PAFF 6350: Introduction to Urban Planning.

Instructor  George Atisa
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Telephone  (956) 665-3841
Email       george.atisa@utrgv.edu, I will often respond to emails within 24 hours.
Office hours Tuesdays/Thursdays and in Blackboard - [Time to be confirmed or by appointment]
Location    Online Blackboard Learn
Duration    Seven Weeks
Prerequisites None

Generally I will respond to emails within [24 hours] of receiving them. If I plan to be away from my computer for more than a couple of days, I will let you know in advance. For the online classes, any technical questions can be referred to Blackboard Support.

Assignments, tests and exams will all be administered through Blackboard. I will update the online grades each time a grading session has been complete—typically [3 days] days following the completion of an activity. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your Blackboard home page under the link to this course.

Coaches: Ms. Jessica Serna.

Textbooks
The following textbooks are is required for the course:

1. What Planners Do: Power, Politics and Persuasion by Charles Hoch. This is one of our required books. This book is about $65 (Used goes for about $10 in amazon.com).
2. Planning theory for practitioners by Michael P. Brooks, AICP. This book is about $40.00 (Used in Amazon.com goes for about $10.00).

Other Required Readings – As posted in Blackboard for each week.

Course Objective
The main objective of this course is to introduce students to the principles of planning and the origins of planning practices in the United States. Students will learn various concepts and
Online Technical Requirements

Blackboard Access
This course will be delivered online through a course management system named Blackboard. Access to Blackboard can be done either through http://my.utrgv.edu.

To participate in this online course, you should have easy access to a computer less than 5-years old with high-speed internet connection via cable modem, LAN or DSL. To ensure you are using a supported browser and have required plug-ins please refer to Supported Browsers, Plugins & Operating Systems for Blackboard Learn from Blackboards resource page.

Technical Assistance
If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Blackboard you can:

• Visit the Blackboard Student Resources Page
• Review Blackboard Student Tutorials
• Visit the Blackboard Student FAQ's Web Page
• Contact the Center for Online Learning, Teaching & Technology:
Phone 956-665-5327, Education Building Room 2.202
Submit a Help Ticket

Important Note: This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to check Blackboard for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted in course announcement or through Blackboard and email.

Communication with the Professor and Coaches
Utilize the course messages link in Blackboard for all communications. All questions on issues related to the course or assignments will receive feedback within 24 hours or as soon as the professor/coaches log into Blackboard. You are also free to email the professor if you find it necessary.

Assignments and Things-To-Do
The table below provides the details of all things that you are required to do. The readings, summaries and discussions will be based on plans and papers that will help you to develop skills to evaluate plans as well as a draft plan. All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard.

Graded Activities
The following activities will be graded weekly and will count towards your final course grade. A zero grade will be assigned if nothing is turned in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summaries – 6</td>
<td>100 points each = 600 Total</td>
<td>(6X5) = 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Critique – 1</td>
<td>100 points each = 100 points</td>
<td>(5X1) = 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards – 6</td>
<td>100 points each = 600 points</td>
<td>(6X2) = 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>100 points each = 100 points</td>
<td>(1X5) = 5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan Evaluation – 1</td>
<td>100 points each = 100 points</td>
<td>(1X20) = 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan Appraisal – 1</td>
<td>100 points = 100 points</td>
<td>(1X8) = 8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research – 1</td>
<td>100 points each = 100 points</td>
<td>(1X20) = 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>1700 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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I am very unlikely to entertain requests for make-up exams or assignments unless it is warranted due to compelling unforeseen circumstances.

Grade Distribution
A: 90 or more
B: 80 to 89
C: 70 to 79
F: 69 and below (fail)
**Schedule of Readings**

**Week 0**
Post Self Introductions – Brief Description of self  
*Date – January 3*

**Week 1**
**Introduction and Understanding Planning**
What Planners Do  
Chapters 1 & 2. Planning and Professional Authority and The Quest for Institutional Authority.

