

**Iowa State University**

**Graduate Student  
Handbook**

**Master of Community &  
Regional Planning**

Last revised: September 2016

Department of Community and Regional Planning  
College of Design  
Iowa State University

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## Message from the Director of Graduate Education

Dear Incoming Graduate Students,

Welcome to the Master of Community and Regional Planning program at Iowa State University. The faculty and staff in the Community and Regional Planning (CRP) program 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 life in the CRP department. 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 Ms. Mona Pett ([mpett@iastate.edu](mailto:mpett@iastate.edu)) College of Design graduate secretary (146 Design), Francis Owusu ([fowusu@iastate.edu](mailto:fowusu@iastate.edu)) CRP chair (156 Design), Carlton Basmajian ([carlton@iastate.edu](mailto:carlton@iastate.edu)) director of graduate education (578 Design), or the appropriate university office.

Although the MCRP program will demand a lot of time and work, we sincerely hope you enjoy your time in Ames. Iowa State has a large number of excellent facilities and supports a wide range of cultural and sporting events. You can see world-class performing arts at the Iowa State Center, and there are many restaurants, taverns, clubs and other activities around the city of Ames. In short, work hard, relax well, and have an exciting and rewarding time at Iowa State.

Sincerely,

Carlton Basmajian, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Director of Graduate Education

## Getting Started

### *ISU Card*

The first thing you should do upon arriving on campus is to obtain your university identification card (ISU Card). Go to the ISU Card Office (0530 Beardshear Hall) to obtain your card. There they will take your picture. This is a permanent card to be used while attending Iowa State. This card primarily serves as your library card, but it also can be activated as an ATM card as well as a swipe card for purchasing products and services around campus.

Loss of your card should be reported immediately to the ISU Card Office, where the lost card will be invalidated. There will be a charge for each replacement of an ISU Card. Disciplinary sanctions may be imposed for improper use of the ISU Card or attempts to obtain, by fraudulent means, any form of identification.

You must also notify the program if you lose your ISU Card. We will need to reprogram the door locks on the studios and classrooms in the College of Design to accept your new card number.

### *E-mail Account*

To obtain an email account, go to <https://www.it.iastate.edu/foryou/students/>. When you have an ISU email address, please inform the DOGE of your username. All students need an ISU e-mail account. We regularly make announcements via e-mail that you would otherwise miss.

### *English Placement Test*

Graduate students whose native language is not English must demonstrate adequate knowledge of the English language.

- If your native language is **not** English and you do **not** have a previous degree from a U.S. college or university or where the language of instruction was English, you must take the Oral English Certification Test (OECT). The Applied Linguistics Program administers this test. You can obtain information about scheduling the test and what to expect here: <https://apling.engl.iastate.edu/english-placement-test/> If your native language is **not** English and you do have a previous degree from a U.S. college or university where the language of instruction was English, you need to fill out a form to certify that you have met your English requirement, found here: <https://apling.engl.iastate.edu/english-placement-test/>

The OECT is in addition to the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), which is taken as part of the admissions process. If you are not successful in passing the OECT, you must complete English 101D during your first year of study.

***Registration***

All students who attend classes at ISU must register and pay assessed tuition and fees. Until you have selected a major professor (usually done at the beginning of the third semester), the DOGE will assist you in registering for classes. Registration for classes takes place via AccessPlus, ISU's online resource for accessing important and confidential university information and web applications. Further information on AccessPlus is available via the Solution Center (a division of ISU Information Technology) at [www.it.iastate.edu](http://www.it.iastate.edu). 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).

***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. 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 (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/>).

***Mailbox***

If you work as a Teaching Assistant (TA) or Research Assistant (RA), you will be assigned a mailbox in the College Administrative Office (146 Design). You should check this location at least once a week for announcements and other important information. If we receive mail for you, it will be put into your mailbox with the assumption that you are checking it. Please do not use the university mail services for personal mail delivery.

