

UPP 502 – CRN 27382
Planning Skills: Computers, Methods and Communication
Fall 2010

Time:	6:00 – 9:00 PM Mondays
Location:	2LH 103
Office Hours:	By appointment only, through email or personally.
Instructor:	Dr. Piyushimita Thakuriah (Vonu)
Office:	Rm. 258 CUPPA Hall
Email:	vonu-pt@uic.edu (preferred method of contact)
Phone:	312-355-0447
Prerequisites:	None.

1. Course Objectives, Learning Goals and Expected Outcomes

The objective of this course is to present students with a basic set of skills that are prerequisites for future coursework and for a successful career in urban planning. The course will achieve this objective by means of a practical case study of building a community profile, including its demographic, economic, land-use, transportation, geographical and related attributes. Through the process of building such a profile, we will explore relevant planning and research questions, data sources, analytical tools, presentation techniques and professional advise-giving methods.

The course has two high-level goals:

- 1) To provide students with a broad understanding of planning problems that may arise at the neighborhood or regional levels, and how to think objectively, and in an informed way, about framing solutions to address those problems;
- 2) To introduce students to a variety of analytical, graphical/visual and presentation skills that is typically used to address those problems.

The overall expected course outcome is for students to be able to connect the needs of a community to the technical aspects of urban planning, so that planning can occur in an informed and objective way. At the end of the course, successful students will have achieved the following six learning outcomes:

- 1) Be able to develop a comprehensive profile of a community;
- 2) Demonstrate proficiency in writing, speaking, enumerating, visualizing and computing skills;

- 3) Be able to demonstrate knowledge about a range of secondary data sources and how to go about finding information that may be relevant to a problem;
- 4) Apply quantitative reasoning and appropriate analysis techniques to problem identification, detailing alternatives and selecting among alternatives;
- 5) Be able to compose professional advice combining writing, speaking, enumerating, visualizing and computing skills to offer practically relevant and professional competent products;
- 6) Be able to frame research questions and possess basic skills to conduct research.

2. Summary of Course

Planners do many different things. You may do detailed historic preservation work in a small town; build alliances with local businesses to stimulate public-private partnerships; consult for the World Bank on massive infrastructure projects in a developing country; advocate on the behalf of seniors, low-wage workers and persons with disabilities; make the streets in your city more pedestrian and bicycle friendly; work in a consulting firm specializing on environmental planning; analyze how federal science and technology funding can improve economic development and labor market outcomes in your region – the list of activities is very long!

Irrespective of what you do and how specialized your work eventually becomes, there are certain issues that will remain constant. First, planning has an explicit or implicit element of space (whether the unit of space is as large as a country/state or small as a street intersection). Second, you would need to know what the economic, social and environmental “health” and needs of that space is. Third, you will need to know how to communicate with your audience, whether the audience is a sponsor or client, a town-hall meeting or a politician/decision-maker. The course will give the starting tools to understand the attributes and needs of that space, towards compiling a profile which can be used for future courses of action and to dialog with stakeholders and decision-makers. The space we will consider is that of a community of your choosing.

The course will have three parts:

Part I: Introduction to Planning Skills: examples of what planners do and the types of skills and information needed to undertake those activities;

Part II: Data, Methods and Tools: Major data sources used by planners; descriptive and inferential statistics; demographic analysis and forecasting, including population projection and migration pattern analysis; economic analysis, including shift-share, location quotient analysis; land-use inventorying and mapping; project analysis including cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis; introduction to survey methodology. Tools include introduction to SPSS/SAS, ArcGIS, Excel, Google SketchUp, Photoshop/In-design.

Part III: Communication and Presentation: Presentation skills, use of powerpoint, fundamentals of communication to stakeholders.

