Course Number | PLAN 525
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Course Credit(s) | 2.0
Course Title | Planning Practice Methods
Term | 2016-2017 – Winter Term 1
Dates/Times | Tuesday and Thursday 10:30 to 12:00 September 12 to November 2, 2017

Instructor | Timothy McDaniels
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Office Hours | By appointment, usually after class and lunch on class days

Short Course Description (maximum 45 words)
This is a required course in the SCARP professional master’s program. Its overall objective is to teach the student methods for planning and policy analysis. There are no pre-requisites.

Course Format
This course has two 1.5 hour meetings per week, for 8 weeks. Each class involves some lecture, some group practice, and some problem solving in the context of planning, policy and decision making for public issues.

Course Overview, Content and Objectives
The title of this course is deceptively broad. Virtually all classes in SCARP examine and apply some aspects of methods for planning practice. Our particular focus will be on methods and insights drawn from the professional writing and practice of policy analysis, planning and decision making as the basis guiding for what planners can and should do to help support their clients and employers in public decision processes for urban and regional planning.

The basic concern of this course is to introduce and develop familiarity with concepts and methods that are fundamental for state-of-the-art planning practice. These include (i) a multiple objective view of policy analysis (multiple accounts analysis) and (ii) planning that actively involves stakeholders (including civil society and technical specialists) through an approach termed “structured decision making”, an excellent basis for understanding, designing and implementing any planning process. SCARP considers these skills as an essential part of education for planning practice, and they are a required component for professional accreditation.
We also address aspects of the cycle of planning, including plan formulation, development, implementation, monitoring and learning over time. We will involve professional planners as guest instructors to provide insights on current planning processes and tasks such as official community plans, neighborhood plans, and also broader regional planning topics.

Along the way, students are introduced to related perspectives, (topics will depend on interest but sometimes include “sustainability planning”, as well as ecosystem planning, feminist planning and other versions). We will discuss and consider whether they are different from or complements to other approaches. We also introduce and consider some basic issues of public finance for planners, including the economic rationale for government and planning.

One major theme in this course, which sets it apart from other courses in SCARP is an emphasis on decision research and decision making as basic concepts for planners. Good decision-making is a skill, like reading, tennis or driving. It must be learned and can be improved with practice. Yet, the how and why of good decision-making are almost never taught in schools, and only taught in real life through the trials of personal experience. This class teaches the elements of decision-making, and through that, how to do good planning and policy analysis.

Decision-making is a topic of enormous interest to a variety of academic disciplines, including psychology, computer science, health care, environmental management, political science, economics, business and many others. In fact, much of the action and innovation in these fields is in applying decision theory in insightful ways to new problems. The process developed in decision research for good decision-making is directly parallel to, and informs the writing on, good process for planning and policy analysis. Good policy analysis and planning involves good decision making, except that, in the public domain, analysts need to help others structure, understand, and make difficult decisions.

Finally, it is important to recognize that concepts such as sustainability, climate adaptation, building resilience and ecosystem-based management all are fundamentally about how decisions are and should be framed, processed and implemented. Better decision-making, by individuals, organization and governments, is how we can make progress in the face of grim environmental trends.

**Learning Outcomes**

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand, differentiate among and be able to apply various stat-of-the-art perspectives and methods for planning practice.
- Diagnose decision contexts and select and apply problem-solving approaches suitable for them.
- Understand, evaluate and be able to apply methods relevant for structuring planning processes, as a basis for better public planning choices.
- Utilize communication and interaction skills essential to planning practitioners.
- Formulate, monitor, and evaluate key components of the planning cycle
- Evaluate the pros and cons of alternative approaches for structuring planning processes.
- Embrace the importance of a clear and versatile frame (in terms of objectives and alternatives) for any planning or policy analysis process.

Additional Course Requirements

- Active participation in three hours of classroom meetings a week.
- Reading all course materials before class. Prepare assignments and any short-term tasks to contribute to class discussions and presentations. The relationship of time spent working outside class relative to in-class meetings is typically estimated in graduate school to be a 2 hours outside for each hour inside class, over the whole term.
- Two written assignments, distributed over the term. In addition, there is an ongoing working group discussion throughout the term, focused on practical topics for our region. The working group discussion and in-class efforts will serve as the basis for Assignment 2.

Attendance

Attendance in class is mandatory, unless permission is received from the instructor beforehand for missing a meeting.

Evaluation Criteria and Grading

Student assignments will be evaluated according to the following criteria:
- Displays excellence of professional writing
- Addresses the questions completely and expansively
- Demonstrates understanding of the concepts and methods taught in the course
- Shows creative insights in applying the material to professional contexts
- Engages, informs, and educates readers
Components of grading include:

Class participation: Mandatory but not graded.

Assignment 1 50% of final grade

Assignment 2 50% of final grade (25% for each of two parts)

In keeping with the requirements of SCARP and the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, letter grades are assigned according to the following standards:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>Clearly outstanding work</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84%</td>
<td>Normal standing for graduate students</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>76-79%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>72-75%</td>
<td>Some deficiencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>68-71%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>64-67%</td>
<td>Pass – Notable deficiencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-63%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% or less</td>
<td>Fail</td>
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**Required Readings**

There is one required book for this course:

Course Schedule
A detailed schedule of the topics to be covered on a weekly basis follows at the end of this outline.