***Graduate Student Office Space***

Graduate students in CRP have their own studio space (562 Design). Everything in that room is for use by current MCRP students. A limited number of desks are also available for use. When claiming a desk to use for the semester, please first make sure no one else is using it. In some cases, students with compatible schedules may wish to share. The electronic lock on this door reads ISU Cards and your card will be programmed for access to this space. Try to avoid keeping valuable personal items (such as textbooks, computers, or other electronic devices) in this space. Though access is limited to MCRP students, thefts have occurred.

## Important University Publications

Publication	What is it?	Web access
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="http://classes.iastate.edu/">http://classes.iastate.edu/</a>
Graduate College Handbook	Complete guide to the Graduate College	<a href="http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/">http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/</a>
Thesis Checklist	Essential information for students producing a thesis	<a href="http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/current/thesis/">http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/current/thesis/</a>

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 ([www.grad-college.iastate.edu](http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu)). It is your primary source of information regarding requirements, procedures, and forms.

### ***Credit Waiver***

Students who have a bachelor's degree in city planning or students who have taken highly relevant coursework may be eligible for a waiver of up to 9 credits. If you are interested in pursuing this option, please consult with the DOGE as early as possible as you embark on your graduate studies. You can petition to waive up to 3 courses. See the DOGE for a copy of the credit waiver form. The DOGE can also assist you in determining which courses are 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 Faculty

Name	Office	Phone	E-mail	Research Interests
Carlton Basmajian, Associate Professor, <b>DoGE</b>	578 Design	294-6942	<a href="mailto:carlton@iastate.edu">carlton@iastate.edu</a>	US planning history, regional planning, politics of planning, transportation, cemeteries
Tim Borich, Associate Professor	126 Design	294-8707	<a href="mailto:borich@iastate.edu">borich@iastate.edu</a>	Community, rural, economic and leadership development, multi-community collaboration, public policy, rural sociology, complex organizations
Biswa Das, Assistant Professor	592 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
Susan Bradbury, Professor	377 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
Ted Grevstad-Nordbrock, Assistant Professor	585 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, Associate Professor	583 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
Sara Hamideh, Assistant Professor	399 Design	294-5676		Post disaster planning, environmental planning, planning methods, planning theory
Neha Mehrotra, Lecturer	329 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, <b>Chair</b>	585 Design	294-7769	<a href="mailto:fowusu@iastate.edu">fowusu@iastate.edu</a>	Planning in developing countries, development policy, urban and economic development, sustainable development, planning methods
Alenka Poplin, Assistant Professor	487 Design	294-8097	<a href="mailto:apoplin@iastate.edu">apoplin@iastate.edu</a>	GIS, geogames for urban planning, Geovisualization, interactive mapping
Jane Rongerude, Assistant Professor	477 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
Youngme Seo, Assistant Professor	492 Design	294-6149	<a href="mailto:yseo@iastate.edu">yseo@iastate.edu</a>	Real estate finance, land use planning,
Dave Swenson, Adjunct Assistant Professor	177 Heady	294-7458	<a href="mailto:dswenson@iastate.edu">dswenson@iastate.edu</a>	Community/regional economic analysis, economic input studies, public finance and tax policy, community change and worker mobility issues, public program and project evaluation
Gary Taylor, Associate Professor	286 Design	294-2973	<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

## **Program Administration**

The chair of Department of Community and Regional Planning is Francis Owusu ([fowusu@iastate.edu](mailto:fowusu@iastate.edu)). The Director of Graduate Education for the MCRP program is Carlton Basmajian ([carlton@iastate.edu](mailto:carlton@iastate.edu)). For administrative support and questions about forms, deadlines, etc. please contact:

Ms. Mona Pett  
Secretary, COD Graduate Programs  
Room 146 Design  
Phone: 515-294-6724  
Email: [mpett@iastate.edu](mailto:mpett@iastate.edu)

## **Progress Toward Your Degree**

### ***First Year Advisor***

At the beginning of your first semester in the MCRP program, you will be assigned a temporary faculty advisor by the DoGE in consultation with the graduate admissions committee. That person will provide you advice and guidance regarding coursework during your first year in the program. Your first year advisor will also be a source of information for your transition to graduate study.

