

Tuesdays 4:10-7:00pm, HSS 201

Office hours: Tuesdays 1:30-2:30pm & Thursdays 10-10:45am by appt.

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### **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 consists of 5-6 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, 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 now also 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 will help SFSU students further with future employers or admission to graduate programs.

### **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 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 2005 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 3, and a written report delivered on May 24. 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 Feb. 8th 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 the instructor by March 1st. 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 (2/22)	
Scope of Work (3/1)	
Brief background/issue paper (3/15)	
PPT presentation of results-to-date (4/12)	10%
PPT Presentation to jury (5/3)	15%
Final Report (5/24)	40%
Self-evaluation of senior seminar experience & evaluation of team effectiveness (5/24)	10%
Class participation	15%
Total	100%

## Spring 2005 Projects and Clients for Student Consideration

Spring 2005 Senior Seminar students will consider the following ten projects from eight organizations for selection. A project descriptions handout will be distributed on Feb. 1. Students should review each project prior to hearing presentations by “clients” on Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>.

1. San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI) Travel Delay Analysis  
**Client: MUNI Service Planning**  
Web site: <http://www.sfmuni.com>  
Contact: Steve Patrnick, [Steve.Patrnick@sfmta.com](mailto:Steve.Patrnick@sfmta.com)
2. Transportation for a Livable City  
**Client: Transportation for a Livable City** (2 projects)
  - a) Complete Streets Urban Design Analysis
  - b) Residential Parking & Traffic Congestion StudyWeb site: <http://www.livablecity.org>  
Contact: Jeremy Nelson, [Jeremy@livablecity.org](mailto:Jeremy@livablecity.org)
3. **Client: Bay Area LISC** (2 projects)
  - b) Bayview/Third Street Market Study
  - b) Lower Polk Sidewalk Cleaning Pilot ProgramWeb site: <http://www.bayarealisc.org/>  
Contacts: Amy Cohen, [acohen@liscnet.org](mailto:acohen@liscnet.org), Desiree Sideroff, [DSideroff@liscnet.org](mailto:DSideroff@liscnet.org), Eric Brewer [EBrewer@liscnet.org](mailto:EBrewer@liscnet.org)
4. Analysis of underserved Asian American Small Businesses & Populations in San Francisco’s Sunset and Richmond neighborhoods  
**Client: Asian Inc, & Northeast community federal credit union**  
Web sites: [www.necfcu.org](http://www.necfcu.org), [www.cdfifund.gov](http://www.cdfifund.gov)  
Contact: Michael Chan, [macppnec@yahoo.com](mailto:macppnec@yahoo.com)
5. Analysis of Sweatshops in the Bay Area  
**Client: Global Exchange**  
Website: [www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/weatshops](http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/weatshops)  
Contact: Valerie Orth, [Valerie@globalexchange.org](mailto:Valerie@globalexchange.org)
6. Geography of Social Service Agencies in Alameda County  
**Client: Society of St. Vincent de Paul Alameda County**  
Website: [www.svdp-alameda.org](http://www.svdp-alameda.org)  
Contact: Rebecca Jewell, [rjewell@svdp-alameda.org](mailto:rjewell@svdp-alameda.org)
7. Food security & Urban Agriculture project  
**Client: People’s Grocery**  
Website: [www.peoplesgrocery.org](http://www.peoplesgrocery.org)  
Contact: Brahm Ahmadi, [brahm@peoplesgrocery.org](mailto:brahm@peoplesgrocery.org)
8. Economic Development Strategies for Neighborhood Commercial Districts  
**Client: Urban Solutions**  
Website: [www.urbansolutions.org](http://www.urbansolutions.org)  
Contact: Jamie Cutlip, [Jamie@urbansolutions.org](mailto:Jamie@urbansolutions.org)

## Course Outline

### Week 1

- 2/1 **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 completed in Jan. 2003 for the San Francisco Head Start Program by Ayse Pamuk *Children Under 5 Years of Age in Poverty in San Francisco, 2000.*  
<http://bss.sfsu.edu/pamuk/research/SFChildren.html>

Handouts: 1) Syllabus; 2) Project Descriptions

### Week 2

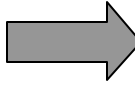
- 2/8 **In-class presentation of projects by clients.** Review web sites of clients and project descriptions handout from last week before this class meeting.

