

Designs for the future

Big dreams and big plans, that's what urban planning gives scope for. It's just the right career for those whose interests range from science to social issues.

Would you like to develop modern cities soaked in their cultural context but connected to the world? Or design state-of-the-art transportation networks that make commuting a hassle-free experience? Would you like to sample how countries like Israel, Japan, Malaysia, and Singapore approach city planning? Do you have a keen interest in science but deliberate on social issues as well?

If yes, welcome to the exciting field of urban planning where you study the city as a 'physical, social, political entity' and understand land use patterns for homes and offices, the myriad relationships between them. Just as an architect plans a building, keeping in mind various functions of each space, an urban planner plans cities and towns such that the city is comfortable to live in and environmentally friendly, says P. Padmavathi, Director, School of Planning and Architecture, JNTU, Hyderabad.

Urban planning is not new in India. In fact the Institute of Town Planning was set up in New Delhi in 1949. And certain universities offered a masters programme in urban and regional planning at the post-graduate level.

But only recently a bachelor's programme in planning has been introduced and three institutions — School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, School of Planning and Architecture, JNTU, Hyderabad and Gurunank Dev University, Amritsar. This equips you to enter the field right after Plus II.

Interdisciplinary

"This subject provides a good

Masters courses

- IIT Kharagpur
- IIT Roorkee
- Centre for Environment Planning and Technology, Ahmedabad
- School of Architecture and Planning, Chennai
- Centre for Developmental Studies, Mysore
- Centre for Developmental Studies, Pune
- Government College for Engineering, Pune
- Barkatullah University, Bhopal
- Bengal Engineering College, University of Kolkata SCER College of Engineering and Technology, Gujarat
- Regional Engineering College, Nagpur

interface between technical and analytical aspects and social issues," says Dr. Padmavathi. Spread over eight semesters, it enables you to master basic engineering and architectural principles along with the contexts in which they must be applied, man and his relationship with the environment.

Hence a study of population growth, settlement geography, settlement sociology runs parallel with fundamentals of building structures, materials and construction principles.

You learn about the causes of migration and its impact, urbanisation and development of industrial cities, current trends in road development, planning traffic volumes based on road size, design of streets, squares, plazas, gardens, gnats, public parks at district, local and neighbour levels, even street furniture design are included into the course.

In urban settlement issues such as construction of storm water drains and water supply systems, sanitation and sewer systems,

collection; transportation and disposal of solid waste are taken up and students also work with planning agencies such as Hyderabad Urban Development Authority, Municipal Corporation, large construction companies, etc. in various projects to get real life experience.

Aerial and satellite imagery for planning (remote sensing) and geo-informatics for planning and developing planning information systems also forms part of the course.

At the masters level offered at over 13 institutions in the country you can specialise in city planning, regional planning, landscape design, transportation planning and environmental design and infrastructure planning. A variety of specialisations are available at SPA, Delhi and Centre for Environment Planning and Technology, Ahmedabad, says S. Kumar, Head of Department, Planning at JNTU.

Jobs

Students work for planning consultancies such as development alternatives or specks systems in using GIS applications in planning. Some join the State Public Service Commission, others opt for the Directorate of Town and Country Planning. Some also find jobs in organisations such as Andhra Pradesh Urban Services for the Poor and NGOs.

Research is another option that most students pursue.

Salaries range from Rs. 8,000 to Rs. 12,000. Log on to www.cpcb.com (comprehensive site of all planning institutions in India) or www.planning.org for more information.

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