

THE PLANNING STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
(PSA) PRESENTS:

SCARP

Student Handbook

2022/23



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Land Acknowledgement

The Planning Students' Association at UBC recognizes that we operate on the unceded, ancestral and stolen territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓'əm (Musqueam) nation. As planning students studying on these lands, it is our responsibility to understand the historical and ongoing harm that professions of community and regional planning has done onto these communities. It is also our responsibility to aid in breaking these cycles and advancing areas of decolonization and reconciliation.

If you are not already aware, we strongly suggest that you learn about the history of colonialism, indigenous displacement, and forced assimilation both in Canada and in British Columbia specifically.



Welcome to SCARP!

Congratulations on your admission to the School of Community and Regional Planning! Whether you are an MCRP, MAP/MScP or PhD student, we hope this PSA-made handbook provides some insight and direction on your academic, social and professional life during your time at SCARP.

The PSA (Planning Students' Association) is your elected student council – elected by our peers to foster community and dialogue within SCARP. Through the PSA, we work academically, professionally, and socially to promote the well-being of students, provide opportunities to grow your skills, organize networking events and act on behalf of students as issues arise. As you get accustomed to your first term, you will have a chance to join our meetings, pitch some ideas, and help organize great events together.

As you prepare for your first day of classes, we are sure you are excited and have tons of questions for your fellow students. In addition to PSA Summer Group Sessions and an upcoming Student Mentorship program, we hope to be an open resource for questions, concerns, and feedback to help make your experience at SCARP as great as possible!



About SCARP

CAPSTONE + STUDIO

Students in MCRP (excluding ICP students) have two additional courses that require special attention: the capstone project and studio course. The capstone currently exists as one of two options: a professional portfolio submission or a professional planning report. The professional portfolio submission is a curated collection of works produced during the MCRP program complete with information that contextualizes each piece of work and an accompanying synthesis report. The professional planning report investigates a well-defined, practical planning-related question or problem and can either be new independent research or an extension of either coursework or internship/professional work done by the student. Students can choose to complete their capstone by April of their second year for May graduation or August of their second year for November graduation. You will need to discuss your capstone plans with your supervisor closer to your second year (although it's never a bad idea to start thinking about your capstone early on!). Until then, if you want to know more, the SCARP website has further information and examples of previous capstones.

The studio course will group students into small teams to work with organizations and community partners on real-world projects. Partners will determine how, and if, projects will be implemented. Students will be sorted into small teams working on projects that they expressed interest in. Past partners included BC municipalities, First Nation Bands, UBC Campus and Community Planning, and neighbourhood groups. Studio courses are intended to give students real-world planning experience and skills prior to graduation. These projects put all the skills you learn at SCARP to the test and help you build professional relationships with community partners. The studio course encompasses two terms from September to April of Year 2.

FACULTY ADVISORS

Your faculty advisor is a key participant in your experience at SCARP. Your advisor is a faculty member that is assigned to you in the summer before your first year, whose interests will ideally align with your own and will support you throughout your degree. They're there to support your overall experience at SCARP, whether it be academic, professional, or personal. Academically, they will help you choose courses each semester to make sure you're meeting minimum requirements and learning what you need for your goals. They're also responsible for helping you develop and complete your capstone project. Professionally, your advisor might be a helpful person to talk to if you need ideas for internships, or they may be able to help you make connections through their professional networks. They also might be a good person to go to for moral support, getting through a graduate degree can be hard!

Overall, it's worth getting to know your advisor well. While most students will meet with their advisors one-on-one at least once per semester, you are free to reach out to them as often as you need. Your first chance to meet them will be at orientation, but you're welcome to reach out to them ahead of time through email.



Concentrations

There are two concentrations you can pursue during your time at SCARP: Customized or Indigenous Planning.

CUSTOMIZED

Once you have arrived at SCARP, you will find that there is an abundance of electives that are super interesting and enriching. This is one of the great things about our school - it brings together students and faculty with a wide range of planning interests! Through the MCRP program, you do have some opportunity to shape your course schedule to align with your planning interests. This is known as your customized 'concentration'. While the SCARP website has a list of suggested concentrations, it is totally up to you to decide what your concentration will be. You will work with your faculty advisor to establish what your concentration will be, and review your selected courses to ensure they will support you and your area of interest.

Here are a few helpful tips if you are struggling to decide on your concentration throughout your first year:

- Don't be afraid to look outside of SCARP for courses aligned with your areas of interest. Many students have taken courses in the School of Population and Public Health, Geography, the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Urban Forestry, Public Policy and Global Affairs, and many more!
- Please reach out to second years for suggestions as many of us have taken great courses all across campus in both Graduate and Undergraduate departments.

It is also super important to take a variety of types of courses. Try your hand at a couple of broad knowledge courses, at least one skills course, and at least one in-depth knowledge course, some of which may even include a field experience course!

FOR ALL STUDENTS: Indigenous Communities

A big, important note for ALL SCARP students (that if you do not yet understand the need for, you will soon): there are specific protocols associated with contacting Indigenous communities. If you would like to do work with or receive information about an Indigenous community, do not contact them without talking to Maggie Low or Leonie Sandercock first. They act as the liaison between SCARP, ICP, and Indigenous communities as they have spent the time to build these relationships.

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY PLANNING

Hello, incoming Indigenous Community Planning students! Welcome to SCARP! You are entering an exciting time of transformative change towards reconciliation in Canada. Your cohort's program has been updated to address some of the biggest challenges facing society today, including climate change, systemic injustice, and planning for more resilient communities; as well as ongoing efforts to repair relationships with Indigenous people and decolonize planning in Canada.