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
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.

Detailed Schedule by meeting date

Week 1: Introduction to Course and Policy Analysis/Planning (PA/PI)

Class 1: September 12, 2017

Topics:
Introduction to Plan 525 and to Policy analysis/ Planning (PA/PI)

(A= First 45 minutes of class meeting B= Second 45 minutes of class meeting)

A: Introduction to Class

Introducing the group
Review course outline, requirements, assignments

Teaching approach, objectives

What’s covered/what’s not

Professionalism; grading

Cases versus other teaching methods and your project

Setting up working groups for in class discussions

B: Introduction to learning PA/Pl in this class

The persistent psychological obstacles to good planning

The generalist/integrator role

Differences among pa/pl styles of work and thinking

Policy analysis versions: different contexts, different end objectives, different value frames

The planning wheel: How to plan anything

What is good policy analysis (a topic we return to later)

Required Readings:

Bardach, Eugene. (2011) Practical guide for policy analysis: the eightfold path to more effective problem solving. Sage, (earlier version is fine) Quickly scan the whole book, which is very short. We will refer to various chapters later. **

NOTE: Two asterisks indicate a very high priority reading. One asterisk is a lower priority reading. I have tried to cut extraneous readings to minimize the burden, but some are listed and provided for those who are interested

Web Resources (if interested in finding more perspectives):

(Note: all web resources that are not direct readings for the course are optional, for further interest. THE SDM materials web site has proven very popular and helpful in the past).
Class 2: September 14, 2017

Topics: Understanding the process; What are we working on?

(A) Understanding the PA/Pl process

Complex problems: what PA/Pl is not easy.

More obstacles to wise public choices

Integrating analysis and deliberation

The framing of policy problems in economic terms

The steps of policy analysis and structured decision making

Buying a car or taking a plane trip: Creating the frame

(B) What are we working on? Concepts for scoping PA/PL questions

Broader or narrower frames

Who controls the frame and the analysis?

Framing our working group questions

Please send me the topic of your group project by email before Sept. 19, 2017

Required readings:

Cha 2. (An economist’s scoping of policy issues in conceptual terms. If you have some
background in economics you will find this discussion familiar and easy to follow. It introduces
some key concepts that come up frequently in economics as applied to policy analysis) *
Web resources:

structureddecisionmaking.org overview of Structured decision making (SDM) (a great resource that has been invaluable for previous students and followers of SDM).

Discussion questions to consider for class:

One major role of planners/policy analysts is to frame the decision for the interested parties.

What are the important elements of a frame for a decision in your view?

How can planners/policy analysts work with stakeholders to construct a frame?

Is it valuable to just tell stakeholders how the problem is framed by others?

What natural obstacles can the decision frame help address?

Class 3: September 19, 2017

Case Studies to frame the Process and the class

*Diagnosing and structuring all planning and PA studies: a similar frame for diverse issues*

(A) The Alouette River Water Use Planning Study

Where and why it arose then
The process
The participants and activities
The results and the follow up
Why it worked

(B) The Victoria Sewage treatment case study referendum
Where and why it arose then
The process
The participants and activities
The results and the follow up
Why it worked /Or did it?

The Tilamook Oregon land/water management case study

Where and why it arose then
The process
The participants and activities
The results and the follow up
Why it worked /Or did it?

Required Readings

McDaniels, T., R. Gregory and D. Fields, 1999 “Democratizing Risk Management: Successful Public Involvement In An Electric Utility Water Management Decision” Risk Analysis, 19, 3, 491-504.**

Please read the one above and one of the two below:


Please be prepared to discuss in groups, for your choice of ONE of the LATTER TWO papers, the following questions:

How did this project arise?

How were values represented and used as objectives?

How was complexity addressed in terms of linkages?

What judgment tasks were posed to the participants?

How were the outcomes used in further efforts?
Do you think the process was successful? Why? On the basis of what criteria?

Class 4: September 21, 2017

Systems and Complexity

(A) systems framing for urban policy analysis and environmental policy

What is systems analysis/integrated assessment

Social-ecological and social-technical systems

Cities as sets of systems in layers

(B) Tools for framing complexity: Decision sketching with influence diagrams and consequence tables)

Influence diagrams

Framing complexity for PA/Pl with decision sketches

Influence diagrams and decision sketches for group discussions

Readings:

Cha 1. * (Please take a look at the diagrams if pressed for time)

Gregory, R., Failing, L., Harstone, M., Long, G., McDaniels, T., & Ohlson, D.
John Wiley & Sons. Cha 3 **

Please pay close attention to Cha 3 of the Gregory et al SDM book. It outlines the basic concepts and methods that I hope you take away from this class. If you can bring these methods,
concepts and tools forward throughout your career, you will be much more likely to be successful. This is not an exaggeration.

