
PLANNING PROGRAM AT SMSU RECEIVES NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

The Planning program at Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU) received national accreditation as of January 1, 2004. Accreditation is a system intended for recognizing programs for a level of performance, integrity, and quality which entitles them to the confidence of the institution and the public they serve. The Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) is a specialized accrediting body serving planning schools in North America. The PAB is a cooperative undertaking sponsored jointly by three organizations: the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, the American Institute of Certified Planners, and the American Planning Association. Accreditation is granted through a planning program's self-study process and validating reports by a site visit team. The standards by which a program is assessed encourage quality education for the preparation of the planning profession's future practitioners.

Planning at SMSU is currently one of only 16 PAB accredited baccalaureate programs in the United States, one of only 6 west of the Mississippi River, and **the first and only in the state of Missouri**. The Bachelor of Science in Planning (BSP) has existed at SMSU since 1972. SMSU is a metropolitan institution located in the third largest city in the state of Missouri and within a region that is undergoing rapid development. Committed to addressing the needs of communities and completing public work, the University has a state-wide mission in public affairs. The planning program is dedicated to providing professional education to meet the planning needs of the state and the wider region. The BSP program prepares planners within two professional tracks - 1) Community and Regional Planning, 2) Tourism Planning and Development. The program has graduated 133 planning professionals since its inception. Currently, the program has 5 full-time faculty dedicated to this program.

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