

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2020-2021

### University of Arizona

## School of Geography, Development, and Environment

## Master's in Development Practice Student Handbook

**Updated:** July 10, 2020

This Handbook serves as a policy reference guide for students, faculty and administrators affiliated with the Master's in Development Practice (MDP) program at the University of Arizona, School of Geography, Development & Environment (SGDE). It covers topics such as curriculum and degree requirements, standards of academic performance and conduct, registration, guidelines for graduation, tuition and fees, funding and financial aid, grievance procedures, professional development resource, and various related University of Arizona policies and regulations. In addition to the policies outlined in the MDP Student Handbook, students, faculty and administrators are subject to all applicable university-wide policies. Please consult these three essential UA Graduate College websites for the most current policy information: 1) Graduate College, <a href="http://grad.arizona.edu/degreecert">http://grad.arizona.edu/degreecert</a>; and 3) New and Current Students, <a href="http://grad.arizona.edu/current-students">http://grad.arizona.edu/current-students</a>.

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## I. Academic Affairs

The curriculum of the Master's in Development Practice (MDP) Program equips students with the insights, knowledge, skills, and experiences needed to successfully pursue a career in the field of sustainable development.

Insights are drawn from an interdisciplinary selection of courses in the natural sciences, public health, social sciences, and management. Knowledge focuses on both global and domestic challenges relating to poverty reduction, societal inclusion, environmental justice, and community capacity building. Skills encompass the analytical, statistical, programmatic, and managerial, while experiences derive from an intensive summer field practicum on a topic and in a global location of students' choosing.

Students in the MDP Program earn a practice-oriented professional degree and have learned the limits of top-down methods, the importance of context-specific solutions, the value of participatory and community-based approaches, and the imperative to prioritize the needs of under-resourced and socially-excluded populations. The MDP curriculum can be tailored for those early in their careers as well as those with prior professional experience in development.

### **Degree Requirements**

Over the course of 22 months students complete 47 credits of development-focused coursework, including a combination of core, elective, and integrative work.

Students begin by taking required core courses and other introductory activities with their cohort the first year.

During the summer between their two years of study, MDP students complete an intensive hands-on field practicum in their field of concentration and at a destination chosen in consultation with MDP faculty.

Students apply knowledge and skills gained during the first year of study to their practicum. Then they return with new insights for the second year to distil the findings from their summer projects, to complete more specialized coursework, and to apply their experiences to the pursuit of new careers in development practice.

During the two academic years, many students also gain valuable experience as teaching assistants or research assistants, working directly with UA professors. Some students also carry out internships with local organizations in the Tucson area that work on development-related issues.

Although variation is sometimes possible in some factors such as sequencing of courses, number of semesters, and timing of the practicum, students should plan to undertake the standard full 22-month program beginning in a fall semester. Changes to the standard program must be approved in advance by the MDP Director.

#### Overview of Courses

Adopting an interdisciplinary approach to development practice, students must take a combination of required core courses.

Unless a waiver is granted because a directly equivalent course has already been completed for graduate credit at another institution, these courses include the following.

Note that not all courses are offered in all semesters, so the sequencing of the courses may vary somewhat from year to year and student to student.

#### **Social Sciences**

- DVP 601: Principles of Social Science for Development
- DVP 602: The Role of Culture in Sustainable Development
- Other electives of your choice (which for many students will be in economics)

#### **Natural Sciences**

- DVP 620: Introduction to Natural Systems
- DVP 621: Natural Systems Management: Applications
- Other electives of your choice

#### **Health Sciences**

• At least one elective (A recommended course is HPS 533: Global Health)

#### Management

- DVP 630: Essential Management Principles for Development
- Other electives of your choice (A recommended course is PA 582: Managing to Collaborate on Environmental and Natural Resource Conflicts)

Additionally, students are required to take **integrative coursework**, which includes the following:

- DVP 600: Foundations of Development/ Boot Camp
- DVP 640: Methods in Development Practice
- DVP 641: The Global Classroom
- DVP 642A: Cross-cohort professional development seminar
- DVP 694A: Summer Field Practicum
- DVP 909: MDP Culmination Project

Along with integrative course work and courses in the Core curriculum, students may take further elective courses in their chosen areas of specialization. Students may consult this <u>suggested list of electives</u> or discuss other course options with their advisors. Note that not all courses will be offered every semester, and that some courses may have pre-requisites.

Please also visit our page with examples of prior summer field practicums.

