

UP510 | Plan Making – Urbana Comprehensive Plan | Fall 2021

Department of Urban and Regional Planning

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Time: M, W, 11:00am – 12:20pm

Location: Temple Buell Hall, Room 223

Office Hours: Tues 1:00pm – 2:00pm by appointment

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 policy based on 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 tasks will be narrowly focused on certain phases and aspects of the plan making process to include rethinking the role of the comprehensive plan, planning support systems, and community engagement and public participation. 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 define our tasks, with the goal of contributing in a meaningful way to the plan making process, and in the process gaining a deeper understanding of planning through practice. 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 of the semester. Potential tasks might include:

- Planning for and conducting outreach to gathering input, encourage community involvement in the planning process, and help communities get organized and build capacity, with a focus on historically marginalized groups and neighborhoods.
- Exploring possibilities and developing a framework for how ideas about more expansive comprehensive plans could be realized in the City of Urbana’s plan making process.
- Developing a web-based ArcGIS tool to better manage the ecosystem of plans and regulations applicable to specific geographic locations to aid in the plan making process.

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
4. Develop a higher level of executive function (i.e., the ability to get things done on time)
5. Improve the capacity to work in groups

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. These tasks will be group efforts. As students working on a “real world” planning challenge, expect to spend time outside of class accomplishing the plan making tasks. Although some class periods will consist of team work on specific tasks, all students are expected to attend required class sessions 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 Memo on Comprehensive Plan Making in the 21st Century (10%)
- Group assignments:
 - Weekly Update posts (12 total for 20%)
 - Group milestone memos:
 - Workplan (15%)
 - Plan review case study (10%)
 - Assessment and reflection memo (15%)
 - Final report and presentation (30%)

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 Canvas site. Come to class on Monday ready to discuss the readings

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.

COVID-19 Policies and Expectations: Following University policy, all students are required to engage in appropriate behavior to protect the health and safety of the community. Students are also required to follow the [campus COVID-19 protocols](#).

Students who feel ill must not come to class. In addition, students who test positive for COVID-19 or have had an exposure that requires testing and/or quarantine must not attend class. The University will provide information to the instructor, in a manner that complies with privacy laws, about students in these latter categories. These students are judged to have excused absences for the class period and should contact the instructor via email about making up the work.

Students who fail to abide by these rules will first be asked to comply; if they refuse, they will be required to leave the classroom immediately. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, the non-compliant student will be judged to have an unexcused absence and reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution for disciplinary action. Accumulation of non-compliance complaints against a student may result in dismissal from the University.

All students, faculty, staff, and visitors are required to wear face coverings in classrooms and university spaces. This is in accordance with CDC guidance and University policy and expected in this class.

Please refer to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's COVID-19 website for [further information on face coverings](#). Thank you for respecting all of our well-being so we can learn and interact together productively.

In order to implement COVID-19-related guidelines and policies affecting university operations, instructional faculty members may ask students in the classroom to show their Building Access Status in the Safer Illinois app or the Boarding Pass. Staff members may ask students in university offices to show their Building Access Status in the Safer Illinois app or the Boarding Pass. If the Building Access Status says “Granted,” that means the individual is compliant with the university’s COVID-19 policies—either with a university-approved COVID-19 vaccine or with the on-campus COVID-19 testing program for unvaccinated students.

Students are required to show only the Building Access Screen, which shows compliance without specifying whether it was through COVID-19 vaccination or regular on-campus testing. To protect personal health information, this screen does not say if a person is vaccinated or not. Students are not required to show anyone the screen that displays their vaccination status. No university official, including faculty members, may ask students why they are not vaccinated or any other questions seeking personal health 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.

Overall Timeline:

- Weeks 1 to 3: Background discussions on plan making and the comprehensive plan
- Week 4 to 5: Developing a work plan
- Weeks 6 to 13: Implementing work plan
- Week 14: Fall break
- Week 15 to 16: Presentations, course wrap up and next steps

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

Readings:

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

Assigned: Individual Memo on Comprehensive Plan Making in the 21st Century, Due: 9/6

Week 2: Plan making and the comprehensive plan

Readings:

- 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.
- Mendes, D. "Project management is good planning!" *PAS Memo*, September-October 2011. Available for APA members at <https://planning.org/pas/memo/2011/sep/>

Week 3: Engaging the public in the plan making process – purpose and function

Readings:

- 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>
- 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/>
- 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>

Tools and resources:

- Complete Communities Tool Box <https://www.completecommunitiesde.org/planning/inclusive-and-active/tools-and-resources-pe/>
- Community Engagement Tools <https://www.lgc.org/virtualengagement-tools/>

Engagement in a pandemic:

- Community Engagement during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond A Guide for Community-Based Organization. <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/102820/community-engagement-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-and-beyond.pdf>
- Public Engagement in the Era of COVID-19. <https://transitcenter.org/public-engagement-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>
- 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/>)

Assigned: Group Workplan Memo, Due: 9/17

Week 4: Looking at Best Practices for Ideas

“Best practice” comprehensive plans:

- Rock Island (<https://www.rigov.org/DocumentCenter/View/6991/Comprehensive-Plan?bidId=>)
- Raleigh (<https://www.raleighnc.gov/content/PlanDev/Documents/LongRange/ComprehensivePlan/2030CompPlanAmendedJuly2016.pdf>)
- Austin (ftp://ftp.ci.austin.tx.us/npzd/ImagineAustin/IACP_2018.pdf)
- Nashville (https://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/2017Update/next-volume1-ABCD-IntroWhyPlan_Amended2017.pdf)

Assigned: Group Plan Review Case Study, Due: 9/24

Weeks 5 through 15 will consist of working on your chosen task the plan making process with weekly updates, a mid-term reflection, and a final report and presentation.

