



Q: How are MCP grads helped in their search for entry-level jobs in a planning profile? Especially since this is a discipline where I'm coming with little practical experience.

A: it's a lot of peer support for the career search as well as faculty support. Many students come in not too familiar with planning so I wouldn't worry about that. In addition, the program is intended for you to pick up the practical experience as you go. You get a lot of support. There are also career services for general interview/cv prep.

Q: I learnt from the webchat transcript that the MCP students have opportunities for TA and RA in their first year. It is the same with the MLA I?

A: - If you are doing the MLA I typically there are not teaching assistantships available unless you have a lot of experience pertinent to a specific topic, they require TA's for. Research assistantships are similar as well. Most of the time these are awarded by your interest in a topic the professors are working on. You could certainly reach out to the department and see if anyone is looking prior to your arrival but more often than not you get them in your second and third years. They are given as a stipend monthly but not offered as tuition relief.

Q: What are some challenges you did not expect of the MCP program?

A: great question! some of the challenges I felt were a little more on the personal side...your peers will be some really super smarty folks with tons of diff backgrounds...so just finding your voice while still learning can be a challenge...another big challenge was TIME MANAGEMENT! you're just always going to wish you had more hours in the day to work, sleep, socialize...etc. And aside from the challenges of learning new skills (ex. GIS), it's overall a really rewarding experience!

Q: Do MCP classes often fill to capacity?

A: some classes fill to capacity but professors in MCP tend to be very flexible if you are an MCP student. You tend to be prioritized if you are in the program. Students from outside the department try to get into classes though.

A: also, our department admins make sure to really keep track of people's schedules and will make sure that you are reserved for your required classes as a top priority when it comes to popular courses

Q: Where can I find out more about the process to apply for an MLA for a dual degree as I did not apply for both initially?

A: you would apply to that after you arrive, during the normal cycle (i.e. deadline in January). It does help that you are already in the School as your Weitzman faculty can write letters of recommendation for you.

Q: M.arch - Is the first year of the program focused more on a model-based design process or does it lean more parametric?

A: the first year varies across studios depending greatly on your professor. The main focus of the first year is to get everyone on the same page skill level wise since there are a lot

Q: I heard Penn students will have opportunities to apply for dual degree after they are enrolled. Is it possible, and if so, what's the general process?

A: You apply in the same way, the same timeline. You don't get charged an application fee, though, and you don't need to resubmit test scores and your undergrad transcripts. You still have to fill out a new application, with new recommendations, and portfolio, if needed.

Q: Did students find out about the diversity scholarship when they received their acceptance letters? Is there a way to reach out to someone about this and be considered for this again?

A: Unfortunately, all of the Diversity scholarships have been given out and yes, students find out with their admissions letter

Q: Is there a way to identify which faculty will be on leave for the next two years, so we can ensure the faculty who are aligned with our interests will still be on campus?

A: we don't know that. Generally, if a professor goes on sabbatical, it's just for one semester, so they would be around for the other 3 semesters

Q: Where could I see past international studio offerings ?

A: if you are looking for the landscape department, the department office could easily provide you a list of the last few years' international studios

Q: Are there any opportunities to still receive merit-based scholarships ?

A: There are times when a merit-based scholarship can be reconsidered. You would need to reach out directly to your department to request this.

Q: For MLA I students-should we prepare for GIS in advance?

A: While it would certainly benefit you, GIS is introduced in your first year through the media courses and will be covered extensively throughout your time here.

Q: MFA: Hi, was hoping to ask my question to an MFA student maybe you can answer, how would you define the relationship one has to faculty at the mfa level? is there a sense of group and collegiality , or do you get to build a privileged relationship with one "mentor"

A: we would highly recommend that you connect with our MFA student ambassador, Ilya. You can find his profile with his email address on our Meet Our Students page: <https://www.design.upenn.edu/meet-our-students>

Q: MCP: What can wait listed students do to improve their candidacy?

A: you might want to connect with Lisa Servon, express your interest in joining the program. I don't think there's anything else you can do, unfortunately.

Q: Are there any plans for a decision deadline extension given the COVID situation is continuing?

A: at this time the April 15th deadline is not being extended

Q: First year studios are done via lottery correct?

A: students aren't able to choose in first year studios for M.Arch but the rest of the semesters is a lottery system

Q:MCP: I wanted to ask about certificate courses such as Real Estate Design and Development. What changes would an MCP student have to make to their schedule to complete that? And do people pursuing a certificate alongside a main degree tend to extend their cost duration of finish within the two years?

A: students that pursue a certificate do not spend extra time trying to attain the certificate. Honestly it is not super necessary to both do a real estate design and development certificate and a real estate concentration but if you do want to do it, it can easily be added to the CPLN curriculum. You can take up to 20 units, are required to take 18, and 15 of them tend to be determined by the core and concentration requirements.

Q: I saw that it is possible to take the physics requirement during the summer. Is a calculus course also being offered? Or does the department suggest a particular online class to take?

A: we aren't offering a calculus course, but you should be able to find one online. Follow up with us at admissions@design.upenn.edu and we can suggest.