3. Format of Course

Dr. Vonu Thakuriah will teach the course but the participation of students is required to make the course a success. The week-by-week schedule is given at the end of the syllabus. Guest lecturers will teach ArcGIS, Photoshop and Illustrator. The course is intended to be highly interactive and class sessions will combine lectures with discussion. There will be several sessions held in a computer laboratory. The assigned readings, as given in the week-by-week syllabus, should be completed prior to the class session on that topic. You are responsible for all material, both covered in class and contained in the assigned readings. Note that in some weeks the amount of assigned reading is substantial, while in other weeks there is little or even no assigned reading. You should schedule your time accordingly, and use weeks with light reading loads to catch up on readings for “heavy” weeks.

The course has one required text that is available in bookstores or online:
 Gibilisco, S. (2004). *Statistics DeMystified: A Self-Teaching Guide*. McGraw-Hill.

The other readings for the course will be from journals or texts and will be posted in electronic format to the course Blackboard site. The full citations are listed at the end of this syllabus.

4. Course Policies

Course policies are on grading, attendance, late assignment submission, academic dishonesty and plagiarism, in-class participation and expectation and overall student responsibilities.

4A. Grading Policies

Assignment		Due Date	Points	Percent of Total
HW	Topic			
1	Community Description	30-Aug-10	5	3.03
2	Data Analysis I (Excel)	13-Sep-10	2	1.21
3	Data Analysis 2	20-Sep-10	3	1.82
4	Data Analysis 3 - Community Analysis	27-Sep-10	15	9.09
5	Population Projection	4-Oct-10	25	15.15
6	Economic Analysis	11-Oct-10	20	12.12
7	GIS	18-Oct-10	5	3.03
8	Photoshop	1-Nov-10	5	3.03
9	Illustrator	8-Nov-10	5	3.03
10	SketchUp	22-Nov-10	5	3.03
11A	Presentation of Final Project	29-Nov-10	15	9.09
11B	Community Profile (Final Paper)	6-Dec-10	40	24.24
	Total for Assignments		145	87.88
	Attendance & Class Participation		20	12.12
Total			165	100.00

4B. Attendance Policy

The instructor will take attendance in each class. Each unexcused absence beginning with the second occurrence will reduce the maximum mark you may receive for class preparation and participation by a full letter grade (the maximum grade with two unexcused absences is a "B", with three unexcused absences is a "C", etc.). An absence will be considered unexcused unless (1) you have discussed your situation with the instructor and obtained approval *in advance*, or (2) you provide evidence of a valid medical circumstance.

Please arrive at class on time so that there is sufficient time for lecture and discussion and so that the class is not disrupted by late entries. Unexcused tardiness of up to an hour will be treated as half an unexcused absence, and unexcused tardiness of more than an hour will be considered a full unexcused absence.

4C. Late Assignment Policy

Assignments are due in Blackboard and are to be time-stamped by 5:30 PM on the date of submission. I

Please read how to submit assignments in Part 2 "Assignments" of:

<https://blackboard.uic.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/ITL/bb9.0%20documentation/bb9UserManual.pdf>

If you wish to request a 24-hour extension (ie, for 5:30 PM on the next day), please email the instructor by 9:00 PM on the Sunday before the assignment is due. *Each student can receive one such extension for the duration of the semester.* If, after receiving this additional time for the first time, the assignment is still not turned in within the extension time, your grade on that assignment will be reduced by 50%, with an additional 10% for every 24 hours after that, leading to a grade of "F" if received 7 days after the original due date. After you use up this one-time extension, your 50% grade reduction will start with non-submission on the original submission due date, to reduce an additional 10% with every passing day without submission, leading to an "F" grade by non-receipt of the assignment by the 6th 24-hour period. The final course grade of any student who is late submitting assignments more than twice beyond the one-time extension, will be reduced by one letter grade.

