

# Urban Design

The Master of Urban Design (MUD) degree program is a one-calendar-year, advanced, interdisciplinary program of study for students with a prior professional degree in architecture, landscape architecture, or city and regional planning. The program's goals are to further train designers who can work effectively in teams across a large range of scales and who have a well-developed understanding of urban places and the interdependencies of the fabric of buildings, landscapes, public ways, and the social interactions that shape them.

The Program in the Design of Urban Places, leading to the Master of Urban Design degree, is a unique, interdisciplinary program of advanced study in which exceptional architects, landscape architects, and planners holding professional degrees partake of an intense, focused learning experience of 12-month duration. Students share working methods, acquire additional skills, and explore new avenues of development under the supervision of an interdisciplinary group of faculty members in the College of Environmental Design drawn from the Departments of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning, and City and Regional Planning.

The program addresses the need for professionals who are specifically concerned with the design of varied urban areas open to public use. The activities of urban design are diverse in both type and scale. Urban designers may be concerned with settlement patterns in urbanizing areas, town layout, the restructuring of inner cities, and the design of streets and open spaces, buildings, and landscape patterns that establish neighborhoods and provide the settings for public life. They may shape the form and space of specific places such as civic or shopping centers, or they may design citywide systems such as streets, lighting, signing, greenways, or bicycle and pedestrian ways. They may work on infill in older towns and cities, or they may prepare plans, guidelines, or standards to manage extensive new development at the metropolitan growth edge.

## Admission to the University

### Minimum Requirements for Admission

The following minimum requirements apply to all graduate programs and will be verified by the Graduate Division:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A grade point average of B or better (3.0);
3. If the applicant comes from a country or political entity (e.g., Quebec) where English is not the official language, adequate proficiency in English to do graduate work, as evidenced by a TOEFL score of at least 90 on the iBT test, 570 on the paper-and-pencil test, or an IELTS Band score of at least 7 on a 9-point scale (note that individual programs may set higher levels for any of these); and
4. Sufficient undergraduate training to do graduate work in the given field.

### Applicants Who Already Hold a Graduate Degree

The Graduate Council views academic degrees not as vocational training certificates, but as evidence of broad training in research methods, independent study, and articulation of learning. Therefore, applicants who already have academic graduate degrees should be able to pursue new

subject matter at an advanced level without the need to enroll in a related or similar graduate program.

Programs may consider students for an additional academic master's or professional master's degree only if the additional degree is in a distinctly different field.

Applicants admitted to a doctoral program that requires a master's degree to be earned at Berkeley as a prerequisite (even though the applicant already has a master's degree from another institution in the same or a closely allied field of study) will be permitted to undertake the second master's degree, despite the overlap in field.

The Graduate Division will admit students for a second doctoral degree only if they meet the following guidelines:

1. Applicants with doctoral degrees may be admitted for an additional doctoral degree only if that degree program is in a general area of knowledge distinctly different from the field in which they earned their original degree. For example, a physics PhD could be admitted to a doctoral degree program in music or history; however, a student with a doctoral degree in mathematics would not be permitted to add a PhD in statistics.
2. Applicants who hold the PhD degree may be admitted to a professional doctorate or professional master's degree program if there is no duplication of training involved.

Applicants may apply only to one single degree program or one concurrent degree program per admission cycle.

## Required Documents for Applications

1. **Transcripts:** Applicants may upload *unofficial* transcripts with your application for the departmental initial review. *If the applicant is admitted*, then *official* transcripts of all college-level work will be required. Official transcripts must be in sealed envelopes as issued by the school(s) attended. If you have attended Berkeley, upload your unofficial transcript with your application for the departmental initial review. *If you are admitted*, an official transcript with evidence of degree conferral *will not* be required.
2. **Letters of recommendation:** Applicants may request online letters of recommendation through the online application system. Hard copies of recommendation letters must be sent directly to the program, not the Graduate Division.
3. **Evidence of English language proficiency:** All applicants from countries or political entities in which the official language is not English are required to submit official evidence of English language proficiency. This applies to applicants from Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Latin America, the Middle East, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, most European countries, and Quebec (Canada). However, applicants who, at the time of application, have already completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with grades of B or better at a US university may submit an official transcript from the US university to fulfill this requirement. The following courses will not fulfill this requirement:
  - courses in English as a Second Language,
  - courses conducted in a language other than English,
  - courses that will be completed after the application is submitted, and
  - courses of a non-academic nature.

