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PLANNING EDUCATION

As noted in previous chapters, urban planning is essential to crafting solutions to the pressing urban problems of the 21st century, yet professional planning practices have not always been able to keep pace with the challenges faced by urban areas. This is particularly the case in developing countries. Rapid urbanization in most developing countries has forced planners to respond to escalating demand for housing, infrastructure and services – from both formal and informal sectors.

The increasingly multicultural nature of many cities requires multicultural planning skills. So, together with changes in technical knowledge essential to successful urban planning, there have been changes in the softer 'people' skills needed to manage the processes of change.

This chapter summarizes the historical development of urban planning education at the university level, and identifies the key philosophical and practical debates that framed planning education during the 20th century. It also presents an initial global inventory of university-level urban planning programmes and assesses the capacities of planning schools to address the challenges of the 21st century.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PLANNING EDUCATION

This section summarizes the key debates that have framed the development of planning education during the 20th century, namely: design versus policy, rationality versus deliberation, master planning versus development management, and 'one world' versus context-specific planning education.

Design versus policy

The first university level urban planning course is widely cited to be the 'civic design' programme at the University of Liverpool (1907). As the name suggests, these early years of planning education were firmly set in the design profession tradition, while drawing on the growing sentiment for scientific applications in government and industry. By the end of the 1940s, however, design was no longer the sole orientation of planning schools, with new schools formed in social science settings, and other schools in design college settings admitting students whose prior work had been other than in a design profession. The UK was quick to join the adoption of a social science orientation. While some European countries clung to the design paradigm, economic planning flourished as a distinct enterprise in the Soviet Union and Eastern European universities throughout the communist era.

The numbers of schools and numbers of students skyrocketed during the 1960s and early 1970s, coinciding with the broadening of scope. This may have been a function of the lower cost models in social science colleges compared with design colleges, and it may have been driven by workplace demands tied to government planning initiatives in the US, UK, and other European countries.

The spread of planning education to developing countries date from the late 1950s, with the establishment of planning schools in India (1955) and Ghana (1958). Initial growth was slow, however, and few developing countries had planning programmes until the 1970s.

Rationality versus deliberation

The policy analytic framework for planning is probably best understood under the terms of the 'rational planning model', which gained widespread use in the mid-1950s (see Box 15). The five-step model is both self-evident, due to its simplicity, and unachievable, due to its demands on resources and expertise. For about 20 years, this model remained the most widely subscribed planning theory. To this day, its logic can be found in the justifications and methodological outlines given in the introductions to most plans. It remains a major underpinning of planning school curricula.

The social unrest of the 1960s in many countries subjected the 'rational planning model' to intense criticism. Radical planners saw the model as a tool used by elites to disenfranchise poor, inner-city residents who often lacked education and access to professional consultants and couldn't effectively argue with the scientific analyses presented as objective by city planning staff, but seen as highly subjective by the residents. As shown in Chapters 3 and 5, the legacy of this criticism and the planning profession's responses have been a series of models for greater deliberation in planning, including greater involvement of community residents and other stakeholders in planning processes. This 'communicative turn' in planning research and practice remains a major force today. Yet, at the same time, distrust of indigenous knowledge and fear of decentralized power remains a concern in many countries.

Master planning versus development management

As outlined in Chapter 3, the planning profession's origins were, of course, steeped in the preparation of plans. In the earliest days, these tended to be land-use plans, but by the 1950s the scope had broadened to include related issues, and the practice was often labelled comprehensive, general, or master planning. Plan implementation through zoning and other means was important, but usually seen professionally as subsidiary to production of the plan itself. At the same time, implementation often failed, and so could not be taken for granted.

Planning scholars debated the relative merits of long-range plan making and immediate-range permit review in the 1950s and 1960s. By the 1980s, much government planning legislation in developed countries contained detailed provisions for the management of development, and growth management and development control were mainstream parts of planning school curricula, including course work in zoning

Box 15	The five steps of the 'rational planning model'
1	Ends reduction and elaboration ('Desires');
2	Design of courses of action ('Design');
3	Comparative evaluation of consequences ('Deduction');
4	Choice among alternatives ('Decision');
5	Implementation of the chosen alternative ('Deeds').

Source: Stiftel, 2000, pp5–6; citing Banfield, 1955; and Harris, 1967

and subdivision regulation, impact assessment, site plan review, and later, negotiation.