Q: Would you say there's a core set of transferrable skills each MCP brings out of the program? Also, would you say there's a specific theme of conversation/inquiry/approach in the MCP across all concentrations (e.g., social justice, climate change, etc.)?

A: yes, if you're asking on a per student basis...there are voodoo many interests! you named few, but others include housing, education, food policy, art, etc. The list goes on and on! No specific theme, but you will tend to find "your people" and make connections based on shared interests. also, there are a ton of clubs/one-off projects/internships/guest lectures that are sure to tap into your interests. I would say just keep an open mind as your interests are bound to widen while in the program.

Q: Obviously graduate studies at a design school are demanding, but are there efforts to promote healthy lifestyles/work-life balance, or is it up to the student to manage themselves?

A: yes, grad school is very demanding, but we want to make sure that you're taking care of yourself as well. I'm also a member of the student council and we have done a lot in the past year to promote health and wellness such as run club and bringing in therapy dogs. We also hosted a student "campfire" where we had milk and cookies and just sat and talked about anything on our minds or whatever interested you at that time. We also hosted badminton and ping pong tournaments to give students a time to just enjoy a night off and win some fun prizes. This is just through the design school and the grad center and GAPSA do a lot of other student health and wellness events

Q: MCP: Are there any updates on any delays/deferrals in the fall schedule at this juncture, given the current situation? Where can I find them?

A: As of now our fall semester is scheduled as normal. If anything changes, we will let everyone know immediately.

Q: I know MCPs can take courses across other schools at Penn, but how frequently are MCPs actually able to register for those courses (assuming students in those respective schools are prioritized during registration)?

A: they are pretty available...when you register for classes outside of Penn, the listing will tell you the cap of cross-listers. so that can help with decision making. but for the most part, if you list a particular course a high priority and/or reach out to that prof during advance registration, chances are you will get into the course

Q: I know you will be offering physics and architectural history for admitted architecture students will these classes overlap with the summer design intensive for non-architecture students?

A: they normally are offered at the same time.

Q: For the MSHP students, what do you see as the greatest advantages of the program and what have you enjoyed most so far in the program? I'm interested specifically in architectural conservation if there are any con sci people here- thank you!

A: I think the MSHP program benefits from a wide array of students with different backgrounds. I've enjoyed having conversations with classmates who bring different perspectives to some of the theoretical courses.

Q: MCP: Thanks Anthony! I'm sorry I didn't see Real estate as a concentration. That's why I thought the certificate is the only option. It's not listed among the 6 concentrations listed with the MCP program. Am I checking something wrong? Also does pursuing a certificate add to your program costs.

A: Sorry, Public Private Partnership (PPD) and Real estate are the same. I just refer to it as real estate.

Q: Has anyone pursued the certificate in Urban Resilience? If so, what was your experience?

A: we don't have any students currently logged on that are pursuing the Urban Resilience Certificate. It is our newest certificate program. But we would suggest that if you are interested in learning more about it, you contact the Program Director, Matthijs Bouw. You can find his email address on the Urban Resilience Certificate page here: <https://www.design.upenn.edu/all-degrees-certificates/urban-resilience>

Q: Do many, or any, MArch students work at firms nearby part time during the school year? Anyone have any insight on how that impacts your study/experience?

A: I will tell you that it is very difficult to do and not many students do it. There are two students in the second year that I know that currently work one day a week off campus at a Philly firm. You have to make sure that your schedule allots for this because there are certain courses you cannot waive out of. I wouldn't recommend it for your first year, but if you feel it's something you can take on once you get the hang of things and have more experience with time management, then it is definitely not impossible

Q: does adding a certificate increase your tuition cost?

A: No.

Q: MCP - Given that planning methods and perceptions can differ on the east coast compared to the west coast, is it disadvantageous to obtain an education on the east coast but move west, or vice versa?

A: great question....I considered west coast schools in my decision-making....I think for me it boiled down to several things: 1) your area interests, 2) after school jobs 3) family + friends 4) cost and 5) the program style. I don't think there is a negative for going either way, but I think if you break down certain factors you'll find yourself leaning towards a certain way...or you can be like me...I've pretty much lived in every NE city (NYC, DC, Philly, Baltimore)...so don't let geography stop you!

A: I do know that we have a lot of alumni who now work on the West Coast: LA, Bay Area, and Seattle.

Q:MCP: Is there any place where i can find information about campus placements and the kinds of jobs and places people go to? Are most students recruited through campus placements?

A: I would e-mail Kate at cityplan@design.upenn.edu. She is the city planning overlord (maybe not her official title) and know where students mostly go. There is also a career services survey that I believe Lauren is about to post a link to!

A: one resource is our Career Services' Post-Graduate Outcomes survey data here: <https://careerservices.upenn.edu/post-graduate-outcomes/>. You can see the jobs people took after graduation for the past 4 years. Though of course it only represents those that respond to the survey.

Q: Any students here who came into the program (MSHP or others) from working full time (I've been working for 10 years since graduating from undergrad)? What was the transition from professional life back to school like? Thanks!

