

C&RP 749 - Developing Countries Studio

Credit: 5 Hours
Studio Hours: Tuesday, 6:30-9:00 pm
Office Hours: Tu & We 2:00-5:00 p.m. or by appointment, Brown 289C
Prerequisites: C&RP 741 or Equivalent and Approval of Instructor
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SYLLABUS

Introduction

The course has been designed to satisfy the studio requirement for the Department's Master in City and Regional Planning. The purpose of this requirement is to expose students to the full analytical and design demands of an actual, 'real world' planning problem. The problem will be sufficiently complex to require students to work in groups and to be involved in all steps of the planning process, including the definition of the problem, data collection, choice of analytical method, development of design alternatives, design decisions, and design of an implementation process. The term 'design' is used here in its generic form. While it may refer to physical design it more often refers to other aspects of project design such as project finance, administration, cost recovery, or implementation.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course the student should have demonstrated through class and lab participation, and through satisfactory completion of the studio project that he or she:

- is able to apply typical data collection and analytical techniques to a specific planning situation;
- can creatively adjust techniques to the situation of a developing country, where data and information is extremely limited;
- is able to design a planning solution sensitive to the developing countries context i.e., a solution that takes account of the severe financial limitations and human capital constraints typical of these countries, makes use of appropriate intermediate and alternative technologies, and is compatible with local and national implementation capacity;
- is able to make proposals and do the analysis for all relevant plan or project components, including its layout and technical description, design standards, finance, cost recovery, and project implementation.

The instructor specifies a planning problem adapted to the situation of a particular developing country. This may involve a housing and infrastructure project, a regional or national settlement plan, or some other urban development issue. Typically, the project will be familiar to the instructor from past work in the country. In this way it will be possible to assemble the necessary data, plans and background materials not available at the University.

The class meets for up to three hours per week for lectures, laboratories, discussions, and presentations (the focus shifting as the class progresses). In particular, the initial 2-3 weeks will focus on lectures to familiarize the class with the project and the existing national situation; during weeks 3-4 the emphasis will be on class and group discussion to analyze the problem and determine a planning approach; weeks 5-9 will emphasize lab sessions; and the final week will be used for project presentations and critique. Throughout the course additional lecture presentations will be made on theory and modeling as required

for student's project progress. For example, students may require to learn more about financial modeling, project accounting, or specific subjects of benefit cost analysis, and some of this material may be provided through lectures.

For the studio work the class will divide itself into groups of 2-4 students. Experience shows that smaller groups work better, given time constraints imposed by the quarter system and given the lack of formal organizational structure within groups. The process of forming groups is left to the students, though the instructor reserves the right to intervene in case of obvious inequities or if individuals cannot form a group.

Method of Evaluation

Course grades are assigned based on student's individual performance and based on the group project. In particular, a student's grade is made up of grades for class participation (10%), development of a project outline and terms of reference (5%), a formal project presentation (5%), the student's individual contribution to the final group project (50%), and the group grade for the project (30%). All but the last grade component are dependent on the student's individual rather than group performance. The evaluation method for each grade component is as follows:

1. Students are required to attend classes and are graded based on class and lab participation as well as their contribution to class discussions and lab ideas.
2. Each student by the end of the second week is to prepare a project outline and project terms of reference (TOR) that detail the project tasks and contributions expected from each member of the group. The terms of reference are to be written as if the group were to be hired as a consultant team and it should outline the expected planning tasks as if the TOR represented the document by which plan fulfillment is to be judged at the end of the quarter. A group may choose to prepare TORs jointly in which case the same grade will be assigned to each group member.
3. Students will make class presentations of their project progress in the 8th week of class, as outlined further in the studio assignment. Each student's presentation will be mainly on those project components for which he or she assumes principal responsibility though there could be exceptions to this rule to improve the flow and clarity of group presentations. Presentations should make use of slides, transparencies, maps and other materials that facilitate comprehension. Grading will be based on clarity, brevity and content of the presentation, and the ability to hold the attention of the audience.
4. The project contributes 80% to the final course grade. As explained above, of this 50 percentage points are based on a student's individual contribution and the remaining 30 points are based on the project grade common to the group. The former are based on the portions of the project for which the student assumes principal responsibility. Only unanimously may a group decide not to identify individual member contributions and then each member will be assigned the same grade for this course component.
5. The project and its components will be assigned grades based on the following general criteria:
 - completeness of discussion;
 - internal consistency of results;
 - competency of technical analysis;
 - innovation in plan development;
 - quality of writing and arguments;
 - ability to write non-technical;
 - quality of art work and tables.

Class Schedule

- **Week 1 Project Introduction**

The project is introduced through lectures, readings and slides. This includes a description of the existing national and urban situation, a survey of relevant policies and project issues, and an introduction to available documents, data and information sources.

Assignment: Students must familiarize themselves with the documents made available at the library.

- **Week 2 Project Outline/TOR Development**

The project issues are detailed and discussed, with the aim to provide students with sufficient information to permit development of a report outline, a workplan, and terms of reference for each student.

Assignment: Students form teams, develop a team workplan and outline for their report and produce terms of reference for each team member with a description of specific output expected from each.

- **Week 3 Workplan and TOR Presentation**

Assignment: Class presentation, discussion and instructor approval of project outline, workschedule and TORs.

- **Weeks 4-7: Preliminary Project Design**

The instructor meets weekly with the entire class for 1-2 hours of lecture and discussions, and with each group for a minimum of 1/2 hour of lab time. The weekly meetings with each group are designed to assure steady work progress and are mandatory.

Assignments: Each group produces a written Project Preliminary Report by the 7th week and makes a class presentation on this report in that week. The instructor reads the report and comments on it and the class presentation by the beginning of the 8th week. The comments should be taken into account in producing the Project Final Report.

- **Week 8-10: Final Project Design**

The instructor meets with the entire class for one hour of lecture and discussion per week and with individual groups as needed.

Assignments: Each group prepares its Project Final Report and makes a class presentation on it during the 10th week of classes. The report is due on the last day of classes.