If applicants have previously been denied admission to Berkeley on the basis of their English language proficiency, they must submit new test scores that meet the current minimum from one of the standardized tests. Official TOEFL score reports must be sent directly from Educational Test Services (ETS). The institution code for Berkeley is 4833. Official IELTS score reports must be mailed directly to our office from the British Council. TOEFL and IELTS score reports are only valid for two years.

Where to Apply

Visit the Berkeley Graduate Division application page (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>).

Admission Criteria and Prerequisites

Admission to the Master of Urban Design program requires:

- A prior professional degree in architecture (BArch or MArch), landscape architecture (BLA or MLA), or city and regional planning (MCP or MUP with a strong design background).
- Evidence of high-quality academic and professional work, including GRE and minimum TOEFL/IELTS score requirements.
- Two years of professional experience after completion of the professional degree is recommended but not required. Applicants will be evaluated based on the quality of their work.
- Recommended: A course in history/theory of urban form (comparable to CY PLAN C240). Students without this course will be expected to enroll in CY PLAN C240 during the program.

Course Requirements

Five courses constitute the core of the Master of Urban Design degree program:

- ENV DES 201 Urban Places Advanced Studio—an intensive studio involving collaborative work on problems that are large in scope, yet require attention to spatial organization and design details; projects often involve the exploration of design options for areas under consideration by governmental agencies.
- ENV DES 251 Urban Places Seminar—an introduction to the program, the faculty resources, and issues arising in current urban design practice.
- CY PLAN 298 Urban Places Economic Module, which introduces key economic issues and concepts.
- ENV DES 252 Urban Place Studies, a seminar that brings all candidates in the program together to develop and discuss with core faculty their individual thesis projects.
- ENV DES 253 Urban Places Thesis Studio, offered during the summer and led by an urban design practitioner with part-time involvement of MUD faculty. The summer thesis studio provides students with guidance leading to completion of the thesis by late summer and presentation to faculty and students during orientation week of fall semester. NOTE: Because this course is offered only during the summer, the UC Berkeley Academic Guide does not list it. For general and semester-specific descriptions of ENV DES 253, see Environmental Design Courses on the Architecture website.

An additional studio is selected from one of the graduate studios in the three departments. As advanced candidates, MUD students are expected to take a leadership role in these studios, assisting with the preparation, conduct, or evaluation of the studio and relating it to the content of the Master of Urban Design program. Students must also complete a course

that offers instruction in methods for urban design practice or research; a course in urban design history or theory; and elective courses related to the thesis topic and selected in consultation with MUD faculty. See the MUD Program Statement for further information, including sample programs.

Curriculum

|   |   |          |
|---|---|----------|
| Courses Required  |   |          |
| ENV DES 201   | Urban Design Fundamentals Studio                                  | 5        |
| ENV DES 251   | Discourses in Urban Design  | 3        |
| CY PLAN 298   | Group Studies   | 1        |
| ENV DES 252   | Thesis Research and Preparation                                   | 3        |
| ENV DES 253   | Thesis Studio   | 4        |
| Second Studio Requirement: Students must complete one of the following courses: |   | 5        |
| ARCH 202  | Graduate Option Studio [5]  |          |
| CY PLAN 248   | Advanced Studio: Urban Design/Environmental Planning [5]          |          |
| LD ARCH 202   | Design of Landscape Sites [5]                                     |          |
| LD ARCH 205   | Environmental Planning Studio [5]                                 |          |
| Methods Requirement: Students must complete one of the following courses        |   | 3-4      |
| LD ARCH C241  | Research Methods in Environmental Design [4]                      |          |
| LD ARCH C242  | Citizen Involvement in the City Planning Process [3]              |          |
| ARCH 209  | Special Topics in Architectural Design [1-4]                      |          |
| History/Theory Requirement: Students must complete one of the following courses |   | 2-3      |
| ARCH 219  | Special Topics in the Social and Cultural Basis of Design [1-4]   |          |
| LD ARCH C25   | Theories of Urban Form and Design [3]                             |          |
| LD ARCH 251   | Theories of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning [2] |          |
| MUD Summer Studio: Students must complete the following course:                 |   | 5        |
| ENV DES 253   | Thesis Studio [4]   |          |
| Electives relevant to thesis topic per approved study list                      |   | Variable |

Urban Design

Expand all course descriptions [+]Collapse all course descriptions [-]

## ENV DES 201 Urban Design Fundamentals Studio 5 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Fall 2019

An intensive studio involving collaborative work on problems that are large in scope, yet require attention to spatial organization and design details.