Planning Theory for Practitioners  
Chapters 1, 2 and 3: Planning practice, political power and theory and planning critics

Articles – Provide a two page summary for each article  
Article - Effects of Mandates on plan quality – Gene Bunnel & Edward J. Jepson Jr.

The birth of organized city planning in the United States; 1909 -1910 by J.A. Peterson  
*Discussion Forum 1*  
*Executive Summaries – 1 & 2*

**Week 2**
Origin of planning in USA  
What planners Do  
Chapter 3 & 4. Rational Protocol and Political Conflict

Planning Theory for Practitioners  
Chapters 4 & 5. Rationale for Public Planning and Values and Ethics

Articles  
Long-Range Planning in the Public Sector by B. Schwarz

**Research Paper Topic to be submitted at the end of Week 3**  
(You will choose a planning topic can be local, state or federal on a program/project and write a research paper about 10 pages. The videos in blackboard especially the second one talking about planning for the 21st century challenges can offer some ideas). You shall submit a 3-4-page proposal in week 4 and final paper is due in week 7.

*Discussion Forum 2*  
Start thinking about research topic
Week 3

Plan Making Process

What Planners Do
Chapter 5 & 6. Research and Rationality, and Making of Plans
Planning theory for practitioners
Chapter 6, 7 & 8. Centralized Rationality: The Planner as an Applied Scientist.

Articles
i. Obstacles to managing growth. When the city and country collide by Tom Daniels
ii. Unimaginable: Future Directions in Planning Practice and Research About Institutional Reform by Annette K. Kim
iii. Why Allow Planners to Do What They Do? A Justification from Economic Theory by Terry Moore

Date – January 17
Things-To-Do
Discussion Forum 3
Executive Summaries – 5
Note – Chapter 5: Plan making topic is good for plan evaluation next week, pay more attention

Week 4

Planning methods and models

What Planners Do
Chapter 7, 8 and 9. Planning, Regulation, Negotiation and the Bottom Line

Articles – These two articles contain excellent information on how to conduct a plan evaluation:


Plans for Evaluation:
Comprehensive Planning – The City of Raleigh, North Carolina
OR
Comprehensive Planning – Seattle, Washington State

Date – January 24
Things-To-Do
Discussion Forum 4
Research Proposal (3 to 4 pages)
Executive Summary 6
Start Plan Evaluation Exercise, due Week 5
| Week 5 | **Planning Horizons**  
What Planners Do  
Chapter 8 & 9. Organizing for Change, Racism and Planning | **Date — January 31**  
Things-To-Do  
Discussion Forum 5 |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Planning Theory for Practitioners**  
Chapter 10, 11 & 12. Decentralized Non-Rationality: The Planner as a Communicator.  
From Local to Global: One Hundred Years of Neighborhood Planning – Rohe, 2009 |
| Week 6 | **Tasks of local planners and Phases in Planning**  
Planning Theory for Practitioners  
Chapter 10. Setting the Stage: Ideas, Feedback, Goals, and Trial Balloons | **Date — February 7**  
Thing-To-Do  
Discussion Forum 6  
Article Critique |
|  | Articles:  
Lessons learned - by R. E. Klosterman;  
Article: Holistic Strategic Planning - by Thomas Plant |
|  | Submit:  
An appraisal of one of your colleagues plan evaluation 500 – 600 words |
| Week 7 | **Public Planning and Feedback** | **Date — February 14**  
Things-To-Do  
Submit Final Research Paper |
|  | **Planning Theory for Practitioners**  
Chapter 11, 12 & 13. The Feedback Strategy, Savvy planner and Vision  
Submit:  
i. Your final research paper |
Understand When You May Drop This Course
It is the student’s responsibility to understand when they need to consider de-enrolling from a course. Refer to the UTRGV Course Schedule for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student’s family.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu.

ATTENDANCE:
Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

University policy on course Evaluations
“Mandatory Course Evaluations period (Just before course ends in February 15 to 21): Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTPA account (https://my.utpa.edu/); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. The evaluation window closes before February 22. Students who complete their evaluations by May 6th will have priority access to their grades.”

