Senior Seminar
Urban Planning and Public Policy
Spring 2008

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The Senior Seminar is the culminating experience in the urban planning and public policy program. It is a small seminar in which you’ll work closely with one another to identify research topics, develop research designs, conduct and analyze research, and produce your thesis. The objectives of the semester are to further develop your ability to think critically, engage your intellectual curiosity, use the methods and literature you’ve learned in other classes, and polish your research, writing, and presentation skills. The thesis presents an opportunity to engage in debates that have piqued your interest in previous coursework and or to consider where you’re heading next.

During the semester, you will conduct new research in an area that interests you, produce a 25 page paper, and present that paper publicly. The courses you’ve taken on methods, literature, research, and writing will form the basis for the tools you will use in this class. Expect to participate fully as a critical member of a collegial community in which you will work closely with other students as you develop ideas, produce research plans, rough drafts and presentations.

Course Materials, Resources, and Information


Citations: The Chicago Manual of Style Online  [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html) (there’s a free 30-day trial - use it wisely!)

*Course Website*
  Sakai under the course number

**Evaluation**

30% Interim work products
20% Feedback on other students’ work, participation
40% Final paper
10% Presentation

**Late Assignments**
I recognize that unavoidable problems occur. If you have such a problem you may only turn in things late with a note from your dean. I will not accept any final papers after the end of the semester and I will not assign incomplete or temporary grades.

**Writing Assistance**
Rutgers has Learning Resources Centers on each campus [http://lrc.rutgers.edu/contact.shtml](http://lrc.rutgers.edu/contact.shtml).

A graduate student will be available 5 hours per week to work with students on writing. More information TBA...
Schedule

January 28. Introduction
Introductions, interests, and expectations


Assignment Due in Class
- *Bring a one paragraph statement class about your research interests*

In Class Activity
- *Discussion of research interests*

February 4. What Do I Write About?
How to turn your interests into a research paper


Assignment Due on Sakai Feb 2
- *Identify your topic and write one page in which you explain what you’re going to study, what questions interest you, and how you might answer those questions*
- *Visit a learning center, learn how it works, and set up a tutoring schedule* [http://lrc.rutgers.edu/contact.shtml](http://lrc.rutgers.edu/contact.shtml)

In Class Activity
- *Team Review: research topics*
February 11. Methods and Research Design 101
How to design research, what is data and where do you get it, and why we will not use any human subjects in our research


Assignment Due on Sakai Feb 9
• Bring a draft bibliography to class that identifies the main literature you will use in your paper. Follow Chicago Style format.

In Class Activity
• Produce a draft research design
• Team Review: In class research designs

February 18. Literature Review 101
What is the literature, where and how do you find it, and how do you review it?
http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/

Assignment Due on Sakai Feb 16
• Revise your in-class research design and produce a final draft for review

In Class Activity
• Team Review: research designs
• Discuss literature reviews

February 25. The Art of Research

No meeting this week. Conduct research

March 3. Research

Assignment Due on Sakai March 1
• Literature Review

In Class Activity
• Team Review: Literature Review
March 10. Research

Assignment Due on Sakai March 8
• Paper outline and 2-page summary of findings

In Class Activity
• Team Review: Outlines and research findings

March 17. SPRING BREAK

What a great time to be writing!

March 24. Project Work

Assignment Due on Sakai March 22
• Draft Paper

In Class Activity
• Team Review: Draft Papers

March 31. Paper Revisions

Assignment Due March 29
• One page written review of your research partner’s draft paper

In Class Activity
• Team Review: Draft Comments
April 7. That Extra 10%

How to polish your paper

Assignment Due on Sakai April 5
• Submit your second draft on Sakai

In Class Activity
• Team Review: review second drafts

April 14. Presentation 101

Assignment Due on Sakai April 12
• One page written review of your research partner’s draft

In Class Activity
• Team Review: final drafts
• Outline presentations

April 21. Prepare Presentation

Editing and polishing your paper and delivering the presentation

Assignment Due on Sakai April 19
• Draft 10 minute presentation in PowerPoint or other presentation software with written text

In Class Activity
• Team Review: Presentations
May 5. In Class Presentation Run Through

Your presentation should be in its final form. From this point on, you’ll polish your delivery and tweak slides.

Assignment Due in Class (no late papers or presentations)
• Final Paper
• Presentation

In Class Activity
• Team Review: Presentation

May 7. Final Presentations

Oral presentations (presentation times determined by lottery)