The studio course is offered each fall semester and required for incoming graduate students in the Master of Urban Design Program (MUD).

The course is also open to College of Environmental Design graduate students of advanced standing in the Master of City Planning Program/ Urban Design Concentration, the Master of Architecture and Master of Landscape Architecture Programs.

Urban Design Fundamentals Studio: Read More [\[+\]](#)

### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** Students enrolled in the Master of Urban Design program have priority. Others welcome with consent of instructor

### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar and 5 hours of studio per week

**Summer:** 10 weeks - 6 hours of seminar and 6 hours of studio per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Environmental Design/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

Urban Design Fundamentals Studio: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

## ENV DES 207 Design and Difference 4 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

This course explores contemporary debates around race, gender, sexuality, disability rights and other forms of embodied politics and considers their potential to transform the normative assumptions and practices of the built environment disciplines. Concepts such as self-abstraction, assimilation, and discourses of the “universal” or neutral body will be examined critically in relation to socially situated theories of power, identity, and activism. The course will investigate case studies of everyday objects, buildings and urban space that exemplify the creative limits and possibilities of embodied difference in the design process.

Weekly reading responses, class discussions, presentations, and a final project are required.

Design and Difference: Read More [\[+\]](#)

### Rules & Requirements

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Environmental Design/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

Design and Difference: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

## ENV DES 251 Discourses in Urban Design 1 or 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2021, Fall 2019, Fall 2018

The course is the first of three courses (ED251, ED252, ED253) directed toward the development of research and design proposals that advance the field of urban design. As the first course in the sequence, ED251 introduces topics and research methods in contemporary urban design. There is a lecture component (Section 1) that is open to the College and campus. Graduate students preparing for theses and professional reports in urban design will enroll in Section 2, which includes attending the lectures as well as a seminar that expands on the lecture topics by exploring various research and design methodologies.

Discourses in Urban Design: Read More [\[+\]](#)

### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** The one unit section is open to all students. The three unit section is for students enrolled in the Master of Urban Design program or those who have obtained the consent of the instructor

### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 1-3 hours of seminar per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Environmental Design/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

Discourses in Urban Design: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

## ENV DES 252 Thesis Research and Preparation 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2021, Spring 2020, Spring 2019

Seminar focuses on individual urban design interests, the design and research work that students are pursuing in other courses, and development of thesis or final design projects.

Thesis Research and Preparation: Read More [\[+\]](#)

### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** Students must be in the Master of Urban Design program or obtain consent of instructor

### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Environmental Design/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

Thesis Research and Preparation: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

## ENV DES 253 Thesis Studio 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2021 10 Week Session, Summer 2020 10 Week Session, Summer 2018 10 Week Session

A studio for Masters of Urban Design students aimed to support students during the final months of their thesis work. Faculty will hold bi-weekly individual desk critiques of student work and organize preliminary reviews to outside reviewers in preparation of the final review scheduled during the late August orientation week.

Thesis Studio: Read More [\[+\]](#)

### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** 252

### Hours & Format

**Summer:** 10 weeks - 3 hours of seminar and 7 hours of studio per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Environmental Design/Graduate

**Grading:** Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Thesis Studio: Read Less [\[-\]](#)

## ENV DES 298 Environmental Design Group Studies 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2015, Spring 2015, Fall 2014

Topics to be announced at the beginning of each semester.

Environmental Design Group Studies: Read More [\[+\]](#)

### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** Consent of instructor

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

### Hours & Format

#### Fall and/or spring:

4 weeks - 4-14 hours of directed group study per week

15 weeks - 1-4 hours of directed group study per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Environmental Design/Graduate

**Grading:** Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Environmental Design Group Studies: Read Less [\[-\]](#)