

Michigan State University
School of Planning, Design and Construction
Graduate Certificate Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the Graduate Certificate Program?

A: The Graduate Certificate Program (“GCP”) offers graduate level education designed for built environment professionals and current MSU students pursuing careers related to the built environment. GCP consists of two offerings presented by the Michigan State University School of Planning, Design and Construction (“SPDC”): The *Real Estate Development and Construction* Certificate (“**REDC**”); and the *Urban Resilient Redevelopment* Certificate (“**URR**”).

Q: What is the **School of Planning, Design and Construction**?

A: SPDC is the home of MSU programs related to the built environment. Its professional programs are **Construction Management, Interior Design, Landscape Architecture, and Urban and Regional Planning**.

Q: How does a graduate certificate differ from a master’s degree?

A: GCP offers graduate level content and academic rigor similar to SPDC’s master’s degree programs, but it is not a degree program. Over a 9-credit curriculum, GCP requires less commitment of time and money than a typical 40-credit master’s degree program. GCP offers flexibility between academic pursuit and full-time employment, whereas a master’s degree typically requires full-time, on-campus study over multiple years.

Q: Are the teaching faculty different in the GCP and master’s programs?

A: No. Unlike certificate programs at most institutions, REDC and URR are taught by the regular, world-class faculty of the School of Planning, Design and Construction.

Q: Upon earning a graduate certificate, will I be considered a graduate of **Michigan State University**?

A: Yes

Q: May the credits earned in the Graduate Certificate Program be applied towards a master’s degree at SPDC?

A: Yes, all credits earned in either REDC or URR may be applied towards the **Master of Science in Construction Management** and **Masters of Science in Urban and Regional Planning** degree programs. GCP credits may also be used as electives towards other graduate degrees at

Michigan State University depending on the specific program requirements. Please consult with an academic advisor for additional information.

Q: Are courses offered strictly online?

A: Yes

Q: May I take the courses on my own time and at my own pace?

A: Yes and no. Each lecture and assignment is recorded and available online so that they may be viewed—and reviewed—at times which fit *your* schedule. However, lectures are rolled out on a timeline spanning the entire semester so that students proceed more or less at the same pace.

Q: May I enroll in GCP as an undergraduate student?

A: Only undergraduates currently enrolled at Michigan State University may enroll in GCP.

Q: How long does it take to earn a graduate certificate?

A: Each certificate requires completion of 3 courses, each consisting of 3 credit hours. REDC requires a 10-month commitment—Fall and Spring semesters plus the shortened Summer I semester. URR requires an 8-month commitment—Fall semester, along with both Summer I and Summer II.

Q: May I start the program during any of the 3 semesters, or is it sequenced to begin Fall Semester.

A: You may begin either certificate program at any point in the cycle.

Q: May I pursue both the REDC and URR certificates at the same time?

A: Yes

Q: Must the courses be taken consecutively in order to earn either certificate.

A: No, but is highly advised to take all 3 courses in succession since each course is only offered once per year.

Q: How much does it cost to complete a graduate certificate?

A: Tuition is \$1,090 per credit hour for a total of \$9,810.

Q: Is tuition assistance available through MSU?

A: Nothing specific to GCP is available at this time. However, MSU employees and their dependents may qualify for tuition assistance.

Q: What materials are required to apply for admission?

A: Proof of a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution; a personal statement of career goals & objectives; and three (3) professional or academic letters of recommendation (as required by MSU). A bachelor's degree is not required for current MSU undergraduates.

Q: Are any standardized exams required for admission?

A: No

Q: How do I apply to the graduate certificate programs?

A: Applications are completed and submitted on line at anr.msu.edu/spdc/programs/graduate-certificate-program.