

**URBS 680: SENIOR SEMINAR (4 credits)**

Urban Studies Program  
San Francisco State University

**Professor Ayse Pamuk**Spring 2006

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Tuesdays 4:10-6:55pm, BUS 116  
Office hours: TTh 3-4pm and by appt.  
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Amy Cohen, Guest instructor, [acohen@liscnet.org](mailto:acohen@liscnet.org)  
Alexander Rice, Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA): [alrice22@yahoo.com](mailto:alrice22@yahoo.com)

**Course Description**

The Urban Studies Senior Seminar (URBS 680) is a *practicum* in urban planning and policy that is the required capstone course for graduating URBS majors. The course is open to seniors in Urban Studies only after completing sufficient URBS core requirements. The course this spring will consist of 10-11 projects (to accommodate 33 students) in which students act as consulting teams to real-world clients in the external community. The students will have an opportunity to select from a wide range of projects identified through an RFP process prior to the beginning of the semester. The class meets in a workshop format, features practitioners from the community as guest speakers, and incorporates hands-on class exercises with practice-oriented readings.

The course is designed to teach students to solve urban planning and policy problems by combining theory, methods, substantive knowledge, and skills in the context of a client-serving project. Students have an opportunity to practice working in a team and prepare a written professional report. The students also have an opportunity to present their findings to a professional jury including the clients and URBS faculty at the end of the semester in order to learn how to deliver a professional report.

URBS 680 is a community service learning (CSL) designated course. This designation provides a procedure for recording the number of hours served each semester on student's Official Transcripts. The benefits of having the hours recorded is tremendous since it helps SFSU students further with future employers or admission to graduate programs.

An innovative aspect of this particular spring 2006 offering of the Senior Seminar is the pilot partnership with Bay Area LISC. LISC is a national nonprofit intermediary organization which was established in 1980. Headquartered in New York City, there are 33 regional LISC offices nationwide, a rural program, and several national programs. Bay Area LISC (<http://www.bayarealisc.org/>) was established in 1981 and provides financing, training and a range of technical assistance to community development organizations in San Francisco, Oakland, Richmond and San Jose. It is explicitly LISC's goal to develop partnerships that assist community development organizations and create pathways for students to learn about and potentially enter the field of community development.

Amy Cohen, Program officer at LISC, will work with half of the student project teams in URBS 680 as they develop their scope of work, develop research designs, and complete their projects. She will be available to help student teams implement their plans. She will meet with her share of student teams working on projects (during class time) each week and help students with their projects. She will evaluate and give feedback to half of the student project teams in the class throughout the semester. The Graduate Teaching Assistant will be available to give feedback to all students and assist the instructors throughout the semester.

### **Student Learning Objectives**

Students who successfully complete the requirements of this course should, at the end of the semester, be able to:

- Apply **theory** (e.g., urban theory) learned through core and disciplinary URBS courses in solving urban planning or policy problems;
- Apply **methods** (e.g., research methods, data analysis, policy analysis) learned through core URBS courses in solving urban planning or policy problems;
- Apply substantive area **knowledge** (e.g., housing, land use, law, health, poverty, sustainability) gained through elective URBS courses in solving urban planning or policy problems;
- Apply **skills** (e.g., web-page construction, PowerPoint presentation, SPSS, GIS, spreadsheets, collaborative team work) learned through URBS courses in solving urban planning and policy problems;
- Combine theory, methods, substantive area knowledge and skills in the context of client-serving projects in the external community;
- Work effectively in a team;
- Communicate findings in the form of a written and oral professional report;

### **Course Prerequisites and Requirements**

The course requires the following:

- ✓ Willingness and commitment to work on real-world client projects;
- ✓ Professionalism in interacting with clients and continuing the tradition of productive exchange between the University and the community;
- ✓ Reliability and timeliness in delivering products to clients, to team members, and to the instructors by the due dates; and,
- ✓ Collaborative work in teams of 3-4 in and outside of the classroom.

This course requires a substantial amount of initiative to be taken by students and in synthesizing knowledge gained as an URBS major. Therefore, students must carefully examine their time commitments for Spring 2006 with their advisors before enrolling in this course. **Advisor approval is required to enroll in URBS 680.**

## **Team Approach**

The entire semester will be focused on producing high quality **professional reports for external clients** by student teams. Presentation of the work to the clients will involve an oral presentation on May 2, and a written report delivered on May 23. In addition, there are several written assignments throughout the semester to help students develop the final products (see dates below). Clients may also require meetings and progress reports throughout the semester as needed.

