.iastate.edu</a>
Graduate College Handbook	Complete guide to the Graduate College	<a href="https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook">https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook</a>

***Credit Waiver***

Students who have a bachelor's degree in city planning or students who have previously taken highly relevant coursework may waive up to 9 credits. If you are interested in exploring this possibility, please consult with the program coordinator as early as possible as you embark on your graduate studies. The program coordinator can provide a copy of the credit waiver form and explain the terms. The program coordinator can also assist you in determining which courses might be eligible for the waiver. The waiver will then be reviewed by the department's Graduate Admissions Committee for approval. To finalize the decision, you will receive a copy of the signed waiver form and a copy will also be placed in your file.

**Program Administration**

The chair of Department of Community and Regional Planning is Dr. Susan Bradbury ([bradbury@iastate.edu](mailto:bradbury@iastate.edu)). For administrative support and questions about forms, deadlines, etc. please contact:

Ms. Melissa Stenstrom  
College of Design Admissions Coordinator  
Email: [mstern@iastate.edu](mailto:mstern@iastate.edu)

Ms. Anne Grevstad-Nordbrock  
Graduate Student Support Staff  
Phone: 515-294-8634  
Email: [annegn@iastate.edu](mailto:annegn@iastate.edu)

Dr. Susan Bradbury  
MCD Program Coordinator  
Phone: 515-294-8720  
Email: [bradbury@iastate.edu](mailto:bradbury@iastate.edu)

## Program Faculty

Name	Office	Phone	E-mail	Research Interests
Carlton Basmajian, Associate Professor	378 Design	294-6942	<a href="mailto:carlton@iastate.edu">carlton@iastate.edu</a>	U.S. planning history, regional planning, politics of planning, transportation, cemeteries
Susan Bradbury, Professor, <b>Chair &amp; DOGE</b>	154 Design	294-8720	<a href="mailto:bradbury@iastate.edu">bradbury@iastate.edu</a>	Community economic development, small town and rural planning, and Canada-U.S. Borderlands
Biswa Das, Associate Professor	380 Design	294-7003	<a href="mailto:bdas@iastate.edu">bdas@iastate.edu</a>	Community economic development, regional economics, public finance, natural resource and environmental economics
Ted Grevstad-Nordbrock, Associate Professor	378 Design	294-2528	<a href="mailto:tedgn@iastate.edu">tedgn@iastate.edu</a>	Historic preservation, preservation planning, heritage tourism, critical heritage studies, urban revitalization, gentrification and displacement, neoliberal urban governance, GIS and spatial technologies for preservation
Mônica Haddad, Professor	385 Design	294-8979	<a href="mailto:haddad@iastate.edu">haddad@iastate.edu</a>	Social justice, spatial analysis for urban and regional issues, urban infrastructure, environmental planning, quantitative research methods
Jiwnath Ghimire, Assistant Professor	383 Design	294-5470	<a href="mailto:jghimire@iastate.edu">jghimire@iastate.edu</a>	Disaster risk reduction, climate action planning, climate science utilization, land use planning, urban resilience, environmental justice, planning in Asia, spatial methods for planning, and transportation planning.
Mike Macri III, Associate Professor of Practice		779-4727	<a href="mailto:mmacri3@iastate.edu">mmacri3@iastate.edu</a>	Commercial real estate development, design, finance and planning within the U.S. with a focus on the Midwest, including office, retail, industrial, multi-family mixed use, sports/entertainment, medical and other uses.
Neha Mehrotra, Associate Teaching Professor	380 Design	294-9154	<a href="mailto:neham@iastate.edu">neham@iastate.edu</a>	GIS, urban design and visualization; historic preservation and land use planning
Francis Owusu, Professor	Design	294-7769	<a href="mailto:fowusu@iastate.edu">fowusu@iastate.edu</a>	Planning in developing countries, neoliberalism, globalization and development policy, urban and economic development, sustainable development, public sector reforms and capacity building
Robert Pfaff, Assistant Professor	377 Design		<a href="mailto:robpfaff@iastate.edu">robpfaff@iastate.edu</a>	Community engagement and development, transportation planning and policy, race and social justice, qualitative research methods
Alenka Poplin, Associate Professor	381 Design	294-8097	<a href="mailto:apoplin@iastate.edu">apoplin@iastate.edu</a>	GIS, smart cities, geogames for urban planning, geodesign
Jane Rongerude, Associate Professor	379 Design	294-5289	<a href="mailto:jrong@iastate.edu">jrong@iastate.edu</a>	US Housing policy, community development and revitalization, spatial implications of planning and state interventions in systems of poverty management, qualitative research methods
Gary Taylor, Professor	287 Design	294-0214	<a href="mailto:gtaylor@iastate.edu">gtaylor@iastate.edu</a>	Land use law, state and local regulation of the development process, state/local fiscal relationships, intergovernmental cooperation and contracting, mediation of land-use disputes



## **Department of Community & Regional Planning Mission Statement**

The Department of Community and Regional Planning delivers high-quality education that combines innovative teaching, scholarly research, community engagement, data-driven decision-making, and cutting-edge technology applications. We aim to education diverse students to become professional planners who contribute to impactful change by engaging with stakeholders to make decisions about the future and by conducting transformational place-based research and scientific inquiry in Iowa, the Midwest, the United States and globally.

