

Planning Theory

Department of Policy, Planning, and Design

Course Description:

Planning is a practice-oriented discipline but all practices rest on basic theoretical formulations. Even when planners dislike theory, they draw on implicit theories to understand what is wrong, what needs to be improved, and who should benefit from planning interventions. Theoretical ideas are the guardrails of the profession. They make meaningful interventions in the world possible. The primary goal of this class is to analyze some of the basic theories that have shaped the thinking of urban planners. By making implicit theories of planners explicit, students will be better prepared to take apart and critically evaluate underlying planning assumptions.

The course addresses planning theory through two themes: power and the city, and community empowerment.

First, capitalist cities at the turn of the 20th century were productive and profitable places but they were also dangerous, unequal, and unhealthy. Early planning theory drew upon the belief that a trained group of rational (mostly) men could impose order on fast growing cities. Their goal was to harness the energies of productive cities and exert some control over the most egregious problems. Knowledge and power were concentrated in the hands of ‘rational’ planners. Norms and methods delineated bad from good, productive from unproductive, normal from abnormal residents. And, institutions were developed to coordinate different activities and spaces (residential, commercial, transit, leisure) within a functionally integrated city. Planners worked within the constraints of economic and political power to produce cities that were functional, profitable, and controlled.

Second, creating a profitable city has marginalized many. Inequalities in the United States are reaching levels not seen since the Great Depression. These inequalities have played out with acute force in our cities. Homelessness and segregation are on the rise. Gentrification has made cities very expensive and pushed low income people out to sprawling suburbs. The cities we live in are more complex and chaotic than ever. How do we think about planning in such complicated, fragmented, and unequal cities? We will address the question by examining theories on empowerment and planning justice.

Course Objectives:

- 1) Identify core theoretical ideas within the discipline of urban planning.
- 2) Investigate how these ideas have shaped the ways in which urban planners conceive of urban problems and develop methods of intervention.
- 3) Analyze the possibilities for residents of cities to participate in the planning process.
- 4) Assess how social inequalities can be reproduced or combatted through the planning process.


Required Texts:

All articles and chapters have been posted to the Canvas website. Please purchase the book through the online vendor of your choosing.

- Soja, E. (2010) *Seeking Spatial Justice*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Teaching format:

The first hour of the course consists of a lecture. The lecture is designed to provide a conceptual overview of the meeting's central issues. The second part consists of a small group discussion concerning the readings. Students are provided questions that will help critically interrogate the readings. The last part of the course consists of a class discussion.

Attendance and Late Submissions

Students are allowed to miss one class. Students with two unexcused absences will have to submit a 5-page writing assignment. Three absences will result in 5% grade reduction. Four or more will result in a fail.

Late submissions are not accepted. The only acceptable excuses for absences and late submissions are: 1) a medical problem, and 2) a serious family emergency. Both require some form of proof.

Fraud and Plagiarism

Plagiarism and fraud are not tolerated. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, plagiarism is, "to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own: use another's production without crediting the source." If a student commits fraud or plagiarism, he or she will refer the case to the university authorities and the student will receive a 0 for the assignment. **The easiest way to avoid plagiarism is simply to cite your references.**

Electronic Equipment:

Students using a portable computer for notes must NOT use it for other activities. If a student is found surfing the web or engaging in social media activities, she or he will have to take notes the old fashioned way: by hand. Students must also turn off their phones before class. **This is mandatory.**

Course Requirements:

1. Take-Home Essays:

There will be two take-home exams. For the midterm exam, students will have the option of selecting one out of two possible questions. Answers should be approximately five pages long (double space, normal font and margins). The midterm exam is worth 75 points and is due on [REDACTED]

The final exam will require students to answer one long mandatory question (cumulative, three to five pages) and one short one (one to two pages). The exam is worth 100 points. The final is due on [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Students are required to hand in both exams through their Canvas accounts. Please do not email me the assignments.

2. Weekly Review

Students are expected to write weekly short reviews of the readings (1 to 2 pages, double space). The reviews will address the week's prompts. The reviews start on Week 2 and continue to Week 10. They will be assessed on a pass / no pass basis. Each review is worth 10 points for a total of 90 points. Students are required to hand in the assignments before class through their Canvas accounts. Please do not send me the assignment via email.

Grading:

The grading scale is based on 285 points.

Mid-Term Exam	75 points
Final Exam	100 points
Weekly Review	90 points

Graduate Division requires students to receive a minimum grade of B to pass the class. **This class is not curved.** If students do not keep up with readings and perform up to standards, they may receive a C or below and not pass the class.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1: What is planning theory?

Friedman, J (1987) "Two Centuries of Planning Theory," *Planning in the Public Domain*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 51-86.

Week 2: Making Order in the Wild Capitalist City

■ Prompts:

- How did the economic forces of capitalism create great instability and problems in the 19th century city?
- How did early planners (especially Baron Haussmann) try to fix these problems?
- Do we find similar problems today?

Harvey, David (2006) *Paris: Capital of Modernity*. New York: Routledge, 93-152.

Hall, Peter (2002) "The City of Dreadful Night," *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 14-46.

Week 3: Planning and Rationality

■ Prompts:

- What is meant by a "planning mentality"? Have you developed such a mentality yet?
- Why did governments pursue "high modern" planning objectives?
- How did high modern urban planning undermine the vitality of cities?

