



Planning pains? Don't panic: study abroad – undergraduate planning programmes in the USA and Canada

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We often have students hoping to cross-credit courses from a 'study abroad' semester to their BEPP/BEMP. It is really important to remember that the BEPP is accredited by the New Zealand Planning Institute. Consequently, it may be very hard to find equivalents for core planning courses. The most likely Universities to have courses that can be easily cross-credited to the BEPP degree are those from Universities that offer undergraduate degrees accredited by their own professional planning organisations.

In the USA professional planning recognition similar to NZPI full membership is through certification by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) which is an institute within the American Planning Association (APA). To be certified by the AICP you must have passed the AICP exam. This can be considered procedurally to be somewhat similar to the oral 'interview' that is required for full membership of the New Zealand Planning Institute. One of the paths to being eligible to sit the AICP certification exam is met partly by having completed a degree that has been determined by the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) to meet standards approved by the AICP and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) or recognized by the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP). Most PAB-accredited North American planning degrees are two year masters degrees. There are **only fourteen** Universities in the USA and **six** in Canada that have **accredited undergraduate degrees** (in 2013). I only have personal familiarity with the programme offered by East Carolina University (in North Carolina). It has a speciality in coastal planning, making it very relevant to NZ. It has

professionally-experienced, and friendly, student-oriented staff, cross-creditable courses and is engaged in study abroad programmes.

I do not know to what extent any of the other universities listed are engaged in study abroad programmes, but the following is a complete list of PAB-accredited USA and Canadian university undergraduate degrees (from the ACSP *Choosing a Career in Urban and Regional Planning (2013 Edition)*).

USA – Accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB)

- Alabama A & M University (B Sc in Urban Planning)
- Ball State University (in Indiana) (B Urban Planning and Development)
- California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (B Sc in City and Regional Planning)
- Californian State Polytechnic University, Pomora (B Sc in Urban and Regional Planning)
- East Carolina University (North Carolina) (B Sc in Urban and Regional Planning)
- Eastern Michigan University (B Sc or BA majoring in Urban and Regional Planning)
- Eastern Washington University (B A in Urban and Regional Planning)
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania (B Sc in Regional Planning)
- Iowa State University (B Sc in Community and Regional Planning)
- Michigan State University (B Sc in Urban and Regional Planning)
- Missouri State University (B Sc in Planning)
- University of Cincinnati (B Urban Planning)

- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (B A Urban Planning)
- University of Virginia (B Urban and Environmental Planning)

Canada (recognised by the Canadian Institute of Planners - CIP)

- Dalhousie University (B. Community Design Honours)
- Ryerson University (B Urban and Regional Planning)
- Universit  de Montreal (Baccalaureat en Urbanisme) – also accredited by PAB
- Universit  du Quebec a Montreal (Baccalaureat en Urbanisme)
- University of Northern British Columbia (B Urban and Regional Planning)
- University of Saskatchewan (B.A. in Regional and Urban Planning)
- University of Waterloo (B Environmental Studies Honours)

There are a number of other Universities in both Canada and the USA that offer planning degrees, but these are not accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board and so the courses they offer may not be as readily cross-creditable. I recommend looking first at PAB-accredited University degree offerings.