The MDP program is located within the School of Geography and Development, which offers a range of courses in the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). As appropriate for MDP students' particular interests and goals, we encourage enrollment in GIS courses.

It is also highly recommended that all MDP students have completed at least some coursework in statistics before starting their first semester, and also take an additional statistical analysis course related to their particular area of focus.

### **Advising & Mentoring**

Success in the MDP program relies on effective relationships between the student, their advisors, and their professors. Upon arrival in the program, new students meet with the MDP Director and Assistant Director to discuss their goals and interests. The Director and Assistant Director will be the student's primary contact throughout their time in the MDP program and are available to advise students on course selection, practicum planning, professional development, the final report, and other matters.

However, students are also highly encouraged to seek out, develop, and maintain informal mentoring relationship with different faculty members and practitioners affiliated with the MDP program. The Director and Assistant Director will guide students toward potential mentors who have professional experience related to the student's field of interest. Students should also seek out advice from faculty whose courses they take as well as with professional practitioners or alumni who are occasionally invited to MDP events such as brown-bag lunches.

## **Plan of Study**

In consultation with and approval from the MDP, each student is required to develop a Plan of Study outlining a list of proposed courses the student intends to take and when.

The Plan of Study should be completed as early as possible during the first few months of the program and must be submitted to the Graduate College no later than the second semester. The plan can be amended later as needed. The form can be submitted through <u>GradPath</u> on <u>UAccess</u>. There is a one-time submission fee associated with this form.

On GradPath, students may be prompted to submit names for their committee. As the MDP program does not require a Master's thesis, students do not need to form an advisory committee. In GradPath,

students should tick the box indicating "no committee" and instead write in the MDP Director's name as their advisor.

## Registration

Students can use UAccess to register for all regular graduate courses (i.e., courses with numbers 500 or above). Students must first get approval from the MDP Director before registering for Independent Study, practicum, or MDP project credits. Following approval, students should contact the Program Coordinator (Liz Cordova) who can manually register them.

Students will receive an e-mail alert from the Graduate College notifying them about their registration window. Students can also register for classes during open enrollment following the priority registration period. International students cannot register for classes until after they have attended the University of Arizona orientation for international students. In order to avoid late fees or other inconveniences, students should consult these <u>dates and deadlines</u> outlined by the Office of the Registrar, and <u>these</u> from the Bursar's Office.

#### **Course Load**

Students typically enroll in 9-12 credits each semester depending on their plan of study. Students can take a maximum of 16 credits each semester. More can be taken with approval from the Director, but this is not advised. International Students must be enrolled in a minimum of credits to maintain their student visa status, and should consult International Student Services for more information. Likewise, students receiving a Graduate Assistantship (TA or RA position) must be enrolled in a minimum of 6 credits.

### **Course Waivers and Substitutions**

Requests for a course waiver or substitutions for a single required course may be approved at the discretion of the MDP Director. If a student wishes to waive or substitute two or more courses, this requires approval from the Graduate College.

## **Desk space, Computing, and Printing**

MDP Students requiring office space in SGDE may request a desk from Amanda Percy, the Administration Manager. Desk space for MDP students is located in the graduate student pod areas on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors of ENR2.

Students who only require occasional access to a computer rather than permanent desk space can use the computers located in the Majors Lab on the 5th floor of ENR2. Students with laptops can also work in the Research Room on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. All students can obtain permission to print on the 5th floor printers by submitting a service request via <u>SBS Ticket Dog</u>.

## **Academic Standards and Satisfactory Progress**

At the start of every Spring semester, each MDP student is required to meet with the MDP Director and/or Assistant Director to discuss their progress toward completion of the MDP degree. Students will have the opportunity to discuss the courses they have completed and their plans for future coursework,

the field practicum, the final report, and graduation. If a student is failing to make satisfactory progress, the Director will recommend a corrective course of action.

#### **Leaves of Absence**

Students may request a leave of absence for one semester or one year to be approved by the MDP Director. Leaves of absence are approved on a case-by-case basis depending on the situation. If a student requires additional leave after completion of the initial leave of absence, another one-semester or one-year period of leave may be requested. Students who do not return at the end of the approved leave or who do not enroll for a semester without being granted official leave of absence will be considered to be making unsatisfactory academic progress.

#### **Time Limits**

Although it is not expected that students would need this much time, there is a seven year limit on all graduate coursework at the University of Arizona (excluding leaves of absence.)

