Introduction

“The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back. I am sure that the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas.”

--John Maynard Keynes, 1936

“Society’s course will be changed only by a change in ideas. First you must reach the intellectuals, the teachers and writers, with reasoned argument. It will be their influence on society which will prevail, and the politicians will follow.”

--Friedrich Hayek, 1954

Planning theory concerns itself with the ideas of planning. If, as Keynes and Hayek argue, ideas are indispensable to action, if every plan or action is underlain—and even driven by—ideas, then it is essential for all planners to be critically literate in planning theory. Being literate involves seriously examining and understanding the arguments of important theorists. Being critical means subjecting those arguments to sustained scrutiny, both from your own perspective, and from the perspectives of other planning theorists. The principal goal of this course is to develop your critical literacy in planning theory.
Course Goals

This course is a graduate seminar. Its goal is to provide you with the opportunity to read, engage, and critically question planning theory. To that end, we will read about, discuss, and write about past and contemporary ideas, debates, and initiatives. The course is not designed to impart applied techniques that you can use to fill your “toolbox” for professional practice. It is designed instead to give you the intellectual tools to make informed and wise judgments about planning theory and practice. Therefore, the course goals are to develop:

- Critical literacy in past and current debates in planning theory
- Developing your academic reading, writing, and discussion skills

Student Responsibilities

In thinking about how I am going to evaluate you, you need only to understand clearly what I expect from you in this class. For me the most important responsibility is to take your own education seriously. This means sincerely engaging the readings and reliably completing each assignment. It means attending each class, prepared and on time. It means impressing me with a sincere intellectual curiosity about the subject of planning theory. Secondary to that, but only by just a little, is the quality of the work you produce.

Professor Responsibilities

My responsibilities mirror yours: to take the class, the material, and your work seriously. That means ensuring a safe and respectful classroom, providing timely feedback, and being present, prepared, and engaged at each class.

Course Readings

In the Course Reader, available either at Rams Copy Center, 4144 University Way NE, (206) 632-6630, or online, depending on students’ desire.

Assessment

Your final assessment in this course will be based on your performance on the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Date due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Every class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Assignments</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Every class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper/Project</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>March 16 (or earlier, if class decides)</td>
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**Academic honesty**

The University takes the offenses of cheating and plagiarism very seriously, and so do I. Cheating is taking advantage of the work of others. Plagiarism is representing the work of others as your own, without giving appropriate credit. If you are unsure what is OK or not OK, make sure to ask!

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**WEEK 1**  
Thursday, January 4  

**Topic:** Introduction to Course

**WEEK 2**  
Thursday, January 11  

**Topic:** Introduction to Planning Theory

**Readings:**  

Read all four, but in class we will focus our time relatively more on the third one.

**Assignments:**  
Reading Assignment #1
WEEK 3
Thursday, January 18

Topic: Planning Theory in Context

Readings:

Assignments:
Reading Assignment #2

WEEK 4
Thursday, January 25

Topic: Rational/Systems/Comprehensive Planning

Readings:

Assignments:
Reading Assignment #3
WEEK 5
Thursday, February 1

**Topic:** Marxism/Feminism in Response to Rational Planning

**Readings:**

**Assignments:**
Reading Assignment #4

WEEK 6
Thursday, February 8

**Topic:** Advocacy and Equity

**Readings:**

**Assignments:**
Reading Assignment #5
WEEK 7
Thursday, February 15

Topic: Pragmatism

Readings:


Assignments:
Reading Assignment #6
WEEK 8
Thursday, February 22

Topic: Communicative/Collaborative Planning

Readings:


Read all five, but we will focus our time relatively more on the first four.

Assignments:

Reading Assignment #7
WEEK 9
Thursday, March 1

Topic: Critics of Communicative/Collaborative Planning

Reading:


Assignments:
Reading Assignment #8
WEEK 10
Thursday, March 8

Topic: Positive Alternatives: post-colonial/feminist/anarchist approaches

Reading:

Global South (Post-Colonial)

Anarchist?

Feminist

Assignments:
Reading Assignment #9

EXAM WEEK
Friday, March 16, 2:30-4:20 or at a time earlier in the week convenient for all, Same room

Topics:
- Retrospective/Class Desire

Reading:
- TBD

Assignments:
Reading Assignment # 10
Final Paper is due during this period
Reading Assignments

Overview

For each discussion, you will prepare a reading assignment. This exercise provides you with an opportunity to develop your critical understanding of the topic at hand. It also helps you process the ideas in the readings so you will be prepared to discuss them when we meet. There are two elements to this assignment:

Understanding: For each reading, you will articulate the author’s main argument in one or two sentences. You should not summarize the reading (e.g. “first the author talked about x, then she talked about y, etc.”). Rather you should distill and articulate the main argument the author is wanting to convince you of (e.g. “Purcell contends that democracy, properly understood, is the best political idea for guiding contemporary struggles for an alternative political economy.”).

