Course Number  PLAN 508
Course Credit(s)  3.0
Course Title  Foundations of Planning Theory and History
Term  2018-2019 Winter Term 1
Days/Times  Tuesday

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Short Course Description
This course explores the history of planning ideas and theories. What are the modern roots of
(community and regional) planning, its colonial history, and how does this shape and perhaps limit
contemporary practice? Why do we need planning? Why is it important to theorise about planning? This
course covers the leading thinkers and schools of thought and is primarily focused on western ideas
about planning.
This course is required for and open only to SCARP masters and Doctoral students.

Course Format
The class meets once each week for three hours. The format varies. The first half of the class is usually
lecture-based, but may involve film screenings and guest panelists. The second part will usually be
discussion of readings in small groups, my ‘coffee shop’ model of learning, as well as a plenary-style
closing discussion. Students must come to class prepared to discuss the required readings and respond
to the prescribed questions.

Course Overview, Content and Objectives
The purpose of this course is to introduce you, as emerging planners, to the fields of planning history
and theory; to familiarize you with the leading thinkers; and to reflect on the qualities of a planning
imagination that might be necessary to deal with the challenges of 21st century cities and regions.
The field of professional planning is a relatively new one. The first planning school in North America was
established at Harvard in 1929. SCARP’s Masters program was established in 1954. Planning theory
emerged in the 1950s and continues to evolve along with the profession. Just as there is no single
definition of ‘planning’, so too there is no definitive agreement of what constitutes planning theory. It is
necessarily a contested terrain, because it seeks to define the profession, its goals, values, and
trajectory. The writings of planning theorists help us to reflect on the very broad field of planning
practice, from its ideas to its institutions, its processes and its outcomes.

We will review the main intellectual movements of the last two hundred years as they relate to the
emergence of planning, covering the following enduring themes:

• What constitutes valid knowledge in planning? As defined by whom?
• Is there such a thing as 'the public interest'? Defined by whom?
• In what sense/s is planning a rational and/or scientific activity? A creative activity? A visionary/transformative activity?
• What theories help us understand the nature of power, and of power relations in planning?
• What is a workable theory of social change for planners?
• How do we integrate the challenge of sustainability into thinking about planning?

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course:
1. You will be familiar with the historical roots of planning, both traditional and alternative histories.
2. You will have your own answer to the question, “What is planning?”
3. You will be able to articulate your thoughts on why and how planning theory is important and relevant to practice.
4. You will be familiar with the evolution in planning theories over the past half-century or so.
5. You will recognize key names, key models, concepts, and lingo within the planning discourse.
6. You will be able to formulate/clarify your own defensible position on key issues that confront planners today.
7. You will have a sense of what orientation to planning best suits your values and goals, what underlying theories will inform you and give purpose to your work as you move into practice.
8. You will begin the journey of becoming a reflective practitioner.

Attendance
Attendance at all sessions is mandatory.

Evaluation Criteria and Grading
1. History Paper (2000 words max) (35%) Due Oct 17th
2. Reflective Assignment: Shadowing a Planner for a Day (40%) Due Dec 1st (2000 words max)
3. Group presentation: Dreaming the Sustainable City (25%) Due Nov 14th and 21st
4. Engaged reading assignments (no grade attached)

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS, INSTRUCTIONS, AND GRADING CRITERIA

1. History Paper (Critical Thinking exercise)
2000 words max (8-10 typed 1.5 or double spaced pages)

Compare and contrast the understanding of planning history presented in the following two texts and explore why there are such strikingly different accounts of planning history:

and, either:


OR:


[ NB it is essential that you read the 6th edition and not an earlier edition ]

This paper needs to address the following range of questions:
What story or stories are being told about planning and planners? (for example, celebratory or heroic or catastrophic or what kind of stories?) Is there a dominant story? (20%)
What are the dominant themes? (20%)
What is the theoretical framework (explicit or implicit)? (20%)
What is the author/s’ intellectual and political project? (20%)
Is there a dominant voice? Whose voice is that? (20%)

You may do a traditional paper (max 2000 words) OR use a message–appropriate format (such as video, soundscape, collage, short story etc) to demonstrate your thinking on these questions. Creativity in assignment format is encouraged. Please submit an artist statement (up to one page) along with creative pieces.

This assignment can be submitted to me in ‘hard copy’ in class, or electronically, on the due date.

**There will be a penalty of two percentage points for every day the assignment is overdue.**

There will be further discussion of how to approach this assignment in the first few weeks of the course.

