

Humphrey School of Public Affairs  
Urban and Regional Planning Program  
PA 5242 (Section 1) Environmental Planning, Policy, and Decision-making  
Fall 2017

**Time and Location:**

Tuesday and Thursday, 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM, HHH 035

**Instructor:**

Dan Milz, PhD

Visiting Assistant Professor of Environmental Planning and Civic Engagement

Office: 295D Humphrey Center

p: 616-626-5047

e: [dmilz@umn.edu](mailto:dmilz@umn.edu)

t: @dcmilz

**Office Hours:**

By Appointment Only: [Schedule Here](#)

**Course Description:**

This course is about making plans for contemporary environmental problems. It adopts the perspective that social and natural systems are linked and complex. Through readings, class discussions, and projects, you will be exposed to the wide range of strategies and tools planners and policy-makers use to mitigate environmental impacts, conserve open space, improve water quality, adapt to climate change, and to promote environmental justice, among others. We will place a strong emphasis on the application of planning skills to address ecosystem malfunction.

As the core required course in the Environmental Planning Concentration, this course is designed to be a gateway between skills acquired within Urban and Regional Planning core curriculum and technical, substantive knowledge acquired via concentration electives. The course is also appropriate for graduate level students in public policy, social and natural sciences, development practice, natural resource management, public health, design, engineering, and other related fields. Students will have an opportunity to demonstrate their comprehension of the course concepts and skills via a term paper written in five, iterative stages spaced evenly across the semester. Students will also have the opportunity to demonstrate their successful completion of the course outcomes by completing focused quizzes and/or group assignments throughout the semester.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Understand the components of effective environmental planning practice
2. Name and identify common strategies and tactics for addressing a variety of environmental problems; evaluate their appropriateness in a given geographic and/or cultural setting; and demonstrate their utility
3. classify and define analytical tools typically used by environmental planners, and demonstrate their use for diagnosing ecosystem malfunction and estimating future system states
4. Name the various theoretical perspectives that inform environmental planning practice
5. Describe the basic legal framework for environmental planning in the United States and identify the opportunities it provides and challenges it poses for environmental planning
6. Describe the role of public participation in environmental planning and evaluate its effectiveness and to understand the role of collaborative environmental governance
7. Create data visualizations (tables/graphs/images/maps) to support technical analyses; Communicate technical information in a clear and effective manner

### **Format:**

Course content is organized into a series of modules. Each module in explores one environmental problem (e.g. air quality), an illustrative case (Salt Lake City), and a planning skill or technique (e.g. Problem Identification).

### **Required Text:**

All required readings are available on the course Moodle page. Please consider the environment before printing a reading.

### **Assignments and Grading:**

You will have the opportunity, in this course, to improve your competency in three core areas: (1) critical thinking for planning, (2) technical application, and (3) professional communication. You have four different ways to illustrate your competency:

Participation	10%
Quizzes/Assignments	20%
Mid-Term Papers (x4)	45%
<i>(Problem Statement</i>	5%)
<i>(Planning Summary</i>	10%)
<i>(Solutions Summary</i>	10%)
<i>(Evaluation</i>	20%)
Final Paper & Presentation	25%

Grades for the categories and assignments above will be posted to the Moodle gradebook as soon as practically possible. It is your responsibility to regularly review your progress.

### *Submitting Assignments, Deadlines, and Extensions*

It is your responsibility to submit all assignments and complete all quizzes using the appropriate dropbox or assignment page on the course Moodle page. It is in your best interest to familiarize yourself with Moodle well in advance of the first deadline. Assignments will not be accepted from any other source (e.g. email, hardcopy, passenger pigeon, teleporter, warged into my brain by three eyed ravens, TARDIS etc.)<sup>1</sup>.

Quizzes cannot be completed late or "made up." If you miss a quiz or fail to complete a quiz, your score stands.

All other late assignments will be penalized one letter grade every twenty-fours. For example, an "A" paper submitted between within the first 24-hours after the deadline would be decreased to a "B." The grade for the same paper would be decreased to a "C" if submitted between 24 and 48 hours after the deadline, and so on.

Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis and at the instructor's discretion before an assignment is due. Asking for an extension does not guarantee one. Exceptions for late assignments will be made in the case of documented illnesses and/or family emergencies.

### *Participation*

Environmental planners are required to be engaged members of their community. Therefore, you cannot successfully complete this course without interacting with your classmates. You will have the opportunity to earn up to 4 participation points

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<sup>1</sup>I will immediately delete any email which contains an attached assignment and hard copies will be shredded.

each week (68 total). I will evaluate your participation on a weekly basis, using the following criteria:

Model (4 Points):

- You show up to class on time and prepared (assignments completed, materials ready, etc.)
- You ask questions both out of necessity and out of interest during class meetings
- You interact with classmates during in-class learning activities
- You listen to and respectfully engage other members of our learning community
- You contribute **NEW** information to discussions online and in class
- You read and respectfully reply to discussion forum posts

Engaged (3 Points)

- You show up to class, usually on time.
- You are usually prepared for class (assignments completed, materials ready, etc).
- You interact with classmates during in-class learning activities
- You listen to other members of our learning community
- You read discussion forum posts of others.