Students will have an opportunity to work in **teams of 3 or 4** introducing them to the challenges and strengths of team approach to real-world problems. At the end of the semester each student will have an opportunity to assess the nature of their approach (in a one-page individual essay) to the problem as a team and reflect on how they might approach a similar problem in the future. Students will also be asked to submit a one-page individual essay describing the effectiveness of their teamwork throughout the semester.

The team formation process will take into account student preferences. Following the presentation of projects in class on Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> and Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> by the clients, each student will have an opportunity to express his/her preference as it relates to his/her career goals and aspirations. We will review student preferences, form teams, and confirm team membership by the third week.

Teams are responsible in developing a scope-of-work in consultation with each client and with the instructors by Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>. This is an important milestone established to ensure the timely completion of subsequent work. Each team will also do some background research about the client's problem and develop a framework in approaching the particular type of problem at hand. Through this process, students will learn to approach new problems and how to best solve them for their future clients.

## **Readings**

The following books will be available at the SFSU Bookstore. All of the articles will be on e-reserve.

### **Recommended books**

Bardach, Eugene (2005). *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Doyle, Michael and Straus, David (1993) *How To Make Meetings Work* New York: Berkley Books.

Iacofano, Daniel (2001) *Meeting of the Minds: A Guide to Successful Meeting Facilitation*, Publisher: MIG Communications, Berkeley.

## **Grading**

Timely completion of assignments	10%
Preliminary work schedule (2/21)	
Scope of Work (2/28)	
Brief background/issue paper (3/14)	
PPT presentation of results-to-date (4/11)	10%
PPT Presentation to jury (5/2)	15%
Final Report (5/23)	40%
Self-evaluation of senior seminar experience & evaluation of team effectiveness (5/23)	10%
Class participation	15%
Total	100%

## Spring 2006 Projects and Clients for Student Consideration

Spring 2006 Senior Seminar students will consider the following fifteen projects from twelve organizations for selection. A project descriptions handout will be distributed on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Students should review each project prior to hearing presentations by “clients” on Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> or Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> (see schedule on page 7).

- 1. Client: Bay Area LISC** (3 projects)
  - a) Bed Bug Analysis project
  - b) GreenLink project
  - c) Commercial revitalization projectWeb site: <http://www.bayarealisc.org/>  
Contacts: (a) Cathy Craig, Senior program officer, [ccraig@liscnet.org](mailto:ccraig@liscnet.org); (b) Clare Bressani Tanko, Program officer, [ctanko@lisc.org](mailto:ctanko@lisc.org); (c) Desiree Sideroff, [DSideroff@liscnet.org](mailto:DSideroff@liscnet.org)
  
- 2. Client: Asian Neighborhood Design  
Community Planning Program**  
**Project:** Columbus Avenue Corridor Study  
Website: <http://www.andnet.org/>  
Contacts: Peter Cohen, [pcohen@andnet.org](mailto:pcohen@andnet.org) and Ka Man C. Chan, [cchan@andnet.org](mailto:cchan@andnet.org)
  
- 3. Client: Western SOMA Citizen’s Planning Task Force** (2 projects)
  - a. Land use analysis around existing Residential Enclave Zoning Districts (REDs)
  - b. Land use and zoning analysis along Folsom StreetWebsite: [http://www.sfgov.org/site/planning\\_index.asp?id=24735](http://www.sfgov.org/site/planning_index.asp?id=24735)  
Contact:: Paul Lord, Senior planner, San Francisco Planning Dept. designated appointee to the Task Force. [Paul.lord@sfgov.org](mailto:Paul.lord@sfgov.org)
  
- 4. Client: The City of San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Greening  
Project: San Francisco Streetscape Maintenance Program**  
Website: [http://www.sfgov.org/site/mayor\\_page.asp?id=33827](http://www.sfgov.org/site/mayor_page.asp?id=33827)  
Contacts: Marshall Foster and Leah Cohen [leah.cohen@sfgov.org](mailto:leah.cohen@sfgov.org)
  