### ***Selecting a Major Professor***

The Major Professor (an official Iowa State term) is responsible for helping you develop and write your capstone project (thesis or professional report) as well as advising you on requirements needed to complete your graduate degree(s). During your first two semesters on campus, try to meet with different CRP faculty to discuss your interests. Ask for feedback and recommendations from your faculty advisor about who might be your Major Professor.

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

Completing an approved program of study (POS) is necessary in order 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. First, the POS shows that you have completed a broad range of required and elective courses so that you have appropriate knowledge and skills to complete your degree. Second, if you intend to specialize in a particular subfield of planning (such as land use, transportation, community design, environmental planning, preservation planning, etc.), your POS reflects that you have developed expertise in that subfield. After you have selected your major professor, you should arrange a meeting time to begin developing your POS.

### ***Assembling Your Program of Study Committee***

The Program of Study Committee (POSC) is responsible for approving your program of study as well as the capstone project required to receive the MCRP. The POSC primarily assists in the choice of a capstone project topic and provides guidance in the development and writing of the capstone project (professional report or thesis). Once you've identified your Major Professor, consult with her or him about who else might serve on your POSC. See the Graduate College Handbook (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/>) for more detailed requirements about the composition of your POSC.

Once you have established who will be on your committee, you will need to complete the POSC form, which is available through AccessPlus. Once you have completed and submitted this form, it will be automatically routed to your major professor and committee members for approval. You will be notified via email if there are any problems with the form that require your attention. Once approved, you will be notified and the form will remain on file and accessible through AccessPlus during the duration of your graduate studies at Iowa State

### ***Curriculum Requirements***

The MCRP requires completion of 48 total credits. Of these 48, 25-27 credits consist of core classes while the remaining 23-21 consist of electives and research credits. It is recommended that students register for 12 credits per semester to complete the degree within a four semester time frame. During the academic year, graduate students must be registered for a minimum of 9 credits to be considered full-time. If you choose to take classes during the summer, you must be registered for a minimum of 5 credits to be considered full-time.

The 25-27 core credits for the MCRP degree are:

		Credits
CRP 564	Introduction to Analytical Methods for Planning	3
CRP 563	Planning the American Metropolis	3
CRP 568	Planning and Development	3
CRP 566	Values and Decision Making	3
CRP 532	Community Planning Studio	3
CRP 561	Planning Theory for Practice	3
CRP 592	Land Use and Development Regulation Law	3
CRP 599	Professional Planning Report –OR--	4
CRP 699	Thesis Research	6

Below is a basic timeline that students can use for timely degree completion:

<u>Fall: Year 1</u>	<u>Spring: Year 1</u>
563	561
564	568
566	Elective
Elective	Elective

Summer: Complete three months of acceptable work experience between the first and second year of study.

<u>Fall: Year 2</u>	<u>Spring: Year 2</u>
532	599 or 698 or 699 (4 or 6 credits)
592	Electives (6 or 9 credits)
Elective	
Elective	

No foreign language is required for the MCRP degree.

### ***Double Degrees***

Students in the graduate planning program have the option of completing a double degree that marries the MCRP with a master's degree offered by another department on campus. Double degrees typically require completing core courses of both programs and a single capstone project. Currently, the department maintains six double degree programs.

MCRP and Master of Architecture (MARCH)  
 MCRP and Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA)  
 MCRP and Master of Science in Sustainable Agriculture (MS)  
 MCRP and Master of Urban Design (MUD)  
 MCRP and Master of Design in Sustainable Environments (MDesSE)  
 MCRP and Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Details about the double degree programs can be found on the departmental webpage:  
<http://www.design.iastate.edu/communityplanning/graduateprograms.php>

### ***Capstone Project: Thesis or Professional Report?***

As you are developing your POS with your major professor, you should decide whether you want to write a **thesis** or a **professional report**.

A master's **thesis** is a scholarly composition that demonstrates the ability of the author to do independent and creative work. It explores in depth a problem or issue related to the major field of study. Since satisfactory completion of the thesis can constitute one of the most gratifying experiences in graduate study, the document should reflect the highest standard of scholarship and research, serving as a measure of quality for the

student, major professor, and the program. For those writing a thesis, consult the Thesis Checklist: <http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/current/thesis/checklist/>. The number of research credits for a thesis (CRP 699) is six.

