

Course Syllabus

Course Information

Urban Planning & Policy (GEOG 3377-001, PA 3377-001, SOC 3377-001)
Fall 2006

Professor Contact Information

Dr. Roxanne Ezzet

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Office Location: GR 3.530

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:30 – 1:30 pm

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TA Contact Information

Ling-Chun Hung

Office Location: GR3.318

Office Hours: TBA

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

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Description

This course will introduce you to important substantive areas and concepts in the field of urban planning and politics, and we will examine urban policies facing local governments. We will address some of the major issues facing urban planners and policy makers today, focusing on specific issues currently affecting the Dallas Metroplex.

This course satisfies the Core Communications Curriculum (Advanced Writing) requirement for Geography and Public Administration majors.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

The course has the following objectives:

- 1) 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, both nationally and within the Dallas Metroplex.
- 2) Introduce some of the major debates and issues in urban policy and politics.

- 3) Learn how to develop and present convincing arguments.
- 4) Students will be able to practice and apply different approaches to and modes of written exposition as appropriate to a variety of theses and subjects.
- 5) Students will be able to write using effective technical requirements, including organization, mechanics, and thesis development.
- 6) Students will develop sensitivity to written language by being able to employ and apply effective and appropriate rhetorical devices directed at a defined audience.
- 7) Students will be able to demonstrate an ability to conduct research, apply source material, discuss general information, and apply logical process when writing.

To meet these objectives, policy briefs, research papers and oral presentations will cover the following four topics:

- 1) Should the Dallas-Fort Worth region adopt policies to discourage sprawl?
- 2) Should the Dallas Area Rapid Transit authority (DART) adopt a mass transit strategy based on bus transportation or light rail transit?
- 3) Should the Dallas Metroplex use congestion/road pricing to alleviate traffic congestion on the major highways (e.g., 635 and 75)?
- 4) Should the federal government expand the Housing Voucher Program or invest additional resources into public housing?

Required Textbooks and Materials

There are two required books that are available at the UTD bookstore and Off Campus Books (561 W. Campbell Road, #201, Richardson, TX 75080, 972-907-8398). There are also articles that are available online or are on reserve at the library.

Books:

Levy, John M. 2006. *Contemporary Urban Planning*. 7th edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Hacker, Diana. 2004. *A Pocket Style Manual*. 4th edition. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Assignments

In-class exams

There will be two exams covering all readings, lecture material and class activities.

Exam 1 – October 4

Exam 2 – November 29

Research Paper/Policy Briefs

You will select one topic from the following four in which you will write a research paper and give an in class presentation at the corresponding mock city council session. You will be required to write short policy briefs on the remaining three topics.

- 1) Should the Dallas-Fort Worth region adopt policies to discourage sprawl?
Presentation & Policy Brief Due: September 27
- 2) Should the federal government expand the Housing Voucher Program or invest additional resources into public housing?
Presentation & Policy Brief Due: October 18
- 3) Should the Dallas Area Rapid Transit authority (DART) adopt a mass transit strategy based on bus transportation or light rail transit?
Presentation & Policy Brief Due: November 1
- 4) Should the Dallas Metroplex use road/congestion pricing to alleviate traffic congestion on the major highways (e.g., 635 and 75)?
Presentation & Policy Brief Due: November 15

Policy briefs

You will write three policy briefs -- each brief must be three pages in length (excluding your bibliography). The briefs you write should summarize and synthesize the assigned readings and lecture materials covered in class. No additional outside readings are required for the policy briefs. You should highlight the key issues of the debate. For example, what are the main reasons scholars argue for road pricing? What are the main arguments against road pricing? Each brief is worth 15% of your course grade. Your lowest policy brief grade will be dropped. You will not write a policy brief on the topic for which you make an in-class presentation and write a research paper.

Policy briefs on each topic are due at the beginning of the class session in which the mock city council and class discussion will take place. Papers turned in after class will be considered late.

- Policy briefs must be typed, and three pages in length (double-spaced).
- Policy briefs must include a bibliography on a separate page.
- Policy briefs must appropriately cite all references used.

Research papers

You will select one of the four assigned topics for your research paper and presentation to the city council. Research papers must be typed, 7- to 8- double-spaced pages in

length, excluding your bibliography. You must include outside resources, with at least five academic journal articles included in your paper. You should argue either for or against the particular issue. For example, you may want to argue against curtailing sprawl, but be sure to include your reasons and supporting points for that recommendation. The support must be grounded in the relevant scholarly literature. **Your research paper is due in class on November 22.**

Research paper outline

A detailed (2-page) outline of your paper is **due October 25**.

