New York University
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

History and Theory of Planning, URPL-GP 2660
Alexis Perrotta, PhD

Fall 2015
Thursdays 6:45pm – 8:25pm
GCASL 238 Thompson Street, Room 269

Office Hours: After class and by appointment
Contact: ap1192@nyu.edu

Overview and Learning Objectives
Planning is a project that links knowledge to spatial and societal transformation. Its history and current state of practice wrestle with several tensions: prescription and explanation, conflict and consensus, process and substance, expertise and local knowledge, and discipline and emancipation. Planners must effectively engage with these tensions to accomplish change. These tensions will be elaborated throughout this course through readings, lectures and seminar discussion.

The goal of this class is for students to become well-versed in the history of the urban planning profession and the intellectual history of planning, so that they can become informed critics of their professional agendas. This class is designed to enable students, in their later careers, to place their professional tools and tasks in historical and intellectual context. Tools such as GIS, surveys, quantitative projections, and community meetings all have important historical roots. Students will be asked to reflect upon the foundations of planning tasks such as building consensus, advocating for change, and predicting future trends. Students will also come to understand why many cities look the way they do today.

The course is structured to first introduce professional planning approaches through theory, and then trace the development of these approaches through history. The first few class sessions identify the main approaches to planning, and discuss theories of the role of the planner, the state and the public; justifications of urban planning; and theories of the plan itself. The following class sessions focus on 19th and 20th century planning history and proceed chronologically with some topical detours. Many lectures and readings are on U.S. history, however some material draws from international cases. Each class will be comprised of a lecture followed by a seminar discussion.
Expectations, Assignments and Resources

1. Reading and Participation in Seminar Discussion (20%)
This is a graduate-level seminar. Students are expected to regularly attend every class, complete assigned readings in advance of each class, and engage in respectful and constructive exchange of ideas with other seminar members. Your presence and punctuality is noted; numerous and unexplained absences, and lateness, will result in a lower grade and may result in referral to the Office of the Dean. Specifically, students earn points for listening well, asking clarifying and probing questions, responding to classmates’ comments, and coming prepared with questions that are evidence having completed the reading. Points will be deducted for behavior that reflects a failure to listen and attend to the discussion, and for inability to answer basic questions about the reading and contribute to discussion. Points will be tracked offline and reported at the end of the semester.

2. Five Reading Responses (30%)
For five of the class sessions, briefly summarize the arguments and main points in the assigned readings for that class session (one paragraph, 3-5 sentences) and list at least three provocative, thoughtful questions that emerged from your consideration of the readings. Reading responses are due at the beginning of the class session, printed out and handed to the professor. Students’ questions may be used during the seminar. Reading responses can receive up to 9 points each: 3 for clarity, accuracy and concision of the summary; 3 for connecting the summary and questions to other readings and themes discussed in class; and 3 for writing creative questions which show the student has thoughtfully reflected upon the readings. Graded reading responses will be handed back the following week. Reading responses may incorporate the optional readings, but it is not required.

3. Final Research Paper (50%)
Select a government policy, urban planning tool or movement, and describe its historical development and intellectual context. This paper should be 10-12 pages. The statement of intent for this paper will be due by the seventh class session. Students who wish to submit a draft of the Final Research Paper for feedback prior to grading may do so by the twelfth class session. Drafts are optional and ungraded, and will be returned with comments the following week. Final papers will be graded according to quality of writing, organization of ideas, evidence of critical thinking, and content. A full grading rubric will be on the course website.

Assignment Submission Instructions: The reading responses, statement of intent, draft and final paper must be submitted in hard copy. In addition, the final paper must be submitted online, on NYU Classes, using Turn It In to detect plagiarism. All assignments must be type written, in 12 point font with 1.5 point spacing, and they must conform to professional standards of grammar, punctuation and citation format. Students are encouraged to use Wagner’s writing consultants free of charge: http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/services/tutoring. Plagiarism and other academic integrity infractions will not be tolerated. Please see the following statement for more
Meetings and Emails: The best way to correspond with the professor is through email, ap1192@nyu.edu. Please end each email with your full name. The professor will reply within 24 hours except on weekends. You may meet with the professor by making an appointment via email. If you plan to be absent from class, please email the professor in advance. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted. Failure to deliver an assignment on the due date will result in 0 points for that assignment. If circumstances prevail to prevent assignment completion on time (e.g. hospitalization, emergency travel), email the professor, and hand in whatever you have completed by the due date. If you will be absent on a due date, arrange for a classmate to print out your assignment and hand it in for you. Do not email assignments to the professor.

Internet: Use of the Internet is not permitted during class, and all devices must have wifi disabled during class. Phones should be silenced during class. Download readings prior to class.

Disabilities: New York University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. If you require accommodations or would like more information, please contact the Center for Students with Disabilities at mosescsd@nyu.edu, 212-998-4980, or 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor, or speak with the professor.

Required Reading: The following four required books should be acquired by students. *Please buy the Third Edition of Peter Hall’s Cities of Tomorrow.* You can buy any edition of the other books. All other readings will be on the course website. Some classes require more reading than others; students should read in advance, especially for classes 9, 10 and 11.


Course Schedule:

1. September 3  Introduction: Core Tensions in Urban Planning

*NO CLASS SEPTEMBER 10*

2. September 17  Approaches to Planning part I
3. September 24  Approaches to Planning part II
4. October 1  Approaches to Planning part III
5. October 8  Utopias, Slums and Charity
6. October 15  The City Beautiful, and Professionalization of Planning
7. October 22  Regions and Neighborhood Units

**Statement of Intent for Final Research Paper due at 6:45 PM**

8. October 29  Colonial Cities & International Development
9. November 5  Modernism & Urban Renewal
10. November 12  Resistance, Unrest & Participation
11. November 19  Postmodern Planning & Neoliberalism
12. December 3  Roots of Contemporary Challenges: Race, Sprawl and Pollution

**Draft of Final Research Paper due (optional)**

13. December 10  Radical Planning and Local Knowledge
14. December 17  Revisiting the Tensions of Urban Planning

**Final Research Papers due at 6:45 PM**
Weekly Schedule of Readings:

1. **Introduction: Core Tensions in Urban Planning**
   There are no readings required for this week.


2. **Approaches to Planning part I: Rational planning, incrementalism, pragmatism**


3. **Approaches to Planning part II: advocacy and equity planning, participatory planning**


4. **Approaches to Planning part III: Communicative action, the just city**


5. Utopias, Slums and Charity


6. The City Beautiful, and Professionalization of Planning


7. Regions and Neighborhood Units; Statement of intent for Final Research Paper due

Hall, Chapter 3, “The City of By-Pass Variegated,” pages 48-86.

Hall, Chapter 4, “The City in the Garden,” pages 87-141.

8. Colonial Cities & International “Development”


9. Modernism & Urban Renewal

Scott, Chapters 1-4, pages 11 - 146.

Hall, Chapter 9, “The City on the Highway,” 294-351.

**OPTIONAL** Hall, Chapter 7, “The City of Towers,” 218-261.

10. Resistance, Unrest & Participation

Hall, Chapter 8, “The City of Sweat Equity” pages 262-293.


**11. Postmodern Planning & Neoliberalism**


**12. Roots of Contemporary Challenges: Race, Sprawl and Pollution; Draft of Final Research Paper due (optional)**


**13. Radical Planning and Local Knowledge**

Scott, Part Four, pages 309-357


14. Revisiting the Tensions of Urban Planning