Boyer, C. (1986) "The Rise of the Planning Mentality," *Dreaming the Rational City*. Cambridge: MIT Press, pp. 59-83

Scott, J. (1998) "Authoritarian High Modernism," *Seeing Like a State*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 87-102.

Jacobs, J. (1967) *Death and Life of Great Cities*. New York: Knopf, 1-25.

Week 4: Planning and Capitalism

■ Prompts:

- What is a growth machine and how does it shape the city?
- How entrepreneurialism and neoliberalism related concepts?
- Do you think planners are simple puppets of capitalist urban development?

Molotch, H. (1983) "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place," *American Journal of Sociology* 82: 309-330.

Harvey, D. (1987) "Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism," *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography*, 71 (1): 3-17.

Sager, T. (2011) "Neoliberal Urban Planning Policies: A Literature Survey, 1990-2010," *Progress in Planning*, 76: 148-199.

Campbell, H. Malcolm, T., and C. Watkins (2013) "Is There Space for Better Planning in a Neoliberal World? Implications for Planning Practice and Theory," *Journal of Planning, Education and Research*

Week 5: Planning and Power

■ Prompts:

- How does power constrain what planners do?
- What is the "dark side" of urban planning?
- How do nonprofit and voluntary organizations become a relay of government power?
- Do you think pluralism can offset the constraints of power in the city?

Forrester, J. (1982) "Planning in the Face of Power," *Journal of American Planning Association*, 48 (1): 67-80.

Yiftachel, O. (1998) "Planning and Social Control: Exploring the Dark Side," *Journal of Planning Literature*, 12 (4): 395-405.

Cruikshank, B. (1993) "The Will to Empower: Technologies of Citizenship and the War on Poverty," *Socialist Review*, 23 (4): 29-55.

Davidoff, P. (1965) "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 31 (4): 331-338.

Week 6: What's to be done in the fragmented city?

■ Prompts:

- How have cities become more fragmented?
- According to Amin, what can be done within the complex city?
- Can planners use the concept of informality in useful ways? Why or why not?

Soja, E. (1996) "Los Angeles, 1965-1992: From Crisis-Generated Restructuring to Restructuring-Generated Crisis", in Allen Scott and Edward Soja (Eds.) *The City: Los Angeles and Urban Theory at the End of the 20th Century*. Berkeley: UC Press.

Amin, A. (2011) "Urban Planning in an Uncertain World," in S. Watson and G. Bridge (eds.) *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*.

Roy, R. (2005) "Urban Informality: Towards and Epistemology of Planning," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 71 (2): 147-158.

Week 7: Planning for a More Just City

■ Prompts:

- What is social justice and how can planners make cities more socially just?
- How do Harvey and Potter contribute to Fainstein's argument?
- What are the possibilities of pursuing the just city in global times?
- Could Orange County be made more just? Why or why not?

Fainstein, S. (2009) "Planning the Just City", in P. Marcuse, J. Connolly, J. Novy (eds.) *Searching for the Just City: Debates in Urban Theory and Practice*. New York, Routledge.

Harvey, D. and C. Potter (2009) "The right to the just city," in P. Marcuse, J. Connolly, J. Novy (eds.) *Searching for the Just City: Debates in Urban Theory and Practice*. New York, Routledge.

DeFelippas, J. (2009) "On globalization, economic competition, and economic justice in cities," in P. Marcuse, J. Connolly, J. Novy (eds.) *Searching for the Just City: Debates in Urban Theory and Practice*. New York, Routledge.

Week 8: Talking about the City

■ Prompts

- How does communication overcome the problems of planning?
- What are the specific ways in which planners can help create a consensus?
- Why is achieving a true consensus difficult if not impossible?
- Do you think there is hope in the communicative turn? Can we just talk things through?

Healey, P. (1992) "Planning through Debate: The Communicative Turn in Planning Theory," *The Town Planning Review*, 63 (2): 143-162.

Innes, J. and D. Booher (1999) "Consensus Building and Complex Adaptive Systems," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 65 (4): 412-423.

Fischler, R. (2000) "Communicative Planning Theory: A Foucauldian Assessment," *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 19: 358-368.

Purcell, M. (2009) "Resisting Neoliberalization: Communicative Planning or Counter-Hegemonic Movements," *Planning Theory* 8(2):140-165.

Week 9: Planners as Insurgents, Insurgents as Planners

■ Prompts:

- How can planners play important roles in social movements?
- How do Miraftab and Beard add to Friedman's argument?
- Why is an 'organizational infrastructure' important?
- What do you think are the limits of social movements for making more just cities?

Friedman, J. (1987) "Planning as Social Mobilization," *Planning in the Public Domain: From Knowledge to Action*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 87-136.

Miraftab, F. (2009) "Insurgent planning: situating radical planning in the global south," *Planning Theory*, 8(1): 32-50.

Beard, V. A. (2003). "Learning radical planning: The power of collective action," *Planning Theory*, 2(1): 13-35.

Nicholls, W. (2003) "Forging a 'new' organizational infrastructure for Los Angeles's progressive community," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27(4): 881-96.

Week 10: Learning from Los Angeles

■ Prompts:

- How does injustice become "urbanized"?
- How is spatial justice different from social justice?
- What are the different roles urban planners have played in making a more just city?

Soja, E. (2010) *Seeking Spatial Justice*. Berkeley: University of California Press.