UP510 Plan Making- Community engagement & schools– Fall 2024

Department of Urban and Regional Planning
Instructor: Prof. Magdalena Novoa, mnovoa@illinois.edu
Office Hours: Through link on Canvas
Time M-W: 11.00-12.20 pm
Room: TBH 227

Land Acknowledgement
We begin this class by acknowledging that the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign occupies the lands of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands were the traditional territory of these Native Nations prior to their forced removal; these lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity. These Nations remain in relationship with these lands, and as a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge these relationships, its role in their dispossession, and its duty to facilitate their restoration.

Description:
The concept of public participation and community engagement takes on various forms and are central to the practice of planning, but they are still contested concepts and a lack of awareness of the significance of developing effective community engagement plans in urban decision making that directly impacts peoples' lives. The rational planning model emphasizes "objective" information from a technical or scientific lens, while communicative approaches to planning embrace non-technical information and call for an open discussion of the underlying value systems. The division of these planning theories into binary comparisons oversimplifies and misrepresents both approaches, and it also obscures the many more creative and situated approaches to engage communities and develop participatory plans. Both communicative approaches to planning and the rational planning model place a high value on information and its incorporation into planning practice and both can be used at different stages of a community engagement plan together with other emerging approaches. Issues arise when we think about planning and engagement as either technical information or local interests dominating the planning and engagement process at the expense of the other instead of seeking for more pluriversal and flexible tools that are adequate to address the issues and context we are confronting in a particular planning process.

This workshop course focuses on community engagement in planning and urban settings taking as a case study the neighborhood schools rezoning and changes to the multilingual education program in the city of Urbana. The course introduces students to the process and strategies of supporting and working with specific communities at a local level while gaining practical knowledge about how to assess needs and issues surrounding decision making, what methods of engagement are available, how to select and apply such methods, and how to develop a community engagement plan to foster the community involvement and belonging in urban decision-making.

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Despite the apparent disconnection between urban planning and schools and education development, urban planning and planners' expertise is critical to ensure not only well-designed physical spaces, but also to create social and cultural environments that foster learning and development. Education is a key factor in shaping the future of cities and their residents, in fostering integration and diversity in cities, and ensuring that educational opportunities are accessible, inclusive, equitable and innovative. Community engagement and participation can foster a sense of ownership, identity, and belonging among the schools' stakeholders, as well as generate feedback, input, and support for the educational goals and initiatives to contribute to effective long-term actions. As planner practitioners we can offer our knowledge by designing and facilitating participatory processes that invite students, teachers, parents, or neighbors to contribute ideas, opinions, or suggestions for the design or improvement of the school facilities, programs, and redistricting. Planners can also foster community partnerships or networks that connect them with local organizations, businesses, or institutions, to offer resources, expertise, or opportunities for learning or service.

This workshop covers the conceptual foundation of public participation and community engagement, the processes and institutions involved in urban planning and design decision-making, and professional skills necessary to conceptualize and implement high-quality community engagement activities. **By nature, a workshop is a student-lead, hands-on, applied, and skill-building course focused on project design and inclusive presentation**. In addition to completing readings selected to build theoretical knowledge, students will engage in 1) activities in and outside class hours to expand their facilitation and engagement skills, 2) assignments to demonstrate their professional skills to design, manage and implement a project; and 3) semester long engagement project to develop their critical analysis of real-world cases and the acquisition of crucial management skills in urban environments.

Students, working in teams, will focus on assessing the needs and issues that arose during the decision-making process and implementation of the multilingual program changes and school rezoning in Urbana, practicing participatory methods, and designing a participatory plan toolkit as recommendation of how to invite students, teachers, parents, and neighbors to contribute ideas, opinions, or suggestions for the design or improvement of the school programs, design and rezoning.

It is important to note that one of the main characteristics of community engagement and therefore this Plan Making workshop, is that it is organic, flexible, and open in nature. Therefore, some of the goals, activities and tasks may change and many will emerge from the learning and engagement process, your creativity and skills, your observations of the problems, and/or the engagement with Urbana multilingual school program's stakeholders.

Course goals:

Course Goals and objectives:
<u>Goal 1 Students will learn and be able to articulate the contributions and challenges of community engagement in planning and urban processes.</u>

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- Become familiar with the concepts, principles and ethics of community engagement.
- Design effective engagement projects tailored to different forms of participation.
- Participate in and outside required class activities and those that you and your team consider necessary to develop your projects.