A **professional planning report**, is considered a capstone experience, providing the student the opportunity to complete an independent study informed by the coursework and experiences gained in graduate study, thereby synthesizing theory and practice. The purpose of the professional planning report is the demonstration of a diagnostic, analytic, articulate, and convincing report summarizing what has been done and what is proposed. The number of research credits for a professional report (CRP 599) is four.

Examples of completed theses are available from the Iowa State University Library, from your first year advisor, or the DoGE. Use the “Theses & Dissertations at Iowa State” search function on the library webpage. While there is no central repository for professional reports, examples can be obtained from the DoGE as well as from most of the CRP faculty.

The following chart outlines the differences between a thesis and a professional report:

	<b>Thesis</b>	<b>Professional Report</b>
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>Capacity to develop and answer research questions</p> <p>Demonstration of full range of research skills, especially in the collection and processing of primary data or original use of existing data</p> <p>Understanding of the major theoretical debates related to research</p> <p>In-depth understanding of a special interest area or topic in planning</p>	<p>Critical examination of community problems/issues</p> <p>Demonstration of experience in planning practice or putting ideas into practice</p> <p>Demonstration of research skills using secondary information and existing data sources</p> <p>Understanding of the setting/context of planning</p> <p>Specialization—topical and geographic focus</p>
<b>Literature Review</b>	Thorough review of literature to demonstrate understanding of theoretical issues	Abbreviated discussion of literature that demonstrates an understanding about why this issue or concern is worthy of consideration
<b>Methodology</b>	Thorough discussion of methodology and approach sufficient to justify choice	<p>Abbreviated discussion of how similar problems have been examined</p> <p>Justification as to why the methods utilized by the student are appropriate especially if they differ from the methodology used in other cases</p>
<b>Research and Analysis</b>	Thorough and original uses of data	Demonstrates thorough understanding of issue or concern that persuasively supports the report's key findings or recommendations
<b>Use/Contribution</b>	<p>Thesis builds on existing ideas and theories</p> <p>Contributes knowledge to profession/scholarly community</p>	<p>Relevant use for a real community</p> <p>If possible, should have a client</p> <p>Makes recommendations or proposes solutions</p> <p>Integrates planning knowledge and skills in practical application</p>
<b>Format and Style</b>	Follows format and style guidelines of Graduate College	Follows format and style guidelines of CRP Dept. for Professional Reports

### ***Human Subjects Research Approval***

At Iowa State University, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews all research involving human subjects, including proposals to gather data from subjects for theses, dissertations, and other student projects. Some professional report and thesis projects will be required to obtain Human Subjects Research Approval, (see policy at <http://www.compliance.iastate.edu/irb/policies/university.html>).

### ***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. However, failure to maintain good academic standing is also grounds for repeal of a graduate assistantship. A “C” is the minimum grade acceptable for courses that appear on the POS and counts toward fulfilling the requirements of the MCRP. 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. Students must provide written evidence of their participation in the event. Requests for an excused absence should be made in writing to their major professor, DoGE or 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 Conduct Code at <http://www.dso.iastate.edu/ja/academic/misconduct.html> for more details and a full explanation of Academic Misconduct policies. Details are also provided in Chapter 9 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 courses. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures, as well as consequences with regard to this course.

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 his or her 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 MCRP 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 identify a major professor and submit an approved POS and POSC within three semesters of matriculation.
- 3 Failure to complete all degree requirements within three years or six semesters (four years or eight semesters for part-time and double degree students).

The DOGE will notify in writing any student who violates this policy. His or her deficiencies will be identified and a meeting between the student, the major professor, and the DoGE 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 9 of the

Graduate College Handbook (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=9>)

### ***Grievances***

If a graduate student believes a faculty member, in his or her academic capacity, has behaved unfairly or unprofessionally, or if a student feels that his or her 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, he or she 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 9 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>).