#### **Grievance Procedure**

The MDP Program at Arizona prides itself on fostering a community of practice between and among students, faculty, staff and partners. As such, we encourage frequent and open communication between students and their professors or other advisers. We feel this kind of honest and ongoing communication is the best way to maintain good working relations and to find mutually satisfactory resolutions to conflicts before they start. Should a problem arise, it is important that students first try to seek resolution directly with the party involved. This can be done in writing or in person. The student may also seek the guidance or assistance of the MDP Director or the SGDE Director in resolving the problem. If informal attempts at conflict resolution are unsuccessful, the student may file a formal grievance following Graduate College guidelines. The decision to file a formal grievance will not subject the student or any other party involved to reprisal by the MDP program, faculty advisors, SGDE or the University. Nor will a student's grades, evaluations, recommendations or other performance measure be affected by this procedure.

## II. Financial Considerations

### **Costs of attendance**

Costs of attendance vary from semester to semester and also depend upon factors including: the number of credits being taken; Arizona resident v. non-resident status; outside vs. university-provided health insurance; costs of books and other course-related expenses; and personal choices regarding housing, transportation, and food. There is also an MDP program fee and other mandatory fees that cover factors such as library access.

For current information about the cost of attending graduate school at the University of Arizona, visit the website of <u>The Graduate College</u>. Costs for each semester include, at a minimum, tuition, program fees, other mandatory fees, and books.

For further information about scholarship and financial aid, visit the website of the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and also see below for other details.

Students should plan for financing <u>4 full semesters in residence in Tucson</u> AND <u>all of the</u> expenses (such as tuition and fees) for the summer practicum.

#### Please note the following:

- Tuition is subject to change at any time;
- Some courses may have additional course fees or course related expenses. Refer to the <u>Schedule of Classes</u> for details;
- The University of Arizona reserves the right to change the fees, policies, procedures, rules, regulations, requirements for graduation, course offerings and any other contents of this web site at any time;
- Overall cost of attendance extends beyond tuition to include other factors include a number of different fees and expenses;
- Travel to Arizona from places outside the state or the country is an additional expense;
- Expenses related to processing visas or other necessary activities may be an additional expense;
- Exact costs vary and may be more for international and out-of-state students.

## **Practicum-related costs:**

During the summer between the two years, all students are <u>required</u> to register for the field practicum (DVP 694a). Depending upon its scope the practicum is taken for 3, 4, 5, or 6 credits (to be determined in consultation with the MDP Director).

Even if the practicum is taking place off campus, the University charges tuition and fees for the completion of practicum credits.

The practicum must be carried out in the summer; likewise and tuition and fees for DVP 694a must be paid for <u>before</u> the practicum begins (i.e., in late May).

Fortunately, UA summer courses are charged for all students at the Arizona resident rate (regardless of a student's residency status). The exact cost will vary depending upon how many credits are taken.

Since financing (e.g., federal loans) for summer courses may be subject to different rules and restrictions than that during the semester, students should factor their summer expenses in their planning for the summer. For instance, some students make use of their spring semester federal loan availability to cover some summer costs.

Students generally cannot continue their work as a teaching assistant (TA) or research assistant (RA), particularly if they are carrying out their practicum in any location other than Tucson.

Additional costs typically associated with the summer practicum include air travel, ground travel, lodging, food, and international travel insurance. (See next section for more about the practicum, as well as the MDP Guide for International Travel, which will be provided to all students during the first semester of study).

The MDP Program will work with students to try to secure funding from sources within the University, from outside sources, and from organizations that host the practicum (especially in countries abroad). Most MDP students are successful in obtaining funding for many of their practicum expenses, but this requires a proactive effort on the part of each individual student.

# **Finding Funding and Fellowships**

There are numerous sources of funding available for completion of the Master's in Development Practice (MDP) at UA. These include external funding sources, internal funding sources, and opportunities for paid Graduate Assistantships of different types.

**U.S. residents**, make sure that you file a <u>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</u>. Apply as early as possible for financial aid and make sure your funding is spread across the entire program (i.e., fall, summer, and spring semesters). For a list of competitive graduate funding opportunities, please consult the <u>Pivot</u> and <u>GRAPES</u> databases.

*International students*, there are a number of awards available to fund, on a competitive basis, graduate education in the U.S. <u>One useful listing</u> is provided by Swarthmore College. To learn more about funding for international students, please contact us at <u>MDPAdmissions@email.arizona.edu</u>.

