COURSE DESCRIPTION

**Time and Location:**
Thursdays, 02:30 PM - 05:00 PM, HHH 035

**Instructor:**
Dan Milz, PhD
Visiting Assistant Professor of Environmental Planning and Civic Engagement

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**Office Hours:**
By Appointment Only: [Schedule Here](#)

**Course Description:**
The Capstone Workshop in Urban and Regional Planning (PA 8081) is a semester-long, project course that fulfills the capstone project requirement for Masters of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) students in the Humphrey School. Students from programs in the Humphrey School that require a capstone project or professional paper are also welcome to enroll. PA 8018 is a hands-on, project-based learning course. Students, working in groups of no more than three, will have the opportunity to complete a research or planning project for a client. Students in this Capstone section are required to complete PA 5080: Capstone Preparation Workshop.

Capstone courses are the final requirement for most students in the Humphrey School. They are intended to provide students with the opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge learned within the required and elective courses. In addition to practicing your technical knowledge and skills, capstone projects provide you with the opportunity to learn professional skills like project and client management. Learning through practice, requires critical self-reflection and responding to external feedback from clients and partners.
Learning Outcomes: 
After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify and define a research/planning problem
2. Interpret data and draw conclusions to provide meaningful advice to an external client
3. Select appropriate analytical methods (or design techniques)
4. Identify and gather relevant data/information
5. Execute analyses and produce results
6. Work effectively with your team
7. Work effectively with your client/partner
8. Work effectively with the course instructor
9. Create data visualizations (tables/graphs/images/maps) to support technical analyses
10. Communicate technical information in a clear and effective manner, orally and in writing
11. Prepare and deliver a professional report or technical memo
12. Prepare a short, engaging presentation for your client and others
13. Know and practice the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Format:
The Capstone Workshop is a problem-based learning experience. In consulting parlance, the instructor will serve as “Project Director” and provide initial client introductions, internal feedback and guidance, will mediate internal/external disagreements (if necessary). Class meeting times are for your use. We will decided on an ongoing basis how best to make use of our allotted time together each week.

Project Management:
● Each team will be assigned a shared Trello board for project management.
● We will make extensive use of UMN’s managed suite of google apps for education (gmail, google calendar, hangouts, drive, docs, etc.).
● You may not share or submit interim drafts of any document you produce with the client without my authorization
● After receiving authorization, you must schedule at least one week for your client to review and comment on drafts
• You are required to provide me with weekly status reports (in writing or in person)
• You are required to schedule at least one, mid-semester check-in with the client
• You are required to provide clients with at least one week of lead time to schedule meetings
• You must retain all files, data, and analyses gathered and completed during this project.
• You must maintain project and time & activity logs throughout the semester
• Your report must include guidance on how it should be cited.

Required Text:
There is no required text. Selected readings will be made available to you on an as needed basis.

Assignments and Grading:
Your grade will be determined by the quality of your final product. I will evaluate individual contributions using peer evaluations and required project log, which requires you to log your time and activities. You will be able to use this information to track your group’s work and progress; I will use this database to evaluate your individual participation.

I will be evaluating the quality of your final report by comparing it to high-quality, professional documents. The expectations (outlined below) are based standards that reflect the highest order of professional products. My evaluation will be subjective but not arbitrary. The projects offered in this section are diverse and may lead to different products and conclusions. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to evaluate them on equal, objective terms. Moreover, my evaluation will not be about differences of “taste.” Instead, it will reflect my judgment of how well your group has successfully executed its work plan and the quality of the product you intend to deliver to the client. Using the AICP Code of Ethics as our guide, I expect that your reports will not contain any factual inaccuracies or misreport your findings in any way.

You work will be evaluated as either:

A  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.

B  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.

Reports below this line will not be forwarded to the client

C  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.

D  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.

F  Failed to Meet Expectations; Failed to Submit Assignment

I  Incomplete grades must be negotiated well in advance of the final project deadline.

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.¹

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](#)).

¹ *Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students".*
## DRAFT COURSE SCHEDULE

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<td>01/25/2018</td>
<td>Course Intro Project Overviews Project/Team Selection</td>
<td>Project/Team (In Class) Draft SOW</td>
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<td>02/01/2018</td>
<td>SOW Workshop</td>
<td>SOW Presentation Submit Final SOW for Review</td>
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<td>02/08/2018 - 02/22/2018</td>
<td>Team Meetings</td>
<td>Progress Report (02/23) Draft #1 (02/23)</td>
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<td>03/01/2018 - 03/08/2018</td>
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<td>05/03/2018</td>
<td>Team Meetings Presentations (Time and Location TBD)</td>
<td>Project Log (05/11) Time &amp; Activity Log (05/11) Final Report (05/11) Peer Review (05/11)</td>
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I have identified ten potential projects with five different clients. The projects cover a broad set of topics in order to accommodate all majors and concentrations. They are also preliminary and subject to change.