Today, master planning remains problematic in developing countries as a result of high rates of population growth, coupled with limited regulatory/implementation capacity in local governments. Various practice programmes are intended to move planning in developing countries toward greater attentiveness to implementation, including strategic spatial planning, 'new' master plans and integrated development planning. Key elements of various United Nations

The University of Liverpool introduced the first urban planning course in 1907

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Participatory and collaborative skills are an important part of successful plan implementation

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supported programmes have also embraced a more focused vision of good planning, often referred to as strategic planning.

'One world' versus context-specific planning education

Planning schools traditionally focused on local scale issues, broadening to metropolitan regional issues in the mid-20th century. The result is that planning education has been tied to the institutional, legal and cultural context of specific countries. When planning schools in many developed countries found they were enrolling students from developing countries in significant numbers, they initiated specializations oriented toward practice in the developing country setting.

The 'one-world' approach to planning education seeks to provide internationally relevant training regardless of the anticipated future location of the student's practice. The European Union has advanced a multi-national orientation in professional education, most recently through the Bologna agreement, which aims to facilitate cross-border movement of professionals regardless of the country of education.

However, 'one-world' planning education faces its own challenges. For example, as planning practice has increasingly emphasized the importance of place and identity, singular models are less convincing. There is also concern that 'one-world' approaches may over-emphasize ideas from developed, particularly Anglo-American countries.

The tensions between context-specific and 'one-world' planning education approaches may not be as significant as some believe, in that planning education is, in fact, generalizable across many national contexts. In particular, the cross-national challenge may not be as powerful as the more basic problem of including real-world practical experiences in planning education.

PLANNING SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE

A core of university programmes teach urban and regional planning under the sanction of national or international accreditation agencies. This group, however, is only the tip of an iceberg of planning education, which includes urban and regional planning degree programmes in countries where there is no accreditation system, as well as modules of study focused on planning that are delivered within degree programmes in architecture, economics, engineering, geography, landscape architecture, law, urban studies and other fields. Finally, there are non-degree granting units within universities and elsewhere that teach urban and regional planning skills to working professionals and others. This section attempts to provide an overview of formal urban planning education at the university level worldwide. Thus, it does not present a complete picture of urban planning schools worldwide. (It is based on a survey undertaken for this report by the Global Planning Education Association Network (GPEAN), an affiliation of nine planning school associations worldwide. The objective was to develop an inventory of university-based programmes that have the word 'planning', or its equivalent, in the title.)

The inventory produced for this report indicates that there are 553 universities worldwide that offer urban planning degrees. As can be seen from Table 10, more than half of these are located in 10 countries, all of which have more than 15 planning schools each. More than half of the world's countries have no planning schools at all. The survey also reveals that nearly one half of the world's planning schools are located in developing countries.

About two thirds of the schools award undergraduate degrees in planning; three quarters award post-graduate professional degrees; and one third award doctoral degrees. The patterns vary considerably by region: while undergraduate degree offerings far outpace post-graduate degrees in Asia, post-graduate degrees are offered by substantially more institutions than undergraduate degrees in the Americas.

In terms of the academic credentials of staff, there are also major regional differences. Planning schools in developed countries generally require a doctoral degree of all full-time academic staff members. In contrast, most planning schools in developing countries require a Master's degree only, and

Region/country	Number of schools	Region/country	Number of schools	Region/country	Number of schools
Developed and transitional countries	**293**	Serbia*	2	*Asia and the Pacific*	*164*
Albania	2	Slovakia	1	Bangladesh	1
Australia	19	Slovenia	1	China	97
Austria	3	Spain	3	China, Hong Kong	1
Belgium	3	Sweden	6	China, Taiwan	3
Bulgaria	1	Switzerland	2	India	15
Canada	21	TFYR Macedonia	1	Indonesia	16
Czech Republic	3	United Kingdom	25	Iran	1
Denmark	2	United States of America	88	Israel	1
Estonia	1	**Developing countries**	**260**	Lebanon	1
Finland	3	*Africa*	*69*	Malaysia	4
France	17	Algeria	1	Pakistan	1
Germany	8	Botswana	1	Philippines	1
Greece	6	Egypt	3	Republic of Korea	7
Hungary	1	Ghana	1	Saudi Arabia	1
Ireland	3	Kenya	3	Sri Lanka	1
Italy	13	Lesotho	1	Thailand	6
Japan	2	Morocco	1	Turkey	5
Latvia	1	Mozambique	1	United Arab Emirates	1
Lithuania	1	Nigeria	39	Viet Nam	1
Malta	1	Rwanda	1	*Latin America and the Caribbean*	*27*
Netherlands	12	South Africa	11	Argentina	3
New Zealand	5	Tanzania	1	Brazil	6
Norway	7	Togo	1	Chile	2
Poland	12	Tunisia	1	Colombia	2
Portugal	7	Uganda	1	Guatemala	1
Romania	2	Zambia	1	Jamaica	1
Russian Federation	8	Zimbabwe	1	Mexico	9
				Peru	1
				Venezuela	2

