



Department of Urban Affairs and Planning

INTRODUCTION TO URBAN PLANNING 787.04 (#3756)

Professor Laxmi Ramasubramanian

Class meets: Mondays, 7.45 PM to 9.35 PM

Note/with agreement of class, we will move to start class at 7.10 PM and end at 9.00 PM

Classroom: Room 1640 Hunter West

Office: HW 1616A

Email: *laxmi [at] hunter.cuny.edu*

Office Hours: On Wednesdays, 3 PM to 5 PM; you are encouraged to make an appointment

Course Overview

This class is the foundation course designed to introduce first semester MUP students to the field of planning. It offers a broad overview of the structure and process of contemporary planning practice in the United States. It will briefly review the growth of modern city planning; highlight both the theoretical debates and practical challenges that planners are likely to encounter within different substantive subfields of planning practice; and discuss problem-solving techniques and strategies used by practicing planners working in different institutional contexts. Readings and in-class work will examine different planning approaches, models, issues, policies and techniques, including community-based and participatory planning and planning for sustainable communities. Lectures and discussions will cover topics such as land use planning and zoning, environment and open space, housing, community and economic development, transportation, infrastructure and municipal services, regional planning, intergovernmental relations, preservation planning, ethics in planning, and global urbanization and planning. This course is focused on planning as practiced in the United States; although examples will be drawn from international contexts, where appropriate. At the end of this semester, students will have enough background about specific substantive areas (e.g., housing or urban design) to help them decide how they may want to focus their subsequent coursework and professional work. The organization of the course will give students an opportunity to learn how to express their ideas verbally and interact with others in class discussions.

Course Learning Goals and Objectives

In this course, students will:

- familiarize themselves with the history of urban planning in the United States and the legal, administrative, and political contexts within which planning takes place;
- learn about several models of planning interventions, and consider their appropriateness under different circumstances, and their different implications for outcomes;
- become familiar with important issues and common techniques used in comprehensive land use planning, neighborhood and community planning, transportation planning, environmental planning, and international development planning; and,
- understand concretely what professional planners do and problems they confront through an individual in-depth term project.

Structure and Format of Class

The class will meet once a week. Students are expected to arrive before the designated start time (Mondays, 7.10 PM) and should plan their schedule so as to stay in class until 9 .00 PM. Tardiness and/or absence (2 or more instances) will negatively impact your final course grade. Most class sessions will include lecture and discussions. Students are expected to have completed assigned readings ahead of time and will be expected to participate actively in class discussions. Please make a note of date/time changes, see page 4.

Required Textbooks

Hoch, Charles, Linda Dalton, & Frank So. 2000. *The practice of local government planning, 3rd edition*. Washington, DC: International City/County Management Association

LeGates, Richard & Frederic Stout. 2003. *The City Reader, 4th edition*. New York: Routledge.

Required books are on order at Shakespeare & Company (68th & Lexington). Please support this independent bookstore, if at all possible.

Use of Blackboard

Students in this course are required to use **Blackboard**, Hunter's on-line course management system. It is your responsibility to check Blackboard regularly for announcements related to the course. Please configure your Hunter email account to ensure that your messages are automatically forwarded to the appropriate place where you typically read your email.

Computing Requirements

Each student is expected to have some form of digital media to store and transfer your data. I recommend a USB2 flash drive (512 MB RAM or greater). Your assignments, regardless of the software program you used to create them, must typically be saved and submitted as Adobe PDF documents.

University Policies

University policies and procedures will be followed to address issues related to accommodation for disabilities, religious observations, dealing with discriminatory conduct, sexual harassment and other related matters. In general, if you need special accommodation to meet any of the requirements of this course, you must see the instructor during the first week of classes. *Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The college is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.*

Grading Scheme

I.	Attendance and class participation	15 %
II.	Individual performance in leading discussions	10 %
III.	Planning Issue Brief	20 %
IV.	What Planners Do – Extended Project	35 %
V.	Take Home Exam (Essay)	20 %

Submission Deadlines

I take submission deadlines seriously. **Unexplained late submissions will not be graded.** In special circumstances such as illness or family emergencies, the student can negotiate a later submission deadline by contacting me. Note that all assignments for this class must be submitted electronically, through the Digital Drop feature on Blackboard since it provides the student and the instructor with an electronic record of submission. If Blackboard crashes (as it sometimes does), you can either attach your submission to an e-mail message or hand a paper copy in person to the department office and get it date/time stamped. Faxed submissions are not acceptable.