If you have any questions, please contact the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs at (956) 665-7899 or via email at facultyaffairs@utpa.edu.

Online Participation Policy
Your success in any online course will heavily depend on your ability to communicate, engage and participate in all course activities. Successful completion of an online course requires that a student keep up with all assignments, course work and discussions. Timely participation in online discussions is a very important part of any online course and participation in discussions, as well as activities assigned, is not optional. You are expected to prepare and post to discussions in a timely manner consistent with the requirements contained within the course syllabus and discussion rubric.
**Discussion Topics**

Many of the "rules of the road" or protocols that apply to e-mail also apply to the use of discussions. Use the following conventions when composing a discussion posting:

1. During a Discussion assignment, deadlines for posting to and replying will be specified with each assignment. It is a good practice to always check the Discussions multiple times during the week.
2. If you want to send a personal message to the instructor or to another student, use e-mail rather than the discussions (see above E-mail Protocols).
3. Use the appropriate Discussion Topic; don’t post everything on the "Main" Discussion Topic.
5. A helpful hint for use with both discussions and e-mail --- Compose your message in your word processing application in order to check spelling, punctuation, and grammar --- then copy and paste your composition into e-mail or the discussion. This also saves online time.
6. Everyone should feel free to participate in class and online discussions. Regular and meaningful discussion postings constitute a substantial portion of your grade.
7. Respect each other’s ideas, feelings and experience.
8. Be courteous and considerate. It is important to be honest and to express yourself freely, but being considerate of others is just as important and expected online, as it is in the classroom.
9. Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.
10. "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or discussion topic when applicable. Some assignments will specify the subject heading.
11. Use the "reply" button rather than the "compose" button if you are replying to someone else’s posting.
12. Do not use postings such as "I agree," "I don’t know either," "Who cares," or "ditto." They do not add to the discussion, take up space on the Discussions, and will not be counted for assignment credit.
13. Avoid posting large blocks of text. If you must, break them into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
14. Use the Technical Discussion topic for assistance with technical issues. Use the Help Discussion topic for questions about course material or assignments. There will be specific discussion topics for particular discussions - pay close attention to the assignment, and post appropriately.

**Guidelines for Student Participation in Online Discussion Forums**

With freedom to voice your opinion and personal thoughts on the web comes responsibility. Keep the following guidelines in mind when developing your posts: Netiquette:
• Identify yourself by your real name. Be mindful of your personal safety, and avoid including personal information, such as phone numbers or addresses, in discussion forums.
• Write in the first person (this is your opinion).
• Use humor, joking, or sarcasm with caution. We often rely on non-verbal cues such as facial expressions to communicate joking or sarcasm; but these cues are not always clear in an online environment. These cues can be simulated with emoticons to reduce misunderstandings.
• What you write is public—respect your audience and be mindful of proper netiquette. Netiquette, also known as 'net etiquette,' includes using language free of profanity, proper tone and mechanics (including full sentences), as well as courtesy and respect for others' opinions. "Netiquette" has evolved to aid us in infusing our electronic communications with some of these missing behavioral pieces. "Emoticons" and other tools have become popular and I encourage their use when it will add to the clarity of your communication.

• :-) happy, pleased
• :-( sad, displeased
• :-O surprised
• >:-| angry

• Abbreviate when possible. Examples:
  • LOL laugh out loud, "I find this funny"
  • ROFL rolling on floor laughing, really funny
  • BTW by the way
  • *grin* smiling
  • IMHO in my humble opinion
  • FYI for your info

• Flame antagonistic criticism Netiquette continues to evolve and constant additions will be added to this growing language. The important thing to remember is that all of the "cute" symbols in the world cannot replace your careful choice of words and "tone" in your communication.

