

**ASIAN COMMERCIAL PROFESSIONAL
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

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As a person pursuing the field of urban planning, my vision is to build Asian communities that are diverse, cooperative and equal. Irresponsible land use plans create problems like segregated urban areas, disproportional housing developments and a lack of public spaces and transit. Such outcomes limit social integration and equal economic opportunities for minority groups. As a master's student in urban planning at UC Irvine, my job is to pinpoint these flawed land use decisions then pose alternative solutions. I use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and research methodologies to examine the socioeconomic outcomes of these planning decisions. These skills and tools also help me design equitable environments for people of different ethnicities and social statuses.

Asians, like other minority groups in the United States, often suffer the greatest consequences from bad planning decisions. Problems such as unbalanced housing supply, social segregation and monopolized market structures affect people of all income levels. The low and medium income families suffer mostly from the lack of affordable housing. They have to live in substandard living conditions because there are not enough affordable housing projects. These people are forced to live in overcrowded areas with recessed economy and high crime rate. This often results in vicious cycles of crime and poverty in their generations and creates more social problems. On the other hand, the middle and upper classes face other challenges. The current spread-out development style inhibits economic diversity and social integration. In the suburban strip malls, small and medium stores have a harder time competing with big chain enterprises. Many Asian business owners used to earn their livings providing services to adjacent traditional neighborhoods. However, they are now forced out from their community and find it extremely difficult to retain their businesses in the new spread-out neighborhoods. Such development patterns also result in segregations in social lives and public spaces. More and more gated communities isolate themselves from the outer world and own their private social events and recreational spaces. All these elements cut off the human

networks of minority groups and leave them isolated.

The problems mentioned above tie very closely to land use decisions. Techniques such as zoning, policies and regulations enable planners to ensure an area's overall economic viability and livability. My academic concentration is to study land use decisions and their regional socioeconomic outcomes with tools such as GIS and analysis methodologies. I use GIS to present scenarios by thematic maps that deliver strong and immediate messages to all stakeholders. I also use it to conduct analysis to see the relationships of different planning issues with their spatial features. The regional analysis methodologies are another skillset that I specialize in. I use these methodologies to investigate almost any type of activities related to land use decisions such as traffic flows, air quality distributions or economic transactions. I study the hierarchical relationships, network structures and flow of these activities in order to capture a longer and broader impact of land use decisions. For example, I compared the highway structures in Orange County and Riverside County and analyzed the complexity of these two systems. The result showed that the highway system in O.C. serves a more sophisticated function than Riverside County, despite being smaller in its structure. It also showed that O.C. has a more compact land use design on transportation and it is a better model. The same methodologies can be applied to housing or economic studies. My goal is to use these tools and knowledge to pinpoint the impacts of inadequate planning decisions and pose alternative, well thought out solutions.

In addition to the professional field, I have always been an active participant in Asian community affairs. I was the vice president of the Taiwanese Graduate Student Association at UC Irvine. Our organization provides a very strong network support for the overseas Taiwanese graduate students. We wanted to create an environment in which every overseas Taiwanese student could always find help. I was also constantly involved in activities held by other Asian Pacific organizations and improved my knowledge about the Asian communities through participation. I believe that I can tie these personal experiences to the improvement of urban environments.

My career goal is to work for private planning firms or governmental agencies that deal with regional planning issues. I want to promote compact land uses and plan for more integrated living environments. Through good planning decisions, I can lessen the disparities in different social and income groups and create environments that provide

equal opportunities to the public. The Asian communities will benefit greatly from these changes and so will other ethnicity groups. My career goal is to build equitable and livable environments for all, especially for the disadvantaged groups. My professional knowledge and passion for serving our own communities are the best tools to help me achieve this goal.