

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT
URBP 260 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING TOPICS
FALL 2023

Instructor:	Serena Alexander, Ph.D.
Office location:	Washington Square Hall 218B
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Email:	serena.alexander@sjsu.edu (preferred method of contact)
Office hours:	Thursdays 1:00-3:30 pm or by appointment
Class days/time:	Thursdays 7:30-10:15 p.m.
Classroom:	Washington Square Hall 113
Prerequisites:	None
Units:	4

Course Catalog Description

In-depth examination of selected topics specifically related to environmental planning. Consult department for current offerings. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Course Description and Course Learning Objectives

Climate change has often been considered one of the most daunting issues of our times. Yet, climate action planning provides an opportunity for communities to reimagine their future in the face of adverse climate change impacts. Typically, climate action planning involves developing and implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) and adapt communities to better cope with climate change impacts. Together, we will discuss and examine the process, methods, and best practices of climate action planning.

Upon successful completion of the course, the students will be able to:

1. Describe how climate action planning is related to various fields such as environmental planning, transportation and land use planning, housing, community economic development, and innovative technologies.
2. Examine the impacts and potential solutions to address climate change, and analyze the policy approaches at multiple scales.
3. Describe the principles and processes of GHG emissions inventories.
4. Develop cost-effective solutions to help communities cope with the causes and consequences of climate change.

5. Evaluate climate mitigation and adaptation strategies and develop a policy prioritization mechanism.
6. Develop a community engagement and collaboration tool for local climate action planning.
7. Develop a plan for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) Knowledge Components

This course partially covers the following PAB Knowledge Components: 1a, 1b, 1d, 1e, 2a, 2b, 2f, 3c, 3d, 3e.

Course Format

This course adopts an in-person format. Students are expected to attend class meetings on campus every week, unless otherwise stated on the syllabus. Some activities can be completed asynchronously. Any changes to course delivery methods will be communicated with the students through Canvas and/or email.

This 4-unit course has a community engagement component which accounts for 25% of the grade. Assignments 3, which account for 25% of the grade, is designed to meet this requirement. The goal is to provide the students with opportunities to integrate theory and practice, and to get involved in real-life planning processes. The students can engage with local organizations and/or members of the community through participation in and/or observation of planning related activities. For the 1-unit engagement activity, the instructor will spend an additional 15 hours per semester on activities such as: designing the engagement unit activities and the related assignments, coordinating with community partners to implement the activities, advising students outside of class on a weekly basis as needed, and grading the engagement unit activity assignments.

Required Course Texts

Required

Boswell, Michael R., Adrienne I. Greve, and Tammy L. Seale. Climate action planning: A guide to creating low-carbon, resilient communities. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2019. (ISBN-13: 978-1-61091-963-0. Price: Buy new for around \$35 from Amazon or Island Press.)

Additional readings from academic journals, agency reports and other sources may also be used to supplement the course book. Further details will be communicated with the students through e-mail and/or Canvas.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Your grade for the course will be based on the following assignments and other graded activities:

Assignments and Other Graded Activities	Due Date(s)	Percent of Course Grade	Course Learning Objectives Covered
Class Participation and Engagement	NA	15%	1, 2
Assignment 1: Identification of Case Studies	September 21	20%	1, 2, 3

Assignment 2: Engagement Unit Activity (25% total)			
Assignment 2: Draft Report and Presentation Comparison of Case Studies	November 30	25%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Final Paper and Presentation: Evaluation of Case Studies	December 15	40%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Students select case studies for the first assignment (assignment 1), compare their case studies with the ones selected by their peers (assignment 2), and receive feedback from the instructor and their peers during the entire semester to develop the final paper. This means that assignments 1 and 2 are important building blocks of the final paper. Additional details on each assignment will be communicated with the students through Canvas, and/or e-mail.

Grading Information

The course grade consists of five items (i.e. assignments and graded activities) as listed in the table above. For example, “Assignment 2” is 25% of the final grade, and “Class Participation and Engagement” (which may include participation in online discussions) is 15% of the final grade. This means that “Assignment 2” is worth 25 points toward your final grade, and “Class Participation and Engagement” is worth 15 points. I add the points for each assignment or graded activity to arrive at the final score for the course. Then, I use the following grading scheme to convert the final score into a letter grade:

- A plus (96 and above)
- A (93 to 95)
- A minus (90 to 92)
- B plus (87 to 89)
- B (84 to 86)
- B minus (81 to 83)
- C plus (78 to 80)
- C (75 to 77)
- C minus (72 to 74)
- D plus (69 to 71)
- D (66 to 68)
- D minus (63 to 65)
- F (below 63)

Other Grading and Assignment Issues

Students are expected to submit all assignments on the specified due dates on Canvas. Please do not e-mail your assignments to me. Late assignments will be accepted but the score will be reduced 15% for missing the due date, and 5% for each day delayed afterwards. Missed assignments will result in a score of zero. Students who turn assignments in on time will normally receive comments from me and (if applicable) their peers within 7-10 days. For late papers, the turnaround time may well take fourteen or more business days. This could significantly impede a student’s ability to pass the course because these assignments are the building blocks for writing the policy prescription paper.

Course Workload

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with

1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Because this is a four-unit class, you can expect to spend a minimum of nine hours per week in addition to time spent in class and on scheduled tutorials or activities. Special projects or assignments may require additional work for the course. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses. For this class, you will have to undertake additional activities outside the class hours such as interviews with planners. Details on how to complete these activities will be discussed in the class and provided as a part of assignment guidelines.

