Objective

Despite the denigration of theory in favour of practice in the planning profession, the adopted theoretical lens is singularly important, if insidious. We will cover a large number of theories and apply them to situations planners face. We examine their strengths, weaknesses and limitations of these theories along with the distortions they project onto the world. In this course, we are not really concerned with what constitutes a theory or a body of knowledge, but how the accepted body of knowledge can be brought to bear on planning questions. And how planning questions can advance those bodies of knowledge. To this end we will consider classic readings from multiple fields such as philosophy, political science, sociology, economics and others.

Student Responsibilities

Being a required course for Ph.D. Planning program, this course will be move quickly to cover a lot of ground. You are expected to read and digest large number of classic readings and talk about them intelligently in class. There is a significant workload in this class and you are expected to budget your time accordingly.

By virtue of being a small class, this class will be structured exclusively as a seminar. This essentially means that there are no lectures, only discussions that draw upon the readings of the week, the interests of the participants and their experiences.

Each class is divided into two parts. The first part is about discussing the assigned readings for the week. The second part is a student led discussion of a paper/chapter of their own choosing.

Each student is responsible at least core of the assigned readings each week. During weeks, where large volume of reading is assigned, strategy of dividing up the readings (with overlap) is appropriate. However, each student is responsible for getting the gist of all the readings from the reading responses (see below) and/or other resources.

You are to provide a response to the readings every week, except two of your own choosing. This summary is due by Monday morning (9 AM). These are posted on the Forums under topics for each week on the Sakai website. The responses are relatively polished short articles (~ 1,000 words), complete with references. The responses should be an argument that you put forward in light of the readings assigned for the week, summarising the author’s views, contesting them, putting them in the context of one another and in general engaging critically with the material. The references are formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style.

For the student led discussion, a lead will be appointed for each week on a rotating basis. There are a number of other topics that are appropriate for planning theory that could not be included in the assigned readings for the lack of time. They include, but not limited to, Organisational decision.
making, Bureaucracy, Collective action, Marxist critiques and Modernity and Post-modernity. The leader will announce the paper that they are discussing for the following week in class, and distribute it, if necessary. The paper is a theoretical paper from any field that is relevant to planning and may or may not be related to the week’s topic. While the rest of the students are not expected to read the paper in detail, they should engage with the material presented by the lead in the seminar.

Every student is expected to come prepared for the class, to ask pointed questions for clarification as well as for discussion that results in synthesis of material. As you will see the readings for each week are extensive. Despite this, we barely scratch the surface of various debates.

This format of seminar organisation is subject to tweaking. You are expected to contribute to the structure of the organisation, by suggesting changes, strengthening what works, modifying what does not, throughout the semester. It is your class.

A key skill to develop to negotiate this course, is to read effectively large volumes of literature to grasp main ideas. You will find that readings assigned for each week are both voluminous and dense. I strongly urge you to meet outside the class and discuss the readings. Research is not a solitary pursuit, but an ongoing conversation with fellow scholars.

By the end of the semester, you should have an annotated bibliography that you could use for your planning theory portion of the comprehensive examination. You should be able to defend and justify why this bibliography is suitable for the research questions you are interested in.

My calendar is available at http://nikhilkaza.youcanbook.me. You can schedule a meeting at a time that is open and convenient to both, directly on the website.

All email concerning the class to me should have ‘PLAN 805’ in the subject line for easy filtering. Or better yet, use the Sakai messaging tool.

COVID-19 Pandemic Contingencies

In the event that the class is no longer feasible to be held in person, we will conduct the seminar over zoom https://tinyurl.com/plan805-fall21.

While we are still in the midst of a global pandemic, all students are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times in our classroom, regardless of vaccination status. We will re-evaluate this policy at appropriate junctures.

I strongly urge you to get vaccinated, if you are not already.

In the event of my unavoidable absence due to travel and/or sickness, alternative arrangements will be discussed in class.

Grading and Assignments

Grading will be based on in class participation (30%), weekly responses (30%) an annotated bibliography (10%) and a well argued paper (30%).

Each week, you are expected to write a short critical summary (no more than 2 pgs) of the materials that are assigned to you. These should be posted on the forum on Sakai by Monday morning.