During your orientation week, Maggie Low will likely gather you together for a meet and greet. The second-year ICP students are looking forward to meeting you and will be organizing a get-together sometime in the Fall semester (so stay tuned!). Getting to know one another across cohorts is a great way to have an idea of how your second year will be, and you'll have a few formal opportunities to learn more about practicum in addition to chatting with second years! We look forward to meeting you, learning from each other, and continuing the incredible ICP Concentration.

The ICP concentration was established in 2012 by ICP Chair Leonie Sandercock and Musqueam's Director of Treaty, Lands and Resources, Leona Sparrow. Accepting only six students for the first four years, then eight, ICP now accepts ten students each year to the concentration. Students in the ICP are in all of the MCRP's core courses, but most of their electives are taken up by additional classes required for ICP. The concentration tries to have a 50/50 split of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, but this hasn't always happened. ICP students have a variety of reasons for applying to and joining the program. Many have experience working in Indigenous communities, but not everyone does. All students within the ICP concentration know that your time at SCARP will involve a lot of self-reflection and cultural humility in the context of Indigenous community planning.

Courses

Logistically, the ICP specialization involves a lot of evening and weekend classes. In year one, ICP classes focus on practical skills like facilitation and community engagement. There is also an Indigenous Community Planning class that discusses the history of colonization of Indigenous peoples in Canada, as well as the role that planning has played in the colonial project and how planning by Indigenous communities is starting to repair some of this damage. ICP students highly recommend their classes for ALL students as it's important for any planner working in Canada to understand the complex impacts of colonialism, the shifting Nation-to-Nation relationships, understanding Indigenous rights in Canada, and the implications of these factors for planning today.

Practicum

In year two, ICP students are paired into teams to work with an Indigenous community for eight or more months to work on a planning project (typically a comprehensive community plan). The structure of the ICP specialization was actually used as a model for the MCRP when it was redesigned — think of the second year ICP practicum as the MCRP studio, although the practicum is worth 12 credits, versus the studio's 6. Typically, ICP students have been able to make trips to visit the Indigenous communities they are working with for their practicum. Practicum is an exciting opportunity to practice your knowledge and most importantly, learn how to build meaningful and respectful relationships with Indigenous communities in creating their community plan.

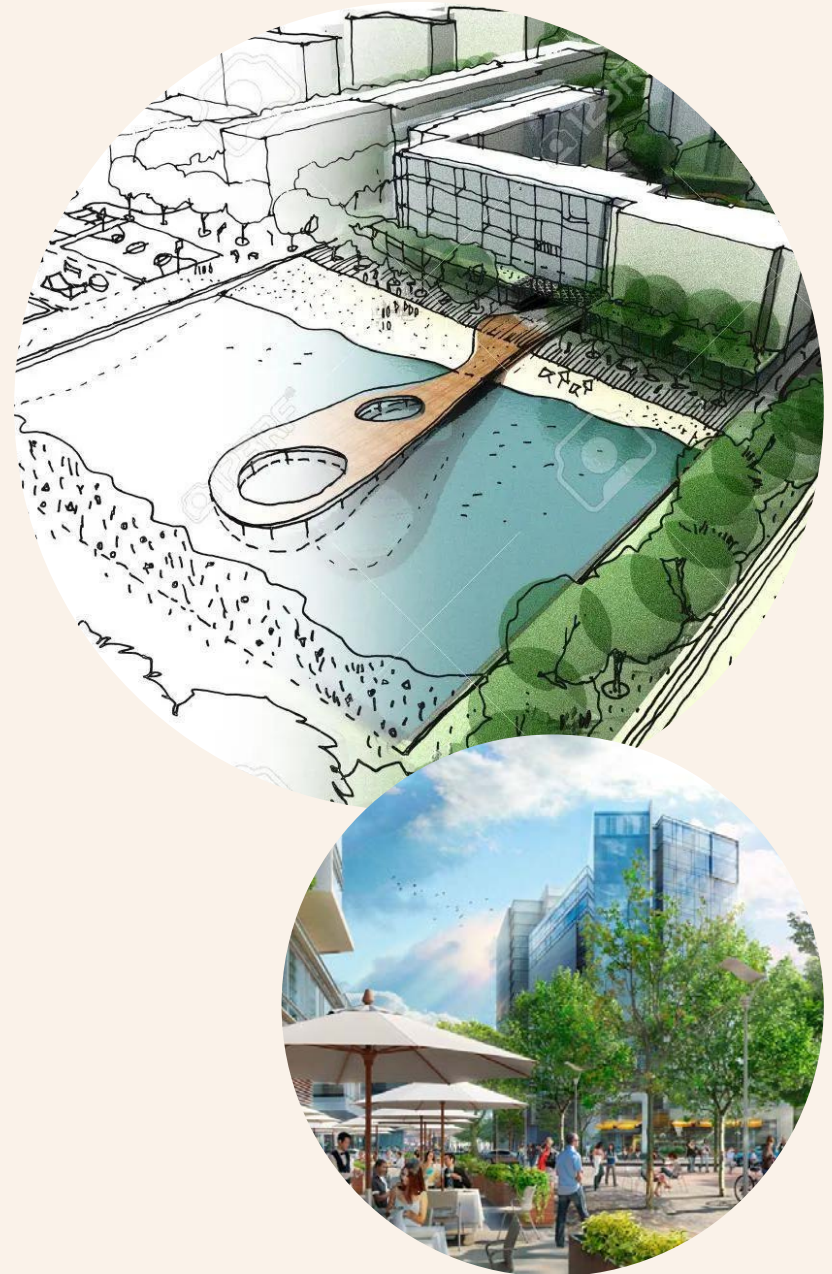
TIPS FOR URBAN DESIGN

Although the Urban Design Concentration is no longer an official concentration for SCARP, we wanted to provide some tips on how to tailor your degree toward this field.