Mock City Council

We will have four Mock City Council meetings that will give us a chance to experience policy making in action. Presenters will take information obtained from class lectures, activities and outside research on a specific topic and argue their cases in front of “city council members.” City council persons will listen to presentations and vote on the issue presented that week. Active participation is expected from everyone during these city council sessions.

Each student will actively participate in two mock city council session. (1) Students will give one (five minute) oral presentation in front of the mock city council for the topic selected as your research paper. (2) Students will select one other mock city council session to act as a voting city council member.

For example, November 1st we will have a session dealing with expansion of public bus versus light rail transit. Students choosing to write their research papers on bus/rail transit will come to class prepared to argue either for expansion of light rail transit or argue in favor of bus transit. City council members will listen to all presenters, and based on the persuasiveness of the arguments, will cast their votes to allocate city resources for either rail or bus transit expansion. All students, except those who are presenting in front of city council on bus/rail transit, will be required to turn in a policy brief on the topic.

CLASS SCHEDULE, LECTURE TOPICS AND READINGS

Readings listed are required and should be done prior to the class meeting.
Levy = textbook Contemporary Urban Planning

August 23: Introduction; Urbanization & History of Planning

Levy – Preface and Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4

August 30: Planning: Legal and Political Perspectives; Planning and the Environment

Levy – Chapters 5, 6, 8, 15

September 6: Zoning; Growth Management; Library Instruction Session

Levy – Chapter 9, 14

September 13: Urban Policy

Wyly, Elvin K., Norman J. Glickman and Michael L. Lahr (1998). "A Top 10 List of Things to Know about American Cities," *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research*, v.3:3, 7-32.

<http://www.huduser.org/Periodicals/CITYSCPE/VOL3NUM3/article2.pdf>

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2000). "Executive Summary," *The State of the Cities 2000. Megaforces Shaping the Future of the Nation's Cities*. (only pages i-xxv)

<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/states/socrpt.pdf>

Websites of interest on this topic:

The Urban Institute

www.urban.org

The Brookings Institution

www.brook.edu

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

www.hud.gov

Center for Urban Policy Research

www.policy.rutgers.edu/cupr

WRITING TOPIC 1 URBAN DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SPRAWL

September 13: Tentative Video: *Urbanism, Suburbanism, and the Good Life*

September 20: Sprawl and Urban Development

Burchell, Robert W., Naveed A. Shad, Davide Listokin, Hilary Phillips, Anthony Downs, Samuel Seskin, Judy S. Davis, Terry Moore, David Helton, and Michelle Gall (1998). "Defining Sprawl," and "Historical Overview" *The Costs of Sprawl Revisited*, Transit Cooperative Research Program, Report 39, Transportation Research Board, National Research Council. (pp 1-41)

http://gulliver.trb.org/publications/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_39-a.pdf

Downs, Anthony (1999). "Some Realities about Sprawl and Urban Decline," *Housing Policy Debate*, 10(4): 955-974.

http://www.fanniemae.foundation.org/programs/hpd/pdf/hpd_1004_downs.pdf

Firestone, David (2001). "90's Suburbs of West and South: Denser in One, Sprawling in Other," *The New York Times*, April 17.

http://inlc.utexas.edu/~bennett/___cwd/UBC/Census+Suburbs.pdf

House Research Organization (2002). "Do Counties Need New Powers to Cope with Urban Sprawl?" Focus Report. Texas House of Representatives.

www.capitol.state.tx.us/hrofr/focus/sprawl.pdf

What's so bad about sprawl?

Gordon, Peter and Harry W. Richardson (1997). "Are Compact Cities a Desirable Planning Goal?" *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 63(1): 95-106.

UTD Electronic Journal access

Ewing, Reid (1997). "Is Los Angeles-Style Sprawl Desirable?" *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 63(1): 107-126.