It is a professional requirement to submit on time and it is good practice for your career. I do not like to grant extensions because of the following reason: your fellow students, many of whom are as busy as you, will be working very hard to submit on time. *In fairness to them, please submit on time and do not request extensions unless there are really, really exceptional circumstances.*

4D. Academic Dishonesty

UIC's academic dishonesty policy can be found in <http://www.uic.edu/ucats/catalog/GR.shtml> and related to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty or plagiarism, bribes, favors and threats, examination by proxy, grade tampering and non-original works. I will discuss this issue in class. I will randomly check all assignments for this purpose.

4E. In-class Expectations

No cell phones, instant messaging, surfing or checking email is allowed in class. Please arrive on time. The preparation and participation portion of your grade will be assessed in part by regular attendance and in part by your contribution of comments, questions, or examples in class. Plan to attend all class sessions for their full length. Excessive unexcused absences will reduce your grade, and more importantly, will affect your ability to master the material in this course.

4F. Student Responsibilities

- 1) Please make sure that you have correct and full access to the Blackboard web site. During the second week of class, the instructors will pass around a list of student names and email addresses as listed in the Blackboard site. That is the address to which the instructor will be sending email through Blackboard (this is almost always your UIC netid). If you wish to receive mail at another address (such as your yahoo or gmail account), you will have to forward your email to your preferred address through the ACCC page in the UIC website¹.
- 2) All homework submissions, including the final term paper, must be submitted electronically to the Digital Drop-Off Box in the Blackboard site. The drop-off box will be "turned off" by 5:30 PM on the day the homework is due.
- 3) It is very important that you keep up with the assigned readings and that you complete the readings before class. The instructor will keep note of class participation and may give an in-class quizzes. Remember that attendance and participation constitutes 10% of your final grade.
- 4) A great venue for discussion is the Blackboard Discussion Board. Be sure not to miss this fantastic opportunity to exchange ideas with your colleagues. Transportation policy is a rich field and we will not have time to discuss everything we want to in class.

¹ For example, if your UIC netid is marysmith@uic.edu and you wish to read email in your yahoo account msmith@yahoo.com, you should forward your UIC mail to your yahoo mailbox. Go to <http://www.uic.edu/depts/accc/index.html/EMAIL.html> and look under **EMAIL TOOLS**.

- 5) Students are encouraged to responsibly reproduce any material that you read. By this we mean that we take plagiarism very seriously. In addition to reviewing the UIC Academic Dishonesty Policy, it is in your best interest to review the guidelines I have provided in Section 5 and to comply with these guidelines as much as possible.
- 6) Urban planning/policy tend to raise strong opinions! With the rapid dissemination of information via the Internet, there is a lot of irresponsible reporting out there in online sources. I encourage you to be balanced in your views and to put material you access in perspective before you introduce them as a part of your work.

5. Major Reading Materials

General quantitative and analysis methods:

- 1) **[Statistics]** Gibilisco, S. (2004). *Statistics DeMystified: A Self-Teaching Guide*. McGraw-Hill.
- 2) **[Policy Analysis Methods]** Patton, C. V., and D. S. Sawicki (1993). *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning*. 2nd Ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Detailed technical planning methods

- 1) **[Population Projection, Economic Analysis, Land-Use Analysis]** Daniels, T. L., J. W. Keller and M. B. Lapping (1995). *The Small Town Planning Handbook*. American Planning Association.
- 2) **[Community Analysis]** Klosterman, R. E. (1990). *Community Analysis and Planning Techniques*. Rowman and Littlefield: Savage, Maryland.
- 3) **[Visualization, Summarizing and Presenting]** Dandekar, H. (2003). *The Planner's Use of Information, 2nd Edition*. Chicago: American Planning Association.
- 4) **[Visualization, Fiscal Impact Analysis, Mapping, Population Projection]** Steiner, F. and K. Butler (2007). *Planning and Urban Design Standards: Student Edition*. John Wiley & Sons.
- 5) **[Visualization]** Chopra, A. (2009). *Google SketchUp 7 for Dummies*. John Wiley and Sons.
- 6) **[Cost Benefit Analysis]** Weimer, D. L., and A. R. Vining (2005). *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*. 4th Ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- 7) **[Socioeconomic Data]** Cortright, J. and A. Reamer (1998). *Socioeconomic Data for Understanding your Regional Economy*. Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.
- 8) **[Writing and Presentation]** Pearsall, T. E. (1997). *The Elements of Technical Writing*. Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.