Design, as a practice in general, is multi-faceted and requires a variety of soft and hard skills—from addressing ambiguous questions and building on the lessons of the past to developing drawing/representation and verbal presentation skills. Naturally, this also requires creativity and willingness to adapt and respond to new information.

Here are a few more tips if you are aiming to add Urban Design to your basket:

- It would be useful to start practicing drawing and sketching, and also getting familiar with the basics of design software (like Adobe Creative Suite) as soon as possible. So go get some pencils and a sketchbook and start playing around on your laptops!
- To get the most out of each course, be fully invested in it. This may mean a greater time and energy commitment, but it's the best way to develop your design mindset and skills.
- The ability to work with a team and collaborate with other students is likely your greatest asset — everyone has different strengths and skills, so you should do your best to learn from others. Although many resources are now online, some of the greatest sources of design inspiration are classic books.
- Want to practice your sketching skills? The Planning Institute of BC (PIBC) hosts free Sketch Walks across Metro Vancouver led by guest sketchers and volunteer PIBC members. Check it when the next sketch walk and other PIBC events are happening [HERE!](#)



For International Students

KEY PSA CONTACT: Vanessa Amoroch (vamoroch@gmail.com)

Canada is a multicultural country and Vancouver especially is home to many nationalities and ethnic groups; therefore we hope you feel at home at UBC and Vancouver! It is not a big city, but sometimes it can feel lonely. Just don't forget that we are here for you and there will most likely be local communities that you connect deeply with.

UBC provides a comprehensive guide for international students. In addition to this guide, you can book an appointment online to talk to an International Student Advisor with International Student Advising. These Advisors are more knowledgeable about specific issues relating to being an international student than SCARP's own administration because they deal with these issues on a daily basis. All you need to know about settling in at UBC is provided there. You'll find information on on-campus housing, getting a UBC card, health insurance, and even finding childcare services for your family.

LOCAL PLANNING KNOWLEDGE

Although you will be taking core courses that will help you build up your local planning knowledge, it is helpful to familiarize yourself with Canadian government structures prior to arrival. For instance, it is important to understand the distribution of power between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments. It is also important to familiarize yourself with the history of colonialism in Canada, indigenous displacement, and current treaties and relations between Indigenous nations and the Federal and Provincial governments. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) also has important and current implications for planning work in British Columbia, and would be a good reference.





VISA + WORK PERMIT

It is very important to make sure your student visa/permit allows you to be employed in a way that will work with SCARP's required internship. For instance, some student permits allow you to work part-time or full-time only if you are employed by the university. This could limit your eligibility for internships. You may need to apply for another permit that allows you to work while being a student. So make sure to double-check!

We encourage international students to submit the application for the co-op work permit during the first months of their first year (September - November). For this, make sure to ask for a letter from the department that states the requirement to complete an internship as a requirement for graduation. Once you have this letter you can apply for your co-op work permit through the CRA web page. This application has no cost and it will allow you to work full-time during the summer.

CELL PHONE + INTERNET

Using a cell phone is a norm in Canada and it is very convenient when it comes to communications. You would want to get a cell phone when you arrive in Vancouver. Rogers, Fido, Telus, Virgin, Bell, Freedom, Koodo, and Chatr are some of the main cell carriers in Vancouver. They have packages for students so make sure to bring your student card when visiting their store to sign up. If you are living on campus you should have access to UBC's high-speed internet. However, if you live off campus you can contact companies such as Shaw and Telus to get high-speed internet. They come to campus during the first 2 weeks of September to sign up new customers.

BC IDENTIFICATION CARDS + HEALTHCARE PLAN

Your International Driver's License can act as your social ID once you also apply for a Canadian Driver's License. If you do not have a driver's license and don't want to carry your passport around all the time, you can apply to get a BC Services Card from ICBC at a cost of 35 dollars. In BC, you need 2 pieces of ID to purchase or consume alcohol and tobacco. You will also need to apply for a Medical Service Plan upon your arrival. The MSP is the health care plan provided by the BC government and required by law for everyone to have.

Lastly, if you have any other questions before you arrive, feel free to contact one of our SCARP PSA International Student Reps: Vanessa Amorocho - [vamorocho@gmail.com](mailto:vamoroch@gmail.com)



Student Development

KEY PSA CONTACT: Chris French (christopherfrench95@gmail.com)

Student Development provides programs, events, and initiatives to enhance your learning experience at SCARP. Whether you are looking for ways to get more out of your degree or connect with the planning profession, we've got many opportunities to help you build professional skills and enhance your leadership potential! Since we are part of the Faculty of Applied Science, many of our professional development opportunities are designed and delivered by them too.

ORIENTATION

Orientation week for incoming SCARP students will take place from September 6th to 9th. Orientation provides an opportunity to connect with both incoming and current students as well as SCARP faculty and staff. Orientation will include two days of activities taking place on-campus and throughout Vancouver followed by an overnight trip to Whistler for the incoming cohort. The 2023 Cohort and SCARP faculty and staff are looking forward to getting to know you better!

ORIENTATION CONTACTS:

Melissa Johnston (melissajohnston96@gmail.com)

Tracy Wilkins (tracyrwilkins@gmail.com)

MENTORING

The SCARP mentoring program matches first-year students with planning professionals based on the student's planning interests. It is an excellent opportunity for you to gain valuable insights into the planning profession and connect with community partners. The Student Development Coordinator will provide more information about this program in your first few months as a SCARPIE!

INTERNSHIPS

The internship program is an essential and integral component of the MCRP program and is designed to connect you with experienced planning professionals in your field of interest, allowing you to gain valuable hands-on experience while also earning academic credit. Most students complete their internship between their first and second year during the summer, but it is not mandatory to do it during that time period. The Student Development Coordinator will provide students with guidance and advice about securing an internship.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development at SCARP provides various workshops, programming, and initiatives to enhance your learning experience and career development at UBC. These opportunities will help in building your professional skills. More to come in September!