## **Student Employment**

### ***Graduate Assistantships***

CRP has a limited number of assistantship opportunities available each academic year. Students will be notified via email when we are accepting assistantship applications. Most of our assistantships are quarter-time teaching or research assistantships and pay a modest monthly stipend. Benefits associated with graduate assistantships include a partial tuition scholarship and health insurance. Out-of-state students who receive graduate assistantships are eligible for in-state tuition changes.

Every graduate assistantship appointment has associated with it an expectation of work to be performed. The supervisor has responsibility to see that this obligation is met. This relationship is similar to an employee/supervisory relationship for other types of employment. Each graduate assistant must complete a Duties and Evaluation Form at the beginning of each semester in consultation with the faculty supervisor. This form is available from the faculty member who you report to. The form outlines the expectations of the graduate assistant. At the end of the assignment, the supervisor will evaluate the assistant's performance using the expectations that were outlined on the Duties and Evaluation Form.

The supervisor will share and discuss the completed Evaluation Form with the graduate assistant. A copy of the form will be retained by the faculty supervisor, a copy will be given to the graduate assistant, and a copy will be given to the DoGE to be kept

on file. The Duties and Evaluation Form will help guide future employment decisions in the program as well as keep a record of the tasks that the graduate assistant was asked to complete during the term of employment. Because this form will also be kept on file in the program office, it may also be used for future recommendations made by the program faculty or staff. It is your responsibility to ensure that both portions of the Duties and Evaluation Form are completed at the end of each semester.

To be eligible for reappointment as a teaching or research assistant, students should meet the following criteria.

1. Satisfactory completion of prior appointment duties
2. Satisfactory academic standing (GPA above 3.0)
3. Satisfactory progress toward completing degree requirements (see Curriculum Requirements section above)
4. Compliance with Iowa State Student Disciplinary Regulations
5. Renewal is contingent on funding availability

See chapter 9 of the Graduate Student Handbook for more details regarding assistantship expectations (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=9>).

### ***Required Tests***

Graduate students whose native language is not English and have been appointed as a Teaching Assistant (TA) are required to take the Oral English Certification Test (OECT). This test is administered before the fall and spring semesters. You must pre-register for this test to ensure a seat is available for you. For more information visit <http://cce.grad-college.iastate.edu/ita/oect>.

## **Graduation**

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

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

### ***Final Oral Exam***

Since you must complete an individual capstone project (thesis or professional report), you are required to sit for an oral defense. At least three weeks before your oral defense, you will need to complete a “Request for Final Examination” form (available on the Graduate College website). At least two weeks before your defense, you should distribute copies of your complete thesis or professional report to each of your POSC members.

At your oral defense, you will present your project to your committee as well as interested members of the department. Your presentation will include questions from the audience as well as a detailed discussion with your committee members. At the conclusion of the defense, your committee will decide whether you have passed, passed conditionally, or failed to pass your defense. A “Report of Final Examination” form will be completed and submitted to the COD graduate secretary immediately following the defense (146 Design).

### ***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 DOGE must review, approve, and sign off on your thesis or professional report before you will be allowed to graduate. After your defense, submit a final copy to the DOGE. Allow at least one week (including a weekend) for his/her review.

In addition to the final bound copies that you will distribute to your committee, the department requires both an electronic and a hard copy version. The DOGE will not sign the “Graduate Student Approval Slip” until these have been submitted.

### ***After Graduation***

Before you leave Ames, you should return any library books that you have in your possession. Any key issued to you must also be returned to the Key Desk in the General Services Building. Do NOT leave your keys with the DOGE or department staff. A fee will be incurred for any unreturned keys.

You should also inform the office staff of your new address. Our alumni records allow us to communicate any departmental news to you.

## **Getting Involved**

### ***CRP Grad Club***

The undergraduate and graduate students in CRP have each organized their own student organization. Its respective members run each club independently. However, because of the relatively small size of the CRP program, the clubs often collaborate with one another and with other clubs around campus.