Goal 2 Students will communicate information and analyses clearly and persuasively.
Objectives
- Apply skills and concepts learned in previous courses to create data visualizations that represents information in an accessible way to understand the outcomes of school rezoning in Urbana.
- Produce written documents that are significant, organized, grammatically precise, and written in a professional but accessible language and format.
- Communicate verbally about planning and engagement related data in a clear and articulate manner.

Goal 3: Demonstrate the skills necessary to develop, manage and implement a community engagement plan.
Objectives
- Learn and practice basic community engagement methods.
- Engage with the local community and other meaningful actors to design a participatory toolkit for schools' decision-making process.
- Develop autonomy and organizational skills in the development of projects.
- Identify and resolve challenges that results from working with a team.
- Recognize and respond appropriately to ethical and professional dilemmas.

Course format
This is a workshop class. Therefore, most classes will be **independent work sessions**. During the first few weeks we will discuss readings and background information before establishing the tasks and workplan students will complete in teams during the rest of the semester.
As students will work on a "real world" urban challenge, expect to spend time outside of class accomplishing the engagement plan making tasks. Although some class periods will consist of team working sessions, all students are required to attend specific class sessions to discuss new instructions, hear status reports from other teams, or to have team meetings with the instructor. These opportunities will allow us to review the work plan, team members' 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 Assessment and Assignments:
The course assessment will be based on completing the tasks that will lead towards the completion of an engagement plan. Most of these activities will be developed as teams. Tasks will focus on community engagement and may include background research and assessment of past and existing conditions, identifying key community partners, identifying historically marginalized population groups, planning and implementing outreach and community

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involvement with a focus on Latinx groups in Urbana. Deliverables will include a memos, reports, implementation of outreach strategies, and presentations.

Assignments:
Individual assessment
- Individual statement on your professional identity as a planner (10 pts)
- Review and Presentation of a community engagement case study (in pairs) (10 pts)

Team assignments
- Weekly update posts and meetings with professor (10 total for 20 pts)
  Group milestones:
- School district assessment (15 pts)
- Community mapping design, implementation and assessment (25 pts)
- Community engagement plan and presentation (20 pts)

Formal Graded Assignments	*Due Dates*	*Points*
Review and Presentation case study (Pairs)	W Sept 4	10
Individual statement (I)	S Sept 14	10
Weekly updates & check ins (Team)	Weekly	20
School district assessment (Team)	Sun Sept 22	15
Community mapping workshop (Teams) -Workplan submission Sep 25 - Workshop agenda Oct 25 -Workshop report, self-assessment & next steps Nov 6	Sat Nov 2 (Tentative)	25
Final engagement plan & presentation (Teams)	W Dec 4	20
TOTAL		**100**

Your course grade will be determined by your successful completion of the components below and your active participation in this course. Course grades will be assigned on an absolute scale (A, B, C...) and will be determined by a criterion-based scale. For example, generally an A+ 98 – 100; A 94 – 97; A- 91 – 93; and so on.

Team members will receive the same grade for team assignments unless otherwise noted or agreed between students and instructor.

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Course Policy

Computers and electronics

The use of computers, tablets, ipads, phones or any other electronic are not allowed during classes except when expressly requested by instructors or if a student absolutely needs it for taking notes. In that case the student has to approach instructors and ask for permission to use it. Students cannot use electronics during discussions, exercises or field visits.

Academic Integrity

Please be aware of the university guidelines regarding academic integrity, which can be found in the Student Code (http://studentcode.illinois.edu/). The standard for this class is that any work submitted by a student is solely, entirely, that particular student's own work. Students caught cheating—including the use of undeclared outside sources (including the net) will receive an F for the course. While you may study with other students, the submission of others' ideas as your own is academically dishonest. All forms of academic dishonesty will be considered a serious offense of university policy. Students committing any form of academic dishonesty will be reported to their home department, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, and to the Senate Committee on Student Discipline.

The use of generative AI tools is permitted in this course for the following activities:
- Brainstorming and refining your ideas;
- Fine tuning your research questions;
- Finding information on your topic;
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts; and
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:
- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts assigned to you or content that you put into a Zoom chat.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, papers or assignments to complete class assignments.
- Creating entire images, visual data or concepts to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university

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policies on academic honesty. Any use outside of this permission will be considered academic dishonesty and a violation.

