COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on making and using plans. Our goal is to understand how plans navigate the messiness of uncertainty, incompletely defined situations, and political differences, and identify lessons that help us cope with such situations in our own practice. In this class, we will start with the local government landscape in which most planners practice irrespective of their specialization. We will examine the structures from which plans get their legitimacy, explore common tools that planners employ, and assess how plan as an artifact influence planning and development processes. We will see how plans are organized – hierarchically and topically – and the benefits and limitations of dominant approaches. As we do so, we will interact with practitioners and hear about their experiences and what plan making means to them.

By the end of this course you may expect to have:
1. An understanding of the local government context in which plans are made and used
2. Knowledge of local planning tools such as comprehensive plans and zoning
3. Engagement and visioning techniques
4. Skills in evaluating plans
5. And a better appreciation of the value of well-made plans

PREREQUISITES
None. This class is designed for urban planning graduate students. If space permits, students from related fields interested in urban planning practice are welcome to take it.

READINGS
Readings are from a range of books, reports, and academic journals, and will be supplied in electronic format to registered students via Illinois Compass.

ORGANIZATION:
This course is built around weekly cycles of learning and activities. You are expected to read the assigned readings for a particular week prior to that Monday’s class meeting. You are expected to post brief reactions to assigned readings on Illinois Compass Discussion Board and actively participate in the class. Typically, on Mondays the instructor will open with a lecture or commentary about that week’s topic. This will be followed by a discussion of the readings. Wednesday’s sessions will focus on activities including discussion with a visiting practitioner, project work, fieldwork, or skill training.
DELIVERABLES

Reading reactions: One set of required readings are assigned for most weeks. You are expected to complete these readings and submit a brief reaction to the overall set of readings on a designated Compass Discussion Board page prior to that week's first meeting (i.e. by 10:30 AM on Mondays). Your reaction may not be more than 250 words in length and may include, for example, something you like or dislike about the readings; some aspect of the readings that made an impression on you (new fact, enlightening observation, new twist to an old idea, writing style, etc.); or something you did not understand. You may also include questions that you would like to ask. Please do not submit reading summaries or write reactions to every individual piece of reading. Please submit your reaction by copying the text directly into the Compass textbox and use week number as the subject (do not attach files). Late submission of reading reactions will not receive credit.

Projects: Memos, Reports, and Presentations: There will be two major projects in this course - one individual and one team. The projects will involve interim tasks and deliverables in the form of group activities and memos, and will culminate in final reports and a presentation. The course also includes a number of standalone memos and activities designed to develop specific skills. Share of final grade for each of these components are included below. Detailed expectations and grading rubric will be shared when introducing the projects. The due dates for all deliverables are listed on the course outline. Unexcused delays will be penalized by 10% of the total score for every 24-hour delay.

ASSIGMENTS AND GRADING

Your grade for this course will be based on the following breakdown:

- Briefing memo → 5%
- Project #1 (breakdown below) → 25%
  - Two memos → 10% (5% each)
  - Report → 15%
- Project #2 (breakdown below) → 30%
  - Memo → 5%
  - Presentation → 10%
  - Report → 15%
- Reading reactions → 25%
- Class participation → 15%

Final course grade will be based on the following distribution: 100-97 points = A+, 96.9-94 = A, 93.9-90 = A-, 89.9-87 = B+, 86.9-84 = B, 83.9-80 = B-, 79.9-77 = C+, 76.9-74 = C, 73.9-70 = C, 69.9-67 = D+, 66.9-64 = D, 63.9-60 = D-, and 59.9 – 0 points = F

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and will be taken in all sessions. Your active and interested participation in the class counts towards your grade. Unexcused absences will be factored in the participation component of the grade, and may affect other components. Request for excusing absences should be made in advance, if possible. If you miss a task
during your absence, it is your responsibility to explore and make adequate alternate contributions.

**Submissions**: Most deliverables are to be submitted electronically through Illinois Compass. Please do not submit any work files via email attachments. For online submissions, please put your name in the name of the file in addition to in the actual document. You are encouraged to speak with us in the class, during office hours and via the discussion board on Compass. I encourage you to post content-related questions on the discussion board, so that your fellow students can participate and benefit from the discussions such questions generate.

*Electronic device use*: The volume of materials to be covered and the cumulative nature of the material require your consistent participation and punctuality. I discourage use of electronic devices in class, especially if they are distracting to students around you. Even for sessions marked for unstructured group activities, you are expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire duration. This course may elicit discussion of controversial topics. Please remain respectful of your peers.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
Please be aware of the university guidelines regarding academic integrity, which can be found under Article 1, Part 4 of the student code (http://studentcode.illinois.edu). Academic dishonesty includes such things as cheating, fabrication of information, or plagiarism. Academic dishonesty may be reported to the student’s home department, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, and to the Senate Committee on Student Discipline.

**SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**
If you have any condition, such as a physical or learning disability, which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as outlined or which will require academic accommodations, please notify me during the first week of the course.

**COUNSELING**:  
https://counselingcenter.illinois.edu/.

The Counseling Center is committed to providing a range of services intended to help students develop improved coping skills in order to address emotional, interpersonal, and academic concerns. The Counseling Center provides individual, couples, and group counseling. All of these services are paid for through the health services fee. The Counseling Center offers primarily short-term counseling, but they do also provide referrals to the community when students could benefit from longer term services.
COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1: Course Overview (1/17)
- Introductions and expectations

Recommended Reading:

Week 2: Background: Property Rights, Public Interest, and the Local Planning Landscape (1/22, 1/24)

Tuesday: No Class (Post reading reaction on Compass, work on briefing memo)
Wednesday: Workshop – Writing a Memo (bring a draft of your briefing memo)
- Please review the ‘Memos’ section on Purdue’s Online Writing Lab website: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/1/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/1/)

[Deliverable 1: Briefing Memo due on 1/26 @ 5 PM]

Week 3: The Logic of Making Plans (1/29, 1/31)

Tuesday: Why Make Plans
Wednesday: Introduce Project 1: Does your community need a better plan?

Week 4: The Comprehensive Plan (2/5, 2/7)
media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/online/PAS-Report-578.pdf and review at least two of the following “Best Practice” comprehensive plans: Austin, Norfolk, Raleigh, and Rock Island.

**Monday:** The Comprehensive Plan and its critiques  
**Wednesday:** Guest: Libby Tyler

[Community and Focus Issue Overview Memo due on 2/9 @ 5 PM]

**Week 5: Zoning, Subdivision Ordinances, and Other Regulatory Tools (2/12, 2/14)**


**Monday:** Zoning, Intended and Unintended Consequences of  
**Wednesday:** TBD

**Week 6: System of Plans (2/19, 2/21)**


**Monday:** Plan making in a system of plans  
**Wednesday:** TBD

[Plan Overview Memo due on 2/23 @ 5 PM]

**Week 7: Plan Assessment (2/26, 2/28)**


*Monday:* Do plans matter?

*Wednesday:* Project work

**Week 8: The Plan Making Process (3/5, 3/7)**


*Monday:* Consensus building for planners

*Wednesday:* Guest: Sam Smith

**Week 9: Project Wrap Up (3/12, 3/14)**

*Monday:* Work session; bring draft report for peer feedback

*Wednesday:* Work session

[Report: Plan critique and synthesis, due on 3/16 @ 5 PM]

**Week 10: Spring Break (3/19, 3/21)**


*Monday:* Introduction to Final Project, Project work

*Wednesday:* Guest: Ben LeRoy
Week 12: Community and Systems Analysis (4/2, 4/4)


Monday: Class and field work
Wednesday: Class and field work

Week 13: Planning with uncertainty (4/9, 4/11)


Monday: Scenario Analysis
Wednesday: Class Activity

[Background Memo due on 4/7@ 5 PM]

Week 14: Communicating Plans (4/16, 4/18)

- Allyson Mendenhall, Claire Hempel, AICP CUD, Emily Risinger, Stephanie Grigsby, AICP, Creating Planning Documents (PAS 589), American Planning Association, 2017

Monday: Professional communications and planning practice
Wednesday: Guest TBD

Week 15: Project work (4/23 and 4/25)

Monday: Preliminary review session
Wednesday: Preliminary review session

Week 16: Final Presentations (4/30 And 5/2)

Monday: Presentations due; Class presentations
Wednesday: Class presentations and Course wrap up

[Final reports and confidential assessment of team members due 5/7 at 5 PM]
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week#</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td><strong>Course Outline at a Glance</strong></td>
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<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>No Class - MLK Day</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Property Rights, Public Interest, and the Local Planning Landscape</td>
<td>Reading Reactions Due, No Class</td>
<td>Memo Writing</td>
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<td>Reading Reactions Due, Lecture: Why Make Plans</td>
<td>Introduction to Project 1</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td>Reading Reactions Due, Lecture: Comprehensive plan and critiques</td>
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<td>Reading Reactions Due, Lecture: Consequences of Zoning</td>
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<td>System of Plans</td>
<td>Reading Reactions Due, Lecture: System of Plans</td>
<td>Guest Lecture: TBD</td>
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<td>Plan Assessment</td>
<td>Reading Reactions Due, Lecture: Do plans matter?</td>
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<td>The Plan Making Process</td>
<td>Reading Reactions Due, Lecture: Consensus building for planners</td>
<td>Guest Lecture: Sam Smith</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Project Wrap up</td>
<td>Work session, draft peer feedback</td>
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<td>Report#1 due</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>(No Class)</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Making Better Plans</td>
<td>Reading Reactions Due, Lecture: Introduction to final project</td>
<td>Guest Lecture: Ben LeRoy</td>
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