Disinterested (2 Points)

- You miss class occasionally and/or show up late frequently
- You fail to prepare adequately for class meetings
- You participate during in-class activities, but contribute on an infrequent basis
- You fail to participate during class discussions
- You fail to read and/or reply to discussion posts

Disengaged (1 Points)

- You miss class frequently and/or show up late
- You are unprepared for class meetings
- You fail to participate at all during in-class activities
- You show little attempt to achieve the course objectives

Did Not Participate (0 Points)

- You do not attend class
- You do not participate in class

Disruptive (-1)

- You are a detriment to the learning of others
- You are insulting, rude, and/or disrespectful to other members of our learning community

*Quizzes*

You will have the opportunity to complete up eight weekly "quizzes." "Quizzes" will be worth 10 points each and will come in a variety of formats (multiple choice questions, short essays, technical memos, etc.). "Quizzes" will be available on the course website after class on the dates noted on the course schedule, and you will have until the stated deadline to complete the quiz.

### *Mid Term Papers*

You will have the opportunity to conduct a review of an exemplar case of environmental planning. By the end of the third week of class, you must a case which you will then investigate over the rest of the semester. Your work will be broken into four mid-term papers of increasing length. Details for each assignment can be found on the course website:

Problem Analysis (2 pages)  
Planning Summary (4 pages)  
Solutions Summary (4 pages)  
Evaluation/Assessment (6 pages)

### *Final Paper and Presentation*

Your work will culminate in a ten-page report and presentation on your chosen case. The report and presentation will include previous work on the case and include a set of unique proposals that you develop to address the problem in your case. The paper and presentation will be due on the date of the final exam for course.

### *Paper Grading*

The mid-term and final papers will be evaluated using four criteria: planning competency, technical competency, writing/presentation proficiency, and response to the assignment. Each category will be worth 25 points each. I will evaluate your work using professional standards and will also evaluate your thoughts and arguments based on how well they are supported by the data or literature you cite.

Your work will be evaluated as either:

- (25 - 23)      Exceeding Expectations  
The document is "publication ready," requiring little to no additional revisions. It relates to ongoing course discussion, integrates course concepts, contains well supported arguments, and properly attributes other sources.
  
- (22 - 20)      Meeting Expectations  
The document requires additional revisions and minor rewrites (one or two small sections) to be publication ready. It requires moderate proofreading for grammar and spelling. It incorporates course concepts and references class discussions, but may not make or

significantly support clear connections to the course material or substantial arguments about the course material.

- (19 - 18)      Toward Expectations  
The document fulfills the minimum requirements of the assignment. It requires major revisions or rewrites to be publication ready. It may contain major organizational or stylistic shortcomings that prevent the reader from comprehending the author's arguments. It struggles to incorporate class concepts and discussion themes.
- (17 - 15)      Not Meeting Expectations  
The document must be rewritten entirely. It contains significant stylistic, grammatical, and rhetorical deficiencies. It does not relate to course concepts or discussion themes.
- (< 15)          Failed to Meet Expectations
- (0)              Failed to Submit Assignment

### **Course Policies**

#### *Student Conduct Code*

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: [Student Conduct Code](#).

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

#### *Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom*

In recognition that laptops and personal electronic devices are necessary tools for planners, personal electronic devices will be permitted in this class, but only for

professional purposes. The instructor reserves the right to rescind this policy for individuals or the entire class at any time. Recording class meetings is prohibited unless granted explicit permission by the instructor. Additional details can be found [here](#).

### *Scholastic Dishonesty*

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. If it is determined that a student has cheated, the student may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. Please see the [Student Conduct Code](#) for more information.

### *Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials*

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community.

### *Sexual Harassment*

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult [Board of Regents Policy](#).

### *Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action*

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age,

marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult [Board of Regents Policy](#).

### *Disability Accommodations*

The University of Minnesota views disability as an important aspect of diversity, and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you have, a disability in any area such as, mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact the DRC office on your campus (UM Twin Cities - 612.626.1333) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

Students with short-term disabilities, such as a broken arm, can often work with instructors to minimize classroom barriers. In situations where additional assistance is needed, students should contact the DRC as noted above.

If you are registered with the DRC and have a disability accommodation letter dated for this semester or this year, please contact your instructor early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

If you are registered with the DRC and have questions or concerns about your accommodations please contact your (access consultant/disability specialist). Additional information is available on the DRC [website](#) or [e-mail](#) with questions.

### *Mental Health and Stress Management*

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the [Student Mental Health Website](#).

### *Academic Freedom and Responsibility*

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss



relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.<sup>2</sup>

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor ([Dan Milz, PhD](#)), the Department Chair ([Ryan Allen, PhD](#)), your adviser, the associate dean of the college ([Carissa Slotterback, PhD](#)), or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost ([Rebecca Ropers-Huilman, PhD](#)).

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<sup>2</sup> \* Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students".