Sample attribution language
"The author generated this document in part with [name the AI tool]. Upon generating draft language, the author reviewed, edited, and revised the language to their own liking. The author has verified all cases, statutes, regulations, and other sources cited in or relied upon in preparation of this document. The author takes ultimate responsibility for the content of this document."

Ultimately this class is about learning engagement and problem solving so be wise when using any AI tools!

Diversity:
The Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP) is committed to creating an environment of inclusion and opportunity that is rooted in the very goals and responsibilities of practicing planners. Conduct that interferes with the rights of another or creates an atmosphere of intimidation or disrespect is inconsistent with the environment of learning and cooperation that the program requires. By enrolling a course in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, students agree to be responsible for maintaining a respectful environment in all DURP activities, including lectures, discussions, labs, projects, and extracurricular programs. We will be governed by the University Student Code. Please see the Student Code Article 1— Student Rights and Responsibilities for further details.

Mental Health
Significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, substance/alcohol misuse or interferences in eating or sleep can have an impact on academic performance, social development, and emotional wellbeing. The University of Illinois offers a variety of confidential services including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric services, and specialized screenings which are covered through the Student Health Fee. If you or someone you know experiences any of the above mental health concerns, it is strongly encouraged to contact or visit any of the University's resources provided below. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do for yourself and for those who care about you.

Counseling Center (217) 333-3704
McKinley Health Center (217) 333-2700
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255
Rosecrance Crisis Line (217) 359-4141 (available 24/7, 365 days a year)

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If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

The [Counseling Center](#) is committed to providing a range of services intended to help students develop improved coping skills in order to address emotional, interpersonal, and academic concerns. The Counseling Center provides individual, couples, and group counseling. All of these services are paid for through the health services fee. The Counseling Center offers primarily short-term counseling, but they do also provide referrals to the community when students could benefit from longer term services.

Community of Care
 As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. If you come across a classmate whose behavior concerns you, whether in regards to their well-being or yours, we encourage you to refer this behavior to the Student Assistance Center (217-333-0050 or http://odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/referral/). Based on your report, the staff in the Student Assistance Center reaches out to students to make sure they have the support they need to be healthy and safe.
Further, as a Community of Care, we want to support you in your overall wellness. We know that students sometimes face challenges that can impact academic performance (examples include mental health concerns, food insecurity, homelessness, personal emergencies). Should you find that you are managing such a challenge and that it is interfering with your coursework, you are encouraged to contact the Student Assistance Center (SAC) in the Office of the Dean of Students for support and referrals to campus and/or community resources.

Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor as soon as possible and provide the instructor with a Letter of Academic Accommodations from Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES). To ensure that disability-related concerns are properly addressed from the beginning, students with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this class should apply for services with DRES and see the instructor as soon as possible. If you need accommodations for any sort of disability, please speak to me after class, or make an appointment to see me or see me during my office hours. DRES provides students with academic accommodations, access, and support services. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 217-333-1970, e-mail disability@illinois.edu or visit the DRES website at http://www.disability.illinois.edu/. Here is the direct link to apply for services at DRES, https://www.disability.illinois.edu/applying-services.

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Disruptive Behavior

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution (https://conflictresolution.illinois.edu; conflictresolution@illinois.edu; 333-3680) for disciplinary action.

Schedule and Required Readings
This is a tentative schedule that will change based on class and community discussions.

Overview:
Week 1-5: Background and context
Week 6: Assessment of case study
Week 6-11: Planning & implementing a community engagement strategy
Week 11-13: Developing recommendations
Week 14: Fall Break
Week 15-16: Presentations & wrap up

Save these dates to attend outside of class hours sessions (required):
- School board meeting: Tuesday September 17th. For more information, please visit this link.
- Community mapping methods workshop with Dr. Bjorn Sletto: Friday September 27th 10.00-12.30. Location TBC.
- APA Illinois Conference Session- AICP Ethics Cases of the Year: Review of topical ethical dilemmas based on actual cases Wednesday 25th 11.00-12.00 or Bjorn Sletto's Lecture: The map was very dark: Place, knowledge, and decoloniality in planning, Thursday September 26th 19.00-20.00.
- Saturday November 2: Hold the date for implementing the community mapping workshop.

