San José State University
Urban and Regional Planning Department

URBP 233 – Social Issues in Planning

AFAM/AAS/URBP 133 – Introduction to Social Issues in Planning

Spring 2022

Instructor: Gordon Douglas
Office location: WSQ 218A
Telephone: Email preferred
Email: gordon.douglas@sjsu.edu
Office hours: Wednesdays 1:30-3:00pm, Thursdays 12:30-1:30pm on Zoom (please email in advance)
Class days/time: Wednesdays 7:30 – 10:00 PM
Classroom: WSQ 208 or Zoom
Prerequisites: None for 233
Upper division standing or instructor consent required for 133
Units: 4

Course Catalog Description
233: Multi-disciplinary study of the principles that guide the growth of a community so all members have equal access to the benefits of living in an urban environment. The course examines the coordination of citizen groups and government bodies to secure needed social services and facilities, champion initiatives that improve quality of life in our community, and engage issues important to underrepresented groups.

133: Contemporary social issues related to urban and regional planning. Assessment of community social needs and resident planning. Focus on ethnic areas such as African, Asian and Mexican American neighborhoods. Prerequisite: Upper division standing or instructor consent.

Course Description and Course Learning Objectives
Are there any issues faced by planners that are not in some sense social? Planners not only have the challenge of serving the “public,” but their decisions have direct and often powerful impacts on the people and places that they work to shape. While “social planning” was an important focus of the discipline in the 1970s, today social consciousness in planning it is often unhelpfully both assumed in principle and all but ignored in practice, even as issues of equity, access, and social benefit are as present as ever. How can a planner best serve communities with diverse needs and values (across age, gender, race and ethnicity, ability, socio-economic status, and cultural background)? In addition,
how should planners understand and address social issues like homelessness, housing affordability, unequal mobility, unsafe streets, environmental injustice, gentrification, and social exclusion?

The purpose of this course is to put a focus squarely on the social issues inherent to urban planning and development. Through readings, discussion, and an empirical research project, students will gain a foundation in urban social theories and key concepts, and learn how to identify, think through, and address competing planning priorities. Subjects of discussion and analysis include planning for ability, age, gender, and race and issues such as neighborhood identity and environmental justice.

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

1. Incorporate knowledge of different social theories and concepts in critically interpreting the urban planning process and be able to identify how planning and development does or does not account for differences in society and the distinctive needs of different segments of the public.
2. Identify and describe variables such as race, age, gender, class, and ability by which people and groups of people may be stratified or segmented, and the distinctive concerns and needs of different groups living and working in the urban environment.
3. Conduct empirical research in order to analyze local conditions and develop solutions to particular social problems in urban communities.
4. Understand the history of participatory planning and how to conduct respectful and community-engaged plan-making processes in our region.

Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) Knowledge Components

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

A complete list of the PAB Knowledge Components can be found at https://www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/graduate-programs/masters-in-urban-planning/public-information.php.

Required Course Texts

I’ve tried to assign mainly readings that are available online through the SJSU library or that the library holds in its physical collection. However, we will be making heavy use of one book in particular for which we have limited access through the library:


(*the library has one license for this ebook: https://sjsu-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1cue0e3/01CALS_ALMA71505199520002901 but you may wish to purchase your own.)

Additional required readings are listed in the course schedule below and will be available via the SJSU MLK Library’s ebook and ejournal collections, elsewhere online, or distributed as necessary.

Library Liaison

The SJSU Liaison Librarian for the Urban and Regional Planning Department is the wonderful Peggy Cabrera. If you have questions, you can contact her at peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu.

San José State University
**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 practica. 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 completing the assigned reading, visiting your field site, and completing assignments (including preparing for the presentation). Details on how to complete these activities will be provided in class. For the 1-unit engagement unit, 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.

**Classroom Protocol**

This course will run as a traditional graduate seminar: not a lecture, but a group discussion, led by the instructor but driven by student ideas, questions, and reactions to readings. Because the class relies on students being thoughtfully engaged in our discussion of course readings and related topics, all students are expected to come to class prepared to contribute. I understand some students are quieter than others; that’s fine, and there are many ways to demonstrate that you are actively engaged without talking all the time. This includes submitting your Weekly Discussion Questions via email and on Canvas, and joining in the discussion there too. That said, I hope with time everyone will begin to feel comfortable speaking. Perhaps more importantly, there are also many things students can do to demonstrate they are not engaged, such as staring at a phone or computer screen during discussion, arriving late or dozing off, not prioritizing attendance and assignments, etc. We will discuss all of this more in class.
## Course Requirements and Assignments

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date(s)</th>
<th>Percent of Course Grade</th>
<th>Course Learning Objectives Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>weekly</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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</tbody>
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Because this course will be taught as a graduate seminar and also because it includes collaborative team research projects, it is essential that students come to class prepared to contribute to our discussion of the readings and to participate in group projects. See “Classroom Protocol” above. Full credit for participation will be given to students who are observed to be doing both throughout the semester.

