Short Course Description
This course fulfills the Synthesis and Application of Knowledge to Practice skills component as established and required for program accreditation by the Canadian planning accreditation body, the Professional Standards Board (PSB). The course also fulfills overall academic objectives of the MCRP program by providing students an opportunity to synthesize planning theory, methods, and practice in a project of their own choosing. The capstone report enables students to identify a planning problem, develop innovative and creative solutions, and present their results to an audience made up of faculty, students, planning professionals, and interested members of the public.

Course Overview, Content and Objectives
Registration in PLAN 528 is required for both Summer and Winter Sessions beginning in the summer of the first year and continuing until completion of the capstone.

The major purpose of the capstone is to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate the breadth of their planning education and to synthesize their knowledge of planning. Students demonstrate their ability to work as a reflexive planner through completing a planning or urban design project. Students gain experience in project design and scoping, in researching project-relevant literature, in the application of appropriate analytic methods, in the analysis of context-specific data, and in the formulation of appropriate conclusions. In short, the capstone provides an opportunity for students to develop and exercise their skill and judgment in problem definition and to demonstrate professional competence in the supervised design and execution of an individual, or group, project report.

Given the increasing scope of professional planning activities and employment opportunities across the public and private sectors, the substantive focus and content of capstones vary greatly. Such projects may also take many different reporting forms--indeed, students are encouraged to use the capstone professional report to hone their presentation skills in diverse media as well as in writing.

A total of 3 or 6 credits are offered for successful completion of the capstone professional report. (Students in the Indigenous Community Planning concentration will be taking the 6-credit option.) The capstone is an investigation into a well-defined practical planning-related question or problem. Capstones can be designed to contribute to a student’s experience of a client-consultant or employer-professional employee relationship. In some cases, students may choose to involve an actual external client to provide context and enhance the realism of the professional project experience. Each capstone proceeds with the formal agreement of, and under the supervision of, a SCARP faculty member. In addition to real-world context, any participating ‘client’ can provide additional guidance and supervision.

To facilitate focused research and reporting and on-time completion, capstones proceed according to a written problem statement or terms of reference prepared by the student in consultation with the
supervising faculty member. The 'problem statement' reflects the conceptual and practical framework to be followed. In all cases, a capstone professional report must satisfy the academic norms of the University and SCARP. The supervising faculty member is the final arbiter as to whether the student's capstone activities and report have achieved the necessary standard. This stipulation is an essential underpinning to all project-related problem statements or terms of reference.

Professional projects are limited in scope. Original data collection is not necessary, but is possible. In general, participating students apply known concepts, data, methods and procedures to a specified situation or problem context and generate a report (variable format) of restricted scope and scale. However, in designing his/her study and writing the professional report, students are expected to demonstrate familiarity with at least the limited body of literature of direct relevance to the project.

Individual professional projects are designed to ensure adequate reporting in a maximum of 30 pages, 1.5 spaces (or the agreed equivalent in other acceptable media). Project reports are logically organized, structured to have effective communication value (use of sub-headings, tables, charts and other figures, etc., is encouraged) and be fully referenced. Note: Students who do a film for their project are also required to write an accompanying paper, the terms of which are established in consultation with their supervisor, and depend on the context: the length of the film, and the length and nature of the film making process. All papers have a critical and reflexive content.

As noted above, the supervising faculty member is responsible for assessment of the final product with input from any external client if relevant. In the absence of a client, external review can be provided by an adjunct professor (in the case of a capstone that develops from a studio project, for example), or by a review panel of knowledgeable professionals (for example, in the case of an urban design project). In all cases the student is required to make a formal oral presentation of his/her findings to a SCARP project symposium as part of the normal reporting procedure. This is particularly important where the professional project is substantially documented in video, PowerPoint, or other presentation media. To enhance the professional value of this experience, external reviewers, other students, and faculty are invited to attend and comment on the presentation.

On-time completion of reports is an essential element of professional practice. Students are to regard the capstone as an opportunity to demonstrate competence in overall project management within the conceptual, time, and space constraints set out in the project terms of reference. Faculty supervisors normally take on-time completion into account in assigning final grades for capstones. A deadline is set each term for the completion and presentation of capstone reports. Students who fail to meet the deadline are required to wait 6 months until the next deadline, and may be penalized for failure to meet their original presentation date.

**Learning Objectives**

At the completion of their capstone requirement, students will be able to:

- Design and scope a project
- Identify, research, and incorporate relevant literature
- Apply appropriate methods to analyze context-specific data
- Formulate appropriate conclusions
- Use project management skills to complete all project requirements on time, and in compliance with the project terms of reference
- Prepare and present a professional-quality report to an audience of their peers
- Accept and incorporate critical review and comments into their project design and presentation
Supplemental Materials
UBC has numerous research, pedagogical and health resources available to students. These include The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT), the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, the Writing Centre, Student Health Services and Student Counselling Services. Please make use of these resources or contact the instructor if you have any questions. Students new to UBC are especially encouraged to become familiar with the broad spectrum of resources that UBC provides.

Special Needs
Please inform the course instructor as soon as possible if you have special needs and require accommodation of any kind. Please visit http://www.students.ubc.ca/access/ for more information on campus resources.

Academic Integrity
Assistance with the creation of a course syllabus is available through the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology, www.ctlt.ubc.ca Resources related to the development of assessable learning outcomes can be accessed through http://ctlt.ubc.ca/resources/webliography/course-designdevelopment/ The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President’s Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.
A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University’s policies and procedures, may be found in the Academic Calendar at http://calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0.