Detailed schedule (in-class lectures, workshops or specific discussions will be added according to students and engagement process needs):

Week 1: Community, power and urban planning.

S1. Monday August 26: **Asynchronous session** Syllabus and assignments independent study. Prepare for pop quiz on the syllabus on Wednesday!

S2. Wednesday August 28: Plan Making and Community engagement plan: What is it and why is important?

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Required Readings:
- Arnstein, S. (1969). A Ladder of Citizen Participation. Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35(4): 216–224.
- Manal J. Aboelata, Leah Ersoylu, Larry Cohen, Lily Swartz. 2019. Chapter 4. Building Healthy Places with People and for People. *Sustainable Communities Making Healthy Places: Designing and Building for Health, Well-being and Sustainability*. Edited by Dannenberg, Andrew L.; Frumkin, Howard; Jackson, Richard J.

Week 2: Best practices on community engagement planning

<mark>S1. Monday September 2: LABOR DAY- NO CLASS</mark>

S2. Wednesday September 4: What a successful community engagement plan looks like?
*Students present a successful engagement plan

Week 3: **Understanding the context and actors of a community engagement plan: Engaging with our Case Study**

S5. Monday September 9

Readings:
- Bischoff, Kendra, and Laura Tach. 2020. "School Choice, Neighborhood Change, and Racial Imbalance Between Public Elementary Schools and Surrounding Neighborhoods." Sociological Science 7: 75-99.
- Rainer, Macy. 2020. School Boundaries Can Cause Unnecessary Segregation: A Case Study in Illinois. Urban Institute.

S6. Wednesday September 11:

Readings:
- Castro, A. J., Parry, M., & Siegel-Hawley, G. (2022). "All schools are not created equal:" An analysis of public comments on school rezoning. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 30, (13). https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.30.6984

Week 4: Active listening & reflexive practice
*This week students must attend the online and in person a School Board meeting

S7. Monday September 16

Reading:
- Kanner, S. et al. 2007. Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making. Chapter 4: Facilitative Listening Skills

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- Taking meeting notes.

S8. Wednesday September 18: Working session

Week 5: What we know and don't know about our case?

S9. Monday September 23: Case study assessment presentation

S10. Wednesday September 25:
*Attend APA conference- AICP Ethics Cases of the Year or Dr. Bjorn Sletto lecture on Thursday 26th.

Week 6: Community mapping & ethics of engagement

S11. Monday September 30:
* This session will be held on Friday Sept 27 and lead by Dr. Bjorn Sletto. Location & time TBC

Weeks 6-16: Workshop sessions.

Assignments description (Review detailed instructions on Canvas)

Ongoing assignment: Team Weekly Updates (2 points each for a total of 10):

Weekly update Canvas posts are a chance for teams to share what they are working on, check in with the instructor, get feedback, and think through next steps. Submit a new post every Sunday by noon summarizing what your group has been up to. Weekly progress reports due on Sunday noon on the following weeks:

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 instructor or classmates?
• What resources do you need (that you don't have)?
• What challenges are you encountering (if any)?

Only one post per group per week is necessary. Include the team's names and week number in the title of the post - e.g. Group Name Week #3. Each group will make 10 posts over the length of the semester.

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Dates for posts are:

Week 3 (Sept. 15)
Week 4 (Sept.22)
Week 5 (Sept 29)
Week 6 (Oct 6)
Week 7 (Oct 15)
Week 8 (Oct 22)
Week 9 (Oct 29)
Week 12 (Nov 17)
Week 13 (Nov 24)

Community Engagement Review Case Study (10 points)
Deliverables: Work in pairs to deliver a 12 minute in-class presentation and submission of power point on Canvas.
Due date: Wednesday September 4, 11.00

Local community engagement or participatory plans are good places to look for ideas about approaches and techniques for engagement plan making. For this assignment, research and present in class on the plan making found and chosen.

Answer the following questions:

- Why you choose this plan?
- What was the purpose of the plan?
- How was the plan or process created?
- What was the level of involvement of community members in decision-making?
- What were the key priorities and actions?
- What are the best practices to emulate and research further?
- What are the challenges or aspects missing in this plan that you think should improve?
- What aspects of this plan may influence your final project?