### Weekly Discussion Questions (x 11)

For weeks 2-4, 6-8, and 10-14, all students are required to write at least one developed question and one personal connection/reaction based on one or more of the readings for that class date. These can be as short as a sentence each, but they must be thoughtfully connected to the readings and potentially of use for class discussion. This must be submitted as discussion posts at least eight hours prior to the start of the seminar (e.g. by 11:30am on the day of class). I will read through them and grade them (3 points for complete, 1.5 point for unsatisfactory, 0 if not submitted), and we will use some of them to guide our discussion during class. For those student questions selected for in-class discussion, the student who submitted it will be invited to expand/explain it to the group, and then we will all discuss. I invite you also to read through and respond to each other's posts in the discussion on Canvas. This is another way to participate in class!

### Local Equity Memo

Choose a neighborhood / community / site in the Bay Area and use it to write a 1 page memo about the persistence of inequality in the urban planning of our region. For instance, how do the conditions of unhoused people along a railroad embankment (and the current crisis of homelessness more generally), relate to the major ideas from the first six weeks of class? How is urban planning implicated, and what can urban planning do now to improve conditions? Make sure to reference course readings and your experiences in your memo. Be sure to write clearly throughout and proofread your work before submitting the assignment.

### Social Infrastructure Memo

Choose a neighborhood / community / site in the Bay Area and use it to write a 1 page memo about the persistence of inequality in the urban planning of our region. For instance, how do the conditions of unhoused people along a railroad embankment (and the current crisis of homelessness more generally), relate to the major ideas from the first six weeks of class? How is urban planning implicated, and what can urban planning do now to improve conditions? Make sure to reference course readings and your experiences in your memo. Be sure to write clearly throughout and proofread your work before submitting the assignment.
Write a short memo on the topic of Social Infrastructure (drawing on Klinenberg) and how it relates to (a) connections, belonging, and resilient community on the one hand, and (b) displacement, dispossession and ‘root shock’ on the other (drawing on other relevant readings). With this in mind, to what extent is Social Infrastructure an operational concept for Urban Planning? Make sure to reference course readings. Also, you should refer to specific examples of social infrastructure wherever helpful to your discussion, but at the end you must also list three concrete examples of social infrastructure in San José, explaining briefly why they qualify as social infrastructure. Be sure to write clearly throughout and proofread your work before submitting the assignment. Undergraduate memos will be 1-2 pages, graduate memos will be 2-3 pages.

San José Social Infrastructure Group Project (Engagement Unit Assignment)

In groups, students will conduct fieldwork and draw upon their own local knowledge and connections to identify and analyze social infrastructure in one part of San José. This includes community based organizations, arts and cultural activities, and both formal and informal instances/sites of local solidarity, identity, social life, cultural production, and resilience. Students will catalog and categorize each case, and provide a brief description and geolocation coordinates for each. Each group will present its findings on the last day of regular class. Presentations must include discussion of the research and findings, a comprehensive map, and some discussion of the implications of the findings (including how local infrastructure might be strengthened, as well as what threats it may face).

Community Communication (Engagement Unit Assignment)

One of the biggest challenges in seeking more authentic and successful community engagement in urban planning is that planners and community members often talk past each other. Community members may not possess the specialized knowledge and vocabulary that allow them to interpret planning and design documents or communicate their own priorities and concerns effectively. Planners must do better at meeting communities where they are and communicating difficult issues in language that is understandable, self-aware, and sensitive to local concerns. For this assignment, students must select a key social issue discussed in this class and create a 1-3 page briefing that communicates about this issue to a general audience. If relevant and helpful, choose a particular site / community where this issue is at play. Think about your document as something that both planners AND lay community members could access and make use of in coming to the
Detailed instructions for each assignment will be discussed and distributed in class, and posted as necessary on the course Canvas website. Different expectations for undergraduate students as opposed to graduate students will be explained in detail.

**Final Examination or Evaluation**

This course is evaluated through multiple assignments and class participation. The Neighborhood Analysis assignment (see above) and corresponding Final Presentation constitute the culminating evaluation assignments for the course. There is no final exam.

**Grading Information**

For course letter grade: A plus (98 and above); A (93 to 97); A minus (90 to 92); B plus (88 to 89); B (83 to 87); B minus (80 to 82); C plus (78 to 79); C (73 to 77); C minus (70 to 72); D plus (68 to 69); D (63 to 67); D minus (60 to 62); F (below 60)

If a student gets 33/39 on the discussion questions, 15/15 on the proposal, 5/6 on the presentation, 27/30 on the final project, and receives 10 points for demonstrating consistent and engaged participation, her or his final letter grade can be calculated as a total of 90/100. The score of 90 for this student equals a letter grade of “A-”.

**Late Assignments**

Assignments are due on the dates stated above and readings are to be completed before class. Because our in-class discussion depends on students having done the reading, and some class meetings will be devoted to presentations and review of student work, assessment will often rely on students being present in class with their work completed. Written assignments will be accepted late with a grade reduction by one half-step letter grade (semitone? accidental?) every one-to-two days it is late. For example, if an assignment warranted an “A” and was one or two days late, the final grade would be an “A-”; after three days: B+, five or six days “B,” and so on.