SYMPOSIUM

A SCARP tradition that rests with the incoming cohort is the planning of a SCARP Student Symposium. This annual event brings students and planning practitioners to UBC campus for a day of panel discussions and keynote addresses. The event is organized by the first-year MCRP students and allows you to engage with the most pressing planning issues our communities are facing, typically around a particular theme that reflects your cohort's values as planners. Unfortunately, both the 2021 and 2022 symposiums were canceled due to COVID-19. The PSA's Professional Development Coordinator is more than willing to speak with the incoming cohort to decide how and if you want to continue the annual tradition!



UBC Mental Health Resources

KEY PSA CONTACT: Beatrice Borres

A list of some of the mental health supports available to you on campus. Mental health matters!



UBC Counselling Services

Students can contact UBC Counselling Services at 604-822-3811 to schedule an appointment, available from Monday to Friday. First-time appointments are booked for the same day.

AMS/GSS Student Health Benefits for Counselling

As a registered UBC student, your AMS/GSS Health and Dental plan covers up to 100% of the cost of psychotherapy services from a licensed psychologist, registered clinical counselor, or a therapist with a Master's degree in Social Work. Submit your receipts to claim up to \$1000 per policy year. Review the health benefits details and use the Pacific Blue Cross mobile app to enter your claims. A list of reduced-cost counseling options in Vancouver (as of July 2022) can be found [here](#).

Student Assistance Program

Offered by Aspira, the UBC Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a free, 24/7 wellness resource for students. Services include personal counseling, life coaching, group programs, and more based on your needs. Access SAP by phone at 1-833-590-1328 (within North America) or 1-604-757-9734 (outside of North America), or through the Aspira website by using UBCV for both the student code and password.

UBC Psychology Clinic

The UBC Psychology Clinic offers comprehensive psychological services for adults. Their clinical services are provided by graduate students from UBC's doctoral program in clinical psychology. Student clinicians are closely supervised by Registered Psychologists from our faculty and the community. Most services are offered in the form of individual therapy, however, group treatment may also be offered depending on the frequency of referrals for particular problems. Website: clinic.psych.ubc.ca; Phone: 604-822-3005; Email: clinic@psych.ubc.ca

Here2Talk

Here2Talk connects students with mental health support when they need it. Through this program, all students currently registered in a B.C. post-secondary institution have access to free, confidential counseling and community referral services, conveniently available 24/7 via the app, phone, and web.

Access and Assessment Centre

The Access and Assessment Centre (AAC) located at Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) provides a pathway for individuals and families to access mental health and/or substance use services in Vancouver and offer an alternative to the Emergency Department for people having a non-life threatening mental health and/or substance use issue. Call 604-675-3700 or walk in between 7:30 a.m. - 11 p.m. Joseph & Rosalie Segal & Family Health Centre 803 West 12th Avenue Vancouver, BC Level 1 East Entrance.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

A KEY PSA CONTACT: Raj Chaudhary (rajch@student.ubc.ca)

SCARP students, faculty, and staff are constantly working to forefront EDI in the curriculum and in day-to-day activities. One notable example is the Planning Equity Coalition, which branches off the PSA. The Coalition always welcomes new members: feel free to get in touch with anyone from the PSA for contact information.

If you have any questions, feedback, or suggestions, please let an Equity Coordinator (EC) - or anyone from the PSA - know!



Key Campus Spots

SCARP-Related

West Mall Annex = WMAX, aka your new home away from home.

- First-floor WMAX: a mixture of studying, learning, meeting, and chilling spaces. You'll find the lounge, kitchens, classrooms, studios, and Ph.D. offices. Pay attention to the signage for room guidelines.
- Second-floor WMAX: classroom 240 makes a great study spot, but quiet only, please! No group meetings are allowed upstairs as this is where many offices are located. This floor also features sleek, minimal studio spaces and an extra set of washrooms.
- Lasserre: Some faculty offices and the main SCARP administration office. Also houses the UBC School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, non-SCARP friends.
- Grad Student Lounge: a bright, spacious lounge tucked away on the 4th floor of the AMS Nest exclusive to grad students. It has an open study area, office spaces, a large meeting room, a basic kitchen and is generally quite quiet. You'll need to scan your UBC student ID to get in. It's also bookable!

Libraries + Study Spaces

- Koerner Library: The main library close to SCARP has 2 computer labs in the basement that have ArcMap and a plotter. The GIS librarians are very nice and can help you with any GIS questions. There are also ample study spaces and basic printing access.
- Peter Allard Law Library: shhh...don't tell the law students, but this is a great, QUIET, and beautiful place to study.
- Irving K Barber Library (or IKB): One of the oldest buildings on campus. Lots of unique study spaces, including the infamous "Harry Potter Library"!
- Forestry Building: a bit of a trek, but worth it for the beautiful wood interiors and indoor trees. A mix of more social and quieter study areas.

Museums and Related

- Residential School History and Dialogue Center: hosts events, dialogues, and exhibits that aim to address the colonial legacy of residential schools and other policies imposed by the Canadian government on Indigenous Peoples.
- Beaty Biodiversity Museum: exactly what the name implies. You can't miss it - just look for the 26-metre-long blue whale skeleton.

Recreation

- The Aviary: UBC's very own rock climbing wall. Get a cheap belay lesson here.
- The UBC Pool: free for students and there's a hot tub! Great for those rainy days.
- The BirdCoop and ARC fitness centers: tend to get busy, but have highly affordable rates, including classes. The 'Coop' also has a hidden bouldering wall.