6. References

In addition to the above materials which we will use extensively, there are several sources that you can consult for reading and reference:

- 1) American Planning Association. 2006. *Planning and Urban Design Standards*. 1st Ed. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.
- 2) Babbie, E. 1998. *The Practice of Social Research*. 8th Ed. Belmont, California: Wadsworth.
- 3) Blakely, E. J., and T. K. Bradshaw. 2002. *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice*. 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- 4) Bunnell, G. 1997. Fiscal impact studies as advocacy and storytelling. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 12 (2): 136-151.
- 5) Center for Land Use Education (CLUE). 2005. *Land Use Resource Guide*. Stevens Point, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Extension. Available at <http://www.uwsp.edu/CNR/landcenter/elementguides.html> (accessed December 31, 2009).
- 6) Dewey, Russ. 2006. *APA Research Style Crib Sheet*. Available at <http://www.psychwww.com/resource/APA> Research Style Crib Sheet.htm (accessed January 2, 2010).
- 7) Freund, D. A. 1984. Cost benefit and cost effectiveness analysis. In J. E. Veney, and A. D. Kaluzny (eds.), *Evaluation and Decision Making for Health Services Programs*: 271-288. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- 8) Kaiser, E. J., D. R. Godschalk, and F. S. Chapin, Jr. 1995. *Urban Land Use Planning*. 4th Ed. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois.
- 9) McLean, M. L., and K. P. Voytek. 1992. *Understanding Your Economy: Using Analysis to Guide Local Strategic Planning*. Chicago, Illinois: Planners Press, American Planning Association.
- 10) Munter, M. 2009. *Guide to Managerial Communication: Effective Business Writing and Speaking*. 8th Ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- 11) Rea, L. M., and R. A. Parker. 2005. *Designing and Conducting Survey Research*. 3rd Ed. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
- 12) Weimer, D. L., and A. R. Vining. 2005. *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*. 4th Ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- 13) Macris, Natalie. *Planning in Plain English*. Chicago: American Planning Association.
- 14) Fisher, Roger; Ury, William; and Patton, Bruce. 1991. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, 2nd Edition. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- 15) Streibel, Barbara. 2003. *The Manager's Guide to Effective Meetings*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- 16) Grunkemeyer, W. and M. Moss, 1999. *Key Concepts in Sustainable Development*. Web Book of Regional Science. Access on Aug. 16, 2010 from <http://www.rri.wvu.edu/WebBook/Grunkemeyer-Moss/contents.htm>
- 17) Grunkemeyer, W., M. Moss and J. R. Thomas. 1999. *Community Preparedness for Site Development*. Web Book of Regional Science. Access on Aug. 16, 2010 from <http://www.rri.wvu.edu/WebBook/Thomas/contents.htm>