Grading Criteria

I. Attendance and Class Participation (15 %)

Attendance at every class is expected. Required readings and additional suggested readings will be assigned for every class session. You are expected to have completed your readings ahead of time. Your familiarity with assigned readings, especially your ability to critique them and integrate them within class discussions will help to determine your class participation grade. It is crucial to the quality of class discussions that you stay current with the readings. Each day, read the New York daily newspapers for information on planning and neighborhood issues, and periodicals like *City Limits*, *Crains*, and online journals such as *Gotham Gazette* (sign up for their daily digest of the local press). Post comments and open up discussions using the Blog feature on BlackBoard.

II. Individual Performance in Leading Discussions (10 %)

Everyone will be assigned the responsibility of leading one class discussion, opening up with a short (5 minute) summary of the readings. Discussion leaders are expected to come prepared with questions, ideas, and/or activities to structure the conversation. Students will be assigned in advance to lead class discussions. Your performance will be evaluated based on the thoroughness of your preparation, your ability to facilitate discussion; and your ability to integrate local/contextual issues from the city/region into the conversation. Additional details will be provided on the first day of class.

III. Planning Issue Brief (20%)

You will write a short report (approximately 1500 words or 5 pages double spaced) on a planning issue, choosing from a list of issues provided by the instructor. This submission is due no later than **March 5, 2008**

IV. What Planners Do - Extended Project (35%)

The purpose of the term project is to learn planning practice by analyzing in detail what an individual planner does in a specific planning project and in her/his general practice. This is an opportunity to examine how planners work independently and collaboratively. The written report (5000 words), due no later than **April 28th, 2008**, should include the following:

- summary description of the work performed by the planner, focusing on at least one specific project
- summary description of the context – structure of agency, organization, firm; relationship to management, clients, community-based, civic and professional organizations

- analysis of the political and economic context in which the planner operates
- skills they use; skills they would like to have
- issues and problems they encounter, including ethical questions
- your overall evaluation of the role of the planner

V. Take Home Exam – Essay Format (20%)

Exam will be based on course readings, and is due no later than **May 19, 2008**

THERE IS NO “INCOMPLETE” OPTION AVAILABLE FOR THIS COURSE

Overview of the Class Schedule

Date	Session	Topics
Jan 28	1	Introductions, Course Overview, What is Planning?
Feb 4	2	An overview of Contemporary Planning Practice
Feb 11	-	No class
Feb 18	3	Comprehensive and Land Use Planning (there’s class, even if it’s a holiday)
Feb 25	4	Written Communication (UMAH Workshop class starts at 5.30 PM)
Mar 3	5	Transportation Planning
Mar 10	6	Neighborhood and Community Planning – 1 (class starts at 6 PM)
Mar 17	7	What Planners Do (Advocacy)
Mar 24	-	No class (College Schedule)
Mar 26	8	Urban Design (Note: it’s a Wednesday)
Mar 31	9	Environmental Planning and Policy
Apr 7	10	Regionalism
Apr 14	11	Technologies and the Transformation of Planning Practice
Apr 21	-	No class (Spring Break)
Apr 28	12	Globalization and International Planning
May 5	13	Ethics and Planning Practice
May 12	14	Future Prospects for Planning
May 19	-	Take Home Exam Due

Detailed Schedule and Readings

SESSIONS 1 & 2 /January 28 and February 4

What is planning? An overview of contemporary planning practice

Required Reading

From *The Green Book*

Chapter 1: Introduction: Planning for people and places and

Chapter 2: Making plans

From *The City Reader*

Davis, "The Urbanization of the Human Population"

Mumford, "What is a City?"

Burgess, "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project"

Zukin, "Whose culture? Whose city?"

