Short Course Description

This course will provide an introduction to affordable housing policy and planning. The history of Canadian housing policy and programs will be examined followed by current issues and challenges faced by municipalities, regional governments, non-profit housing providers, and others. The causes and responses to homelessness will also be addressed, as well as the evolution of social or non-market housing in Canada and elsewhere. Students will undertake a major research project in partnership with a local organization.

Course Format

The course is structured primarily in a lecture-discussion format. Students are expected to read the required readings thoroughly for each class and be prepared to fully participate in a discussion or activity based on the readings. A major component of the course will be a research project with topics identified by a local community partner agency.

Course Overview, Content and Objectives

Planning for affordable housing involves many stakeholders and jurisdictions with diverse interests ranging from the local and regional (e.g. density, land supply) to the provincial (e.g. housing, health, mental health, addictions), the federal (e.g. taxation, homelessness, Aboriginal affairs), and increasingly the private sector (e.g. bonusing, amenity contributions). While housing historically fell under the jurisdiction of senior levels of government, matters of affordable housing and homelessness are increasingly falling to municipal governments where the issues are most visible.

This course will provide an introduction to affordable housing policy and planning. It explores key issues related to the current practice of housing planning and policy making, primarily at the local level. The history of federal, provincial and municipal level housing policies and programs will be examined followed by current issues and challenges faced by municipalities, regional governments, non-profit housing providers, and others. The causes and responses to homelessness will also be addressed, as well as the evolution of social or non-market housing in Canada and elsewhere.

In addition to the lecture/discussion based structure, the students will participate in a number of short
in-class activities and a walking tour. The course will include the preparation of a fictional staff report (short assignment) and complete a group research project on a topic identified by a community partner agency (major assignment).

Key Dates
Jan 8  First Class
Jan 15  Submission of Major Project Topic
Jan 22  Research Project Outline
Feb 5  Mid Term Assignment Due
Feb 26  Research Project Update
Mar 3  Walking Tour (date to be confirmed)
Mar 26  Final Presentations – Part 1
Apr 9  Final Presentations – Part 2 (Final Class)
Apr 16  Research Projects Due

No Class Dates: Feb 12 (Family Day in BC), Feb 19 (UBC Reading Break), April 2 (Easter Monday)

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the legislative, political, and historical context of affordable housing policy and practice in Canada.
- Identify major issues and debates in contemporary affordable housing policy and planning (approaches, innovations, opportunities, and barriers).
- Gain a detailed knowledge of the methods, debates and key concepts around affordable housing and homelessness.
- Consider the tools and techniques relevant to affordable housing planning and policy making.

In addition, students will have an opportunity to work on a research question of current relevance to housing practitioners and potentially establish professional connections with local housing agencies.

Evaluation Criteria and Grading

Prerequisite: There are no prerequisites to this class, although students with prior experience in the housing field may be able to pursue their research projects at a greater level of depth and analysis.

The final grade is based on:

- 15% on complete attendance, familiarity with the readings, and participation in class discussion and activities
- 35% on mid-term assignment (Preparation of a Staff Report to Council)
- 50% on a major project and presentation (Research project)

The course grade and focus will revolve around a major research project of relevance to an external housing agency. As such, a highly professional approach to the research will be expected; this includes research methods, analysis, and presentation.

Grading Criteria:
Course Schedule and Readings

1. Introduction to Affordable Housing Policy (Jan 8)

An introduction to affordable housing concepts, issues, and policy options. This will include housing supply and demand; demographic drivers and trends; definitions of affordable housing; core housing need; and the housing continuum. Housing policy is inextricably linked to a range of social, economic, and environmental factors and considerations. Strengthening the housing sector is associated with improved quality of life; neighbourhood revitalization; physical and mental health; employment; economic development; and a host of other areas.

Readings:

- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. (2014). Canadian Housing Observer: Chapters 2 and 3. Ottawa: CMHC.

2. Evolution of Housing Policy and Planning in Canada (Jan 15)

A review of the major periods of housing policy in Canada; the creation and consolidation of the welfare state; and the evolution of federal, provincial and municipal roles in affordable housing.

- Guest Speaker: Lance Jakubec, Innovation Fund Consultant, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Readings:

- Riis, Jacob. (1890) How the other half lives: studies among the tenements of New York. Introduction and Chapter 1.
University Press.


3. **Municipal Tools for Housing (Jan 22)**

Municipalities use land use planning decisions to address housing choice and affordability. This includes policy and regulations on density, housing form, secondary suites, lot sizes, fiscal measures, and other practices.

- **Guest Speaker:** TBD, City of Vancouver

**Readings:**


4. **Market Rental Housing (Jan 29)**

Efforts by municipalities to identify and address the shortage of new purpose-built rental housing and the relative lack of choice and affordability facing low and moderate income households. This class will focus on the tools available to local government for creating purpose-built rental housing. Includes legislation, challenges, and examples.

**Readings:**


5. **Creating Non-Market Housing (Feb 5)**

How municipalities, community organizations and the private sector work to create new non market housing using a variety of tools. Discussion of examples, challenges, opportunities and lessons learned.

**Readings:**


6. International Examples (Feb 26)

Morning: Key theories, definitions and dominant policies and strategies been used internationally to address the lack of housing affordability in a variety of contexts. Case studies will be used of particularly relevant policies and strategies to the Canadian context.

Mid Term Project Update

Readings:

• Förster, Wolgang. 80 Years of Social Housing in Vienna. Available at: https://www.wien.gv.at/english/housing/promotion/pdf/socialhous.pdf

7. Walking Tour (Mar 3)

The class will do a walking tour of Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. This will include a visit to two supportive housing buildings operated by RainCity Housing. Following the visit, we will have an opportunity to meet with staff from RainCity Housing. Please note the date and time for the walking tour has not yet been finalized and may change.

8. Causes and Effects of Homelessness (Mar 5)

A review of the homelessness situation, its causes, its effects, as well as federal, provincial and municipal roles and responses. Will include: definition(s) of homelessness, the role of federal government, provincial government, local governments and community agencies.

Readings:


9. Housing First Responses and Non-Traditional Groups (Mar 12)

The response to homelessness has evolved considerably in recent decades. Housing first is a model or approach to responding to homelessness that has gained considerable traction in recent years. This class will focus on the transition towards housing first models in Canada and the US. It will also consider segments of the population, such as women, youth and Indigenous households, that may need non-traditional responses and solutions.
• **Guest Speaker:** Celine Mauboules, Shelter Net BC

**Readings:**


• Patrick, Caryl. (2014) Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review.


10. **Alternative Forms of Ownership Housing (Mar 19)**

Efforts by municipalities to identify and address the disparity in household incomes and homeownership by facilitating the development of below market housing. Examples of near market or below market homeownership will be examined with a focus on the challenges and benefits of different approaches.

**Readings:**


11. **Student Presentations – Part 1 (Mar 26)**

12. **Student Presentations – Part 2 and Class Wrap Up (April 9)**

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