Note: For some readings, the author is mainly reporting the arguments of other writers (e.g. when Allmendinger is writing about rational planning), so for those readings state the main argument of the tradition the author is reporting on.

Maximum 70 words for each reading

Reflection: you will write your reaction to the readings as a whole for that week. This can be a critique of the arguments, a deconstruction of them, a related new idea that you are excited about, an application of the ideas to a particular case…there are a range of appropriate ways to reflect on the reading. Use this exercise to do something useful for you and your work.

Optional Maximum 300 words

There will be a reading assignment for every class. They are worth 34% of your course grade. Each reading assignment will be graded on a scale of 0 to 10. They should be entirely your own work.

Format
The assignment should be typed and single-spaced. Make sure your name is on the page.

The assignment for a particular set of readings are due the day we discuss the readings. See the syllabus for specific dates.
You should do the “understanding” exercise for each reading (for the optional readings, of course, it is optional). You can pick one or more or all readings to address in the reflection exercise.
Participation

Participation makes up 33% of your course grade. It is important. And there is no way around participating. In a discussion format, each of you has a responsibility to others in the class to share your ideas and insights. The way this happens is by you speaking during class. If you do not share your questions and ideas with everyone, they can’t benefit from what you have to offer. Each of you has important questions and ideas to share that we can all learn from. Therefore, since you all have something important to contribute, you all have a responsibility to contribute it. The intellectual value of this class (and any seminar) depends on the active and engaged participation of its members. Such participation depends on a sincere desire to learn more and learn from others. Hence the quality of class discussions rests on how well everyone meets their responsibility to participate.

You will be graded on participation class-by-class. Effective participation is not measured by sheer amount. If you consistently share your ideas and questions and concerns in an honest effort to explore the material in the spirit of intellectual curiosity, you will receive a good grade for participation.

So, the strategy for participation is this: do not hesitate to share your thoughts. Do not think that they have to be fully formed and 100% defensible before you offer them. Do not think that they have to be brilliant or dazzling. Do not think that you can’t contribute until you’ve read the book that intimidating guy in the corner referred to obliquely. Do not think you should remain quiet because you have different ideas about a topic than most others in the class. And do not think that you have to know before you speak. Honest questions and true struggles within yourself that you have not yet resolved are the best way to contribute.

Remember also that listening is as important as talking. Asking genuine questions (for which you have not already decided on an answer) is a good way to listen. If you ask a question that you do not already have an answer for, you will genuinely want to hear what others have to say. What we are shooting for are true dialogues in which you engage the comments and questions of others rather than following them up with unrelated comments and questions. We want to steer clear (more or less) of a series of unrelated monologues. Be curious about what others have to say.

I understand that oral participation may be a struggle for some. I am willing to explore any and all ways to help you participate. If you feel uncomfortable with speaking in class, you should come see or e-mail me so we can think of ways to make it more comfortable. I stand ready to help you find ways to speak, but the responsibility for participating is yours. Again, the structure of the class means there is no way around participation. The quality of learning in the class depends on it, and a large portion of your grade depends on it.
**Final Paper/Project**

The goal of the final paper is to bring your own work into sustained and productive engagement with the ideas of the course. I encourage you *not* to undertake new research for this paper. Rather, it is better to draw on your existing research projects or ideas, using this material as the subject matter that you bring into dialogue with the ideas and arguments from the course. As I read your paper, my main focus will be the way you engage with the ideas in the course.

The framework of this project is deliberately vague, because there are many ways this exercise can be carried out. It depends greatly on your topic and how you choose to bring it into conversation with the course ideas. So, the way this works best is an iterative process where you come up with an idea, I give you feedback, you come up with a refined idea, I give you more feedback, etc. On each step, below, I encourage you to go through this iterative process with me (and with your peers).

**Step 1**: select a topic: an element of your work and the course idea you will engage with (feedback, refinement, feedback, etc.)

**Step 2**: formulate a thesis about the relationship between your work and the course idea (feedback, refinement, feedback, etc.)

**Step 3**: lay out a work plan: what kind of document will you produce, what work will you need to do to make your project work, etc. (feedback, refinement, feedback, etc.)

**Step 4**: come up with an outline for the document (feedback, refinement, feedback, etc.)

**Step 5**: write the final document (& I evaluate it)

The paper should have *at least* 15 pages of text (assuming all the standard formatting—double-spaced, 1” margins, 12-point font). Ideally, you should think about this project as a potential working paper, conference paper, journal article, or other career-relevant product. The length of these products varies by format and discipline, so let your vision for what the paper will become guide you as to length (with the minimum of 15 pages as a baseline).