From *BlackBoard*

Klosterman, "Arguments for and against planning"

Questions to Answer

- What are the historical roots of planning? Can you describe the actors, institutions, and the socio-political contexts within which particular approaches to planning emerged?
- What are the arguments for and against planning? Are these arguments still relevant today?

SESSION 3/February 18

Land Use and Comprehensive Planning; Zoning

Required Reading

From *The Green Book*

Chapter 7: Development Planning

Chapter 14: Zoning and subdivision regulations

Chapter 4: Population Analysis

From *The City Reader*

Le Corbusier, "A Contemporary City"

Wright, "Broadacre City: A New Community Plan"

Jackson, "The Drive-In Culture of Contemporary America"

Downs, "The need for a New Vision for the Development of Large U.S. Metropolitan Areas"

Questions to Answer

1. Describe a typical comprehensive planning process and discuss its strengths and limitations using a specific example (outside of New York city).

Recommended Reading

Kelly, Eric Damian & Barbara Becker. *Community Planning: An Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan*. Washington DC: Island Press

Chapters 1 & 2: *The Comprehensive Planning Process and an Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan*

SESSION 4/February 25

Written Communication Skills

Attend presentation by Ms. Louise Dunlap, guest speaker at UMAH

Required Reading: TBA in class (on Feb 4th)

**SESSION 5/March 3
Transportation Planning**

Required Reading

From *The Green Book*

Chapter 9: Transportation Planning

From *The City Reader*

Fishman, "Beyond Suburbia: The rise of the technoburb"

Jacobs, "The Use of Sidewalks: Safety"

Davis, "Fortress LA"

Soja, "Taking Los Angeles Apart: Towards a Postmodern Geography"

Webber, "The Post-City Age"

From *BlackBoard*

Making Transit Work: Insights from Western Europe, Canada, and the United States. TRB Special Report # 257

Questions to Answer

1. What are the connections between patterns of development (land use) and transportation?
2. In what ways do transportation patterns impact our quality of life?

**SESSION 6/ March 10
Neighborhood and Community Planning**

Required Reading

From *The Green Book*

Chapter 11: Community Development

Chapter 10: Housing Planning and Policy

Chapter 12: Economic Development

Chapter 6: Economic Analyses

From *The City Reader*

DuBois, "The Negro Problems of Philadelphia", "The Question of Earning a Living"

Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital", p. 105

Wilson, "From Institutional to Jobless Ghettos", p.126

Wilson & Kelling, "Broken Windows", p. 267

View Video "Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street"

Viedo is based on the book by Peter Medoff and Holly Sklar, "Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood", South End Press, 1994.

Viewing is scheduled for 6.00 PM, before class begins

Questions to Answer

1. How should planners facilitate community development?
2. How do race, class, gender, and citizenship intersect in neighborhood planning decisions?

**SESSION 7/ March 17
What Planners Do**

Required Reading

From *The Green Book*

Chapter 17: Building Consensus

Chapter 18: Communities, Organizations, Politics, and Ethics

From *The City Reader*

Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation"

Davidoff, "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning"

Forester, "Planning in the Face of Conflict"

From *BlackBoard*

Ramasubramanian, L (2004). *Knowledge production and use in community-based organizations: The impacts and influence of information technologies*, **CityScape** 7, 1, pp.165-191

Questions to Answer

1. Is advocacy planning a relevant model for planning in our globalized world? Take a position and support your arguments with practical examples and evidence

SESSION 8/March 26 (WEDNESDAY SESSION) Urban Design and Management and Public Spaces

Required Reading

From *The Green Book*

Chapter 13: Urban Design

From *The City Reader*

Lynch, "The City Image and Its Elements"

Jacobs & Appleyard, "Towards an Urban Design Manifesto"

Whyte, "The Design of Spaces"

Madanipour, "Social Exclusion and Space"

Duany & Plater-Zyberk, "The Neighborhood, the District, and the Corridor"

From *BlackBoard*

Does the built environment influence physical activity? Examining the evidence.

TRB Special Report # 282

Questions to Answer

1. What is "good" urban design? Bring examples. Be prepared to explain and justify your choices. You must have relatively specific information to support your observations.