Professional identity statement (10 pts)
Due Date: Saturday September 14
Write a 400-500 word statement reflecting your professional identity as a planner and your positionality as a practitioner.

Urban School 116 District Assessment Map (10 pts)
Due date: Sunday September 22, 4 pm.

This assignment asks teams to analyze Urbana School District Attendance Boundaries and the recent rezoning to understand how these changes address or not intersectional inequalities (race, class, ethnicity, among others).

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Teams must create a map visualizing the data analyses and a one page summarizing the findings.

- What are the relationships between demographics and school attendance boundaries in Urbana?
- What does the overlap between these two sets of data tells us about the relation between social and racial inequalities and school attendance boundaries?

Participatory Community mapping workshop
Due dates: The deliverables for this assignment are incremental and therefore there are 4 different due dates.
1. Workplan: 5-6 weeks workplan (Due on Sept 25th) (10 pts)
2. Workshop plan, agenda & script (Due October 25th) (10 pts)
3. Workshop implementation: **Week of October 28th** (unless changed as a class agreement) (60 pts)
4. Workshop debrief &, teams & self-assessment (Due November 6th) (20 pts)

Community workshops and charrettes often include a group activity where participants are asked to engage in a hands-on visioning, design, or mapping or asset mapping. The purpose is to elicit data from residents, obtain residents' perspectives on certain issue, emotional attachments to certain landscapes or places, and/or document residents' visions for the future of certain places and communities. Typically, such activities begin with an introduction to and/or discussion of the context or problem, followed by instructions for the activity, division into working groups, the activity itself, presentations by working groups of the results or products, and a final collective discussion. These activities are premised on participants' direct engagement with materials—poster boards, large paper sheets, pre-printed maps, markers, pins, post its, and so on—which help foster collective information gathering, problem-solving, visioning, and commitment to the project at hand. In this assignment, we will use the format of a participatory community mapping to document dual language school's parents' knowledge, perspectives, emotional connections, and visions for the program in Urbana School District, including the location, zoning, the facilities and infrastructure, the curriculum, access, resources and community involved. **The information gathered in this workshop will inform your final assignment: the community engagement plan and recommendations.**

There are of course numerous challenges involved in developing such workshops, including potential pre-existing divisions or resentment among participants, uneven skill levels, lack of shared understandings, difficulties in attending in-person events, inequities that stem from uneven relations of power associated with class, language, access, gender identifications, race, and more, which we will discuss in class. We will practice such in-person community engagement with parents involved in the dual language program. Because the dual language program has recently been changed and rezoned many parents may be reticent to participate in our class workshop. Therefore, we will offer a compensation for their participation. Since our

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resources are limited the number of participants will also be more limited than it would have been if we had implemented this activity while the changes were being made.

You will work with your teams as a class and lead a 2-3 hour workshop on the week of October 28th (including Saturday November 2 since weekends tend to be good days for working parents). You will have to identify the problem /question to be addressed and plan and design the entire workshop, including budgeting for the workshop, identifying the materials needed, recruiting participants, managing and implementing the mapping activity and creating a report and self-assessment on the workshop.

You will have the opportunity to work with me during class sessions to provide feedback, guide you or provide training if needed. Because 510 is a professional workshop class that assumes that you will apply the knowledge you have learned through the program, team(s) will be responsible to identify any possible needs or knowledge gaps they have and ask me if they need training on certain skills or topics.

Community engagement plan and presentation

An engagement plan outlines a set of specific outreach and public participation strategies according to established goals and objectives and with assigned roles and a timeline for new or reoccurring projects that will impact the community either at the neighborhood or citywide level.

In this Workshop class, students will be responsible to develop a community engagement plan for the Urbana School District Dual Language programs focused on the following question:

- What engagement strategies and approach can inform the Urbana School District Dual Language programs decision making process?

- How an engagement plan benefits the community and the dual language program at Urbana School District?

Throughout the semester, students working in teams will conduct background research, engagement with community members and other relevant actors, data collection and data analysis on the Urbana School District dual language programs recent changes and rezoning to understand how the community was engaged through the decision-making process and develop a plan on how to better inform such changes and decision-making processes in the future.

Team(s) will produce a report that summarizes what was done, data collected, preliminary analysis of this data and engagement recommendations that can be used as input into future decision-making processes.
The findings and recommendations will be presented at the end of the semester.

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