## **Graduate Assistantships**

A TA-ship refers to a "teaching assistantship" and a RA-ship refers to a "research assistantship". Both positions qualify as "graduate assistantships" (GA-ships) and come with certain benefits with regard to tuition, health coverage, and payment of a stipend depending on the level of employment.

Graduate Assistants in the MDP program are usually placed within the School of Geography and Development, but may also on their own initiative pursue positions in other departments or programs within the University. The program will from time to time share information about such opportunities, but students should also be proactive in terms of reaching out to individual professors, as well as departments or programs whose work relates to their interests.

In order to be considered for a Graduate Assistant position, a graduate student must:

- 1 **Be admitted to a graduate degree-seeking program**. Certificate-only programs do not satisfy this requirement. Furthermore, Law, Medicine and Pharmacy students are not normally eligible for a GA position unless concurrently enrolled in a regular degree-seeking program.
- 2 **Have a minimum GPA of 3.0.** If a student is newly admitted, the admission GPA is considered for this requirement. A student must also maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 during their appointment. Appointing departments may also require a higher GPA.
- 3 **Be enrolled in at least 6-graduate level units**. Undergraduate, Outreach, or audited courses do not satisfy this requirement. Appointing departments may also require a higher enrollment.

Appointing departments may also have additional criteria that a graduate student must meet in order to be appointed into a Graduate Assistant/Associate position. Note that TA and RA positions are ordinarily not available to students until their second semester of study.

For more information on eligibility, please consult the <u>GA Manual</u>. For more information on the benefits provided to GAs, please visit <u>Benefits of Employment</u>. For any questions or concerns regarding this information, please contact <u>gahelp@grad.arizona.edu</u>

## **Qualified Tuition Reduction/Educational Assistance Program**

The Arizona Board of Regents provides a Qualified Tuition Reduction (QTR) and Educational Assistance Program (EAP) that enables eligible active and officially retired employees, their spouses, and dependent children to enroll in courses of study at reduced tuition rates. You can read more about QTR on the UA Educational Benefits page.

## **Peace Corps Fellow Program at the University of Arizona**

The Coverdell Peace Corps Fellows Program allows Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) to attend the University of Arizona with reduced expenses while serving in an internship that benefits an underserved domestic community. For more information about this program and to apply, please visit the <u>UA Coverdell Program</u>. You can also read more about the <u>current Coverdell Fellows in the MDP Program</u>.

For further general advice, see this <u>article on how students can finance studies in international development</u>

#### III. Practicum

A key feature of the MDP program is a summer practicum that creates a structured opportunity for field-based learning within an existing development project or program. Students can undertake this field practicum with international partners abroad; at the headquarters of national or international organizations and agencies located in Washington, D.C. or elsewhere; or with local projects situated in the Southwest/borderlands region.

Although students may choose the site and type of organization based on their interests, the partner organization and the nature of the work must be related to the practice of sustainable development and related issues (including global public health, natural resource management, gender empowerment, education, youth development, livelihoods, agricultural and rural development, etc.) Although the position may involve some administrative tasks, the summer field practicum or internship should primarily be substantive and professional in nature. Finally, although students may work with smaller, grass-roots community organizations, such organizations must be registered with the proper local authorities and may not be an individual or family owned organization or for-profit business. Summer practicums normally last between 8 and 12 weeks of full-time work (30-40 hr/week minimum), although highly structured 6 weeks programs may be acceptable. The work commitment can be intense, especially if the practicum involves a lot of travel to and from a remote field site. Students should be prepared to work independently with little supervision.

The purpose of the summer practicum is to:

- Gain first-hand experience with project management techniques including assessment and analysis, project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and report.
- Integrate development practice with knowledge of cross-cutting development issues including gender, education, environment, agriculture, health, infrastructure, water, livelihoods, and community development.
- Develop a capacity for fostering community participation in development projects.
- Identify effective strategies and policies to advance sustainable development at the local, national and global levels.
- Demonstrate critical self-reflection and analysis of preconceived attitudes, beliefs and biases and how they impact development practice on both an individual and organizational level.
- Strengthen inter-personal and cross-cultural communication and problem-solving skills.
- Communicate project achievements and challenges to multiple audiences using a variety of media, including project reports, policy briefs, web writing, presentations, videos, social media, etc.

For more information, students may visit the practicum page of the MDP website.