- 5. Client: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Region IX  
Office of Community Planning and Development**  
**Project:** Analysis of Continuums of Care SuperNOFA for Northern California, Arizona and Nevada in 2005  
Website: <http://www.hud.gov/>  
Contact:: Karna Wong, Consolidated Planning Specialist, [Karna\\_L.\\_Wong@hud.gov](mailto:Karna_L._Wong@hud.gov)
  
- 6. Client: MKTHINK**  
**Project:** Dwelling well on campus: SFSU Student wellness and housing study  
Website: <http://www.mkthink.com/>  
Contact: Art Taylor, Senior associate, [taylor@mkthink.com](mailto:taylor@mkthink.com)

- 7. Client: Resources for Community Development (RCD)**  
**Project:** Stanley apartments and International apartments study  
Website: <http://www.rcdev.org/>  
Contacts: Nicole Boucher, [nboucher@rcdev.org](mailto:nboucher@rcdev.org) and Yueyi Huang, [yhuang@rcdev.org](mailto:yhuang@rcdev.org)
- 8. Client: San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency**  
**Project: Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP) project**  
Website: <http://www.sfmta.com>  
Contact: Frank Markowitz, Pedestrian Program Manager, [Frank.markowitz@sfmta.com](mailto:Frank.markowitz@sfmta.com)
- 9. Client: ASIAN Inc.**  
**Project:** Mixed-use and infill development in Western San Francisco neighborhoods  
Web site: <http://www.asianinc.org/>  
Contact: Michael Chan, Board President, [macppnec@yahoo.com](mailto:macppnec@yahoo.com)
- 10. Client: City of Berkeley, Dept. of Planning and Development & Dept. of Human Services**  
**Project:** Assessing social service needs in downtown Berkeley: Perceptions, patterns of behavior, and an inventory of existing services  
Web site:  
Contact: Matt Taecker ([MTaecker@ci.berkeley.ca.us](mailto:MTaecker@ci.berkeley.ca.us)), and Mary Ager ([MAger@ci.berkeley.ca.us](mailto:MAger@ci.berkeley.ca.us))
- 11. Client: San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency**  
**Project:** Bicycle Access on Muni Light Rail Vehicles  
Website: [www.bicycle.sfgov.org](http://www.bicycle.sfgov.org)  
Contact: Oliver J. Gajda Assistant Bicycle Program Manager ([oliver.gajda@sfmta.com](mailto:oliver.gajda@sfmta.com))
- 12. Client: City of San Francisco Park and Recreation Dept.**  
**Project: Japanese Tea Garden Visitor Survey/Needs Assessment**  
Website:  
Contact: Kathleen Diohep, Property Manager, [kathleen.diohep@sfgov.org](mailto:kathleen.diohep@sfgov.org)

## Course Outline

### Week 1

1/31 **Introduction to course and classmates.** Student expectations from class. Career goals and aspirations as graduating URBS majors. Examples from previous senior seminar classes.

Handouts: 1) Syllabus; 2) Project Descriptions

### Client presentations

5:10-5:30 **City of San Francisco Park and Recreation Dept.**  
Kathleen Diohep

5:30-5:50 **Bay Area LISC**, Cathy Craig

5:50-6:10 **Bay Area LISC**, Clare Bressani Tanko

6:10-6:25 **San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency**, Frank Markowitz, Pedestrian Program Manager

### Week 2

2/7 **In-class presentation of projects by clients.** Review web sites of clients and project descriptions handout from last week before this class meeting.

4:10-4:25 **Bay Area LISC**, Desiree Sideroff

4:25-4:40 **U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Region IX Office of Community Planning and Development**, Karna Wong

4:40-4:55 **Asian Neighborhood Design**, Peter Cohen and Ka Man C. Chan

4:55-5:10 **MKTHINK**, Art Taylor

5:10-5:25 **San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency**, Oliver J. Gajda, Assistant Bicycle Program Manager

5:25-5:40 **Asian Inc**, Michael Chan

5:40-5:55 **City of Berkeley, Department of Planning and Development & Dept. of Human Services**, Mary Ager


5:55-6:10 **Western SOMA Citizen's Planning Task Force**, Paul Lord

6:10-6:25 **Resources for Community Development**, Nicole Boucher, and Yueyi Huang

6:25-6:50 **The City of San Francisco Mayor's Office of Greening**, Marshall Foster and Leah Cohen

Week 3

2/14 **Finalizing teams. How to develop a scope of work for your client**

 One page write-up due on project preferences (first, second, and third choices) and how it relates to your career goals and aspirations. (due on 2/9 via email to pamuk@sfsu.edu). Teams will convene, will designate a team communications director, and start scheduling first meeting with clients and start working on the project.