- 4:10-4:30 **Steve Patrnik, San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI)**  
Travel delay analysis
- 4:30-4:50 **Valerie Orth, Global Exchange**  
Analysis of Sweatshops in the Bay Area
- 4:50-5:10 **Amy Cohen, Desiree Sideroff, Eric Brewer, Bay Area LISC**  
Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (2 projects)  
1. Bayview/Third Street Market Study  
2. Lower Polk Sidewalk Cleaning Pilot Program
- 5:10-5:30 **Michael Chan, Asian Inc. & NECFCU**  
Analysis of underserved Asian American Small Businesses & Populations in San Francisco's Sunset and Richmond neighborhoods
- 5:30-5:50 **Jeremy Nelson, Transportation for a Livable City**  
(2 projects)  
1. Complete Street Urban Design Analysis  
2. Residential Parking & Traffic Congestion Study
- 5:50-6:10 **Rebecca Jewell, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Alameda County**  
Geography of social; service agencies in Alameda County
- 6:10-6:30 **Brahm Ahmadi, People's Grocery**  
Food security and urban agriculture in Oakland
- 6:30-6:50 **Jamie Cutlip, Urban Solutions**  
Economic Development Strategies for Neighborhood Commercial Districts

Handouts: Individual handouts brought to class by senior seminar class clients.

Week 3

2/15 **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 2/10 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.

Suggested Readings

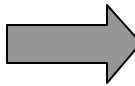
- Bardach (2005) “Smart (Best) Practices” Research: Understanding and Making Use of What Look like Good Ideas from Somewhere Else” pp. 91-105.
- Iacofano, Management Team Members, pp. 34-37.
- Doyle & Straus (1993) “Chapter 1: Why Meetings are Important?” pp. 3-18; “Chapter 2: What Goes Wrong at Meetings?” 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).

Handout: Clients, projects, and teams spreadsheet.

Week 4

2/22 **How to develop a scope of work for your client.**

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



Preliminary work schedule due.

Suggested Readings

- “A Practical Guide to the Selection, Care, and Feeding of the Consultant” The Planning Center, 1999.
- Bardach (2005) “Assembling Evidence” pp. 61-88.

Handout: Preparing a scope of work

Week 5

3/1 **Workshop on client projects—Discussion: Approach to each client’s problem and peer review of scope of work.** Working in Teams Effectively



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).

Guest speaker: **Alex Amoroso**, Regional Planner, Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)

### Suggested Reading

- Iacofano, Group Dynamics, pp. 67-74.

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

Week 6

3/8 **Holding Productive Meetings, Meeting Facilitation Techniques, Methods of Generating Ideas, Problem-Solving Strategies**

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

### Suggested Readings

- Doyle & Straus (1993) "Chapter 16: Solving Problems in Groups: The Tools" pp. 212-255).

Week 7

3/15 **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

3/22 **No class**- Spring Break

Week 9

3/29 **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 (4-6pm).

### Suggested Readings

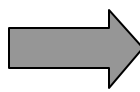
- Doyle & Straus (1993) "Chapter 17: How to Make a Presentation" pp. 256-268).
- Iacofano, Closure, 98-106.

Week 10

4/5 **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 12 & May 3 presentation schedule



Week 11

4/12 **PowerPoint Presentation of results to date**

Week 12

4/19 Attend *Alumni Panel Discussion* organized by the Urban Studies Program (5-8pm at the University Club)

Week 12

4/26 **Preparing Presentation Graphics in PowerPoint**

BSS Computer lab HSS 380 (4-6pm)

Week 14

5/3 **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.

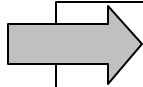
Week 15

5/10 Using presentation feedback to revise written report. Synthesis of what we learned from the presentations.

Week 16

5/17 No class session--individual meetings with students about their reports.

**Senior Seminar class and Graduation Party! (May 21 6pm).**



**Final report due:** May 24. 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 Department Office. Keep a fourth copy for yourself.