2. ‘A Day in the Life of a Planner’: Reflective Thinking exercise

Find a planner somewhere in Vancouver or BC. Spend a day with her/him on the job. If possible, interview him/her at the end of the day about what happened during the day. (You may want to take a digital, not video, camera and/or a tape recorder, but you’ll need to get permission in advance from the person in order to do this)

Evaluation is based on your coverage of the following:

Firstly, what makes you think this person is a planner. What kind of planner is s/he? (20%)
Second, describe and reflect on this planner’s daily work. (30%)
Third, reflect on what mixtures of skills and theories were drawn on by the planner, referring to the relevant literature throughout the course to support your argument. (30%)
Fourth, connect all of the above with reflections on your own professional development. (20%)

Feel free to be as creative as possible in your paper. BUT PLEASE NOTE THAT ONE OF YOUR TWO MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE IN TRADITIONAL ESSAY/PAPER FORM. So if your history assignment was in a
non-traditional format, this assignment should be in traditional format, and vice versa. You can also choose to do both assignments in traditional format.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS ASSIGNMENT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY UBC’S BEHAVIORAL ETHICS REVIEW BOARD, AND YOU MUST FOLLOW THE PROCEDURES SET OUT IN THE APPLICATION TO THE BOARD FOR APPROVAL OF THIS PROJECT.

There will be a penalty of two percentage points for every day the assignment is overdue.

3. Dreaming the Sustainable City: group presentation (Utopian, Critical and Reflective Thinking exercise)

As explained in the Course Description above, there have been three broad approaches to planning theory and practice: rational/technical, critical, and transformative/utopian. For this exercise you are developing your utopian/transformative selves, in both dreaming the sustainable city AND thinking about how such a transformation might come about (your theory of action).

The class will be organized into groups of four or five students for this exercise. Each group will address the same question:

"What would a sustainable human settlement look like, feel like, be like to live in?"

There are many different sub-themes that could be chosen and focused on, such as:
‘What would a non-sexist city look/feel etc like?’
‘What would a non-homophobic city look/feel etc like?’
‘What would a biophilic city look/feel etc like?’
What would a decolonized city look/feel etc like?’

Your group can choose to focus on one such sub-theme, or take a broader overview of the sustainable city.
Presentations may take the form of a powerpoint, video, a theatre piece, poem, dance, puppet show, quiz show, interactive game... Let your imaginations go crazy. Each group member must participate in some way in the presentation, but not necessarily verbally.

All groups will present in Weeks 10 and 11, so that’s 4 presentations in 3 hours: 30 mins per group. The actual presentation should be no more than 15 mins. There will be 15 mins for questions and comments from the class.

Evaluation
Criteria for evaluation include the following:

Was this presentation well-researched?
Was it thought-provoking?
Was it engaging? (Did you work on your collective communication skills?)
Was the group well-organised?

4. ENGAGED READING AND CO-LEARNING
This is what you might you call a ‘reading, thinking and reflecting course’ so you will get the most out of it if you actively do the readings assigned each week. These weekly assignments are meant to help you stay engaged with the readings for the course. You will choose ONE reading each week (unless otherwise specified) along with a set of questions to keep in mind as you read. There is no grade for reading, but unless you do the reading, class discussions will be lifeless, you won’t know anything about the professional field you’ve chosen, and you won’t be contributing to the goal of co-learning.

**Required Readings and Videos**
There is an online Class Reader with all required and recommended readings. Typically there are two or three journal articles or book chapters per week. These readings are listed in the detailed class syllabus which is distributed in Week One.

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**Course Schedule**
1. Introduction to course. What is planning theory?
2. Intro to Planning History (1): The Re-Settlement of BC: colonization and planning
3. Intro to Planning History (2): The Enlightenment: planning as a modernization project
4. Intro to Planning History (3): Foundations of 20th century planning: nine big ideas
5. Intro to Planning History (4): Insurgent planning histories
6. Intro to Planning Theory (2): Knowledge, Power, and Ethics
7. Intro to Planning Theory (3): Advocacy and Equity Planning
8. Intro to Planning Theory (4): Communicative, Collaborative, and Therapeutic Planning
9. Intro to Planning Theory (5): Empowerment, Diversity, and Decolonizing Planning
10. Group presentations on Utopian City
11. Group presentations on Utopian City
12. Class presentations of Final Assignment

**Special Needs**
Please let the Instructor know if you have any special learning needs

**Academic Integrity**
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](http://calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0).