7. Weekly Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Learning Component	Readings and work before class	Assignments due before class	
1.	Aug 23	Introduction to Planning Skills	Overview of course, goals, learning outcomes, requirements types of studies; types of skills; overview of techniques to be covered in class	Familiarize yourself with Blackboard: https://blackboard.uic.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/ITL/bb9.0%20documentation/bb9UserManual.pdf		
2.	Aug 30	Data and Information I	Major sources of data for planners; survey research and design; innovative approaches to collecting information; basic structure of data files – observations and variables; graphical and tabular information; summary analysis; introduction to research design and evaluation; short review of Excel	Freund and Wilson: Chapter 1, pages 1-15. Scheuren - What is a Survey? Explore: http://www.uic.edu/depts/accc/training.html : Go through “Excel 2007 Essential Training” (see note at the end of the table) If necessary: Gonick and Smith, Chapters 1 and 2	HW 1 Paragraph describing Community to be profiled (5 points)	
3.	Sep 6	Labor Day holiday. No classes.				
4.	Sep 13	Data and Information VI: Statistics	Fundamentals of descriptive and inferential statistics	Gibilisco, Chapters 2 and 4 Recommend: Freund and Wilson Chapter rest of Chapter 1 and 2 If necessary: Gonick and Smith: Chapters 3 (upto page 30), 4	HW 2 Excel Homework (2 points)	
5.	Sep 20	Data and Information II: Demographics of a Place	Fundamentals of descriptive and inferential statistics	Gibilisco, Chapters 5 and 6 Recommend: Freund and Wilson Chapter 2 If necessary: Gonick and Smith: Chapters 5, 6	HW3 Data Analysis Homework (3 points)	
6.	Sep 27	Data and Information III: Population Trends	Population Projection; Migration patterns; Demographic Data; Equity analysis;	Daniels et al.: 7 Recommend: Steiner and Butler: 299-302 (blackboard)	HW 4 Descriptive Analysis of Community Census Data using graphs and tables (15 points)	
7.	Oct 4	Data and Information IV: Economic Analysis	Shift share, economic base; location quotient; economic output measures – Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics data	Daniels et al.: 8 (blackboard) Steiner and Butler: 303-304 (blackboard) Cortright and Reamer (Blackboard): recommended	HW 5 Population Projection (25 points)	
8.	Oct 11	Data and Information V:	GIS and maps: Guest Lecturer: Max Dieber	Materials in Class:	HW 6 Economic Analysis	

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		Mapping	and Nina Savar		(20 points)
9.	Oct 18	Data and Information VI: Land Use Analysis	Land use inventory, mapping; land-use planning	Review of Subdivision Sketch Plan Materials Daniels et al.: 10 and 17 (blackboard) Center for Land Use Education Ch.3-4, Appendix C http://www.uwsp.edu/CNR/landcenter/Publications/elementguides/Land_Use_Element_Guide/LUG-Chapter3.pdf Steiner and Butler: 312-335. (blackboard)	HW 7 GIS Lab Exercise in Class (5 points)
10.	Oct 25	Data and Information VII: Financial Analysis	Cost-effectiveness; cost-benefit analysis	Patton 5, "Establishing Evaluation Criteria" (blackboard) Patton 7: "Evaluating Alternative Policies" (blackboard) Steiner and Butler: 314-316. (blackboard) Weimer and Vining (recommended)	
11.	Nov 1 Room SEL 2249F	Data and Information VIII: Visualization I	PhotoShop Guest Lecturer: Max Dieber and Nina Savar	Dandekar, Chapter 10 Steiner and Butler: 336-344 (blackboard) Pearsall Ch.6, pp. 54-65	HW 8 Photoshop Homework in Class (5 points)
12.	Nov 8 Room SEL 2249F	Data and Information VIII: Visualization II	Illustrator Guest Lecturer: Max Dieber and Nina Savar	Dandekar, Chapter 10 Steiner and Butler: 336-344 (blackboard) Pearsall Ch.6, pp. 54-65	HW 9 Illustrator Homework in class (5 points)
13.	Nov 15 Room SEL 2249F	Data and Information VIII: Visualization III	Google SketchUp	Chopra, Chapters 3, 7 and 10 Steiner and Butler: 336-344 (blackboard)	
14.	Nov 22	Summarizing and Presenting	Writing an executive summary; presenting major results; understanding an audience; presentation skills	Dandekar: Chapters 8, and 9 Pearsall: Chapters 1 through 5	HW 10 SketchUp Homework in Class (5 points)
15.	Nov 29	Student Presentations			Presentation of Final Project (15 points) COMMUNITY PROFILE DUE (40 points)
	Dec 6	Exam Week: Student Presentations			Presentation of Final Project (contd.)