Food on Campus

- Koerner's Pub (\$\$) – Close to WMAX. A great place to grab drinks and food! Also hosts some great events (Drag @ UBC).
- Starbucks (\$) – The classic coffee shop. 4 locations on campus:
 - LIFE building (adjacent to the Nest)
 - UBC Bookstore
 - Fred Kaiser building (Engineering building on the southern part of campus)
 - Agronomy Rd/West Mall (Even further south)
- Tim Hortons (Tim's/Timmies) (\$) – Canadian staple. Cheap coffee & doughnuts with 3 locations on campus:
 - Sauder (closest to WMAX)
 - North Campus (near the LIFE building/North Parkade)
 - Forestry (South Campus)
- International Food Court (\$) – A food court in the basement at the UBC village (near the McDonald's). A little from WMAX, but has lots of international selections at a cheap price. Some highlights include:
 - Donair Town (\$) – Great portion sizes for the price. Try the potatoes with garlic sauce.
 - My Home Cuisine (\$) – A Chinese food staple.
 - Miyamae Sushi (\$) – A great place to grab sushi, much better than the sushi in the Nest!
- The LIFE building — more food options!
 - Sprouts (\$) — a great student-run place for vegan eats
 - Booster Juice (\$)
 - Starbucks (\$)
 - Pacific Poke (\$\$)
 - Subway (\$)



- The AMS Nest (\$\$) – The selections at the Nest are always changing (and will likely change over the course of your time here)! Here are some current highlights:
 - Blue Chip Cookie (\$) – The BEST cookies on campus (maybe even in Vancouver), for when you just need a sweet treat. Try the Marbelous cookie!
 - The Delly (\$/\$\$) – Has some great grab-and-go options. You can also build your own sandwich. Their fudge brownies are amazing!
 - Porch (\$) – Has great vegetarian and vegan food. The tomato soup and grilled cheese combo is highly recommended.
 - Flavour Lab (\$) – A new food option; UBC Food Services staff try out new recipes here.
- The Gallery (\$\$) – Also in the Nest, but more of a sit-down restaurant than the others listed above. Has some great share plates and pitcher deals! Also a great patio to enjoy on a nice day.



- Triple Os (\$\$) - Open late. Hamburgers, milkshakes, etc.
 - TIP: Go on 'Triple O Tuesdays' – the classic burger is \$5! (but be warned, the line will be long at lunchtime)
- Mercante (\$\$) – Pizza!
- Harvest (\$\$) – A little bit expensive, but it's a small convenience store with a deli on the ground floor. It's the closest place from WMAX to get something quick.
- Great Dane Coffee (\$\$) – Behind the Walter Gage Towers. Said to be the best coffee on campus. Serves really good sandwiches and soups. Great study space but gets busy. (Tip: there are two separate areas where you can sit!)
- Loafe (\$\$\$) – In the Alumni Centre and a little more on the expensive side. They also serve Cartems donuts, a must-eat in Vancouver. Good place for professional meetings/networking. Good Happy Hour options.
- The Point (\$\$/\$\$\$) – Located in Marine Drive Residence. Another nice sit-down spot with a variety of food (menu changes seasonally).
- Kokoro (\$\$) – Located in University Village (above the Underground Food Court). Has great ramen/mazesoba!
- University Boulevard – there are a lot of new options here:
 - Jam-Jar (\$\$) – Lebanese Canteen. Pretty good value for the amount of food you get.
 - Browns Crafthouse (\$\$/\$\$\$) – A great sit-down spot. Some Happy Hour options.
 - Steve's Poke Bar (\$\$) – Great poke, but can get busy at meal times.
 - Chatime (\$) – Solid bubble tea chain.



Getting to Campus

BY TRANSIT

UBC is highly transit-accessible and most SCARPIes commute to campus by transit. You need to have a Compass card in order to use the public transportation system. As a UBC student, you can get a Compass Card from the UBC bookstore. Or you can grab one at YVR Airport if you arrive in Vancouver by plane, at some Skytrain stations, London Drugs, Shoppers Drug Mart, or other locations around Vancouver (check TransLink's website for locations). A monthly student bus pass "U-Pass" (activated online through Compass card website) is included in your student fees already for the school term. You'll need to tap your card each time you ride the bus, and when you enter and exit the Skytrain and Seabus station. Buses from UBC are frequent throughout the day. Google Maps and the Transit app both have transit directions and live bus locations.

Key bus routes:

- 99 B-line - Travels along Broadway, from Commercial Skytrain station to UBC Campus. This is an extremely popular route (the busiest bus in North America!) for students, which means busses tend to fill up quickly. Many UBC students do try to live within walking distance to this route.
- 44 - A express bus that picks up our West-end and Kitsilano friends before heading to UBC. It's important to know that this bus only runs on weekdays!
- 84 - An express bus that leaves VCC Clark Skytrain station, runs through Olympic Village, lower south False Creek and Kitsilano.
- R-4 - An express bus that travels along 41st ave from Joyce-Collingwood station to UBC.
- Routes 33, 68, 480, 49, 25 all arrive at the UBC Exchange (Next to the aquatic center)
- Routes 9, 14, 4, N17, 258 all arrive at the UBC Exchange (On University Boulevard)

BY CYCLING

A bike is great to have in Vancouver, and there is an amazing network of cycling infrastructure and dedicated bike streets across the city! Many students cycle-commute to campus, but be prepared to bike in the rain (and up lots of hills)! Cyclists may take their bikes on buses, SkyTrain, Canada Line, SeaBus, and the West Coast Express.

- UBC has lots of great resources for cyclists, including trip planners and safety tips. Visit their [website](#).
- Check out the City of Vancouver's Cycling Map [here](#) to plan your trip around the city.