**University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the Syllabus Information web page at [https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

San José State University
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. Students may use either of the styles in this course, as long as they pick one or the other to use consistently throughout any given assignment. In planning, footnotes or endnotes are typical.
# URBP 233 / 133 – Social Issues In Planning  
## Spring 2022  
### Course Schedule

Subject to change with fair notice – any changes will be announced in class well in advance. Readings listed here are to be complete *before* that day’s class.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic, Reading and Assignments</th>
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| 1   | 1/26 | Introduction: The Social Construction of Cities  
Listen online to Episodes 0 and 1 of KQED's *American Suburb* podcast (2017). [Online at](https://www.kqed.org/news/series/american-suburb-podcast/)  
*On Zoom*  

| 2   | 2/2  | The History and Persistence of Racism in Urban Planning  
Eli Moore, Nicole Montojo, and Nicole Mauri (2019) “Introduction” (pp. 7-15) and “Exclusionary Zoning” (pp. 29-34) in their *Roots, Race & Place: A History of Racially Exclusionary Housing in the San Francisco Bay Area*. [Berkeley, CA: Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society](https://belonging.berkeley.edu/rootsraceplace)  
*On Zoom*  

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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Unjust Geographies and the Neoliberal City</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>Access and Mobility</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>Housing and Homelessness</td>
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<td>Listen online to the 2019 episode “Kelsey Banes on Housing Activism and Homeless Services in Palo Alto” from <em>The Henry George Program</em>: <a href="http://seethecat.org/ep/2019-10-03.html">http://seethecat.org/ep/2019-10-03.html</a></td>
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<td>ASSIGNMENT DUE: Neighborhood Social Issues Memo</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>The Social Infrastructure, pt. 1</td>
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<td>Listen online to the 2017 podcast episode “Ch. 3 How to Survive an Exodus” from KQED’s <em>American Suburb</em> podcast (scroll to Ch. 3): <a href="https://www.npr.org/podcasts/552484922/american-suburb">https://www.npr.org/podcasts/552484922/american-suburb</a></td>
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| 7   | 3/9  | **The Power of Place and Community Identity**  
Gordon Douglas (forthcoming) “Reclaiming Placemaking for an Alternative Politics of Legitimacy and Community in Homelessness.” (See Canvas) |
| 8   | 3/16 | **The Social Infrastructure, pt. 2 | Guest Speaker**  
### 9 3/23 Overview of Final Projects  |  Guest Speaker

Teams, Expectations, Research Preparation

**ASSIGNMENT DUE:** Social Infrastructure Memo

### 3/30 **SJSU Spring Break – No Class**

This week, in addition to keeping up on the readings for next week (see next week), get a jump on your two final projects. This means: (a) meet with your team and begin work on your Social Infrastructure Audit; (b) take a look at the readings on community participation and engagement from week 12 and begin thinking about your Community Communication project as well.

Other useful sites:

*Social Explorer* website: https://www.socialexplorer.com/ (look at some data for a neighborhood that interests you)

*Anti-Eviction Mapping Project* website: https://www.antievictionmap.com/

### 10 4/6 Disaster and Planning  |  Guest Speaker


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| 11 | 4/13 | **Gentrification**


Listen online to two episodes from the second season of WNYC’s *There Goes the Neighborhood* podcast, “Coffee, Pizza, and Beer” (Oct. 24, 2017) and “Gentrification: No More L.A. Traffic, Put it that Way” (Oct. 31, 2017). Available at: [https://www.npr.org/podcasts/555340969/there-goes-the-neighborhood](https://www.npr.org/podcasts/555340969/there-goes-the-neighborhood)

| 12 | 4/20 | **Advocacy, Participation, and Protest I**

Paul Davidoff (1965) “Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning” (pp. 426-40) in Fainstein & DeFilipps *Readings in Planning Theory*.

Judith E. Innes & David E. Booher (2004) Reframing public participation: strategies for the 21st century, *Planning Theory & Practice*, 5:4, 419-436. [https://csu-sjsu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CALS_SJO/1nj5q0c/cdi_informaworld_taylorfrancis_310_1080_1464935042000293170](https://csu-sjsu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CALS_SJO/1nj5q0c/cdi_informaworld_taylorfrancis_310_1080_1464935042000293170)


NYC Dept. of City Planning (2022) “Community Based Planning” webpage: [https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/community/community-based-planning.page](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/community/community-based-planning.page) and “Good Urban Design” webpage: [https://www.goodurbandesign.nyc/](https://www.goodurbandesign.nyc/)
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>Advocacy, Participation, and Protest II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>5/4</td>
<td>What Can Planning (and Planners) Do?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
|     |      | Campbell, Tait, and Watkins (2014) “Is there Space for Better Planning in a Neoliberal World?” Ch. 10 (pp. 191-116) in Fainstein & DeFilippis *Readings in Planning Theory*.  
Susan Fainstein (2013) “Spatial Justice in Planning” (pp 261-74) in Fainstein & DeFilippis *Readings in Planning Theory*.  
| 15  | 5/11 | Social Infrastructure Audit Presentations | Special Guests  
Presentations in class, submit via Canvas  
*Final Community Engagement Briefs due by Midnight on May 18*  
Submit via Canvas |