Assignments:

Individual Memo on Comprehensive Plan Making in the 21st Century (10 points): Research contemporary approaches to comprehensive plans and plan making by contrasting and comparing the City of Urbana’s 2005 comprehensive plan with one of the following plans that have been highlighted by APA as going beyond traditional approaches to comprehensive planning:

- Seattle, Washington’s *Seattle 2035* (<http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPCD/OngoingInitiatives/SeattlesComprehensivePlan/CouncilAdopted2020.pdf>)
- Houston, Texas’ *Plan Houston* (<http://www.houstontx.gov/planhouston/>)
- Boston, Massachusetts’ *Imagine Boston 2030* ([imagine.boston.gov](http://www.imagine.boston.gov))
- Raleigh, North Carolina’s *2030 Comprehensive Plan* (www.raleighnc.gov/cp)
- Portland, Oregon’s *2035 Comprehensive Plan* (portlandoregon.gov/bps/57352)

Pay attention to the plan purpose, organization, and plan making process, trying to answer the following in your memo:

- What is novel about the contemporary comprehensive plan (form, role, substance...)?
- How is it different than the Urbana 2005 plan?
- How were these differences accomplished?

Due: September 6th by 11:00am (before class and be prepared to discuss what you found)

Group Weekly Updates (2 points each for a total of 12): Weekly update blog posts are a chance for groups to share what they are working on, get feedback, and think through next steps. Submit a new post every Friday by noon summarizing what your group has been up to. At a minimum, be sure to address the following:

- What did you accomplish this week?
- What are your next steps?
- What do you want to share with the other groups?
- What resources do you need (that you don't have)?
- What roadblocks are you encountering (if any)?

Only one post per group per week is necessary. Include the group name and week number in the title of the post - e.g. Group Name Week #3. Each group will make 12 posts over the length of the semester. Dates for posts are:

- Week 3: due 9/10
- Week 4: due 9/17
- Week 5: due 9/24
- Week 6: due 10/1
- Week 7: due 10/8
- Week 8: due 10/15
- Week 9: due 10/22
- Week 10: due 10/29
- Week 11: due 11/5
- Week 12: due 11/12
- Week 13: due 11/19
- Week 15: due 12/3

Group Workplan Memo (15 points): Create a draft workplan that guides your group through completion of the community engagement task this semester. **The expectation is that this workplan will be revised throughout the semester as new information comes in and schedules are updated.**

There is no set format for a workplan but I suggest that at a minimum the workplan should include the following:

- Objectives or what you hope to accomplish and why
- Key tasks/milestones (e.g. engagement strategy, implementation plan, data collection...)
- Schedule (what are you doing and when)
- Roles and responsibilities (who is doing what in the group e.g. communications)
- Resources needed to complete the tasks (what do you need, what do you have, where will you get what you don't have...)
- Deliverables (weekly updates, milestone memos, final report...)
- Etc. (additional material should be added as needed or as is helpful to the group)

Draft Due: September 17th by 5:00pm

Group Plan Review Case Study (10 points): Award winning comprehensive plans are good place to look for ideas about approaches and techniques for plan making. For this group assignment, research and report on the plan making found in your assigned plan.

Try to answer the following questions:

- What was the purpose of the plan?
- How was the plan created?
- What were the key priorities and actions?
- What are the best practices to emulate and research further?

“Best practice” comprehensive plans:

- Rock Island (<https://www.rigov.org/DocumentCenter/View/6991/Comprehensive-Plan?bidId=>)
- Raleigh (<https://www.raleighnc.gov/content/PlanDev/Documents/LongRange/ComprehensivePlan/2030CompPlanAmendedJuly2016.pdf>)
- Austin (ftp://ftp.ci.austin.tx.us/npzd/ImagineAustin/IACP_2018.pdf)
- Nashville (https://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/2017Update/next-volume1-ABCD-IntroWhyPlan_Amended2017.pdf)

Due: September 24th by 5:00pm

Group Progress Assessment and Reflection Memo (15 points): This memo will ask you to assess your progress mid-semester and propose course corrections as needed.

Due: October 1st by 5:00pm

Group Final Report and Presentation (30 points): Each group will produce a report that summarizes what was done, data collected, and a preliminary analysis of this data that can be used as input into the next phase of the plan making process.

Due: December 6th to 8th (exact date to be determined)