### ***MCOMDV Program-level Learning Outcomes***

We educate students to become *community developers* and *civic leaders who have the ability to bring about positive community change*. Graduates of the Community Development program at Iowa State University will be skilled in understanding and articulating community problems and issues. Graduates of the program will:

1. acquire practical and theoretical knowledge of community development program design, implementation, and evaluation.
2. demonstrate the ability to implement community development strategies within both urban and rural settings.
3. demonstrate the ability to identify and utilize theoretical and analytical constructs of community.
4. demonstrate a working knowledge of community analytics including demographic analysis, community power structures, community organization, community economic analysis, and regional context.
5. develop competencies for leadership, negotiation, and successful communication.
6. demonstrate the ability to design and implement a community engagement plan involving an inclusive community process.
7. develop professional networks with others in the profession through program facilitated interactions, practicums, and membership in professional organizations.

## **Progress Toward Your Degree**

### ***Program Advisor***

At the beginning of your first semester in the MCOMDV program, you will be assigned a faculty advisor by the program coordinator in consultation with the graduate admissions committee. That person will provide you advice and guidance regarding coursework and classes during your first year in the program. Your advisor will also be a source of information for your transition to graduate study. However, in addition to your advisor, the program coordinator will also serve in an advisory role.

### ***The Major Professor***

At the beginning of the program a major professor shall be assigned to you. The Major Professor is responsible for advising you on requirements needed to complete your graduate degree(s), as well as helping you develop and complete your practicum.

### ***Developing Your Program of Study***

Completing an approved program of study (POS) is necessary to receive a graduate degree from Iowa State. It is, quite simply, a list of all the courses that you take to complete your degree. It is important for two reasons. At the beginning of the program, you should contact and arrange a meeting time with your Major Professor to begin developing your POS.

### ***Curriculum Requirements***

The MCD requires completion of 30 total credits. Of these 30, 15 credits consist of core classes including the capstone practicum credits, while the remaining 15 credits consist of electives. Students should register for 6 credits per semester to complete the degree within a two-calendar year time including the summer period, for their registration to be considered full-time. Below is a table showing the basic timeline and order of classes that students can use as a guide for timely degree completion. It includes the 15 core credits for the MCOMDV degree, the year and semester they are held, plus their credits.

<b>Year and semester of study</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Course name</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Fall: Year 1	COMDV 5020	Theories and Constructs of Community Change	3
	Elective		3
Spring: Year 1	COMDV 5030	Community Development Methods	3
	Elective		3
Summer: Year 1	Elective		3
Fall: Year 2	COMDV 5050	Analysis of the Community Economy	3
	Elective		3
Spring: Year 2	COMDV 5040	Creating Community Change	3
	Elective		3
Summer: Year 2	COMDV 5300	Community Development Practicum	3

No foreign language is required for the MCOMDV degree.

The above sequence allows for a program requirement to be completed within a 24-month period. It is envisioned that most MCOMDV students will be nontraditional and many working full time while they progress in their degree program. Hence, only six credits are needed each semester, or two courses where one is a core course and the other is an elective course from the table below. The flexible core and the on-site are also designed to enhance degree completion.

### Elective Courses (Select Five)

Course	Title	Type	Credits	Semester
COMDV 5230	Grant Writing for Community Development Professionals	online	3	S
COMDV 5210	Housing and Development	online	3	S
COMDV 5120/CRP 5840	Sustainable Communities	online	3	S
COMDV 5900	Special Topics	online	3	F,S, SS
CRP 5210	Historic Preservation Planning: Theory and Practice	online	3	Alt. F
CRP 5260	Real Estate Development	online	3	F
CRP 5270	Sustainable Community Development	online	3	S
CRP 5450	Transportation Policy and Planning	online	3	S
CRP 5510	Introduction to GIS	online	3	SS
CRP 5600	Social Justice and Planning	online	3	Alt. F
AGEDS 5240	Program Development and Evaluation in Agriculture and Extension Education	online	3	F
FIN 5720	Real Estate Finance	online	3	F
FFP 5410	Housing and Real Estate in Family Financial Planning	online	3	F
IND D 5300	Design Thinking	online	3	F
JLMC 4730	Social Media Strategy	online	3	S
JLMC 4770	Diversity in the Media	online	3	F
STAT 5870	Statistical Methods for Research Workers	online	3	SS
YTH 5500	Youth Policy	online	3	F
YTH 5800	Youth Development Personnel and Program Management	online	3	F
YTH 5850	Design and Evaluation of Youth Programs	online	3	F