Where to Live

Living off-campus is very common among UBC students since campus housing is always scarce and pricey. There are lots of fun neighbourhoods in the city! That being said, a nice Vancouver rental may be expensive and hard to find. Although some neighbourhoods are pricier than others, there are still “relatively affordable” rental places in most neighbourhoods. Be prepared to make a decision quickly when you find a place you like. Sometimes luck plays a huge factor, but we’re sure you’ll find a home!

If it’s your first time looking for an apartment, be aware of scammers and NEVER give a deposit without reading the tenancy agreement.

Basically, apartment costs tend to go down the farther you travel from campus as UBC is located at the edge of a wealthy neighbourhood. The “I-just-moved-here” classic is a basement suite, so be prepared to consider how much more you are willing to pay to live above ground. All the neighbourhoods listed in this map below are within the City of Vancouver boundary (approx. 15~45min commute). There are nice places to live in other nearby municipalities such as Burnaby, Richmond, North Vancouver...but they just take longer time to commute to campus.



UBC - University Endowment Lands

Living on campus means you can avoid driving or busing, but rent is very expensive (despite what UBC says). It's basically a small town with grocery stores, restaurants, museums, banks, etc. so you'll never need to leave campus. But, try to leave anyway to explore the rest of the city because the action is definitely off-campus. If you want to travel back to campus after the buses stop running, you're in for an expensive cab ride. Bike back instead - if you don't mind the rain.

West Point Grey

The closest you can get to campus without living on campus. You're about a 6-10 minute bus ride to campus, totaling 15 minutes to WMAX. Perfect if you like to roll out of bed 20 minutes before you have to be in class. There isn't much going on in the neighbourhood, so you have to bus to downtown (30min) or walk over to your neighbour Kitsilano to find some fun and entertainment. Houses are huge so you can find a decent-sized basement apartment or a spot in a few of the above-ground apartments. Very family-oriented neighbourhood with only a 15-minute walk to Spanish and Jericho beach!

Dunbar-Southlands

If you hate early mornings but don't want to live on campus, Dunbar might be the choice for you! It's a fairly quiet area, with mostly single-family homes with an active and vocal neighbourhood association. Dunbar Village is along Dunbar Street and you can find some nice little restaurants and shops here for daily needs. If you're lucky you can find a gem of a basement suite or rent a whole home with a few other people. Some trade-offs? The neighbourhood itself is a bit sleepy and you're a little far from other lively neighbourhoods in Vancouver (you will likely require 2 bus connections to get anywhere downtown/east Vancouver).

Arbutus Ridge + Shaughnessy

Welcome to one of the oldest yet most expensive neighbourhood in Vancouver! Some of the best houses and wealthiest people are in this area due to their prime geographical location. However, there are still plenty of people renting out their nice basement suites at a reasonable price, so don't let the neighbourhood names scare you away. If you love biking and jogging, this could be one of the best neighbourhoods because they are adjacent to the Arbutus Greenway Corridor.

Kitsilano (South of 4th Ave)

Aka Kits. Lots of older single-family homes and some low-rise apartments that aren't too close, but not too far from campus, with access to the 99, 84, and the 4. There's lots going on Broadway including some of UBC students' favourite restaurants and bars. Basically, it's close to campus with lots of grocery and dining options.

Kitsilano (4th Ave and North)

If you love lounging on tree-lined beaches (who wouldn't), dining out at great restaurants, and poking into cute (but expensive) shops - this laid-back, trendy neighbourhood might be for you. Bonus: it's home to the original Lululemon (and their current global HQ), hence you'll see lots of yoga pants around. Range of pricing from expensive nice places, to cheap basement suites. Some apartments are fairly old, but the beach is only a few steps away so who could complain!

Fairview

Kitsilano's cheaper, less-yuppie-ish cousin, you're probably pretty close to at least one 99 B-Line stop. It is the area east of Burrard, west of Cambie, and north of 16th. This area has almost certainly the highest number of 2-3 storey apartment buildings in the city. Bonus 3am ambulance noise if you live near VGH at Oak and 12th! Slightly cheaper than Kits, but still close to UBC. Also a short walk to False Creek and the Broadway-Cambie SkyTrain Station (Canada Line). A happy middle. Bars are a little scarce but it's easy to hop on over to our ironically mustachioed friends to the east. South Granville is home to lots of shops, but is a well-known food desert. Probably a half-hour transit ride to campus unless rush hour is especially bad.

South Cambie

A lot of variation depending on where along Cambie you live. Cambie Village is undergoing major development so the streetscape is constantly changing (but a lot more food options now!). Closer to False Creek, you'll be close to many grocery stores, the Canada Line, and the 99 B-Line. City Hall is at Cambie and Broadway, so maybe you'll spot planners walking around your neighbourhood.

Where to Look for Housing in Vancouver

- Craigslist - this is the go-to place to search for apartment rentals!
- Zumper
- Padmapper
- Facebook Marketplace

Strathcona

A bit of a cocoon, and a few transfers to get to UBC, but an eclectic mix of housing and residents. Super charming heritage homes, boulevard gardens, and friendly community vibes. Around the corner from Chinatown and a hop, skip, and a jump to DT. You can get really cheap groceries from Chinatown but don't expect supermarket chains (support the locals!). Rent on par with Commercial & Mount Pleasant.

Mount Pleasant

Close to a 99 stop. Easy to get around and located near other "cool" areas (Commercial Drive and Main Street). Diverse neighbourhood with a KFC nearby. Lots of cool bars, restaurants, and breweries around, and a mix of 2-3 story apartments and single-family homes. The area has historically been home to industrial lands in Vancouver, and as such, is now quite a contentious neighbourhood from a planning perspective.

