

UP510 | Plan Making – Urbana Comprehensive Plan | Spring 2021

Department of Urban and Regional Planning

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Time: T, Th, 11:00am – 12:20pm

Location: Online

Office Hours: Tues 1:00pm – 2:00pm Online via Zoom

Course Description

This workshop course (4 credit hours) focuses on the comprehensive plan making process. Comprehensive plans are critical planning documents that act as a statement of the future vision of a community. Traditionally this vision focused on land use and physical development but newer iterations of these plans address a much broader range of topics. This semester we will be helping the City of Urbana as they undertake a multi-year process of updating their comprehensive plan. Our task will be narrowly focused on one aspect of the plan making process: community engagement. Students will apply concepts and skills from prior courses and work extensively in teams to engage with community members, stakeholders, and decision makers to compile, synthesize, and present information that will aid the City of Urbana in updating their comprehensive plan. The class is designed for learning by doing. There are no prerequisites and students will have ample opportunity to contribute in a variety of ways within the collaborative learning environment. We will work closely with City of Urbana planning staff to engage communities, contribute in a meaningful way to the plan making process, and gain a deeper understanding of planning through practice. **The focus of our efforts will be to increase equitable participation, engagement, and participation in the comprehensive plan making process.** Based on individual interests, students will be organized into teams and work on tasks that are identified during consultation with City of Urbana planning staff during the first two weeks. Potential tasks will focus on public engagement and may include background research on existing conditions, identifying key stakeholders, identifying historically marginalized population groups, planning for outreach and community involvement in the planning process with a focus on historically marginalized groups, and implementing those outreach plans.

Course Objectives

Throughout the semester, students will:

1. Become familiar with the basic purpose and principles of comprehensive plan making
2. Apply concepts and skills from prior courses to gain a deeper understanding of planning through practice
3. Engage with the local community to make a meaningful contribution “real world” planning efforts

Course Format

This is a workshop class meaning most class sessions will be work sessions. We will spend some time in the first few weeks discussing readings and background information before agreeing on the tasks to be completed during the remainder of the semester. Although some class periods will consist of team work on specific tasks, all students are expected to attend every class session in order to receive new instructions, hear status reports from other work groups, or to have team meetings with the instructor. The latter provide an opportunity to review the work plan, member responsibilities, and overall progress towards assigned tasks. If you are not able to attend a class session, please notify the instructor via email in advance.

Course Evaluation

Course evaluation will be based on completing assigned tasks. Most tasks will be group efforts worked on in teams. These tasks and timelines will be developed early in the semester. Tasks will focus on public engagement and may include background research on existing conditions, identifying key stakeholders, identifying historically marginalized population groups, planning for outreach and community involvement in the planning process with a focus on historically marginalized groups, and implementing those outreach plans. Deliverables will include a mix of memos, reports, and presentations to members of the community, key stakeholders, planning staff, and decision makers.

Assignments:

- Individual background memo on technique or process best practices for public engagement using a SWOT analysis framework
- Group milestone memos:
 - Background research on assigned outreach group
 - Engagement strategy
 - Implementation plan
 - After action report

Transformation of numerical grade to letter grade will be according to the schedule below:

| | | | |
|----|---------|----|---------|
| A | 93-100 | C+ | 77-79.9 |
| A- | 90-92.9 | C | 73-76.9 |
| B+ | 87-89.9 | C- | 70-72.9 |
| B | 83-86.9 | D+ | 67-69.9 |
| B- | 80-82.9 | D | 60-66.9 |

The general grading rubric for assignments is as follows:

An “A” assignment demonstrates original thought and synthesis of ideas and sophisticated, cogent analysis. It is clearly written and presented.

A “B” assignment includes above average analysis with appropriate evidence to support ideas. It is clearly written and presented.

A “C” assignment shows a basic level of understanding, with analysis limited to obvious arguments. Writing is competent. It is adequate work.

A “D” assignment misunderstands or misrepresents the material or is so poorly written that it obscures the analysis. It is inadequate work.

Readings

All readings will be available through the course Compass site.

Course Policies

Student Conduct: From the University Student Code, Article 1, Part 3: Students enrolling in the University assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the University’s function as an educational institution and suitable to members of the academic community. Students are responsible for knowing their rights and responsibilities as found in the student code at <http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/policy/code/index.html>.

The effectiveness of this course is dependent upon the creation of an encouraging and safe classroom environment. Exclusionary, offensive or harmful speech (such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.) will not be tolerated and in some cases subject to University harassment procedures. We are all responsible for creating a positive and safe environment that allows all students equal respect and comfort. I expect each of you to help establish and maintain an environment where you and your peers can contribute without fear of ridicule or intolerant or offensive language.

