Overview and Learning Objectives

Urban Planning is both a professional endeavor and a collective effort. As a social endeavor planning arose out of the particularities of international historical context, as a response to technological innovations and the perceived ills of industrial urbanization. Since the rise of modern planning in the late 19th century, many theories have emerged to explain and guide the practice of planning. This course explores the different theories and experiences that have informed planning practice in the modern era, with an eye toward informing your personal approach to the profession.

The assigned material describes and analyzes the evolving pattern of urban and metropolitan development in the United States and provides a historical perspective on the origin and values of city planning and the urban planning profession. Through readings and assignments, students examine alternative theories of planning and the changing role of the planner in the policy-making process and, gain an understanding of the way in which federal, state, and local policies influence urban and regional development.

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with urban planning history
- Understand and be able to evaluate a variety of urban planning theories
- Conduct research on a planning tool, movement or debate of your choosing
- Reflect on your identity as a planner within the contemporary moment of urban planning practice

Expectations and Requirements

1. Reading and Participation in Seminar Discussion (30%)

   This course is a graduate level seminar, meaning that students share responsibilities with the instructor to actively participate in the teaching and learning that we accomplish in each class. Active participation requires regular class attendance, fully completing and understanding assigned readings in advance of each class session and engaging in discussion through both listening and speaking with other students in a respectful and constructive exchange of ideas. Your presence will be noted; unexplained absences and lateness will result in a lower grade and may result in referral
to the Office of the Dean. Active engagement will also be noted; your grade will depend on your ability to listen well, ask clarifying or probing questions, respond to classmate and professor’s comments and be prepared to ask questions that illustrate you have completed the assigned readings. Students will lose points for behavior that reflects a failure to listen or participate in the discussion, and for an inability to answer basic questions about the reading and contribute to the classroom discussion.

Each week one or two students will lead the group discussion on the assigned readings. Discussion leaders should come prepared to provide a summary of the readings, pose thoughtful questions and make linkages to readings and discussions that have occurred in previous classes. This activity will count toward one-third of the Reading and Participation grade (or 10% of the student’s final grade).

2. Reading Response Papers (30%)
For four of the class sessions, students will submit response papers (3-5 pages in length) that briefly summarize the arguments and main points in the readings assigned for that class and offer critical reflection of and engagement with the history and ideas presented in the texts. Reflection papers should also include at least three provocative/thoughtful questions that emerged from your consideration of the readings. Response papers are due at the beginning of the class session, printed out and handed to the professor; Emailed papers will not be accepted. Student’s questions may be posed to other students during the seminar. Reading responses can receive up to 10 points each: 3 for clarity, accuracy and concision of the summary; 4 for critical reflection and engagement with the ideas presented in the assigned readings and with other readings assigned for the course; and 3 for writing creative questions which show the student has thoughtfully reflected upon the readings. The response with the lowest grade will be dropped and will not count toward the final grade. Graded papers will be handed back the week after they are submitted.

3. Final Research Paper (40%)
Select a government policy, urban planning tool, movement or intellectual debate and describe its historical development and intellectual context. The paper should be 10-12 pages in length, not including the bibliography. Students must submit a paper proposal to the professor by the 7th week of classes (October 26). Detailed guidelines are available on the course website.

Assignment Submission Guidelines: Reading responses, the research proposal and the final paper must all be submitted in hard copy during the class session they are due. In addition, the final paper must be submitted online, on NYU classes, using ‘Turn It In’ to detect plagiarism. All paper submissions must be type written, in 12 point font with 1.5 point spacing and must conform to professional standards of grammar, punctuation and citation format. Plagiarism and other academic integrity infractions will not be tolerated; students who violate this will be referred to the Office of the Dean for disciplinary action. Please see the following for more information: http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies/academic-code

Meetings and Emails: The best way to correspond with the professor is through email at laf13@nyu.edu. Email communication provides an opportunity to practice drafting professional correspondence, and as such all emails should include a salutation, use appropriate language and end with a signature that includes your full name and preferred email address. The professor will reply to your emails within 24 hours during the week and prior to Monday’s class session for emails sent over the weekend. You may meet with the professor by making an appointment via email. If you plan to be absent from class for any reason, please email the professor in advance.
Late Assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted. Failure to deliver an assignment by the due date will result in 0 points for that assignment. If unexpected circumstances prevent assignment completion on time (e.g. hospitalization, emergency travel), email the professor as soon as possible and hand in whatever you have completed by the due date.

Internet: Use off the Internet is not permitted during class sessions, and all devices should have Wi-Fi disabled during class. Please be sure to download any readings or reference material you will need for class discussion prior to the beginning of class. Cell phones should be silenced during class. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in deductions from the Participation portion of the grade.

Required Reading: The following three books should be purchased by students. Copies will also be placed on reserve at NYU’s Bobst library. All other readings are available on the course website.


Course Schedule:

1. September 14: Introductions and Syllabus Review
2. September 21: Industrial Urbanization
3. September 28: Reactions to Industrial Urbanization
4. October 5: 1909 Plan of Chicago
5. October 13 (Tuesday): The Professionalization of Planning Practice
6. October 19: Midcentury Planning: The Rational Comprehensive Model
7. October 26: Midcentury Planning: Incrementalism, Pragmatism and the Realities of Planning
8. November 2: Rational Comprehensive Planning Critiques
12. November 30: New Approaches to Planning: Communicative Action and the Just City
13. December 7: Postmodern Planning and the Neoliberal City
14. December 14: Revisiting Planning Theory for the Practitioner

Weekly Schedule of Readings:

1. Introductions, Syllabus Review, Tensions in Urban Planning

No readings required for this week.

2. Industrial Urbanization


3. **Reactions to Industrial Urbanization**


4. **1909 Plan of Chicago**


5. **The Professionalization of Planning Practice**

Geddes, Patrick. 1915. “City Survey for Town Planning Purposes, of Municipalities and Government” from *Cities in Evolution*.


6. **Midcentury Planning: The Rational Comprehensive Model**


7. **Midcentury Planning: Incrementalism, Pragmatism and the Realities of Planning**


8. **Rational Comprehensive Planning Critiques**


9. **New Approaches to Planning: Participation, Advocacy, and Equity Planning**


10. Economic Restructuring and Neo-Marxist critiques of Planning


11. Globalization of Planning: Colonial Cities and International Development


Robinson, Jennifer. *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development* (London; Taylor and Francis, 2006); Introduction


12. New Approaches to Planning: Communicative Action, the Just City


13. **Postmodern Planning and the Neoliberal City**


14. **Revisiting Planning Theory for the Practitioner**