#### *Scheduling COMDV Electives*

The COMDV electives are taught on a two-year cycle and the student is required to select 5 electives. The current CRP 584 Sustainable Communities course is cross listing the current COMDV 512 course with the identical name. COMDV 590 may be taught any semester given the interests of students in the program.

### ***Academic Standing***

If a graduate student at Iowa State does not maintain a cumulative 3.0 (B) grade point average on all coursework taken, he/she may be placed on academic probation by the Dean of the Graduate College. While on academic probation a student will not be admitted for candidacy for a degree and if appointed to a graduate assistantship, he/she will not receive a tuition scholarship. In addition, failure to maintain good academic standing is also grounds for repeal of a graduate assistantship, so maintaining a “B” grade point average (or better) is extremely important.

A “C” is the minimum grade acceptable for courses that appear on the POS and counts toward fulfilling the requirements of the MCOMDV. In other words, if you receive a grade below a C in any class, the course will have to be repeated until a grade of C or higher is achieved, or the course must be removed from the POS.

### ***Absences***

Graduate students attending official Iowa State field trips or conferences/workshops related to professional development may request an excused absence from their classes for the duration of the event if the course classes are held synchronously. Students must provide written evidence of their participation in the event. Requests for an excused absence should be made in writing to the department Chair. If the request is approved, students will receive an official excuse letter that should be presented to all course instructors prior to the absence. Students must make arrangements with their instructors to make up missed readings, assignments, quizzes, or exams.

### ***Academic Misconduct***

Academic Misconduct in any form is a violation of Iowa State University Student Disciplinary Regulations and will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to: copying or sharing answers on tests or assignments, plagiarism, or having someone else do your academic work. Depending on the act, a student could receive an F grade on the test/assignment, an F grade for the course, and could be suspended or expelled from the University. See the Student Conduct Code available at <https://www.policy.iastate.edu/policy/SDR#4.2> for more details and a full explanation of Academic Misconduct policies. Details are also provided in Chapter 8 of the Graduate Student Handbook (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=9>)

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of your study. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures, as well as consequences with regard to their continuation in the MCOMDV program.

Forms of academic misconduct include but are not limited to:

**Obtaining unauthorized information:** Information is obtained dishonestly, for example, by copying graded homework assignments from another student, by working with another student on a take-home test or homework when not specifically permitted to do so by the instructor, or by looking at your notes or other written work during an examination when not specifically permitted to do so.

**Tendering of information:** Students may not give or sell their work to another person who plans to submit it as their own. This includes giving their work to another student to be copied, giving

someone answers to exam questions during the exam, taking an exam and discussing its contents with students who will be taking the same exam, or giving or selling a term paper to another student.

**Misrepresentation:** Students misrepresent their work by handing in the work of someone else. The following are examples: purchasing a paper from a term paper service; reproducing another person's paper (even with modifications) and submitting it as their own; having another student do their computer program or having someone else take their exam.

**Plagiarism:** Unacknowledged use of the information, ideas, or phrasing of other writers is an offense comparable with theft and fraud, and it is so recognized by the copyright and patent laws. Literary offenses of this kind are known as plagiarism. This includes material published on the Internet.

**Bribery:** Offering money or any item or service to a faculty member or any other person to gain academic advantage for oneself or for another is dishonest.

### ***Academic Dismissal***

Graduate students enrolled in the MCOMDV Program may be dismissed for any one of the following reasons related to academic standards.

1. Failure to maintain a B (3.0) grade point average or better for two consecutive semesters.
2. Failure to submit an approved POS and POSC within three semesters of matriculation.
3. Failure to pass the capstone practicum after three attempts.

