

Course Syllabus – Urban Planning and Policy

Course Information

Course number –GEOG/PA - 3377

Course title – URBAN PLANNING AND POLICY

Term –FALL 2014

Section – 001

Classroom – ECSS 2.306

Time –Monday/Wednesday, 1:00 - 2:15 pm

Professor Contact Information

Name – Dr. Irina Vakulenko

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Office location – GR 3.213

Office hours – Tuesday 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm; by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

There are no formal prerequisites for this course. General academic skills of analytical thinking, comparison, essay writing, working with statistical material, map reading will be helpful.

Course Description

This course explores important substantive areas and concepts in the field of urban and regional planning and current urban planning and policy issues and debates. Topics include: forces that have historically guided and are currently guiding U.S. urbanization; land use, growth management, transportation and traffic congestion, economic development, housing and community development, environmental planning; legal, environmental, governmental contexts.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- Provide an overview of the various fields within planning, such as housing, community development, transportation, environmental planning, urban sprawl and growth management. Our focus will be on the major policy issues and problems within each of the fields.
- Introduce some of the major debates and issues in urban policy and politics nationally and regionally.
- Students will enhance their skills in conducting research, applying source material, discussing general information, and applying logical process when writing.
- Oral presentations and debating arguments will be practiced as a tool of coming to a personal conclusion in regard to policy proposals based on educated and research substantiated ground.
- Students will improve their skills in public speaking, argumentation of contentious issues and live debate.

This class will fulfill your C3 oral and written communication course requirement, should you choose to apply for the Certificate (<http://oue.utdallas.edu/home/c3/>). See more info on e-learning course page.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Contemporary Urban Planning. 10th edition. By John M. Levy, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc. 2012. ISBN- ISBN-13: 978-0205851737. Extended reading for the research on Policy Briefs.

Suggested Course Materials

Students are expected to take notes during PowerPoint presentations, reading chapters and other relevant materials, and complete the assignments listed in the syllabus by a due date.

3377 Assignments & Academic Calendar

#	Date	Topic	Reading & Assignments
1	8/25/14	Introduction. Urbanization of America before the 20 th century.	Ch 1, 2
2	8/27/14	Urban trends in the 20 th century.	Ch 2
3	9/3/14	The history of planning before the Great Depression.	Ch 3
4	9/8/14	The history of planning since 1930s.	Ch 4
5	9/10/14	National Planning in the United States.	Ch 17
6	9/15/14	Planning Theory.	Ch 19
7	9/17/14	Test 1	15%
8	9/22/14	The legal basis of planning.	Ch 5
9	9/24/14	Planning and politics.	Ch 6
10	9/29/14	The social issues in planning.	Ch 7
11	10/1/14	The comprehensive plan and tools of land use planning.	Ch 8,9
12	10/6/14	Guest speaker on tools of land use planning.	
13	10/8/14	Role of outside investments and forces beyond local control.	Ch 9
14	10/13/14	Test 2	15%
15	10/15/14	Urban Design.	Ch 10
16	10/20/14	Urban space size: sprawl vs. smart growth.	Presentation and Policy Brief on Topic 1 are due. 10%
17	10/22/14	Urban renewal and community development	Ch 11
18	10/27/14	Housing for the disadvantaged: voucher program vs. public housing.	Presentation and Policy Brief on Topic 2 are due. 10%
19	10/29/14	Transportation planning.	Ch 12
20	11/3/14	Fixing urban infrastructure: freeways vs. tollways.	Presentation and Policy Brief on Topic 3 are due. 10%
21	11/5/14	Economic development planning.	Ch 13
22	11/10/14	Growth management and sustainable development.	Ch 14
23	11/12/14	Living in "smarter cities": development vs.	Presentation and Policy

		conservation as a way to sustainability.	Brief on Topic 4 are due. 10%
24	11/17/14	Environmental and energy planning.	Ch 15
25	11/19/14	Planning for metropolitan regions.	Ch 16
26	12/1/14	Test 3	15%
27	12/3/14	Planning in other nations.	Ch 18
28	12/8/14	Planning in other nations.	Ch 18
29	12/10/14	Review.	Collect up to 2 bonus points to your final grade.
30	TBA	Final Exam is on TBA	15%

Grading Policy

Your course grade will be comprised of three tests (15% each), participation and presentation in a mock urban policy debate (group project -10%), three policy briefs (10% each), and a final exam – 15%.

Every test will consist of 20 multiple choice questions over the covered material, 2 short answer questions asking for an educated opinion, and one actual urban planning situation described in a paragraph to comment on like what is problematic in this situation and what needs to be done to resolve it in a professional manner. No makeup tests. (Individual consideration may be given in case of overwhelming circumstances).

Average of Test 1 and 2 will make your Midterm Grade to be posted by **October 17, 2014**.

There are 4 topics for discussion included in the syllabus addressing challenges in various fields of urban planning. ¼ of the students will be responsible for presenting pros (7-8 people) and cons (7-8 people) in regard to one topic. After listening to each opinion (10 min presentation) followed by answering the questions of an opposing team (5 min) the floor will be open for audience questions and discussion. All the students will have to prepare Policy Briefs for discussion topics they do not need to present on (total of 3) and are expected to ask questions and provide comments. Rotation of topics will allow every student to participate in presenting material in the course of the semester. The total of 3 participation points (my initials on your participation tag) for contribution to the discussion equals **1 bonus point** to the final grade. Presenting students will determine the participation level of each participant in the project by completing an assessment form.

Each policy brief is about 3-4 pages paper, followed by the reference to at least 4 sources. Textbook and classroom discussions may provide the initial idea about the problem to discuss but independent review of relevant materials and conclusions will be assessed. The brief should summarize on-going discussion in scholarly literature and mass media on the issue. Describe the main reasons scholars, urban planners, and public argue about the issue, arguments against either course of action for problem solution. You will not submit a policy brief on the topic chosen for in-class presentation. All references used must be appropriately cited. Policy Briefs must be turned in the day of the discussion in class. E-mail it within 24 hours – lose 10% of the grade; turn in before next class – your grade is BASED on 70 points max; not accepted after the next class. No exceptions.

The Final Exam on **TBA** is comprehensive and includes multiple choice questions, short answer questions and a short essay.

Course & Instructor Policies

Attendance is crucial for the successful learning and will be taken each class. A good set of class notes will be extremely helpful if you plan excelling in this course. To claim **a bonus point** for perfect attendance you need to have a set of notes covering EVERY topic discussed. If you missed a class (maximum 2 class absences may qualify you for a bonus point toward your final grade) the notes should be made as you read the assigned chapter in the book.

Although extra help may be provided to students, the professor will not hold alternate lectures or release lecture notes to students. Respectful discussions of the topics being studied are encouraged. Attendance and class participation will be used as deciding factors for borderline students. No makeup tests. (Individual consideration may be given in case of overwhelming circumstances).

If you wish to look at the ancillary syllabus material, a link to that material is as follows
<http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.