UTD Electronic Journal access

Lang, Robert E., and Partick A. Simmons (2001). "Boomburbs: The Emergence of Large, Fast-growing Suburban Cities in the United States." *Census Notes and Data*, Fannie Mae Foundation Census Notes 06 (June 2001).

http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org/programs/census_notes_6.shtml

Websites of interest on this topic:

<i>Congress for the New Urbanism</i>	www.cnu.org
<i>National Resources Defense Council</i>	www.nrdc.org/default.asp
<i>Planners Web</i>	www.plannersweb.com/sprawl/home.html
<i>Sierra Club</i>	www.sierraclub.org/sprawl
<i>Smart Growth Network</i>	www.smartgrowth.org
<i>Sprawl Watch Clearinghouse</i>	www.sprawlwatch.org
<i>Reason Foundation</i>	reason.com/bisprawl.shtml

<p>September 27 Mock City Council: Should the North Central Texas Council of Governments recommend that Metroplex cities adopt policies to discourage sprawl?</p> <p>Policy Brief Due</p>

October 4: Exam 1

October 11: Housing and Community Development

***Guest Speaker: Michael Backman, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development**

Levy – Chapters 7, 11

WRITING TOPIC 2: SUBSIDIZED HOUSING: THE CASE OF SUPPLY-SIDE VS. DEMAND-SIDE POLICIES

October 11: Affordable Housing

Hartman, Chester (1998). "The Case for a Right to Housing," *Housing Policy Debate*, 9(2) 223-246.
http://www.fanniemae.foundation.org/programs/hpd/pdf/hpd_0902_hartman.pdf

Carr, James H. (1998). "Comment on Chester Hartman's 'The Case for a Right to Housing': The Right to 'Poverty with a Roof' - A Response to Hartman," *Housing Policy Debate*, 9(2): 247-257.
http://www.fanniemae.foundation.org/programs/hpd/pdf/hpd_0902_carr.pdf

Salins, Peter D. (1998). "Comment on Chester Hartman's 'The Case for a Right to Housing': Housing is a Right? Wrong!" *Housing Policy Debate*, 9(2): 259-266.
http://www.fanniemae.foundation.org/programs/hpd/pdf/hpd_0902_salins.pdf

Federal Housing Policy

MacDonald, Heather I. (2000). "Renegotiating the Public-Private Partnership: Efforts to Reform Section 8 Assisted Housing," *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 22(3): 279-299.

UTD Electronic Journal access

Crump, Jeff (2002). "Deconcentration by Demolition: Public Housing, Poverty, and Urban Policy," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 20: 581-596.

Available on reserve at the UTD McDermott Library

Epps, Gayle (1996). "Emerging Strategies for Revitalizing Public Housing Communities," *Housing Policy Debate*, 7(3): 563-588.
http://www.fanniemae.foundation.org/programs/hpd/pdf/hpd_0703_epp.pdf

Websites of interest on this topic:

HUD www.hud.gov

HUD's Office of University Partnerships www.oup.org

Dallas Housing Authority www.dallashousing.org

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs

www.tdhca.state.tx.us

National Low-Income Housing Coalition www.nlihc.org

Texas Low Income Housing Information Service

<http://www.texashousing.org/txlihis/index.html>

<http://www.texashousing.org/issues/phref/phref.html>

October 18	Mock City Council: Should the Federal Government continue to expand the Housing Voucher programs or invest additional resources into public housing? Policy Brief Due
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October 18: Transportation

Levy – Chapter 12

Video: *Taken for a Ride*

WRITING TOPIC 3: URBAN TRANSIT - BUS VS. RAIL

October 25: Two-page paper outline is due.

October 25: Bus vs. Light Rail

Pucher, John (2002). "Renaissance of Public Transport in the United States?" *Transportation Quarterly*, 56(1): 33-49.
www.vtpi.org/tqtransi.pdf

Garrett, Mark and Brian Taylor (1999). "Reconsidering Social Equity in Public Transit," *Berkeley Planning Journal*, 13: 6-27.
www-dcrp.ced.berkeley.edu/bpj/pdf/13-GarrettTaylor.pdf

Simon, Richard (2003). "For Nation's Drivers, Bumpy Roads Ahead," *Los Angeles Times*, 2003 February 3.
www.sactaqc.org/resources/literature/funding/federal_funding_reduction.htm

Arosemena, Martha and Maria Lane (eds.) (2000). "Point/Counterpoint Questions about the Future of Light Rail in America," *Planning Forum*, Community and Regional Planning Program, School of Architecture, The University of Texas at Austin, 6:79-90.
<http://www.ar.utexas.edu/planning/forum/vol6pdfs/v6pcp.pdf>

Kain, John (1990). "Deception in Dallas: Strategic Misrepresentation in Rail Transit Promotion and Evaluation," in *Journal of the American Planning Association*, pp 184-196.

UTD Electronic Journal access

Pickrell, Don (Spring 1992). "A Desire Named Streetcar: Fantasy and Fact in Rail Transit Planning," in *Journal of the American Planning Association*, pp 158-176.

UTD Electronic Journal access

O'Meara, Molly (1999). "How mid-sized cities can avoid strangulation," *Public Management*, 81(5): 8-15.