Web resources:

Influence diagram notes id.2 (on Drop box)

Class 5: September 26, 2017

Values and Performance measures

(A) Values: why we do planning

Value focused thinking and why it is important for planning/pa
Relationships among different kinds of values and objectives
Learning about values: Citizen involvement as a basic step in PA/PI

(B) Creating Effective objectives and performance measures

Thoughts on generic objectives and performance measures for PA/PI
Creating objectives for your working group project

Required Readings;


McDaniels, T., 2000 "Creating and Using Objectives for Ecological Risk Assessment and Management," Environmental Science and Policy, 3, 299-304. * (This is a condensed, less detailed, more generic guide as an alternative reading to the SDM book).

Web resources

structureddecisionmaking.org (SDM) Creating Objectives and Performance measures

Less Wrong: A Summary of the book Value-focused thinking (If interested, a chapter by chapter summary of an interesting and valuable book)

http://lesswrong.com/lw/gdq/valuefocused_thinking_a_chapterbychapter_summary/

**Class 6: September 28, 2017**

Creating better alternatives, and fostering creativity

(A) Creating better Alternatives

(B) Citizen engagement: a brief overview

Creating alternatives for working groups

Required Readings


Campbell, H and E. A. Corley (2012) *Urban Environmental Policy Analysis* Sharpe Chapter 3. (the economist’s framing of reasoning and market/non-market responses for creating alternatives)

Tamarack. “Community Engagement.” http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g3s1.html As well as other appealing parts of web site. **

Web resources:
Class 7: October 3, 2017

Workshop class. We will spend the whole 1.5 hours working in small groups on your working group topic.

Class 8: October 5, 2017

Learning and policy analysis cycles: Regional and urban case studies

Guest speaker: Lil Ronalds (City of Vancouver, to be confirmed)

Readings for learning and adaptive management:


Google *policy cycle* or *planning cycle* and check a couple of sources.

Web resource to consider: http://www.slideshare.net/business901/the-planning-cycle-presentation

Questions to think about for discussion in class:

Why is there a planning cycle? Why not just a process?

Do the same issues come back again?

Do they get tackled in the same ways?

What basic notions could help us learn from experience and do better over time?
Class 9: October 10, 2017

Comparing Alternatives

(A) Approaches for comparing alternatives

(B) Discounting and using data

Comparing alternatives for working group projects

Required readings:


Chapter 11 257-262 also cha 4 90-100. Discounting discussion

Web resources:

structureddecisionmaking.org (SDM) Comparing Alternatives*

I will prepare a worksheet for you to complete as practice with discounting. It will have questions for you to discuss in class.

Class 10 October 12, 2017

Addressing tradeoffs within SDM cases

Guest Speaker: Dan Ohlson, Compass Resource Management

ASSIGNMENT 1 Due in Class on paper. See instructions for details

Class 11 October 17, 2017

Understanding tradeoffs: Multiple accounts analysis as a heuristic for PA/PI with multiple criteria

A brief introduction to economist’s benefit/cost analysis, and why we in Canada do not usually use it. How is it used and why?

Multiple accounts as a generic way to do analysis that has some economics as needed

Readings:


Crown Corporations Secretariat, 1993, Multiple accounts analysis guidelines. *

Greer Alan, 2002, Multiple accounts evaluation of rapid transit corridors**

Class 12 October 19, 2017

Addressing uncertainties and risk management issues

(A) Basic concepts for addressing uncertainties

(B) Risk management as a kind of policy analysis

Perspectives on specific kinds of planning (Sustainability, Ecosystem, Feminist, others)

Addressing Uncertainties in working group projects

Required readings:


Gladwell, M. 2015 The Engineer’s lament, Two ways of thinking about auto safety New Yorker, May 4, 2015 (A great piece from a few years ago that shows the complexity of a specific and highly important policy analysis issue regarding the safety of cars (the famous Ford Pinto). The final section has a great discussion on how analysts can quickly adopt the values and beliefs of their clients and employment contexts.

Web resources:

structureddecisionmaking.org (SDM) Addressing Uncertainties

**Class 13 October 24, 2017**

**A. ) Addressing tradeoffs: Structured Decision Making and examples**

Approaches to understanding tradeoffs

Required Readings:


*Note: All the readings above are repeats from Class 3 Sept 20, 2016*

**Class 14 October 26, 2017**

Review of major themes in class. Discussion of your perspectives, questions and comments about the class. Course evaluation to be completed.

**Class 15 October 31, 2017**

This class will be extended to three hours (10:30 to 1:30 pm with a 20 minute break. In this class we will ask each of the working groups to do a short presentation of 12-14 minutes about their group project topic. Please see the assignment notes.

**Class 16 Nov 2, 2017**  Class will not be held on Nov. 2, because of the three hour class on October 31, 2017. Please use the time to work on your group project and individual learning statement.

**Final review of class themes and progress.**

Class discussions about the assignments and how they related to the readings, the approaches and the content discussed in class.

**TERM ASSIGNMENT final report due on November 14, 2017.** Please send the group assignment (part 1) to me electronically. For the individual
statement (part 2 of this assignment) please send me an electronic copy and provide a paper copy in my SCARP mailbox.