SESSION 9/March 31 Environmental Planning and Policy

Required Reading

From *The Green Book*

Chapter 8: Environmental Policy

Chapter 5: Environmental Analysis

Chapter 6: Economic Analyses

From *The City Reader*

Wheeler, "Planning Sustainable and Livable Cities"

Beatley, "Green Urbanism and the Lessons of European Cities: The Vision of Green Urbanism and Creating Green and Sustainable Cities in the United States: Lessons from Europe"

From *BlackBoard*

Laurian, L (2004). *Public Participation in Environmental Decisionmaking*. **JAPA**, 70, 1, 2004

Questions to Answer

1. How can planners engage with environmental questions that are heavily dependent on scientific research and evidence (e.g., questions related to air and water quality)?
2. Can planning for natural hazards be managed using a participatory planning approach, or should it always be a top-down process? Why or why not?

SESSION 10/ April 7 Regionalism

Required Reading

Chapter 15: Growth Management

From *The City Reader*

Calthorpe & Fulton, “Designing the Region” and “Designing the Region is designing the Neighborhood”

From *BlackBoard*

Wheeler, S (2002). *The new regionalism: Key characteristics of an emerging movement*, **JAPA**, 68, 3

Downs, A (2005). *Smart Growth: Why we discuss it more than we do it*, **JAPA**, 71, 4

Gilliam, Oliver (2002). *The Limitless City: A primer on the urban sprawl debate*. Washington, DC: Island Press. Chapter 14, “Regionalism” (on reserve for this course)

Questions to Answer

1. Should most planning functions remain at the local level, or should we advocate a regional planning model that is more prevalent in other western democracies? Why or why not?
2. How do regional planning agencies function in the United States? Be prepared to discuss the work of a single agency, highlighting both the agency’s strengths and weaknesses.

Note: More materials will be added for this session!

SESSION 11/April 14

New Technologies and the Transformation of Planning Practice

From *The Green Book*

Chapter 3: Planning in the Information Age

From *The City Reader*

Mitchell, “The Teleserviced City”

Sassen, “The impact of the new technologies and globalization on cities”

Castells, “European Cities, the Informational Society, and the Global Economy”

From *BlackBoard*

Schlossberg & Shuford, 2005. *Delineating “Public” and “Participation” in PPGIS*, **URISA Journal**, 16, 2

Ramasubramanian, L (2008). *Public Participation GIS Implementation and the Transformation of Planning Practice*, manuscript in review for inclusion in Handbook of GIS & Society

Questions to Answer

1. Are information technologies likely to be used to serve the needs of low-income communities or are they more likely to be used in preserving the entitlements of affluent communities and elite interests? Why or why not? Bring specific examples to support your arguments.

2. New technologies have made planning easier (faster, more efficient, and more precise). However, do these technologies help us make better plans? Why or why not?

SESSION 12/April 28
Globalization and International Planning

Readings TBA

SESSION 13/May 5
Ethics and Planning Practice

Required Reading

From *BlackBoard*

APA Ethical Planning Principles

AICP Code of Ethics

Howe, E (1990). Normative Ethics in Planning, **Journal of Planning Literature**, 5, 2

Baum, H. (1998). *Ethical Behavior Is Extraordinary Behavior; It's the Same as All Other Behavior*, **JAPA**, 64, 4

Forsyth, A (1999). Administrative Discretion and Urban and Regional Planners' Values, **Journal of Planning Literature**, 14, 1

Dobson, J & P. Fisher (2003) *Geoslavery*, **IEEE Technology and Society Magazine**

Questions to Answer

1. What kinds of ethical conflicts are you likely to encounter as a planner?
2. What actions would be clear cut violations of professional planning ethics?
3. In what situations might you be unsure whether a certain action was ethical or not?
4. Be prepared to define the "public interest" in class and to defend your definition.

SESSION 14/May 12
Future Prospects for Planning

No assigned readings

Bring in examples to discuss topics you would like to share and discuss with the class

EXAM SUBMISSIONS DUE NO LATER THAN 5 PM, MAY 19, 2008