UTD Electronic Journal access

Websites of interest on this topic:

DART

www.dart.org

NCTCOG Transportation Department

www.dfwinfo.com/trans/

Bus Riders Union

www.thestrategycenter.org/

Surface Transportation Policy Project

www.transact.org/

Reason Public Policy Institute

www.rppi.org/

November 1	Mock COG meeting: Should DART (the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Authority) adopt a Mass Transit Strategy based on Bus Transportation or Light Rail Transit? Policy Brief Due
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WRITING TOPIC 4: URBAN TRANSIT - THE CASE OF CONGESTION PRICING

November 1 & 8: Issues in Urban Transit & Congestion Pricing

Brownstone, David, and Kenneth A. Small. (2003) "Valuing Time and Reliability: Assessing the Evidence from Road Pricing Demonstrations" UCTC Working Paper, Fall 2003
www.uctc.net/papers/668.pdf

Johnston, Robert A., Jay R. Lund, and Paul P. Craig. (1995) "Capacity-Allocation Methods for Reducing Urban Traffic Congestion" in *Journal of Transportation Engineering*, Jan/Feb95, Vol. 121 Issue 1, p27, 13p
UTD Electronic Journal access

"Drivers buy into congestion pricing." (1996). *Planning*, 62(7): 24, Section: Planning News.
UTD Electronic Journal access

Mead, Tom. (2003). "Buy your way out of traffic jams." *Christian Science Monitor* on the Web 17 July 2003.
www.csmonitor.com/2003/0717/p14s01-sten.htm

Small, Kenneth A. (1997). "Economics and Urban Transportation Policy in the United States." *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 27 (6): 671-691.
UTD Electronic Journal access

Websites of interest on this topic:

Orange County's 91 Express lanes www.91expresslanes.com

San Diego I-15 FasTrak <http://argo.sandag.org/fastrak>

U.S. DOT www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/otps/valuepricing.htm

University of California, Irvine – Institute for Transportation Studies www.its.uci.edu/its

University of Minnesota, Value Pricing Homepage

www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/slp/projects/conpric/index.htm

Curbing Gridlock: Peak-Period Fees to Relieve Traffic Congestion -- Special Report 242

www.nap.edu/books/0309055040/html/R7.html

North Central Texas Council of Government, Transportation Department

www.nctcog.org/trans

November 15 Mock City Council: Should the Dallas metro area implement congestion pricing on the 635 and 75 highways to alleviate traffic congestion?
Policy Brief Due

November 22: Metropolitan Regions

Levy – Chapter 16

Research paper due in class. No email papers will be accepted. Papers must also be submitted to turnitin.com by 11:00pm on November 22 to receive full credit. Papers not uploaded to turnitin.com by the deadline may be subjected to a 10% penalty.

November 29: Exam 2 (2:00-3:30 pm)

Enjoy the winter break!

Grading Policy

Your course grade will be comprised of two in-class exams, participation and presentation at the mock city council meetings, three policy briefs, and one research paper.

Grading will be based on the following:

Exam 1 (October 4)	15%
Exam 2 (November 29)	15%
Three policy briefs (lowest score is dropped)	30%
Research paper (due November 22)	25%
Oral presentation to mock city council	10%
Mock city council member participation	<u>5%</u>
	100%

Course & Instructor Policies

Make-up exams

No make-up exams will be offered. A missed exam will receive a “0” score. Exceptions to this policy will be considered in the case of documented emergencies only. If you miss an exam, you must contact Dr. Ezzet immediately.

Word Processing

All assignments, except in-class exams, must be word processed or typed. No handwritten policy briefs, outlines, or papers will be accepted.

Late Work

All policy briefs, research papers and other assignments must be turned in at the beginning of lecture on the date indicated in the course syllabus. Work that is turned in after class is considered late. **Papers and assignments submitted late will be subject to the following penalty:**

- 1 day late – 25% reduction from total points possible**
- 2 days late – 50% reduction from total points possible**
- 3 days late – 75% reduction from total points possible**
- 4 days late – 100% reduction from total points possible**

Note: These are “calendar” days. (i.e., an assignment due on a Wednesday but turned in the following Monday will receive 0 points.)

Consideration of exceptions to this policy will be made only due to illness and with appropriate documentation from a medical professional.

All policy briefs and research papers must be turned in to Professor Ezzet and uploaded to turnitin.com. Papers which are not uploaded to turnitin.com will not be graded or returned and will result in a “0” score for that assignment.

Field Trip Policies

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative

intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

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