

GEOGRAPHY 241: INTRODUCTION TO URBAN PLANNING FALL SEMESTER

Dr. Brian J. Sommers
Classroom: Diloreto 309
Class Hours: M 5:00-7:40
Office Hours: MTF 9:00-11:00 (Other hours by appointment)

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COURSE INTENTION & CONTENT

This course is intended as an introduction to the basic principles and practices that guide urban planning in Connecticut and throughout the U.S. The course will provide students with an understanding of the planning process as well as the responsibilities and functions of planning professionals. The course will also furnish students with information on topical areas of interest in planning, and the function of planning at different geographic scales. The course will also make students aware of planning in their communities and how they as concerned citizens can be part of the planning process.

The goal of the course is to provide students with the basic planning skills and a level of knowledge suitable for use in advanced-level planning course work. In doing so, the students should have an understanding of the course content sufficient to allow them to participate on planning boards and commissions in their home communities.

CLASS FORMAT

The format for the classes is lecture/discussion. It is lecture in that I will provide you with material during class lectures. It is discussion in that I will expect you to come to class prepared to participate in discussions on topics in planning. There will also be some class time spent working with planning documents in a lab setting and possibly going out in the field.

COURSE TEXTBOOK

The required textbook for the course is Contemporary Urban Planning by John M. Levy (7th edition). This text will be the basis for most of the course readings. Other readings will come via the course web page and readings from Internet sources. For those of you who would like electronic access to the textbook, you can go to the Contemporary Urban Planning link at www.Safarix.com. Through that link you can subscribe to the textbook and read it on your computer. The subscription lasts 150 days and costs about \$40. Whether you get a paper or electronic copy, the textbook is required.

COURSE WEB PAGE

Copies of the syllabus, POWERPOINT files, a link to the online version of the textbook, and some of the course readings will be posted on the course web page. To access the web page log on to the Central Pipeline and then go to 'VISTA Courses' on the Student tab. When you first access the course, you may want to do a browser check. This is because some of the software on your home computers may not be set properly for using VISTA. If your computer asks, the VISTA site should be a 'trusted site.' If you use one of the campus computer labs then this will not be necessary.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The numbered items that follow are what your course grade will be based on. Students interested in checking on their grades as the semester progresses are welcome to do so

- 1) Exams: There will be two exams. A grade of zero will be given for missing an exam without notification from the Office of Student Affairs. The exams will cover all lecture and reading materials. They will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions.
- 2) Planning in My Town: In this project students will be creating a notebook of planning and how it works in their town. For project specifics please see the material on the last page of the syllabus.
- 3) Class Participation: Your presence and participation in class are important and are key elements of the learning process. They show that; a) you are involved in the class, b) whether or not you understand the material, and c) that you know enough to ask good questions or to contribute to the discussion.

GRADING SCALE & DISTRIBUTION

All graded assignments, tests, as well as the course grade will be based on the following scale.

A	93-100%	B	83-86.9%	C	73-76.9%	D	63-66.9%
A-	90-92.9%	B-	80-82.9%	C-	70-72.9%	D-	60-62.9%
B+	87-89.9%	C+	77-79.9%	D+	67-69.9%	F	Less than 60%

The graded materials will be weighted according to the following system.

Mid Term Exam	x 30%	=	_____	Final Exam	x 30%	=	_____
Planning in My Town	x 30%	=	_____	Participation	x 10%	=	_____
				TOTAL		=	_____

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

The course schedule below is a best estimate and slight deviations from schedule may occur. What will not change are the test dates. The lecture schedule may vary slightly due to unexpectedly rapid/slow progress through the materials or other unforeseen circumstances. If classes are canceled for any reason, any assigned activities for that class will be pushed back to the next. The readings listed by chapter and/or page number come out of the textbook. All readings should be completed **BEFORE** coming to class.

Part 1: The Background and Development of Planning

9/11	What is Urban Planning and why do we need it?	Chapters 1 and 2
9/18	The History of Planning	Chapter 3
9/25	The History of Planning	Chapter 4

Part 2: The Structure and Practice of Planning

10/2	Planning, the Law, and Politics	Chapters 5 and 6
10/9	Social Issues and Comprehensive Planning	Chapters 7 and 8
10/16	The Tools of Planning	Chapter 9
10/23	The Tools of Planning	Chapter 9

10/30 **MID-TERM EXAM (first hour of class) and...**

Part 3: The Fields of Planning

10/30	Urban Design	Chapter 10
11/6	Housing and Urban Renewal	Chapter 11
11/13	Transportation Planning	Chapter 12
11/20	Economic Development and Tourism	Chapter 13
11/27	Sprawl, Growth Management, and Regional Planning	Chapters 14 and 16
12/4	Environmental Planning and Disaster Planning	Chapter 15

Part 4: National Planning

12/11	National Planning and Planning in Other Countries	Chapters 17 and 18
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PLANNING IN MY TOWN PROJECT DUE!!!

12/18 **FINAL EXAM 5:00-7:40 PM**

Planning in My Town

Planning is not something that exists only in a classroom. In the communities of New England and the Northeast, planning is an important part of town/city government. It is part of how your hometown governments do business. For this assignment you will be answering a number of questions. These are:

- 1) How does planning work in my hometown?
- 2) How does it fit in my town's government?
- 3) What commissions does planning work with in my town?
- 4) What are the key planning issues that are facing my hometown?
- 5) What are the day-to-day issues that the local planning officials face?

You will answer these questions in the form of a short paper. To answer these questions you will need to do some research. Be sure to include the sources of your information in a bibliography at the end of the assignment. You should plan to contact local planning people and/or to attend some meetings. If you decide to do interviews, please call ahead, set up appointments, be on time, and be prepared. (Also make sure to reference the interviews in your bibliography.)

The resulting paper should be 8 or more double-spaced and typed pages. Do not adjust margins or text sizes to increase paper length. The volume is not the key factor, the content is. (To say what you will need to say to get a good grade will probably take you at least 8 pages). Feel free to include diagrams, graphics, lists, etc. if it helps your paper. These should be in ADDITION to the text total. In any case, the paper should be well-organized and proof read before it is turned in. The grades will be based on what you have to say and how well you say it.

**The project is due on 12/11 at the start of class.
NO PROJECTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 5:00 on 12/11**