PADM 4170 Methods in Urban Planning Research and Analysis

Instructor:
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Class Meetings: Monday and Wednesday 2:00pm – 3:20pm
Class Location: General Academic Building 550

Office Hours:
Monday 12:00pm – 1:30pm
Office Location: 204N Chilton Hall

Course Overview:
How do we analyze urban economies, the built environment and public behavior? How do planners and policymakers obtain and evaluate information about citizen needs and policy effectiveness? How do we use all this information to analyze, predict and shape the future? In this course, we explore the tools and techniques urban planners and policy professionals use to understand urban problems and evaluate policy solutions. We examine the role of quantitative and qualitative data in public decision-making, and gain familiarity with a variety of analytic methods and evaluative frameworks commonly used in planning practice.

Our focus is on understanding the basics of applied research design and improving our data literacy, or the ability to critically evaluate data-based arguments in journals, professional reports and mass media outlets. Through lectures, lab sections, and field work, we will gain familiarity with planning research while critically examining the tools being used by planners to understand urban problems. The techniques we examine throughout the semester will help students develop their planning and policy 'toolkit' that can be expanded through future coursework and internship experiences. In addition to learning technical skills, students will be encouraged to identify and establish their own set of values and visions that underlie their work as urban planners and policy professionals.

Course Objectives:
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify common methods for examining planning problems and issues;
2. Determine the appropriate data required to research urban issues;
3. Conduct analysis using a variety of planning tools;
4. Critically evaluate planning research and scholarship;
5. Concisely and effectively communicate research findings and policy recommendations

Required Materials:

- Maccallum, D., Babb, C., & Curtis, C. (2019). Doing Research in Urban and Regional Planning: Lessons in Practical Methods. Routledge.
- Articles, reports and other materials on Canvas.
- Microsoft Excel and Internet

Course Requirements:

1. Class Participation + Attendance 10%

Active participation and attendance are essential in this course. Each absence will result in **a deduction from the final grade**. In emergency situations, you must inform the instructor before class and obtain the instructor's confirmation.

2. Research Memo 40%

You will write three research memos based on in-class lab activities. Each memo will focus on one of the following topics: (1) economic base analysis, (2) built environment analysis, and (3) public behavior and opinions analysis. The memos should identify a research question, discuss the methods used to investigate the question, provide a summary of the data, report analysis results, and suggest policy implications. Detailed guidelines and templates will be provided in class. Late submissions will incur a penalty, and submissions that are **more than one week late will not be accepted**.

3. Quizzes 20%

There will be **TWO quizzes** during this course. The first quiz will cover material from Week 1 through the last class before the quiz. The second quiz will cover material from the class following the first quiz through the last class before the second quiz. Both quizzes will be open-book and conducted online. You are not allowed to discuss or collaborate with other students during the quizzes. All quizzes must be completed by the specified due date. **Failure to complete a quiz by the deadline will result in a score of zero**.

4. Final Research Proposal 30%

Throughout the semester, you will develop a research question and create a research plan to address that question. Your final research proposal will include the research question(s), a literature review, appropriate methods and data to answer the question, and a critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed approach. You are NOT expected to conduct or complete the research during this semester; the final project is a research proposal only. You will present your research proposal in class and submit the presentation slides along with a description document on Canvas. **Late submissions will incur a penalty, and submissions more than one week late will not be accepted**.

Grading Policies:

Grades will be determined by:

	% of Final Grade
Participation + Attendance	**10%**
Research memo (3)	**40%**
Economic Base Analysis	10%
Built Environment Analysis	15%
Public Behavior and Opinions Analysis	15%
Online Quizzes (2)	**20%**
Quiz 1	*10%*
Quiz 2	*10%*
Final Research Proposal	**30%**
Total	100%

Communication Policy:

If you have any questions about the course, send an email to Annie.Lee@unt.edu. The subject line of emails should state "Methods in Urban Planning." Instructor will usually respond within 72 hours (not including the weekend), and often much quicker. To ensure a response, always plan to e-mail at least 72 hours before a deadline.

Assignment Policy:

Assignment due dates will be posted on Canvas, and all assignments must be submitted **through Canvas.**

Syllabus Change Policy:

We reserve the right to modify the syllabus, including adding readings and activities. Any changes will be posted on Canvas at least one week in advance.

Academic Integrity:

The University of North Texas values the integrity of learning and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. All students must understand their responsibilities and the academic penalties associated with academic misconduct, such as cheating and plagiarism, under UNT policy "06.003 Student Academic Integrity" (see https://vpaa.unt.edu/ss/integrity).

Course Outline:

Week 1		Assignments + Readings
1/12	Course Overview and Introduction	
1/14	Introduction to Planning Research I	*Andranovich, p.1-14*
Week2		
1/19	***Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday (No Class)***	
1/21	Introduction Planning Research II	*MacCallum et al., p.7 – 33*
Week 3.		
1/26	Developing a Problem Statement	
1/28	Planning Research Review Activity	*Schutt, p. C1 – C7*
Week 4		
2/2	Quantitative Methods	*MacCallum et al., p.34 – 42*
2/4	Research Foundations	
Week 5		
2/9	Qualitative Methods	*Erickson, p.1451 – 1469*
2/11	Working with Census and Government Data	*Andranovich, 63 – 85* **Online Quiz 1 (Feb 12-13)**
Week 6		
2/16	Urban Economics, Development + Planning	*Readings on Canvas*
2/18	Economic Base Analysis Lab I	
Week 7		
2/23	Economic Base Analysis Lab II	**Research Memo 1 (Mar 6)**
2/25	Analyzing Built Environment	*Readings on Canvas*
Week 8		
3/2	Irvine Minnesota Inventory	
3/4	Built Environment Lab: Campus Field Work	
Week 9		
3/9	***Spring Break (No Class)***	
3/11	***Spring Break (No Class)***	
Week 10		
3/16	Built Environment Lab: Analyzing Field Data I	
3/18	Denton Street Audit Field Work	
Week 11		
3/23	Built Environment Lab: Analyzing Field Data II	**Research Memo 2 (Apr 3)**
3/25	Observation	*Readings on Canvas*
Week 12		
3/30	Survey	
4/1	Survey Development Working Session	**Research Memo 3 (Apr 17)**
Week 13		
4/6	Focus Groups	*Readings on Canvas*
4/8	In-depth Interview	**Online Quiz 2 (Apr 9-10)**
Week 14		

4/13	Research Proposal Working Session	
4/15	Research Proposal Presentation 1	
Week 15		
4/20	Research Proposal Presentation 2	**Final Research Proposal (Apr 24)**
4/22	Scenario Planning and Forecasting	*Readings on Canvas*
Week 16		
4/27	ArcGIS Lab session *(Business Analyst)*	
4/29	Final Review Session *(Online)*	