A: Yes, I worked for 4 years before returning to school. The transition was interesting, and I think my work experience was beneficial. I was able to begin school treating classes and classwork like a job. It helped to keep me on a schedule and maintain work/life balance.

A: I worked for 6 years after undergrad before coming to Penn. The biggest difference to me is that grad school makes me feel like I should always be doing something (there's always work to do!), while I was a little better at "turning off" outside the office. I've found that establishing really distinct breaks for myself has been important. on the other hand, my work before grad school was in the public sector and the effects of it were very tangible, so doing grad schoolwork, which really only affects me, has been in a lot of ways less stressful. :)

Q:Would I also be able to get any idea of an average graduating students salary package?

A: I believe that data is included in the survey data as well.

Q: can you share avg starting salary for MCP graduates?

A: it's the same link I provided above. I just checked and they do include average starting salary and a salary range.

Q: Where can I learn more about visiting artists and architects teaching studios and giving lectures? Are there any courses that cross over with work experience/ built projects?

A: we normally post our visiting speakers at the beginning of each semester. Our chair sends out invites to a different designer and as they accept the schedule is made. There is a link for all of our events <https://www.design.upenn.edu/architecture/graduate/events>. Professors also bring in guest speakers to talk to their classes from different countries, schools and disciplines,

Q: MCP: what would be the difference in pursuing real estate as a concentration versus as a Certificate? How would the course structure differ?

A: my concentration is PPD. The main difference is that the real estate certificate requires courses at Wharton. If you are enrolled in the certificate, you get first dibs to the available seats the planning department has access to at Wharton in specific courses. Otherwise, like Anthony said there isn't much overlap. It would depend if you have more interest in another concentration then taking the certificate would help to specialize you in those courses and provide you access to them.

Q: Can you speak to the MCP alumni network spread/engagement in NYC and abroad?

A: I would email Kate and ask her about the network there. I would also look into LinkedIn and see what you can find when filtering for location. There are certainly a great number of students that move to NYC after the Penn MCP. When you are a student, you also have access to Penn's larger alumni network with an account for Quaker Net. it allows you to search alum by location, company, program, and interests which was really helpful for my job search.

Q: Are there any recent collaborative endeavors between city planning and architecture discipline

A: there is an interdisciplinary studio that combines architecture, planning, landscape, and an MFA student even took it. There are also opportunities for architecture students to take city planning classes. I took one last semester and it was one of my favorite classes at Penn

Q: if I take PPD as a concentration, I would still be taking classes at Wharton, but won't get dibs on the seats in those courses?

A: Not necessarily. You can complete all your requirements for the PPD concentration without Wharton classes, but they can be used as substitutes for courses in finance and management. Since seats are limited, they give first preference to RE certificate students, then PPD concentration planning students, then they are open to the rest of the school.

Q: Reposting my previous Q here which hasn't been answered: What would you say makes the Penn MCP stand apart from the MCP programs at MIT and Harvard?

A: sure, I considered MIT and did apply to Harvard. Truthfully, I just couldn't make the deadline for MIT (lol)...it was so early....but I do have friends there that love it....their only complaints are bc it could be a little "too theory based" if that makes sense...as for Harvard...truthfully I wasn't impressed/intrigued...the facilities are beautiful but I felt there was too little structure around the curriculum and I felt a lot of people at the open house couldn't give me any wow factors about the program except it's "Harvard"...plus I also felt the city planning program was in the shadows of their arch program which is their darling. so, for me, I wanted a really practical program where I could walk away with tools...the Penn faculty is awesome, and I really connected with the chair of our program...also philly is an amazing city...and overall it just felt right during my school visit

Q: has anyone compared Penn MCP to area competitors like UVA? Why Penn?

A: I would just not that one big factor for me in choosing an MCP program was the city that you are in. I would just keep that in mind when considering programs!

Q: Are there additional scholarships that become available to students and can be applied for before your second year?

A: there is a Witte scholarship for 50K for one MCP student going into 2nd year. It is a competition, but the format may change. In addition, there are tons of scholarships available around Penn once you are here. It can be overwhelming, for instance, I got one for studying Arabic. It is called FLAS.

A: no, whatever scholarship you are given will remain with you during your academic career as long as you stay in good academic standing. There is no option to reapply for scholarship before your second year

A: to clarify other than the Witte that Anthony is talking about outside scholarship opportunities. Your 'Weitzman' scholarship cannot be reapplied for

A: yes, outside scholarships can be overlapped with your Weitzman scholarship

Q: we sadly can't have that immediate "instinct" upon visiting, anything you'd suggest as a stand-in to try to get that sense virtually?

A: you might have more of a sense of the School during the Open House! I'll be sending you more information about that tomorrow. We have prerecorded sessions that you'll be able to view over the weekend, and then live chats on Monday with faculty, staff, and students.

A: yea, totally understandable! so the def attend the virtual open house on 4/6!!!!!!! talk to as many people as you can. reach out via email as you come across us and no question is too silly!

Q: following up on your response. Would you say the Penn program is balanced between theory and practical design application or does it lean towards either side?

A: def a balance of both theory and practical design...you'll get a good foundation in your first year and then your electives are all yours to tailor as you'd like!