



URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING (PADM 5339)

Instructor Information

Instructor: Heather Nick, AICP, MPA

Contact: Use Canvas messaging or text 903-521-9938

Office Hours: By appointment

Mode: Canvas Online Teaching

Course Description

This course introduces graduate students to the theories, practices, and tools of **urban and regional planning**. Topics include the evolution of planning, zoning principles, comprehensive plans, land-use regulation, and contemporary challenges such as sustainability, equity, and economic development. Students will critically analyze planning strategies and their impacts on diverse communities.

Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to expose you to urban planning, with a focus on public planning done by and for cities, counties, towns, and other forms of local government. Examine and emphasize politics, economics, ideology, law, and the winners and losers of certain decisions.

Historically, the planning profession has been a response to a myriad of problems stemming from urbanization processes. This course builds the background necessary for understanding how cities grow and change and how diverse American planning concerns relate to managing the process of urban growth (or decline in some cases).

Planning functional areas typically deal with: comprehensive planning, land-use patterns, transportation planning, urban design, environmental planning, sustainability, economic development, and quality of life.

Course Requirements

Students must read the selected readings each week detailed in the Course Schedule section of the syllabus. Each student is responsible for all the readings and assignments, which are an integral component of successful learning.

Textbook

Required

Levy, J. M. (2025). *Contemporary urban planning* (12th ed.). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
ISBN 978-1032270531

To support your learning, I've added supplementary readings and links to the syllabus that we'll reference at different points in the course.

Course Objectives:

1. Assess the historical development of urban and regional planning and its role in shaping patterns of urbanization.
2. Analyze the legal, political, and social contexts shaping planning decisions.
3. Evaluate planning tools, comprehensive plans, and zoning regulations for effective land-use policy.
4. Examine equity, sustainability, and resilience in planning practice.
5. Articulate planning concepts effectively to diverse stakeholders.

How to Contact Me

The fastest way to reach me is by Canvas messaging or text at **903-521-9938**. I aim to respond to emails and texts within **48 hours** (excluding weekends/holidays). For more complex questions, we can schedule a virtual meeting or phone appointment.

Class Participation

You are expected to engage fully in the course. Many students bring public agency experience into the virtual classroom. Students also bring critical insights from organizational life and life experiences that are very instructive for all students. Students also contribute by reinforcing course concepts. Therefore, participation in all discussion assignments is **mandatory**. Each student must be an active participant in the digital learning environment.

Student Expectations

You may be wondering what is expected of you? I have listed the minimum (basic) items that are in your best interests to adhere to because it will help you be successful in the course:

- **Weekly Modules:** Each module includes readings, lecture slides, discussion prompts, and assignments. Complete all assignments on or before due date, **no exceptions**.
- **Active Participation:** Graduate-level learning requires consistent engagement in **Canvas discussions**.
- **Writing Standards:** All assignments must follow **APA 7th edition**, which includes a **title page, citations, references, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 pt., and double-spacing**.
- **Turnitin Submission:** All writing assignments will be checked for originality.

Instructor Expectations

I believe teaching is a two-way street. Therefore, you should also have expectations of me. Here is what you can expect from me.

- You should expect me to post assignments and engage you through multiple online tools and teaching methods.
- I will return all of your written work in a timely fashion. The written assignments take time to grade, but I will do my best to have them returned within one week.

- I will also return any efforts to request information from me via Canvas and text at maximum within 48 hours.

Evaluation Procedures

Students will be evaluated according to their performance on examinations, the content of their classroom discussion, the paper and the short writing assignments.

Major Assignments

1. **Short Writing Assignments (5)**
Two to three pages each, tied to weekly topics.
2. **Final Research Paper**
A **15-page APA-formatted** research paper on an approved planning topic.
3. **Discussion Forums**
Monthly robust discussions linking theory to practice.
4. **Comprehensive Final Exam**
Includes case-based questions, multiple-choice, and applied planning analysis.

Grading Scale

A - (90% or higher) | **B** - (80 - 89%) | **C** - (70 - 79%) | **D** - (60 - 69%) | **F** - (Below 60%)

Examination: (40%)

Comprehensive Final at the end of the semester.

Short Writing Assignments: (20%)

Throughout the semester, you will be required to complete five short writing assignments related to the topic/book we will discuss for that week or otherwise. Your response should be no longer than three pages and no shorter than two pages, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. You must also use Times New Roman and 12-point font.

Discussion Topics: (10%)

Throughout the semester, you will be required to complete a discussion session. These will not be every week. You must post your response to my topic and respond to another student's discussion item with your thoughts and citations. Topics will be related to the chapters we will be discussing for that week or otherwise. These discussion posts should be robust and show proficiency with the assigned reading materials. **You must include accurate APA Style citations within your discussion post to qualify for a full discussion credit.**

1 x a Month - Discussion topics will typically be posted on Monday, and everyone should have engaged in the topic, per the above, **before the identified Sunday due date.**

Paper: (30%)

A 15-page paper will be required. The topic selection for this paper will be up to the student. You must have a pre-selected topic you are interested in learning more about that is specific to urban and regional planning.