#### **Finding and Choosing and Practicum Partner**

Students should begin to think about possible directions for their practicum experience early on. While deciding on a seemingly endless array of possible organizations to work with may seem like a daunting task, this task can be managed by first defining one's own professional goals and interests. For example, do you primarily want to work on hands-on development project implementation, or development research and policy making? Do you prefer to work more with local, grassroots community organizations, national agencies, or international non-governmental organizations? What themes are you most interested in or passionate about (e.g. education, gender empowerment, food security, health, etc.) What skills do you have or would you like to development (e.g., monitoring and evaluation, data management, program design, project management, communications, etc.). Do you see yourself based in the field or in an office headquarters? Finally, in what region do you want to work? Bear in mind, it is not uncommon for development professionals to start in one region and move to another, or to gain experience working in the field before moving to the office headquarters. What is most important for you at this stage is to start zeroing in on your topic and skill specializations (e.g. monitoring and evaluation of health projects.) Focus on skills that could be transferable to any location.

Once you are ready to start researching field internship opportunities, you can begin by pursuing online jobs sites like Idealist, Devex, and ReliefWeb. Organizations like Care International, Mercy Corps, or World Vision, as well as agencies like USAID and the World Bank, also list internships opportunities on the websites. Students should bear in mind that these larger organizations receive hundreds of applications and are often take much longer to respond (if they respond at all.) This is another reason why you want to start applying as soon as possible. In addition, consider contacting local field or national offices of larger international organizations. Inquiring directly with a program manager will often get you a faster response than applying to a website. Finally, make use of personal networks and existing partnerships (below), as these are often the best ways to get your foot in the door. Please remember, though, when using the personal contacts and connections of your advisers you are putting their reputation and the reputation of the Arizona MDP program on the line. Try to avoid burning bridges both for yourself and for the students who will come after you.

#### **International Partners**

MDP students have conducted their practicums in association with a wide array of international organizations (you can see <u>some examples on the MDP website</u>). Students have identified potential international partners through contacts of MDP and other faculty and alumni, through their own networks, and through postings for summer positions made by various organizations. Students considering an international practicum are encouraged to begin identifying a potential practicum topic, site, and partner no later than the November prior to the scheduled start of the practicum.

#### **Local Partners**

Although the Arizona MDP program does not currently have any formal memoranda of understanding with and local organization, students have undertaken their practicums locally before, and we are committed to supporting students who choose to undertake their field practicum experience here in Tucson or elsewhere in the Southwest border region. Development is not just something that happens "over there," but here in our own communities as well. We have many contacts with local city and county government as well as local non-profit organizations working on a variety of issues related to sustainable development. Please let the MDP Director know is this is something that interests you.

## **Expectations and Code of Conduct**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional and ethical practice while undertaking their summer field practicum, and to remember that they are representing the Arizona MDP program. This includes:

- Maintaining courteous and timely communication with the partner agency prior to departure and upon arrival.
- Complete all project assignments and duties in a timely and professional manner to the best of your ability.
- Respecting the guidelines of professional and culturally-appropriate dress and appearance as directed by the partner agency.
- Adhering to the partner agency's policies regarding working hours and holidays.
- Maintain strict rules of confidentiality as set by the partner agency.

#### **Summer Practicum Costs and Support**

Although actual expenses will vary greatly, students should bear in mind the costs associated with their summer field practicum and budget accordingly. Students need to consider the cost of flights to and from the field site, housing in the field, per diem (food, transportation, etc.), health expenses/insurance, summer tuition, and the cost of rent or storage in Tucson while away. Again, these will vary considerably depending on how far the student is travelling for the field practicum as well as the cost of living in the field site. Often, practicum partners will cover all or part of the student's expenses while in the field, including room and board and transportation. You will need to negotiate this up front with the organization and be clear about what they can provide. At the very least, you will likely need to cover your own airfare. Students should seek out external funding sources to cover travel costs such as the <a href="Graduate and Professional Student Council">Graduate and Professional Student Council</a> travel grant, travel or internship grants from various centers on campus (such as the <a href="Center for Middle Eastern Studies">Center for Middle Eastern Studies</a> and the <a href="Institute of the Environment">Institute of the Environment</a> Institute of the Environment), or fellowships like the <a href="Pruitt Minority Fellowship">Pruitt Minority Fellowship</a>, open to minority women in geography (which past students have received and used to help cover practicum expenses.)

