

## **Introduction to Environmental Planning**

PLAN4579

Introduction to Environmental Planning

Fall 2017

Thursday, 9:00 – 11:00 am

Avery Hall, rm 408

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Adjunct Professor

### **Course description**

This course provides an introduction to the background of the practice of urban sustainability planning. Students should have a basic foundation in environmental studies, urban studies and economic development, although we will spend the first portion of the class reviewing these aspects. Each student presents summaries of the reading material for the week, at least, once during the semester. Participation in class discussion is vital to a successful course.

### **Course methods**

Classes will be held on Thursdays, from 9:00 – 11:00 am. During the semester we will focus on four areas of the urban sustainability. First, we delve into an overview of sustainability. The readings cover a gamut of issues, but we will focus on the environmental aspects. The first text, *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader*, provides the necessary background to the broad topic. The instructor will cover the material in this text. Thereafter, it will be up to the students to provide summaries and synthesis of each book. The text review environmental, economic and social issues that have accompanied urbanization. We ask in each case; What is the role of cities in each of the sustainable development components, what remain the major challenges for cities to achieve sustainable development and how can we address these problems through planning and policy?

All students are required to do preparatory reading and participate in every class, even if they do not lead the seminar that week. Leading a seminar includes preparing a short summary of the reading (PPT or other), providing questions for the class to help guide

discussion and leading classmates through the reading and its important planning aspects and implications in a class discussion.

At the beginning of each class, the instructor provides a short lecture on some aspect of “how to do research.” These lectures will guide students in leading the seminar, writing the final paper and presenting in their final presentations.

## Student evaluations

Evaluations are based upon:

- Class attendance and participation. Participation in class discussion is vital. As mentioned, a significant portion of class time is devoted to discussion of readings and class lectures;
- The completion of three assignments. Each student will be required to help run an individual seminar. All seminars will begin with a short introduction given by the instructor. Students will present the main questions addressed by the readings and a brief summary of the author’s arguments.
- Students will prepare a paper based upon, or related to a specific topic related to the seminar (it’s must include the word “urban” or “urbanization” or “city”). The final paper should be approximately 3-5,000 words including bibliography, tables and figures.
- Finally, on the last day of class, students will provide a presentation of their research project.

Percent of

<u>Class activity</u>	<u>final grade</u>	<u>Due date</u>
Class participation	20%	Throughout
Assignment 1 – Leading a seminar	20%	Throughout
Assignment 2 – Paper related to seminar session	40%	11 December
Assignment 3 – Final presentation	20%	30 November

## Reading materials

1. Stephen M Wheeler and Timothy Beatley (Eds.) 2014 *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader*, London and New York, Routledge.
2. William Meyer (2013) *The Environmental Advantages of Cities: Countering Commonsense Anti-urbanism*, Cambridge: MIT Press

3. Jan K. Brueckner (2011) *Lectures on Urban Economics*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
4. Kent E. Portney (2013) *Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously: Economic Development, the Environment, and Quality of Life in American Cities 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* Cambridge: MIT Press
5. Karen Chapple (2015) *Planning Sustainable Cities and Regions: Towards More Equitable Development*, London, Routledge.

All books can be purchased at the school bookstore. Any other readings will be posted on Columbia's Courseworks.

### **Office hours and classroom policies**

I am available for discussion most Thursdays. I do not, however, have an office here on campus, so we will meet in common spaces at Columbia. Note that while I respond to email as promptly as possible, if you send me an email late on Friday I may not respond until Monday.

During class time, please turn off your phones and do not bring/use earphones.

### **Academic integrity**

Columbia University regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The University is committed to enforcing its Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Academic Integrity Procedures. Plagiarism, dishonesty, or cheating in any portion of the work required for this course will be punished to the full extent allowed according to Columbia University College regulations.

### **Tentative semester schedule**

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1. 7 September – Introductory lecture
2. 14 September – Wheeler and Beatley, 2014 *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader*

3. 21 September – Wheeler and Beatley, 2014 *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader*
4. 28 September – Brueckner (2011) *Lectures on Urban Economics* (Chapters 1-6)  
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5. 5 October – Brueckner (2011) *Lectures on Urban Economics* (Chapters 7-end)
6. 12 October – Meyer (2013) *The Environmental Advantages of Cities* (Chapters 1-4)
7. 19 October – Meyer (2013) *The Environmental Advantages of Cities* (Chapters 5-9)
8. 26 October – Portney (2013) *Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously* (Chapters 1-5)
9. 2 November – Portney (2013) *Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously* (Chapters 6-12)
10. 9 November – Chapple (2015) *Planning Sustainable Cities and Regions* Chapters 1-6
11. 16 November – Chapple (2015) *Planning Sustainable Cities and Regions* Chapters 7-13
12. 30 November - Student presentations