

Council Approval

Note: This form is intended to track the progress of a proposal (whether from Academic Affairs or Health Sciences) through the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils.

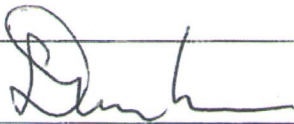
Proposal: Center for Ecological Planning & Design

This proposal needs to go through:

Undergraduate Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graduate Council	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Both Approvals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grad Approval/Undergrad Notification	<input type="checkbox"/>


This proposal has been approved by:

Chair of Undergraduate Council



Date: _____

Chair of Graduate Council



Date: 2/2/17

Once the appropriate signature(s) have been obtained, please forward this completed form to the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. *(NOTE: The SVP-AA is the Chief Academic Officer for the University of Utah and reports to the Board of Regents in this capacity. When necessary, the CAO will get a signature from the SVP-HSC.)*

Chief Academic Officer



Date: 2-12-17

Once the Chief Academic Officer's signature has been obtained, this approval document will be forwarded to the **Office of the Academic Senate**.

New Unit Description - Abbreviated Template

Section I: The Request

University of Utah requests approval to establish Center for Ecological Planning and Design effective 07/01/2017. This action was approved by the institutional Board of Trustees on .

Section II: Program Proposal

Administrative Unit Description/Rationale

Present a brief description of the unit. Describe the institutional procedures used to arrive at the action being proposed. Briefly indicate why a new administrative unit or change to the unit is justified. Are similar units offered elsewhere in the USHE or the State? State how the institution and the USHE benefit from the proposed unit or unit change.

This document proposes to create a Center for Ecological Planning and Design (CEPD). The challenges of cities and regions are too complex to be addressed within a single, or even several, fields of expertise. Too often, knowledge generated by research is separated from applications and decision-making by institutional and disciplinary silos and time lags. Housed jointly by the College of Architecture and Planning (CA+P) and the Global Change and Sustainability Center (GCSC), the CEPD will serve as a hub for interdisciplinary, community-oriented research on the full complexity of the built environment and of human settlements as social-ecological systems.

Mission: The goal of ecological planning and design is to create human habitat that is ecologically integrated, reflects local natural assets and community values, and enhances social, economic and ecological well-being. The mission of the CEPD will be to draw on multiple disciplines to understand and shape our environment by interweaving research and practice in human, biophysical, and built systems - *people, place and design*. By integrating planning and design processes with research, we seek to build in parallel both places and knowledge. In so doing, we strive to create communities that are adaptive to place, socially and ecologically just, and have high quality of life.

The proposed center builds on two existing centers in the College of Architecture and Planning: the Ecological Planning Center (EPC) and the Integrated Technology in Architecture Center (ITAC). The EPC was established with provisional approval in 2012, under the name Ecological Planning Center (EPC). It was founded based on a donation by Dr. Paula Swaner to the Department of City and Metropolitan Planning (CMP). The EPC has built a strong presence in CMP, enhancing the department's capacity to offer a specialization in Ecological Planning, recruit new faculty with research interests in resilience and planning for environmental change, and provide a bridge between the field of planning and other disciplines such as natural and social sciences and engineering. EPC faculty have been PIs and coPIs on multiple interdisciplinary grant applications and are active participants in several active grants, including the multi-institutional iUTAH EPSCoR project focused on water sustainability in Utah. The EPC has also taken a leadership role in creating the Strategic Vision for Red Butte Creek on campus, involving significant engagement across campus and with the broader community.

ITAC was established in 2004. The center name changed in 2009. The center is directed by Ryan E. Smith, Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Research + Community Engagement in the College of Architecture + Planning. The center performs built ecology research focused on buildings and the environment. ITAC has particular focus in renewable structural materials, construction efficiency, and market analysis for sustainable construction technologies. It has been funded by private and public institutions including the State of Utah, DOE, and USDA. The center is widely published and respected in architecture and built environment audiences. The center reputation has garnered awards from the ACSA, ARCC, EPA, ENR, MBI and NIBS. With this proposal, ITAC will dissolve and be integrated into the new CEPD. The director, Ryan Smith, will join the steering committee of the CEPD.

This document proposes to grant full center status to the former EPC, with three major changes. First, the name will change to become the Center for Ecological Planning and Design. Second, it will incorporate the resources, membership and projects of the former ITAC. Third, it will expand beyond the College of Architecture + Planning to become a joint center between CA+P and the Global Change and Sustainability Center. These changes reflect a broadening in scope beyond the field of planning to include an integration of disciplines that shape the built environment (architecture, planning, engineering, landscape architecture) and disciplines that study the built environment (ecology and other natural sciences, social science, etc.) By becoming a thematic research node within the GCSC, the CEPD will be able to engage the growing community of over a hundred faculty affiliated with the GCSC on discipline-neutral ground. This will enhance the University of Utah's capacity to be an intellectual leader in research on cities and the built environment, and its competitiveness for a range of major interdisciplinary research funding opportunities. Finally, the CEPD will provide a campus home and contact point for coordinating activities related to implementation of the Red Butte Creek Strategic Vision.