Kensington-Cedar Cottage

Aka the No-frills neighbourhood. You'll find absolutely nothing trendy or hip in this neighbourhood, but that's what makes it great. Cheap basement suites are readily available, as are low-cost Asian grocery stores and very affordable restaurants (lots of Vietnamese). Several options for getting to UBC, but it's about a 45 to 50-minute commute by bus (no transfer!). You're also well situated between the two Skytrain lines which really opens up the whole region, and biking places is a breeze.

West End

Aka Best End. If you want small community living in the big city, the West End is the place for you. Perfect for foodies and anyone who wants the beach steps from their door. You can also get an express (the 44) bus to UBC, but it only runs on weekdays with no late-night service or weekends. Rents are pretty affordable *for a downtown location*. Davie Village is also home to many of our local LGBTQ2SI+ communities.

Riley Park

If making fun of hipsters that are just a little too behind the times to have moved to Fraser (so hot right now), Main Street is your place. Do you like coffee? There's lots of that. Antique stores clinging for dear life against ever-increasing rent pressures? Yup. Poodle on a Pole? You bet! Moderately priced, relatively, but is increasing due to its popularity.

Fraserhood (Kingsway and Fraser)

Not designated on the map, but essentially the intersection of Mt. Pleasant and Riley Park. With the highest "Gluten Free Bakery" to person ratio, Fraserhood is the place to be - if that's your thing. You can stop by Matchstick Coffee, where half month's rent gets you a latte. Although the coffee is expensive, rent is relatively cheap. Depending on the buses that day, you are located between 40 and 90 minutes from UBC. The local business bureau will probably call Fraserhood "An up and coming Neighborhood," but in reality, it has been a culturally rich area for a long time. Changing faster than UBC's campus this info may be out of date by the time of publication, but there are a number of SCARP kids kicking around the neighborhood so it'll feel like home in no time.

Commercial Drive

One of the last remaining eclectic areas in the city, but sadly going through some severe gentrification. The neighbourhoods surrounding "The Drive" are diverse in culture and socio-economic status, with an occasionally edgy feel where folks "let their freak flag fly". Here, you are spoiled for choice with affordable restaurants, grocery stores, and coffee shops, and rents in apartments and shared houses are reasonable. However, expect a 40-60 minute commute to SCARP, by bike or express bus. Commercial-Broadway Station is great to be near if you're traveling anywhere east of Vancouver or to other municipalities.

South Van

SCARPIes don't believe it exists, but it does! Covering most of Oakridge, Marpole and Sunset neighbourhood, this area is family oriented and ethnically diverse. The Punjabi Market is also in this area, with lots of other Asian grocery stores and restaurants too. Rent could range from fairly expensive to surprisingly cheap depending on which block you're at. Marine Drive gateway is also developing with new cinemas and stores right beside the Canada Line Skytrain station. Commuting to campus would range from 40 ~ 60 min depending on buses.

If you are having trouble finding a place to live, please post in the SCARP group and you may find others looking for roommates or people who have places for rent. Craigslist, PadMapper, UBC Buy/Sell, Facebook Marketplace, and Kijiji are popular websites where you can find accommodations, used/new furniture and even second-hand textbooks. You could also consider looking for places in Metro-Vancouver (including Burnaby, Surrey, Richmond, North Van, West Van and New West). That said, these areas are all quite far from the action and UBC. We generally wouldn't recommend moving there unless you have some connection to these areas and/or a private vehicle...and even then...it's still quite a journey if you forget something on campus.

Social Opportunities

There are tons of fun opportunities at SCARP/UBC and in Vancouver to connect with others and make friends!

UBC Varsity Outdoors Club (VOC)

UBC's VOC is a long-running, membership-based, student-run club at UBC for outdoor enthusiasts. Activities range from beginner- to expert-level and run basically every weekend, year-round. A year-long membership costs \$45 for UBC students and \$70 for everyone else and gets you access to member trips and all sorts of gear. Check out their website at <https://www.ubc-voc.com/> for more info!

UBC Clubs

Go to Club Day on Tuesday, September 6th to see UBC's VAST range of clubs. You can join in on (literally) whatever suits your interests, from the Fencing Club to the Beads and Crafts Club.