Classroom Protocol

Students are expected to attend every Zoom meeting with their cameras turned on at all times. Attendance will be recorded regularly. Moreover, class participation points can only be earned by attending class sessions. An official documented excuse from an authorized person (e.g. doctor, supervisor, etc.) is required to justify absence. Missing more than three classes for any reason (whether excused or unexcused) will seriously impact your ability to pass this course. If you anticipate missing more than three classes, you should consider taking this course later. All Zoom classes will be recorded, and I can share the link with you upon request.

Students have a responsibility to show respect to fellow classmates during the Zoom meetings and group activities. To do so, please:

- Avoid interrupting other speakers and listen to the ideas of others with respect during class and group activities.
- Do not use electronic devices for purposes not relevant to the class and/or when it is distracting to others or keeps you from being engaged in class activities.
- Ensure that your microphone is muted, when you are not speaking. This will minimize background noise.

Participation Guidelines

You are expected to have carefully read and thoroughly thought about the assigned readings BEFORE each class session. Failure to read the assigned chapter(s) and/or article(s) will seriously hinder your ability to engage in class discussions and/or activities impacting your participation points and final grade. I encourage you to take notes while reading assigned materials. Participation in class discussions accounts for 10% of your final grade. Other than being physically present, I expect you to:

- Respond to questions raised in class
- Ask good questions
- Present alternative views to those offered by class readings, other students or the instructor
- Raise comments that encourage other students to get engaged in the discussion
- Discuss connections between materials covered in this class and other experiences or materials covered in other classes

- Be alert and attentive and listen carefully to others
- Participate in online discussions (if any)

Please note that you may be randomly selected to answer a question about the readings or apply your knowledge gained through readings to a group activity or an in-class assignment. Your presence means that you are ready to engage in these class activities. If you have not been able to do the readings for reasons beyond your control, such as an illness or a family emergency, you are required to notify me at least 30 minutes before the class. This will allow you to avoid losing participation points the first time you come to class unprepared. If this happens more than once, an official documented excuse from an authorized person will be required.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Plagiarism and Citing Sources Properly

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's language, images, data, or ideas without proper attribution. It is a very serious offense both in the university and in your professional work. In essence, plagiarism is both theft and lying: you have stolen someone else's ideas, and then lied by implying that they are your own.

Plagiarism will lead to grade penalties and a record filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. In severe cases, students may also fail the course or even be expelled from the university.

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, it is your responsibility to make sure you clarify the issues before you hand in draft or final work.

Learning when to cite a source and when not to is an art, not a science. However, here are some common examples of plagiarism that you should be careful to avoid:

- Using a sentence (or even a part of a sentence) that someone else wrote without identifying the language as a quote by putting the text in quote marks and referencing the source.
- Paraphrasing somebody else's theory or idea without referencing the source.
- Using a picture or table from a webpage or book without reference the source.
- Using data some other person or organization has collected without referencing the source.

The University of Indiana has developed a very helpful website with concrete examples about proper paraphrasing and quotation. See in particular the following pages:

- Overview of plagiarism at www.indiana.edu/~istd/overview.html
- Examples of plagiarism at www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html
- Plagiarism quiz at www.indiana.edu/~istd/test.html

If you still have questions, feel free to talk to me personally. There is nothing wrong with asking for help, whereas even unintentional plagiarism is a serious offense.

Citation style

It is important to properly cite any references you use in your assignments. The Department of Urban and Regional Planning uses Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition (University of Chicago Press, 2013, ISBN 780226816388). Copies are available in the SJSU King Library. Additionally, the book is relatively inexpensive, and you may wish to purchase a copy. Please note that Turabian's book describes two systems for referencing materials: (1) "notes" (footnotes or endnotes), plus a corresponding bibliography, and (2) in-text parenthetical references, plus a corresponding reference list. In this class, students should use the second system: in-text parenthetical references, plus a corresponding reference list.

Library Liaison

The SJSU Library Liaison for the Urban and Regional Planning Department is Ms. Peggy Cabrera (peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu).

URBP 260: ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING TOPICS FALL 2023 COURSE SCHEDULE

Subject to change with fair notice.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments due
Part I: Understanding Key Frameworks				
1	Aug. 24	Introduction to environmental planning	Course Syllabus	
2	Aug. 31	Climate action planning	Chapter 1	
3	Sep. 07	A framework for community action		Online discussion 1
4	Sep. 14	A framework for community action	Chapter 2	
Part II: Climate Mitigation Planning				
5	Sep. 21	Community engagement	Chapter 3	Assignment 1
6	Sep. 28	GHG inventories	Chapter 4	
7	Oct. 05	Strategies for low-carbon communities	Chapter 5	
Part III: Climate Adaptation Planning				
8	Oct. 12	Vulnerability assessment	Chapter 6	Online discussion 2
9	Oct. 19	No Class (Online Activity)		
10	Oct. 26	Strategies for resilient communities	Chapter 7	
Part IV: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation				
11	Nov. 02	Pathways to successful implementation	Chapter 8	
12	Nov. 09	Communities leading the way	Chapter 9	
13	Nov. 16	No Class (Online Activity)	TBD	
14	Nov. 23	No Class (Thanksgiving)		
15	Nov. 30	Time to act	Chapter 10	Assignment 2
16	Dec. 07	No Class (Study/Conference Day)		
Finals Week	Dec. 14	Final Presentations		Final Paper