The goal of the planning clubs is to provide an avenue for students to learn more about the field of urban, community, and regional planning. Each club typically offers special educational, networking, and career development opportunities such as traveling to

planning offices, arranging for guest speakers on planning topics, and attending planning conferences.

Leadership of the CRP Graduate Student Club is elected at the end of each fall semester for the upcoming year. The club maintains an active schedule of meetings and events.

### ***American Planning Association***

Students are encouraged to participate in activities sponsored by the national American Planning Association (APA) as well as the Iowa state chapter (Iowa APA). The APA (<http://www.planning.org>) holds an annual conference every spring, which brings together professional planners from communities around the United States. Students can receive free registration fees by volunteering to work during the conference. The Iowa APA (<http://www.iowa-apa.org/>) holds an annual conference every fall for planners working in Iowa and neighboring states. The state chapter provides funding to offset the cost of registration for students who want to attend. MCRP students are strongly encouraged to attend one or both of these conferences at least once during your time at Iowa State. The CRP Grad Club typically organizes group travel and lodging for those planning to attend the conferences.

### ***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 <http://www.gpss.iastate.edu/>.

### ***Recreation***

When you need a break from academics, Iowa State offers plenty of choices for recreation. The ISU Recreation Services provide fitness programs, outdoor recreation, intramural sports, sports clubs, and state-of-the-art recreation facilities. More information can be obtained from [www.recservices.iastate.edu](http://www.recservices.iastate.edu).

### ***Athletics***

If you are interested in intercollegiate athletics, Iowa State's teams compete in the Big 12 athletic conference. For ticket information and all the news about your favorite teams, check out the official Iowa State University Athletics web site at [www.cyclones.com](http://www.cyclones.com).

### ***Performing Arts***

If you are accustomed to theater and the arts, big-name entertainers, symphonies, museums, ballet and rock concerts, then you will feel right at home at Iowa State. Visit <http://www.theatre.iastate.edu/> for additional information. The Iowa State Center is

the local stop for nationally touring music acts and theatrical productions:  
<https://www.center.iastate.edu/>

## **Campus Resources**

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

Campus Address: 3024 Morrill Hall

Phone: 515-294-2906

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)

### ***International Students and Scholars Office***

Campus Address: 3248 Memorial Union

Phone: 515-294-1120

Fax: 515-294-8263

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

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

### ***Student Counseling Service***

Campus Address: 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Student Services Bldg.

Phone: 515-294-5056

Web: [www.public.iastate.edu/~stdtcouns/](http://www.public.iastate.edu/~stdtcouns/)

### ***Student Employment Center***

Campus Address: 0640 Beardshear Hall

Phone: 515-294-JOBS

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

Web: [www.financialaid.iastate.edu/employment/sec.php](http://www.financialaid.iastate.edu/employment/sec.php)

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

Campus Address: 0570 Beardshear Hall

Phone: 515-294-2394

Fax: 515-294-8846

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

**Department of Community & Regional Planning**  
**Assistantship Duties and Evaluation Form**

Please provide an outline of your Graduate Assistant's (GA) duties and expectations for the assignment. You should discuss these expectations with the GA at the beginning of the assignment. The faculty supervisor should keep a copy of these expectations and provide a copy to the Graduate Assistant.

Assistant \_\_\_\_\_

Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Course or Project \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the duties to be completed by the Graduate Assistant below:

The duties listed above have been discussed and understood by both the assistant and faculty member. These duties are appropriate and have been agreed to.

Graduate Assistant signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Faculty signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

At the end of the assignment, please provide an assessment of the Graduate Assistant's (GA) performance. You should discuss your evaluation with the GA. The faculty supervisor should keep a copy of this evaluation, provide a copy to the Director of Graduate Studies, and a copy to the Graduate Assistant.

<b>Supervisor rating of GA (as applicable):</b>	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Dependability and reliability			
Consistent communication			
Timeliness in completing required tasks			
Professionalism in attitude and work quality			

Comments (please explain any criteria checked as "Below Expectations")

This evaluation has been discussed and understood by both the assistant and faculty supervisor.

Graduate Assistant signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Faculty signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_