PLA4008: Planning History and Theory
Mondays 10 am-1 pm, Room 114 Avery Hall
(lecture 10-11:45, section 12-1)

Instructor: Professor Hiba Bou Akar
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This course provides a survey of key historical moments and contemporary theoretical debates that have shaped the field of urban planning. It emphasizes how the profession has been shaped simultaneously by local socio-economic, political, and spatial processes as well as transnational and global circulations of capital, commodities, services, and people. The course has four objectives. First, it introduces students to key paradigms in planning thoughts and provides insights on the struggles and complexities that have shaped the field. It focuses on how planning practices have been implemented, negotiated, transformed across cities of the Global North and Global South. Second, the course enables students an in-depth understanding of how spaces are developed, governed, lived, and contested, by foregrounding debates on spatial justice that have been central to planning practice. Third, it invites students to reflect on the role of the planner-practitioner and the ethical implications of planning interventions. Fourth, it enables students to develop their research skills and abilities to communicate ideas in writing.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Course evaluation depends on the following assignments:

1. Class Attendance and Participation, 10% of final grade
The class meets once week for three hours including a lecture and section (12-1). Class time will
be combination of lectures and discussion. Students are expected to come on time, having read
assigned readings and are expected to actively participate in class discussions. All required
readings are posted on Canvas. No required textbooks for purchase.

2. Opening Commentary Paper, 10% of final grade.
Based on a thorough reading of the assigned readings for weeks 1 and 2, you are required to write
a 500-600 words essay in which you critically reflect on your positionality as a planner-in-
training vis-à-vis these different readings. A class handout will detail more the assignment’s
requirements, due on September 24.
3. “Good Plans” examples and discussion, 5% of final grade
Choose a planning topic of interest. Look up examples of good planning process or outcome in that field. Bring it to section and discuss its merits and critiques on October 8.

4. LiPS response papers, 10% of final grade.
The Urban Planning Program offers a Tuesday afternoon (1:15- 3:00) lecture series known as Lectures in Planning Series (LiPS). These lectures are an opportunity to broaden your understanding of planning beyond course work. As a requirement of the course, the student is must attend and summarize six (6) lectures. Summaries are to be 300-400 words in length. Compile all summaries and submit to your TA by December 3.

5. Pop Quizzes, 25% of final grade
There will be several unannounced quizzes in class. The aim of the quizzes is to ensure students’ preparedness for class and engage students to critically reflect on the readings.

6. Research Project, 40% of final grade
This project asks students to pick a planning case study, explore the different dimensions of the issues at stake, and perform an in-depth analysis using texts, visuals, multi media, and interviews if possible. A handout detailing the project requirements will be distributed in class.
   - Stage 1: Proposal. Due: October 1 (5%)
   - Stage 2: Outline and Annotated bibliography. Due: November 12 (15%)
   - Stage 3: Final Research Project. Due on December 10 (20%)

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<td>Opening Commentary</td>
<td>September 24</td>
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<td>Research proposal</td>
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CLASS POLICIES

Please abide by the following class policies.

Submission Policies: Text assignments are due in hard copy at the beginning of class on the specified date, in addition to uploading a digital copy to Canvas. Papers should be well-written and typed in 12-point font, double-spaced. Please include citations and list of references. Please submit all assignments on time. We will not be able to accept late submissions.

E-communication: All students are responsible for checking their emails and course site on Canvas on a daily basis, as these our avenues of communication. During class time, please keep your phones and tablets silent and invisible.

Ethics of Scholarship: Plagiarism is a serious offense and includes falsely claiming the work of others as one’s own, using material without properly quoting and documenting its sources, academic dishonesty, papers written by someone else, not acknowledging multiple authors or collaboration on submitted work, and not declaring multiple submissions of the same work.
Class Program

The course is divided into four parts. Part I introduces a number of key theoretical planning frameworks and critiques about the goal of planning and the role of planning practitioners. Part II provides a brief survey of key historical moments that had a profound impact on the planning field, mainly modernism, colonialism, and capitalism. Part III examines various debates on planning and social justice focusing on issues of race, class, gender and climate change. In Part IV we will go back to reflect on planning and the role of planners in a global context.

Part I. Planning and Planners

Week 1 (September 10): What is Planning?

Week 2 (September 17): Theorizing the Role of Planner

Part II. Key Moments in Planning History

Week 3 (September 24): Colonial Planning

Week 4 (October 1): Planning of Modernism

Week 5 (October 8): No reading- Read for “Good Plans” and Watch in-class film

Week 6 (October 15): Planning for/against Capitalism
• David Harvey. 2007. “Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction” The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 610:1, 21-44.

Week 7 (October 22): The Dark Side of Planning

III. Planning Issues

Week 8 (October 29): Racialized Planning

Week 9 (November 5): Fall Break, no classes.

Week 10 (November 12): Class Inequality


Week 11 (November 19): Gendering Planning

Week 12 (November 26): Planning for Climate Change

Week 13 (December 3): Wars and Disasters, Migration and Refugeeeness

IV. Reflecting back on Planning and Planners

Week 14 (December 10): Right to the City, Community Participation, and Insurgency