How to Get Others to Read Your Posts:
• Jot down notes as you read; and before you post, think about the focus question in the context of the readings. Address the focus questions as much as possible (Do not let the discussion stray).
• Distribute contributions evenly during the discussion period (not concentrated all on one day or at the beginning and/or end of the period). • Give your post an interesting descriptive subject line to draw attention and invite responses from others.
• Avoid cursory, non-contributory posts, such as "I agree" or "great idea." If you agree (or disagree) with a post, then say why--and support your statement with concepts from the online lecture or assigned readings, or by sharing a related example or experience.
• Avoid using texting abbreviations in your posts. • Elaborate one single idea and try to keep your message to a couple paragraphs. Long, multiple-screen "mini-dissertations" are difficult to follow on screen and limit opportunities for the give-and-take essential to effective dialogue.
• Review your comments carefully for grammar and punctuation before you post. Well-formulated, grammatically correct, clear posts attract more attention (from both instructor and colleagues). Consider developing your initial posts in a word processing program that allows you to edit for spelling and grammar—then copy it into the discussion forum. This not only will improve the quality of your posts, but also has the added benefit of preserving your insights and observations in word documents you can access after the online course has been completed. Another advantage to composing "offline" is avoiding a timeout from the online discussion forum while you compose your thoughts--resulting in a loss of your careful composition!

**Earning Full Credit:**
• Keep your posts related to the focus question. • Think of the assignment as a collegial dialogue—not a writing exercise. Engage in a discussion about the text and issues of the course materials.
• Cite or reference any part of your posts that are not your own original thoughts. (Avoid plagiarizing!) Citing your sources is especially important in courses where your instructor offers full credit only when citations support the ideas in your post. When you refer to online resources include a hyperlink directly to the source to add context to your comments.
• After you have posted, check back to see if anybody has responded to you—and whether a return response is desired/expected. Build on others' responses to further develop threads of dialog.
• Respond to a colleague who either supports your own thoughts or lacks supporting evidence or seems to fall short on an important point. Pose questions, offer arguments (distinguish between opinion and argument), or play "devil's advocate." Avoid responses that offer only right or wrong perspectives while ignoring other possible answers; pose open-ended questions that invite dialogue.
• Participation in online forums may be a significant portion of the assessment for your course, so check the course requirements for the weighting of the assessment in your final grade as well as the frequency and requirements for discussion posts to receive full credit.

**SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY:**
As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and
Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Statement on plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the representation of another person's words, ideas, and creative work in general as one's own. This misrepresentation is a breach of ethics that seriously compromises a person’s reputation. Professional careers have been ruined by revelations of plagiarism. To avoid plagiarism, researchers and professionals in public, private, or nonprofit organizations must scrupulously give credit whenever they use another person’s idea, opinion, theory, written or spoken words, as well as any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge. The following rules should be observed to make sure that the distinction between one's own words, ideas or work, and those of others is justly maintained.

1. Put in **quotations** everything that comes directly from the text of another’s work, especially when taking notes.

2. Alternatively, you can **paraphrase** another person’s work, but be sure you are not just rearranging or replacing a few words. A good strategy is to (1) read over what you want to paraphrase carefully, (2) cover up the text with your hand, (3) write out the idea in your own words without peeking, and (4) check your paraphrase against the original text to be sure you have not accidentally used the same phrases or words, and that the information is accurate.

3. Whether you quote, paraphrase or otherwise borrow another’s work, always **cite or indicate the source** of the information, and **provide references** following one of the many accepted styles or formats.

4. Common knowledge such as George Washington’s date of birth or the meaning of OLS regression need not be quoted, cited, or referenced. However, borrowing another’s original or creative presentation of common knowledge should follow the abovementioned rules. When in doubt, follow the rules.

Of course, submitting a paper that is completely the work of another person is plagiarism in its most extreme form. A student who plagiarizes all or part of an assignment can expect severe cumulative penalties, ranging from failure in the course to expulsion from the university, with an annotation of the sanction received on the student’s transcript.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE:**

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at [www.utrgv.edu/equity](http://www.utrgv.edu/equity), including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to
provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

**COURSE DROPS:**
According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.