1. I must pre-approve the topic. You must complete a two—or three-paragraph explanation

- of the topic for my approval.
2. Use Times New Roman, 12-point font, one-inch margins, and double-spacing throughout the document unless otherwise instructed.
 3. Use APA 7 format (this includes a **title page, page numbering, in-text citations, and references**).
 4. A fifteen (15) page minimum that utilizes peer-reviewed references. (Your title page, abstract, and reference page(s) are not included in the minimum page count.)
 5. Your paper will be subject to submission through Turnitin. Therefore, **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE**.

Missed Exams/Late Assignments:

There are **no make-up examinations without written evidence from a medical professional or an extreme family situation (this may also require documentation)**. If you are going to miss an examination, you must contact me prior to the date of the examination; if practical. *There is no excuse for a graduate student to turn in a late assignment.*

Library Support

The Robert R. Muntz Library strives to serve as a center of discovery, exchange, and advancement of ideas. <http://www.uttyler.edu/library/>

Free access to the American Psychological Association (APA) 7th ed. Style Manual, which offers the following:

- Direct, 24/7 access to the official APA 7 guidelines
- Searchable and always current
- Integrated examples and templates for correct formatting
- Quick tutorials that present Publication Manual content in an approachable and engaging way
- Mobile-friendly for quick access on the go

Access the Online Style Manual here: <https://stylemanual.apa.org/dashboard>

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is simply using someone else's work and presenting it as your own. You must avoid this at all costs! Your credibility is on the line. Your work product must be your own. If you are borrowing someone else's facts, ideas or opinions without providing the individual proper credit you are stealing. In the academic world this is referred to as plagiarism and the penalty is severe. If the thought is not your own, you must cite your source to give proper credit. If you are borrowing someone else's words, you must enclose them in quotations as well as citing the source. Plagiarism also includes you borrowing, buying or stealing someone else's work product and presenting it as your own. **DO NOT** commit intellectual theft because you will compromise your academic future.



Penalties for Plagiarism

Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student will receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible

disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, has the right to give freshmen and sophomore students a “zero” for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of “F” (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade. This option is not available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse.

Penalties for Cheating

Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam, quiz, or other class project, the student will receive a “zero” for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident must be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an “F” in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an “F” in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a “W.”

Tentative Course Schedule — Fall 2025

Week	Date	Topic & Readings	Assignments
1	Aug 25	<p>Introduction + Ch. 1 Overview American Institute of Certified Planners Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct: <i>AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct</i></p> <p><i>Rojas, James, “Let Me Tell You a Story! Storytelling to Enhance Urban Planning Engagement,” February 14, 2018, https://www.planetizen.com/features/97224-let-me-tell-you-story-storytelling-enhance-urban-planning-engagement.</i></p> <p>Monthly discussion item – Introduce yourselves in video or writing. (All discussion posts are due by Sunday, August 31)</p>	<p>Introduction Syllabus quiz*</p>
2	Sep 1	<p>Ch. 2 Urbanization of America Frey, William H., Population Growth in Metro America Since 1980: Putting the Volatile 2000s in Perspective, Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, 2012. https://www.brookings.edu/research/population-growth-in-metro-america-since-1980-putting-the-volatile-2000s-in-perspective.</p>	<p>Discussion #1</p>

Week	Date	Topic & Readings	Assignments
3	Sep 8	Chs. 3-4 History of Planning	
4	Sep 15	Chs. 5-6 Legal Basis & Planning & Politics Assignment: Short Writing Assignment #1 (virtually attend a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting in your community or another community and write a short paper (2-3 pages) detailing the meeting and key planning concepts). The paper must be uploaded through Canvas by Sunday, September 21 (midnight).	Writing #1 (P&Z meeting)
5	Sep 22	Chs. 7-8 Social Issues & The Comprehensive Plan <i>Raitt, Jennifer M., Ending Zoning's Racist Legacy</i>	Writing #2 (paper topic)
6	Sep 29	Chs. 9-11 Tools, Urban Design, Housing & Community Development	Discussion #2
7	Oct 6	Chs. 12-13 Transportation & Economic Development	Writing #3 (annotated bib)
8	Oct 13	Ch. 14 Environmental Planning & Sustainability American Planning Association. (2013, November 1). <i>Integrating health into the comprehensive planning process.</i> https://www.planning.org/publications/document/9148247	
9	Oct 20	Comprehensive Planning Workshop	Writing #4 (plan review)
10	Oct 27	Ch. 15 Planning at National, State, Metropolitan Levels	
11	Nov 3	Ch. 16 Planning in Other Nations (Last day to withdraw from one or more 15-week courses)	Discussion #3
12	Nov 10	Virtual Class Meet-up: Peer Feedback Circles	Writing #5 (policy memo)



Week	Date	Topic & Readings	Assignments
13	Nov 17	Research Paper Development	
14	Nov 24	Final Research Paper Due	Final Paper Submit by Nov 24
15	Dec 1	Final Exam Review	
16	Dec 8	Comprehensive Final Exam	

**I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MODIFY THIS SYLLABUS AT ANY TIME.
THEREFORE, ATTENTION TO THE ANNOUNCEMENTS IN CANVAS IS CRUCIAL.**