Table 10

Urban planning schools inventory (university level), by country

Note: * Includes one planning school in Kosovo.

Source: unpublished Global Planning Education Association Network (GPEAN) survey

some of these schools require only an undergraduate degree for their full-time academic staff. Obviously, this has impacts on the quality of the education provided.

As noted above, urban planning education has moved from a focus on physical design towards an increased focus on policy and social science research. During the last decade, however, there has been a resurgence of design in some schools. While the curricula of a majority of planning schools worldwide combine design and policy approaches to planning. Planning schools in China and Mediterranean countries tend to focus on physical design, while those in the UK and US tend to emphasize policy/social science approaches.

Curriculum content in the areas of sustainable development, social equity, participatory and deliberative planning and climate change is quite prevalent among planning schools. This is tied to the prevalence of policy/social science approaches. In the transitional countries of Eastern Europe, however, the lack of integration of design and social science in planning curricula is an impediment to effectively incorporating sustainability issues. In contrast, in many schools in North America, sustainability is a unifying theme to the curriculum. On a global level, three quarters of planning schools teach sustainable development, more than half teach participatory and deliberative planning, a similar

number teach social equity, while a third of planning schools teach climate change.

Despite awareness of the importance of gender in planning practice, gender is not a core part of the syllabus in many urban planning schools. While about half of the planning schools teach social equity issues, only a minority of these specifically teach gender-related issues. A survey undertaken for this report indicates that only four programmes worldwide currently address gender and urban planning specifically. The absence of gender specific modules has impacts on how gender and diversity is discussed in the wider framework of urban planning education.

There are also significant regional variations in terms of the relative importance given to technical skills, communicative skills and analytic skills in planning curricula. Again the variations are linked to the prevalence of policy/social science approaches, as opposed to design. While planning schools in Asia rate analytical skills as most important, followed by technical skills, and communication skills, the focus varies substantially in Latin America. Overall in Latin America, technical, rationalist perspectives are the norm, with skills such as master planning, urban design and econometric modelling more common than those of participation or negotiation.

CAPACITY FOR EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT OF PLANNING PRACTICE

Average staff sizes at the 553 planning schools surveyed for this report are considerable, with every continent having average staff numbers of eight or higher and most continents enjoying average staff sizes in excess of 20. This substantial system of planning education reflects a total academic staff of more than 13,000. The magnitude of the planning educational system is a recent phenomenon: only forty years ago the size of the system was a small fraction of what it is today.

A planning education system of this size should be capable of meeting the demand for professional planners. Yet, the system is not evenly distributed, curriculum emphases often fall short of the real demands of planning practice, and resources are frequently inadequate. Box 16 sets out some of the challenges facing planning education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Most, if not all, the challenges identified apply to other developing countries, and to many developed and transitional countries as well.

Some countries, primarily developed countries, are increasingly treating higher education as a source of foreign exchange, and universities are setting up offshore operations. Liverpool University's civic design program in China and Carnegie Mellon University's business and computer science programs in Qatar are two examples of this trend. This trend can be beneficial to countries lacking strong university resources. But, it can also be damaging, as when individuals in whom a country has invested extensively, choose to not return to their home countries.