Guest speaker: **Joanne Brion**, Principal, Brion & Associates.

Suggested Readings


- “A Practical Guide to the Selection, Care, and Feeding of the Consultant” The Planning Center, 1999.

Handout: Preparing a scope of work

Handout: Clients, projects, and teams spreadsheet.

Week 4

2/21 **Developing a scope of work for your client**

 Preliminary work schedule due.

Handouts: 1) Working with clients and teams; 2) Generic dimensions in working with clients

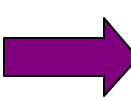
Week 5

2/28 **Holding Productive Meetings, Meeting Facilitation Techniques, Methods of Generating Ideas, Problem-Solving Strategies**

**Amy Cohen**, Bay Area LISC (4:10-6pm)

Suggested Readings

- Iacofano, Management Team Members, pp. 34-37.
- Doyle & Straus (1993) “Chapter 16: Solving Problems in Groups: The Tools” pp. 212-255).
- Doyle & Straus (1993) “Chapter 1: Why Meetings are Important?” pp. 3-18; “Chapter 2: What Goes Wrong at Meetings?” pp.19-37; Chapter 10: How to Plan your Meeting” pp. 156-158; Chapter 15: How to Put it All Together: The Agenda” pp. 201-211).
- Iacofano, Group Dynamics, pp. 67-74.

 Team scope of work (signed & approved by client) due. Be prepared to discuss your team scope of work with a one page handout (bring enough copies to share with classmates).

Week 6

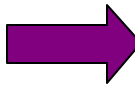
3/7 **How to prepare background reports to contextualize your client's problem**

Suggested Readings

- Bardach (2005) "Smart (Best) Practices" Research: Understanding and Making Use of What Look like Good Ideas from Somewhere Else" pp. 91-105.
- Bardach (2005) "Assembling Evidence" pp. 61-88.

Week 7

3/14 **Workshop on client projects-Discussion: Use of background information in solving your client's problem.**



Team background reports due. Be prepared to discuss your report in class with a one page bullet list as a handout. (4-5pm)

Week 8

3/21 **Preparing Presentation Graphics in PowerPoint**

How to develop an effective oral presentation strategy including using Power Point slides in the BSS computer lab HSS 380 (4-4:50pm).

Suggested Readings

- Doyle & Straus (1993) "Chapter 17: How to Make a Presentation" pp. 256-268).
- Iacofano, Closure, 98-106.

Week 9

3/28 **Workshop on client projects—Discussion: Implementation of the work plan.**

Be prepared to discuss any challenges and issues you have encountered for collective problem-solving in the classroom. Also be prepared to discuss your preliminary findings, presentation, and report production strategy.

Handout: April 11 & May 2 presentation schedule

Week 10

4/4 **No class-** Spring Break

Week 11



4/11 **PowerPoint Presentation of results to date (dry run)**

Week 12

4/18 no class meeting - instead attend *Alumni Panel Discussion* organized by the Urban Studies Program (tba)

Week 12

4/25 **Polishing PowerPoint presentation**

BSS Computer lab HSS 380 (4-4:50pm)

Week 14

5/2 **Presentation to a jury** of invited professionals and URBS faculty for evaluation -- practice in communicating results to professionals. This is an excellent opportunity to learn from our guests' comments.

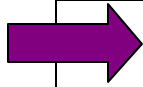
Week 15

5/9 Using presentation feedback to revise written report. Synthesis of what we learned from the presentations.

Week 16

5/16 No class session--individual meetings with students about their reports.

**Senior Seminar class and Graduation Party! (Friday, May 19 6pm).**



**Final report due:** May 23. Please provide 3 copies. I will forward one of the copies to your client, and keep 1 copy on file in the Urban Studies Program Office. Keep a fourth copy for yourself.