#### **Tuition and Fees**

As with any investment, there are costs associated with graduate studies at the University of Arizona such as tuition, fees, books, and cost of living. Students should consult the Graduate College for the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding tuition, fees and expenses at the University of Arizona. The Graduate College has information on <u>Costs and Fees</u>, including <u>Estimated Costs/Tuition</u>

<u>Calculator</u>. Be aware that late payment of tuition and fees may result in an added Bursar's fee. Within the School of Geography and Development students also pay a program fee, and certain lab courses (including some GIS classes) may include a course fee.

## **Scholarships and Financial Aid**

Although the MDP program cannot directly offer scholarships to students, MDP students can avail themselves of university resources that can help identify external funding opportunities. In particular, students should consult these two funding databases maintained by the university:

**PIVOT** - Search Engine for funding for University of Arizona students

**<u>Scholarship Universe</u>** - Search Engine for funding for University of Arizona students

In addition, students should search other scholarship clearinghouse sites like the <u>Mcnair Scholars</u> <u>Funding List</u>, which lists a variety of funding options for different disciplines. A more comprehensive list of resources is provided in the "Advice on Searching for International Funding" provided to all incoming domestic and international students.

## **Graduate Assistantships**

Students enrolled in professional Master's courses (such as the MDP) may apply and be considered for graduate assistantships in the SGDE and other schools throughout the University. Prior to the start of each semester a call for Teaching Assistants is circulated amongst all graduate students in SGDE. Students are asked to provide their top 3 teaching preferences and outline their teaching experience, including whether they have taken or taught those particular courses before. Taking into consideration scheduling and other personnel issues, the SGDE Program Coordinator will allocate teaching assistantship assignments. There are always more applications for TA-ships than there are available positions, however MDP students have received them in the past.

Regarding Research Assistantships, these are allocated on an ad hoc basis depending on the availability of specific research funding and the needs of individual faculty for their funded research projects. Students should identify particular faculty with whom they are interested in working and inquire directly about the possibility of research assistantship opportunities. Students with a particular area focus or subject matter expertise should contact the appropriate departments to seek RA-ships outside of SGDE.

# **On Campus Job Opportunities**

There may be additional job opportunities on campus that carry benefits similar to those of TA/RA positions. On-campus jobs include student worker positions, Federal Work-Study (FWS) jobs, and hourly/part-time university employment. To be eligible for FWS, you must be eligible for financial aid and have completed the FAFSA (as with any scholarship opportunity.) Student worker positions can be found through <a href="Handshake">Handshake</a>, the student employment fair held at the start of each Fall semester, departmental listservs, and direct inquiry to different departments on campus. Part-time and hourly employment can also be found on the <a href="UA Careers">UA Careers</a> website. For more information, please consult <a href="careers">careers</a> services.

## **IV.** Professional Development

As a professional Master's program, preparation for the job market begins on day one. With each phase of your degree program you should ask yourself what knowledge, skill or experience can you gain that will translate into value for a future employer, and thus your own employability. This requires regular self-assessment. Don't wait to the spring semester of your final year to prepare your professional résumé and start looking and searching for jobs. Start building your résumé now and start looking for what opportunities may be available to you when you finish and what skills or capacities are in highest demand. This kind of self-assessment and job market analysis will likely have an impact on your choice of courses, your areas of concentration and where you decide to do your practicum. Likewise, your coursework, graduate school performance, your practicum experience, and the professional networks you create and maintain over the course of your degree will all be important factors in securing a position the future.

Students should consult with the MDP Director early in the program for advice on how to structure their degree to maximum effect on the job market. The MDP Director and other faculty advisers and mentors will work with students to seek employment and to provide courses that focus on career development skills. The cross-cohort seminar is designed to facilitate mutual learning among students and faculty toward the aim of enhancing professional development and employability. This includes preparing CVs and cover letters, interviewing, giving presentations, and making the most of your practicum experience. In addition, the MDP program seeks to provide students with a variety of professional development opportunities, including guest speakers, conferences, professional contacts, and mentoring to help students achieve their career goals. As part of this, all current students and recent alumni are given full access to the Arizona MDP Devex membership, including job boards and webinars. There are also career and professional development resources on campus that students can avail themselves of, and to which students will be guided towards where relevant. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to take charge of their own job search and to seek out opportunities for profession networking and development.

Also, check to see if the <u>Professional Development Workshop</u> in the School of Geography and Development is being offered.