The CEPD will have a Director based in CA+P and an Associate Director based in another college and affiliated with the GCSC. The proposed individuals to hold these positions initially are, respectively, Dr. Sarah Hinners, Research Assistant Professor in City and Metropolitan Planning and Acting Director of the EPC since 2013, and Dr. Diane Pataki, Professor in Biology and Associate Dean of the College of Science. Both will also hold a position of Associate Director of the GCSC. The Director and Associate Director will report to the Dean of CA+P and to the Executive Director of the GCSC. The Director and Associate Director will administer the Center with the assistance and guidance of an interdisciplinary steering committee consisting of a minimum of six faculty from multiple colleges across campus, a liaison with the Environmental Dispute Resolution Program in the College of Law, and a member of the local planning and design professional community.

The new CEPD name, organizational structure, mission and goals have been discussed and agreed upon in meetings and conversations within and among all units within CA+P, the GCSC Executive Committee, current EPC and ITAC faculty and students, the Office of Sustainability, and the newly-recruited CEPD Steering Committee. This proposal passed with unanimous support from the CA+P College Council.

Similar units: Each of the top 10 planning schools, as ranked by Planetizen (a widely used online resource for those interested in urban planning), emphasize some element of environmental planning, however, the term "ecological planning" is used in only two other programs in the world, one in Vermont and the other in Norway. Although the subtle difference in nomenclature may seem insignificant, it reflects an evolution in thinking associated with a holistic approach to research and practice regarding the places we live. The term "ecological design" is widely used, and "urban ecological design" increasingly so, particularly in the field of landscape architecture, however while this field applies ecological principles in design, it does not also practice scientific inquiry. The CEPD proposes to develop approaches and practices that fully integrate research processes with the processes that shape the built environment.

Nationwide, about a dozen universities have units that combine some elements of ecological science, community-based planning processes, and design for sustainability. The most closely related of these, conceptually, is the Urban Ecology and Design Laboratory at Yale, which focuses on integrating urban ecological science with landscape design. Geographically, the closest is Community Engagement, Design and Research (CEDaR) at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Housed in the Environmental Design program, this center is design- and community-oriented but does not explicitly engage scientists and engineers within the center.

Within the Intermountain West, three universities have units that are at least superficially comparable. The University of Idaho's Building Sustainable Communities Initiative was established in 2006 to "prepare future public leaders, create and disseminate new knowledge, and assist communities and organizations in planning for sustainable development, sustainable efficient conservation planning and management, and sustainable human quality of life within and across bioregions." The Center for Collaborative Conservation at Colorado State University is "a place where all stakeholders come together to define, discuss, study and act on critical issues affecting the earth's ecosystems and the people who depend upon them." Finally, the Ecology Center at Utah State University "supports disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and graduate degree programs in the ecological and environmental sciences, broadly defined; it also provides professional information and advice for decision-makers about actions that affect the environment." Whereas the first two focus on planning and the third on ecology, none focuses on the relationship between them, the principal concern of the CEPD. The University of Utah's Department of City and Metropolitan Planning, offers the only accredited planning program in the states of Utah, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana, South Dakota, and North Dakota.

Creation of the CEPD at the University of Utah establishes the U and the state of Utah as "ahead of the curve" in thinking about, and developing novel approaches to address, the complexity and sustainability of human settlements. It builds upon the existing strong and nationally-recognized practice of collaborative planning in Utah, and shows a commitment to truly interdisciplinary, innovative research being invited by federal funding agencies such as the National Science Foundation and many private foundations. Here on campus, it provides an institutional structure that supports the University's sustainability efforts and stewardship of Red Butte Creek and other campus ecological amenities.

Consistency with Institutional Mission/Institutional Impact

Explain how the unit is consistent with the institution's Regents-approved mission, roles, and goals. Describe how the existing administrative structures support the proposed unit and identify new organizational structures that may be needed. What changes in faculty and staff will be required?

The CEPD will be an interdisciplinary research center, based on a mission that is grounded in the long-term wellbeing of human communities. By studying the complex 21st century challenges for human systems and ecosystems, the CEPD fulfills the University's mission to build knowledge and to conduct cutting edge research. An essential function of this research is to collaboratively solve problems and create opportunities within the larger community, thus fulfilling the University's mission to enrich public life. In addition, the CEPD fulfills the University's mission as a teaching institution, both by engaging graduate and undergraduate students in a wide range of Center projects and by building Center insights and activities into the classroom curricula of affiliated faculty. For example, the faculty engaged in building the CEPD's predecessor, the EPC, have also been central to developing the Urban Ecology undergraduate program and the Ecological Planning Masters specialization within the Department of City and Metropolitan Planning.

The CEPD is supported by CA+P with space, faculty, and a portion of the College's returned overhead. The partnership with the GCSC provides further support in the form staff assistance and the capacity for growth through engagement with faculty from across campus. In transitioning from the EPC to the CEPD, the Center's organizational structure is becoming formalized with an official multi-college Steering Committee, and a Director and Associate Director, who report to the Dean of CA+P and the Executive Director of the GCSC. This transition requires no new staff, faculty positions, or other resources.

Finances

What costs or savings are anticipated with the actions proposed? What new facilities or modifications to existing facilities or equipment are needed? Describe any budgetary impact on other programs or units within the institution. If new funds are required, describe expected sources of funds.

There are no additional costs associated with the creation of the CEPD. The center will use existing facilities and engage existing faculty lines. The center is supported by ongoing donations from the Swaner family, grants, and a portion of returned overhead from CA+P. Future inter-college

collaborations on research grants will follow the current model for interdisciplinary grants, in which funds and returned overhead are apportioned among the home colleges of participating faculty based on the role of each PI on the project.