Drag Nights at Koerner's Pub

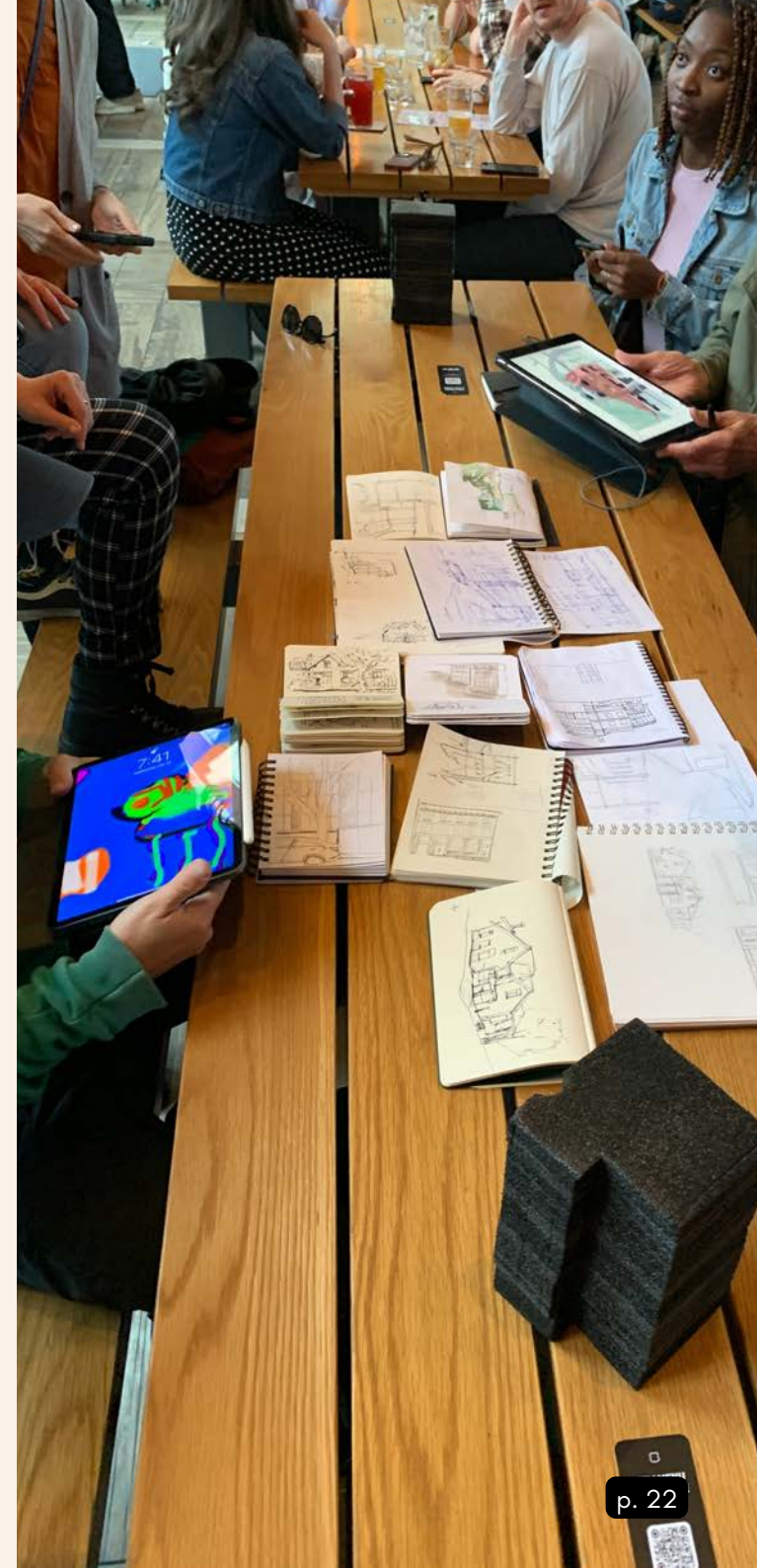
Lately, UBC's Koerner's Pub has been hosting drag nights featuring local Vancouver drag queens and kings! They're a great way to meet other drag-enthusiasts and get involved in UBC's LGBTQ community. Tickets are sold on an event-to-event basis. Check out Koerner's Pub Facebook page for more information.

Sketch Walks

This is an event organized by the PIBC (Planning Institute of BC) south coast chapter. It happens monthly and is in a different neighbourhood each month. It's also advertised in the SCARP Digest, PIBC newsletter, and PIBC Facebook page. Check out their Instagram @vancouverurbansketchers for more information!

Coffee Outside for Cyclists

This is a weekly camp coffee gathering that happens every Friday morning at 7am at rotating locations. It promotes inclusive bike culture! Check out @coffeeoutsideyvr on Instagram for more information.





A very ~Vancouver~ way to socialize with your friends is to grab a pack of beers or a bottle of wine to go share in the park or beach!

Parks + Beaches

Kitsilano area:

- Locarno Beach Park (allows drinking, has washrooms)
- Kitsilano Beach Park (allows drinking, has washrooms)
- Jericho Beach
- Spanish Banks (nice, quieter beach)
- Wreck Beach (arguably the nicest beach in Vancouver if you can muscle through the stairs - heads up, it's a nude beach)

Downtown area:

- English Bay (standard city beach!)
- Stanley Park of COURSE!! This park is infamous for a reason - go ride around the seawall and take in the salty sea air, then head up to Stanley Park Brewing for a drink and some lunch!

Mount Pleasant area:

- Jonathan Rogers Park (has washrooms, close to cool breweries)
- Dude Chilling Park (aka Guelph Park, but everyone knows it as dude chilling)
- Mt. Pleasant Park (has a skate park)

East Van area:

- New Brighton Park (allows drinking)
- Trout Lake Park (allows drinking, has washrooms)

Breweries

Kitsilano area:

- 33 Acres (a Vancouver staple - check out 33B Brewing Experiment right beside the main storefront for experimental beers)
- R&B (impeccable vibes for hanging out with friends)
- Brassneck (small, but great beer)
- Sing Sing (technically not a brewery, but they have a massive beer list, good vibes, and a menu of pizza and pho)

Commercial / East Van area:

- Bomber Brewing (just delish)
- Strange Fellows (Vancouver staple!)

Wine Bars

- Juice Bar (in gastown, during the day it's a coffee shop called The Birds and The Beets. Low-key, cozy vibes)
- Bar Susu (off Main & 6th, this is the author's personal favourite spot - amazing wine, staff, ambience, and food. They also have great cocktails if that's more your thing)
- Grapes & Soda (cutie natural wine bar just outside of Kits)

Cocktail Bars

Main Street / Mount Pleasant area:

- The Narrow (sneaky and hard to find - but a really cool underground dive bar)
- Key Party (also sneaky and hard to find, it's disguised as an accounting office and is designed to replicate prohibition-era speakeasies)
- The Shameful Tiki (cute tiki bar)
- Tocador (cuban-style bar, upscale casual)
- Hero's Welcome (old legion converted into a hip bar! They got pool, skee-ball, trivia nights, and a photo booth. Old legion rules apply, so take your hat off ok?)

Kitsilano area:

- Bimini's (standard spot for UBC's undergrad population)
- The Cider House (cute spot that's close to the beach with plant-based food)

Commercial Drive area:

- The Charletan (bit dive bar-y, but cheap, and there are always tables available)
- The Social (make sure you ask to sit upstairs)



Connect with the PSA

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WELCOME TO SCARP!

