

Mondays 4:10-7:00pm, HSS 156

Office hours: MWF 1:00-2:00pm and by appt.

Advance sign-up sheet for office hours on my door, HSS 136

Tel: (415) 338-7045

Email: pamuk@sfsu.edu

### **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 consists of 6-8 projects in which students act as consulting teams to real-world clients in the external community. The students 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 and features practitioners from the community as guest speakers.

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.

### **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 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 instructor 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 2002 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 April 29, and a written report delivered on May 20th. 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.

The team formation process will take into account student preferences. Following the presentation of projects in class on Feb. 4th by the clients, each student will have an opportunity to express his/her preference as it relates to his/her career goals and aspirations. I 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 me by Feb. 25th. 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.

### **Grading**

Timely completion of assignments	10%
Preliminary work schedule (2/18)	
Scope of Work (2/25)	
Brief background/issue paper (3/11)	
One page team progress report (4/8)	
Presentation to jury (4/29)	15%
Final Report (5/20)	60%
Class participation	15%
Total	100%

## Spring 2002 Projects and Clients

Spring 2002 Senior Seminar students will work on the following projects:

- Project: “Establishing Guidelines & Framework for Community Planning in SOMA”  
Client: South of Market Community Action Network & South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition (SOMAD)  
Contact: Quintin Mecke, quintin3@earthlink.net
- Project: “Feasibility of converting Heritage Homes from rental to a limited equity coop”  
Client: Geneva Valley Development Corporation (GVDC)  
Contact: Linda Hallen Wohlrabe, vgvdc@aol.com
- Project: “The Role of the State of California in Promoting Smart Growth”  
Client: Urban Land Institute California Smart Growth Initiative  
Contact: Gary Binger, garybinger@yahoo.com
- Project: “Promoting Social Equity in Low-Income Neighborhoods”  
Client: Social Equity Caucus (Urban Habitat & Policy Link)  
Contacts: Juliet Ellis (Urban Habitat), Victor Rubin (Policy Link)
- Project: “Understanding how “informal” economic variables impact the small business community in the Mission District”  
Client: Mission Economic Development Association (MEDA);  
Contact: Andrew Murphy, amurphy@medasf.org  
Web site: <http://www.medasf.org/>
- Project: “Developing a Community Profile for the Tenderloin”  
Client: Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation  
Contact: Kathleen Mullin, kmullin@tndc.org

## Course Outline

### Week 1

- 1/28 **Introduction to course and classmates.** Student expectations from class. Career goals and aspirations as graduating URBS majors. Examples from previous senior seminar classes. What have you learned from your internship experience that is applicable in this class? An example of a client-oriented project just completed for the San Francisco Head Start Program by Ayse Pamuk, et.al.

### Week 2

2/4 **In-class presentation of projects by clients.**

- “Establishing Guidelines & Framework for Community Planning in SOMA” South of Market Community Action Network & South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition (SOMAD), Quintin Mecke (4-4:30pm)
- “Feasibility of converting Heritage Homes from rental to a limited equity coop” Geneva Valley Development Corporation (GVDC), Linda Hallen Wohlrabe (4:30-5pm)
- “The Role of the State of California in Promoting Smart Growth” Urban Land Institute California Smart Growth Initiative, Gary Binger (5-5:30pm)
- “Promoting Social Equity in Low-Income Neighborhoods” Social Equity Caucus, Juliet Ellis (Urban Habitat), Victor Rubin (Policy Link) (5:30-6pm)
- “Understanding how “informal” economic variables impact the small business community in the Mission District” Mission Economic Development Association (MEDA), Andrew Murphy (6-6:30pm)
- “Developing a Community Profile for the Tenderloin” Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation, Kathleen Mullin (6:30-7pm)


### Week 3

2/11 **Finalizing teams. How to Prepare Scope of Work and Background documents—An Introduction.**




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 2/8 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.

Week 4

2/18 **How to develop a scope of work for your client.** Guest speaker(s)  
 Preliminary work schedule due.


Week 5

2/25 **Workshop on client projects—Discussion: Approach to each client's problem and peer review of scope of work.** How to develop a background section of your report.  
 Team scope of work (signed & approved by client) due. Be prepared to discuss your team scope of work with a one page handout.

Week 6

3/4 **No class session**—work on team background report.

Week 7

3/11 **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.

Week 8

3/18 **Workshop on client projects—Discussion: Implementation of the work plan.**  
Start scheduling meetings in the community related to completing your work as appropriate.


Week 9

3/25 **No class**- Spring Break

Week 10

4/1 **No class**-Cesar Chavez Day Holiday

Week 11

4/8 **Workshop on client projects-Discussion: Research findings and progress reports**  
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.  
 One-page team progress report due.

Week 12

4/15 **Panel on Career Options with Urban Studies Alumni**

Week 13

4/22 **Preparing Presentation Graphics in PowerPoint**  
How to develop an effective oral presentation strategy including using Power Point slides in the PSIRUS lab.

4/25 *Alumni Panel Discussion* organized by the Urban Studies Program (TBA—mark your calendars)

Week 14

4/29 **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 guest's comments.

Week 15

5/6 Using presentation feedback to revise written report. Synthesis of what we learned from the presentations.

Week 16

5/13 No class session--individual meetings with students about their reports.

**Senior Seminar class and Graduation Party! (TBA).**



**Final report due:** May 20. Please provide 2 copies. I will forward one of the copies to your client.