**Hennepin County**

Students will work with the Transition Age Youth Coordinator from Hennepin County to complete projects focused on “county involved youth.” The county has several programs intended to help these residents transition to adulthood. The county is interested in knowing more about its programs, their success, and the individuals who would benefit from county services. We are currently working with the county to finalize the details of three different projects:

1) **Defining Transition Age Youth in Hennepin County.** Students will complete a comprehensive demographic analysis of county involved youth in Hennepin County. Students will also complete an analysis comparing Hennepin County to similar counties in the United States. Finally, this work may be supported by qualitative character profiles of Transition Age Youths currently living in Hennepin County to document their experiences.

2) **Analysis of Existing Programming.** Students will complete an analysis of services and programming currently offered by Hennepin County. They will also develop a logic or conceptual model to identify the needs of Transition Age Youths. Students will then assess current programming and services in light of the needs identified by the modeling process. The county is interested in learning how well its current programming is performing and would like to identify opportunities for improvement that will have the biggest impact.

3) Legislative Challenges for Providing Services to Transition Age Youths.

**Resilient Communities Project and Ramsey, Minnesota**

The Resilient Communities Project (RCP) has chosen the City of Ramsey, Minnesota as its 2017–2018 Community Partner. Faculty and students from across the University have been working on projects with the City that are aligned with its strategic planning priorities. RCP and Ramsey have identified four projects for students in this capstone section:

1) **Every Voice Matters.** Ramsey is currently updating its comprehensive plan. As part of that process, the City is looking to enhance its civic engagement efforts. In particular, the City is interested in building and supporting a network of volunteers. This capstone is equal parts policy analysis and strategic planning. Students completing this capstone will complete an assessment of the City’s policies and regulations regarding volunteers and civic engagement. Additionally, they will use this
information to propose strategies for growing a network of volunteers and engaged citizens.

2) **Highway 10: Community and Regional Focal Point.** Highway 10 serves as Ramsey’s primary gateway and is the face of the city for visitors passing through to Minnesota’s Cabin Country. The City is interested in the practical steps it can take, in partnership with business owners in the area, to develop a future vision for the area that balances the needs and desires of area stakeholders. Students completing this capstone will design and host a series community engagement meetings with business owners and other key stakeholders. Student work will also include an assessment of these meetings to provide recommendations to the City.

3) **A Gathering Within: COR Redevelopment Plan.** Finally, the City of Ramsey is updating the redevelopment plan for its downtown, transit-oriented, mixed-used city center. Students working on this project will work with planners from the City to execute a slate of civic engagement activities. The purpose is to connect land use change proposals with a community engagement plan being developed in courses this fall.

**American Planning Association—Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division**

The Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division of the American Planning Association recently published a Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Report entitled: “Planners and Water." This PAS report was a in-depth look at how planners work with water resources and the challenges posed to water resources due to global climate change. We have worked with members of RIPD to develop two interrelated projects which build off this PAS report.

1) Integrated water management is, in theory, a set of practices that consider the various threats to our shared water resources. Climate change is altering the underlying ecologic context of hydrological regimes across the globe. Practical strategies for planning and managing water change from place to place, thus planners in the 21st Century are required to learn and apply practices fitted to an ecological context that is rapidly in flux. The purpose of this project is to design a national internship program via partnerships between the APA and accredited planning schools situated in region as across the United States. Students will complete a high-level review of integrated water management practices in order to set the stage for detailed analysis conducted by future interns. Students completing this capstone will interact with faculty at planning schools across the country and members of the American Planning Association.

2) The Metropolitan Council adopted its water resources policy plan two years ago. The plan supports a transition to integrated water management practices (IWRM). IWRM provides a framework for making practical changes to how we manage our water resources. The purpose of this project will be to produce a guidebook for professionals to transition to integrated water management practices in the Midwest Region. This guide will serve as a model for similar products for practitioners in other regions in the country. Students completing this capstone will research water
management practices and document success stories across the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region.

Rebecca Noecker, Ward 2 Councilmember, St. Paul, Minnesota

Commercial Vacancies in St. Paul. Councilmember Rebecca Noecker represents Ward 2 in the City of St. Paul. Councilmember Noecker is interested in the relationship between vacant commercial buildings and city policies. Students completing this capstone should expect to conduct a review of current policies regarding commercial vacancies in St. Paul, to review best practices from other cities and regions, and to conduct an assessment of commercial vacancies in St. Paul focusing on the Councilmember’s Ward specifically.

Drinking Water and Organic Farming in the Minnesota River Basin

The relationships between farming practices and water quality is well-established. However, action and positive improvements remain elusive. "Traditional" farming practices are a major source of nitrates that compromise drinking water quality in cities throughout the Minnesota River Basin. The costs associated with treating water, leaving many consumers to fend for themselves to ensure access to clean drinking water. Changes in farming practices have been shown to have positive effects on reducing nitrate run-off leading to improved water quality. This capstone will include a review of current efforts to address threats to water quality in the basin, to evaluate the policies and actions they include, and provide recommendations for basin-wide farming practices.