

School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP)
University of British Columbia
COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number	PLAN 547C
Course Credit(s)	6.0
Course Title	Professional Project Report (MAP/MScP)
Term	Ongoing Course

Short Course Description

Research and preparation of a professional project report on a planning topic in public policy or professional practice.

Course Format

Select one section only. Student registering for BOTH Term 1 and 2 should select Section 001. A student may complete his or her master's program by undertaking either an academically oriented thesis of 12 credits (549C) or a professionally oriented project of 6 credits (547C) together with 6 credits of additional coursework. Students are required to make their choice by the end of September (the beginning of a student's second academic year) of the Master's program. But it is highly recommended that the student make their choice before the suggested time.

Registration

Registration in Plan 549C or 547C is **mandatory** in both Summer and Winter Sessions beginning in the summer of the first year and continuing until completion of the thesis or project.

Learning Outcomes

The professional project is the capstone project of choice for those students with a practical bent and who intend to enter professional practice after graduation. Its major purpose is to provide experience in the execution of a planning or urban design project. Students will 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 professional project option provides an opportunity for students to develop and exercise their skill and judgement in problem definition and to demonstrate professional competence in the supervised design and execution of an individual planning study.

Given the increasing scope of professional planning activities and employment opportunities across the public and private sectors, the substantive focus and content of professional projects will vary greatly. Such projects may also take many different reporting forms--indeed, students are encouraged to use the project option to hone their professional presentation skills in diverse media as well as in writing. To maximize the intended value of the professional project experience, the program of research and reporting under the project option will generally have the following characteristics:

1. A total of six (6) credits are offered for successful completion of a professional planning project. Project students therefore take six (6) more credits of coursework than thesis students.
2. A professional project is an investigation into a well-defined practical planning-related question or problem. Professional projects 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.

3. Each professional project will proceed 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. (See following point.)
4. To facilitate focused research and reporting and on-time completion, projects will 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' of the project should therefore reflect the conceptual and practical framework to be followed.
5. In all cases, a professional project must satisfy the academic norms of the university and SCARP. The supervising faculty member will be the final arbiter as to whether the student's professional project activities and report have achieved the necessary standard. This stipulation is an essential underpinning to all project-related problem statement or terms of reference.
6. A professional project is limited in scope. Original data collection is not necessary, but is possible. In general, participating students will 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 reports, students are expected to demonstrate familiarity with at least the limited body of literature of direct relevance to the project.
7. Individual professional projects should be designed to ensure adequate reporting in roughly 30-50 pages, 1.5 spaces (or the agreed equivalent in other acceptable media). Project reports should be 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 will have a critical and reflexive content.**
8. As noted above, the supervising faculty member is responsible for assessment of the final product with input from any external client if relevant. If there is no external client to review the final product a second reader will review the report (as detailed below). A final oral examination is normally not required though should be regarded as an option at the discretion of the supervisor(s) in special circumstances.
9. In all cases the student will be required to make a formal 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, other students and faculty will be invited to attend and comment on the presentation.
10. On-time completion of projects is an important element of professional practice. Students should regard the professional project 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 will normally take on-time completion into account in assigning final grades for professional projects

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

1 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>.