Leading planning schools view planning as an integrated practice that requires technical, analytic and communicative skills, including participation and conflict resolution in a multi-cultural context. Unfortunately not all schools approach these needed perspectives. Many schools treat planning as either a design or a policy practice, rather

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Box 16   Challenges for planning education in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Keeping pace with the development of new technical expertise and with the equipments required to perform relevant planning analyses;
- Expanding negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution, and consensus building skills;
- Complementing the rational planning model with participatory, advocate, democratic, and collaborative planning models;
- Effectively coordinating multidisciplinary teams with various forms of knowledge and knowledge production;
- Addressing metropolitan and regional planning and governance;
- More effectively responding to the growing environmental challenges in the region and the world;
- More effectively responding to the growing socio-spatial justice challenges in the region;
- Forging more collaborative relations with community and governmental organizations involved in planning; and
- Placing greater emphasis on ethics education so that planning professionals can become more effective agents in combating corruption and other professional and governmental vices.

Source: Irazábal, 2008
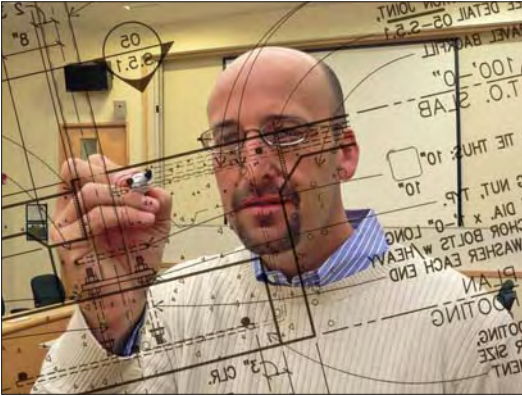
Effective education is essential for development of urban plans of the future

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Appropriate educational facilities are essential for successful planning education

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than both. Many are focused on a narrow range of issues tied to legislative planning mandates and forgo consideration of key specializations. Many give short coverage to participation with the full range of stakeholders, but also to understanding and communication with professionals in other fields.

Furthermore, all too often planning schools lack the academic staff, computers, library materials, and studio space to carry out their work effectively. In some developing countries, it is not uncommon for academic staff to be expected to hold second jobs in order to survive on the salaries paid. In some countries, the most basic library materials are unavailable and staff resort to reading aloud from key sources so that students may learn from them.

Many schools are not effectively networked into the broader discipline as they are not members of an international planning school association and/or they do not benefit from a specialized accreditation system. Conferences and the debates which take place in the publication process are vital to testing the correctness of ideas. In the absence of networks and other forms of peer review, it is difficult to build quality. The case for international accreditation of urban planners should thus be further investigated.

Perhaps the greater educational challenge facing planning is the need for planning objectives and tools to be understood by architects, engineers, lawyers, administrators and the myriad of citizens and elected officials who must endorse planning interventions and support plans if they are to be adopted and implemented. University incentives in many countries do not support education of non-degree seeking students, with the result that planning schools are

seldom major contributors to the planning education of allied professionals and others.

As noted above, there is a glaring absence of gender-related subject in the urban planning courses taught world-wide. It has been noted that planners who have graduated from a planning course where gender was not in the syllabus, regardless of their gender, often fail to consider gender in planning. The Royal Town Planning Institute, UK, has worked to advanced gender awareness in planning practice in recent years, and has produced tools intended to help planners address gender-related issues in a practical manner.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There is considerable need to increase the capacity of planning education in developing and transitional economies. Beyond this, leading universities outside developing countries must increase their capacity to examine and educate for those countries. The 'one-world' approach to planning education holds some promise in helping them to do so. The latter is particularly the case with respect to the world-wide inclusion of gender-related issues into urban planning curricula.

Schools which still treat planning only as a design exercise or only as a policy practice need to broaden their approaches. Schools which teach planning as technical and analytic without incorporating the political and participatory facets of the profession must expand their curricula. Schools which do not yet effectively discuss questions of sustainability, social equity, or climate change must do so.

Creativity will also be needed to find additional sources of revenue that can help resource-starved institutions in developing countries. Partnerships between universities and planning practice organizations may advance the goals of both, allowing universities to perform useful planning studies for which the practice community may not have capability, while funding students or permitting the purchase of needed equipment. Exchange programmes may be used to give students in one country access to resources not available in their home country.

Planning schools need to interact with professional and scholarly networks. Planning school associations in developing countries do not effectively sustain communication and growth among their members because school staff can not travel in sufficient numbers, and because schools cannot afford association membership fees. International development agencies would do well to consider the need for adequate communication among university urban planning schools.