A well-crafted paper that applies the concepts you have learned during the course of the semester, is due at the end of the semester. This paper is of length and quality of a journal article. You are welcome to choose a topic, a question that interests you and examine it critically and bring to
bear arguments and concepts that clarify (or muddle) positions. You will introduce your topic to
the class by Oct 5. We will discuss a draft of these papers on Nov 9 and critique them. Chicago
Manual of Style will be the style guide for the paper, including references. Final papers are due
COB on Dec 3.

Concurrently, you will also develop an annotated bibliography. A draft of the annotated bibli-
ography is due on Oct 29. You are expected to develop this annotated bibliography within a
bibliography software, such as Zotero, EndNote, BibTeX, Mendeley and RefWorks. You may as
well develop good academic habits now. Final annotated bibliography, which will serve as a starting
point for your comprehensive exam reading list, is also due COB on Dec 3.

Speaking of academic habits, Mark Twain once said, “. . . substantially all ideas are second-hand,
consciously and unconsciously drawn from a million outside sources, and daily used by the garnerer
with a pride and satisfaction born of the superstition that he originated them . . . .” However, as
academics we deal in the currency of ideas. While you may appropriate and build on others’ ideas,
please make every effort to give their progenitor, a small satisfaction of recognition.

Textbooks and Readings

Many of the book chapters and articles are linked in the Sakai website. Books that are required to
be purchased/acquired individually are marked with an (∗). Recommended, though not required
books are marked with a (∗∗). It is not necessary for everyone to purchase all the required books.
You may also use communal strategies that planners advocate in analogous situations. I expect
that you will organise yourself collectively.

Schedule (Subject to revision)

Aug 24th

Introduction and Preliminaries
What is planning? Who is it for? How is it justified? Who does it? Who should plan?

• Susan S. Fainstein and James DeFilippis, editors. Readings in Planning Theory. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester, West Sussex, UK, fourth edition, January 2016 (Chapter 1)
• M. Gunder and J. Hillier. Planning in Ten Words or Less. Ashgate, Aldershot, UK, July 2009 (chapter 1)

Aug 31st

Recap of material from PLAN 704
What should be central questions of planning and how should we theorise about them? How
should we teach them? You will be given access to the syllabus and Sakai site for PLAN 704 and you will pick and choose the material. This will help students who have not taken the class before. I will not lead the class, but you will collectively work through the material.
Sep 7th

Planning Histories
How do we conceptualise and construct the field of planning? You will need to organise amongst yourselves to split different chapters in Krueckeberg and Sandercock. Each student should read at least two chapters from each book and the class a whole should cover all the material.


Sep 14th

Theory, Theories, Evidence, and Competing Explanations
What is a theory? What counts as a right explanation? Who decides? What is the nature of evidence?

- John McCumber. America’s Hidden Philosophy, [https://aeon.co/essays/how-cold-war-philosophy-permeates-us-society-to-this-day](https://aeon.co/essays/how-cold-war-philosophy-permeates-us-society-to-this-day)

Sep 21st

Domain of Planning Theory
What positive and normative aspects should the theory of planning cover?

Sep 28th

**Plans & Planners**

Who plans? What are plans? What do planners do?


Oct 5th

**Plans & Planners (contd.)**

Who plans? What are plans? What do planners do?


Oct 12th

**Property Rights & Planning**

Why are planning and property rights so intimately intertwined?

Oct 19th                      Week 9

Political Justice

• Steven Lukes. *The Curious Enlightenment of Professor Caritat*. Verso, November 1996 (**)
• Leif Wenar. What We Owe to Distant Others. *Politics, Philosophy & Economics*, 2(3):283–304, October 2003

Oct 26th                      Week 10

Political Justice (contd.)

• Susan S. Fainstein. *The Just City*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1 edition, July 2011 ( Chapters 1 & 2) (**)

Nov 2nd                      Week 11

Institutions & Organisations

• John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, March 2007 (Chapters 1, 2&3) (*)

Nov 9th                      Week 12

Power

Nov 16th  Week 13  

Multiple Rationalities  


Nov 23rd  Week 14  

Communicative Planning  


Nov 30th  Week 15  

Paper Presentations