The program coordinator will notify in writing any student who violates this policy. Their deficiencies will be identified and a meeting between the student, the program coordinator, and the department chair will be scheduled to discuss the details of the case. The student will be notified in writing of the outcome. Dismissals for failure to maintain academic standards may be appealed to the Chair of the Department, who will notify the student in writing of the outcome. Details about the process are available in Chapter 8 of the Graduate College Handbook (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=9>)

### ***Grievances***

If a graduate student believes a faculty member, in their academic capacity, has behaved unfairly or unprofessionally, or if a student feels that their scholarly or professional competence has not been evaluated fairly, a grievance may be filed. Two paths for filing a grievance are available to graduate students. One path is for grievances related to grades and instruction in a course. The other path is for grievances related to scholarly and professional competence. Both procedures start at the department or program level and lead through a series of steps to higher appeal channels. If a student's complaint relates to a general policy, they may also bring the matter to the attention of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate either by contacting the department senator or the president of the Graduate Student Senate. Students also have the right to complain directly to the

Dean of the Graduate College. Detailed grievance procedures are outlined in Chapter 8 of the Graduate Student Handbook (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=9>). Information about grievances can also be found in the ISU Course catalog (<http://catalog.iastate.edu/academics/#academicgrievancesappealstext>)

## **Graduation**

### ***Applying for Graduation***

Very early in the semester you plan to graduate, you will need to complete an “Application for Graduation” on Workday. The purpose of this form is to put your name on the list of graduate students planning to graduate in that semester. In addition, be sure to consult the Graduate College web site for the appropriate deadlines for the semester in which you plan to graduate.

### ***Tying Up Loose Ends***

You cannot graduate with “Incomplete” marks for any credits appearing on your POS. It is your responsibility to meet the specified requirements for such courses and ensure that the instructors of such courses submit a “Grade Report to the Registrar” form.

The program coordinator must review, approve, and sign off on your capstone practicum before you will be allowed to graduate.

### ***After Graduation***

You should also inform the department chair of your new address and join the ISU MCOMDV LinkedIn group. Our alumni records allow us to communicate quarterly departmental news to you.

## **Getting Involved**

### **Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS)**

GPSS represents the graduate and professional student’s perspective on campus issues and serves as a liaison between graduate/professional students and the university administration. Each department is permitted to have at least one GPSS representative. The GPSS is also responsible for Professional Advancement Grants (PAG). PAGs support travel to conferences or professional meetings and for research outside of a person’s degree program. Additional information is available at <https://www.gpss.iastate.edu>.

## **University Resources**

### ***Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching***

Campus Address: 3024 Morrill Hall

Phone: 515-294-5357

Fax: 515-294-1860

Email: [celt@iastate.edu](mailto:celt@iastate.edu)

Web: [www.celt.iastate.edu](http://www.celt.iastate.edu)

***Graduate College***

Campus Address: 1137 Pearson Hall

Phone: 515-294-4531

Fax: 515-294-3003

Web: [www.grad-college.iastate.edu](http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu)

Within the Graduate College is the Center for Communication Excellence. This Center offers a wide array of helpful services specifically for graduate students. These include but are not limited to research writing workshops, as well as grant writing workshops. More information is available at <https://cce.grad-college.iastate.edu> (look under events). The Center for Communication Excellence also offers a wide variety of programs to assist graduate students with respect to improving a students' writing and speaking skills, especially for those of you, who are not native English speakers. Here is a link to their web page <https://cce.grad-college.iastate.edu/about-us>. Look under the Writing and Speaking tabs for the information. Check out what they offer and remember, this is all free and available to you.

***International Students and Scholars Office***

Campus Address: 3241 Memorial Union

Phone: 515-294-1120

Fax: 515-294-8263

Email: [isso@iastate.edu](mailto:isso@iastate.edu)

Web: [www.isso.iastate.edu](http://www.isso.iastate.edu)

The mission of the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) is to provide immigration and cross-cultural expertise to create a welcoming and supportive environment for all international students throughout their university experience. Because laws and regulations governing legal presence in the U.S. change frequently, it is important to consult ISSO for the latest information and to understand how it applies to your individual situation.

***Student Counseling Service***

Campus Address: 3rd floor, Student Services Bldg., 2505 Union Drive

Phone: 515-294-5205

Web: <https://www.counseling.iastate.edu/>

Student Counseling Services (SCS) provides clinical and campus-based services to help students achieve their educational and personal goals. SCS supports the holistic well-being of every Iowa State student and promotes a healthy and inclusive community through clinical services, outreach, consultation, crisis intervention and collaboration with campus partners.

***Student Employment Center***

Campus Address: 0640 Beardshear Hall

Phone: 515-294-JOBS (5627)

Email: [studentjobs@iastate.edu](mailto:studentjobs@iastate.edu)

Web: <https://www.financialaid.iastate.edu/student-employment-center/>

The Student Employment Center provides several resources to students regarding student employment.

***Students & Scholars Health Insurance Program***

Campus Address: 3810 Beardshear Hall

Phone: 515-294-4800

Web: <https://sship.hr.iastate.edu>