Special Circumstances: Due to the participatory nature of this course, please communicate any expected or unexpected absences with the instructor as early as possible. Every effort will be made to work with students with unusual or unexpected obligations outside the course (family emergencies, health issues, participation in University sanctioned activities, etc.) Students with disabilities or special needs who require any accommodations to facilitate full participation and completion of the course should contact the instructor as soon as possible. Please refer to the Disability Resources and Educational Services at <http://www.disability.illinois.edu> for more information.

Safety and Security in the Classroom: Emergencies can happen anywhere and at any time. It is important that we take a minute to prepare for a situation in which our safety or even our lives

could depend on our ability to react quickly. When we're faced with any kind of emergency – like fire, severe weather or if someone is trying to hurt you – we have three options: Run, hide or fight. Please refer to the General Emergency Response Recommendations at <http://police.illinois.edu/dpsapp/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/syllabus-attachment.pdf> for more information.

Schedule and Required Readings

This is a tentative schedule that will change based on class discussions and discussions with staff at the City of Urbana.

Week 1: What is a comprehensive plan and why does it matter?

- City of Urbana 2005 Comprehensive Plan.
<https://www.urbanainillinois.us/businesses/urbana-comprehensive-plan>
- Herman, B., & White, D. (2016). The 21st century comprehensive plan: *Planning Magazine*, 82(3). <https://www.planning.org/planning/2016/mar/>
 - Substance
 - Role
 - Form

Week 2: Plan making and the comprehensive plan

- Godschalk, D. R., & Rouse, D. C. (2015). *Sustaining places: best practices for comprehensive plans* (Vol. 578). Chicago: American Planning Association.
<https://www.planning.org/publications/report/9026901/>
- American Planning Association. (2019). Planning for Equity Policy Guide.
- Loh, C. G., & Kim, R. (2020). Are We Planning for Equity? Equity Goals and Recommendations in Local Comprehensive Plans. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 1-16.

Additional resources:

- Straus, D. How to Make Collaboration Work: Powerful Ways to Build Consensus, Solve Problems, and Make Decisions. BerrettKoehler Publishers Inc., San Francisco 2002. Available online at <https://www.safaribooksonline.com/library/view/how-to-make/9781605092850/> with your University of Illinois email address as your login. Chapters 4, 5, and 6
- Susskind, L. & Connie O., "Mediated negotiation in the public sector: The planner as mediator." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 4.1 (1984): 5-15.
- Allyson Mendenhall, Claire Hempel, AICP CUD, Emily Risinger, Stephanie Grigsby, AICP, Creating Planning Documents (PAS 589), American Planning Association, 2017.

Week 3: Engaging the public in the plan making process

- It's Time to Move On From Community Consensus: Public meetings often disprove the notion that communities have a unified stance on any issue. With this in mind, we must move past trying to find consensus and focus on uplifting the most marginalized voices.
<https://shelterforce.org/2020/09/04/community-consensus/>
- Public Engagement in the Era of COVID-19. <https://transitcenter.org/public-engagement-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

- How planners can re-think public engagement. <https://www.lincolnst.edu/news/lincoln-house-blog/how-planners-can-re-think-public-engagement>
- Brownill, S. , & Parker, G. (2010). Why bother with good works? The relevance of public participation(s) in planning in a post-collaborative era. *Planning Practice & Research* , 25 (3), 275–282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2010.503407>
- Innes, J. E. , & Booher, D. E. (2004). Reframing public participation: Strategies for the 21st century. *Planning Theory & Practice* , 5 (4), 419–436. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1464935042000293170>
- Crossing the Digital Divide During COVID. <https://shelterforce.org/2020/09/10/staying-connected-digital-divide/>

Additional Resources:

- Online Public Engagement (<https://www.planning.org/knowledgebase/onlineengagement/>)
- How COVID-19 Has Underscored the Digital Divide (<https://www.planning.org/podcast/how-covid-19-has-underscored-the-digital-divide/>)

Weeks 4 through 15 will consist of working on tasks related to public engagement and the plan making process.

Timeline:

- Weeks 1 to 3: Background discussions on comprehensive planning and public engagement
- Week 4: Background research
- Weeks 5 and 6: Developing an engagement strategy
- Weeks 7: Making contact
- Week 8: Non-instructional days
- Weeks 9 to 11: Conducting public engagement (week 8 non-instructional days)
- Week 12: Non-instructional days
- Weeks 13 to 14: Reviewing and summarizing engagement activities
- Week 15: Presentations, course wrap up and next steps

Presentations:

- Background research
- Engagement strategy
- Summary of engagement activities

Assignments and milestones timeline and due dates TBD.

