

PADM 4170: Methods in Urban Planning Research and Analysis

Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:00 – 10:20 AM

Gateway 141

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Ja Young Kim, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM Monday and Wednesday or by appointment

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Course Overview

How do we analyze urban economies and public behavior? How do planners and policymakers obtain and evaluate information about citizen needs and policy effectiveness? 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 various analytical 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 fieldwork, 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

Recommended 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 the Internet

Expectations

- Attendance matters**
 Your presence is essential for your success in this course. Lectures, in-class activities, lab sessions, and class discussions are directly related to your assignments. Students are expected to attend all scheduled sessions and arrive on time.
- Participating actively and constructively**
 Participation in class discussions is critical. It makes for a meaningful experience for all students and is a substantial portion of final grades. Students should be willing to “take risks” (e.g., to have a unique perspective, ask questions, challenge the instructor and other students), contribute to the conversation without dominating it, show interest in and respect for others’ views, and connect readings to prior knowledge, experience, ideas, evidence, and other courses.
- Turning in all assignments on time and building on the feedback received**
 Students should contact the instructor with any questions they may have about the assignments at least a week before it is due. Students should incorporate the feedback they receive to improve subsequent assignments.

Course Requirements and Grading

This course includes a mixture of activities, lectures, field work and individual and collaborative projects. Your grade is based on the following components, described in detail below:

Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due Date
Research Memo: Literature Review Labs (2)	10%	
1) <i>Journal Article Analysis</i>	5%	Sep 5
2) <i>Professional Planning Report Analysis</i>	5%	Sep 19
Research Memo: Method Labs (4)	40%	
3) <i>Economic Base Analysis</i>	10%	Oct 3
4) <i>Built Environment Analysis</i>	10%	Oct 24
5) <i>Scenario Planning Analysis</i>	10%	Nov 7
6) <i>Public Behavior/Opinion Analysis</i>	10%	Nov 21
Online Quizzes (2)	20% (10% each)	Sep 26 - 27 Nov 14 - 15
Final Research Proposal	20%	
<i>Problem Statement</i>		Oct 10
<i>Literature Review</i>		Oct 31
<i>Presentation</i>		Dec 1 & Dec 3
<i>Final Research Proposal</i>		Dec 10
Participation + Attendance	10%	

Course Grading Scale:

A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; F = 0-59%

Research Memos:

You will prepare a total of six research memos during the semester. Two of these will summarize research conducted by practitioners or academics, and four will summarize work completed during the in-class lab sessions. The templates for these research memos are available on Canvas.

Literature Review Labs (2): You will write a memo on an academic journal article, and another memo on a professional planning report of your choosing. The report memo provides a summary of a planning research report produced by a city or regional government entity, planning consultants or academic researchers. Your memos should identify the research question/hypothesis, discuss the methods, provide a summary of the data used (including sources and collection methods when appropriate), and summarize the major findings and policy recommendations.

Methods Labs (4): You will write four research memos based on the in-class lab activities in Modules 3, 4, 5, and 6. Rather than summarizing the research of others, these memos require you to summarize research you will be conducting with your classmates. Memos should identify a research question and a hypothesis, discuss the methods used to investigate the question, provide a summary of the data used (including sources and collection methods when appropriate), report analysis and findings and suggest how they matter for urban planning.

Online Quizzes:

You will complete TWO open-note online quizzes that cover material from the assigned readings and class lectures. Students are encouraged to use their notes, consult the readings.

Final Research Proposal:

Throughout the semester, you will develop a research question and create a research plan to answer that question. You will share research ideas during the class and submit a problem statement and literature review to receive feedback, working towards the final research proposal. Your final paper in this class will be a 7–10-page research proposal that includes a short literature review on your topic, identifies appropriate methods and data to answer the question, and provides a critique of the strengths and weaknesses of your proposed approach. You are NOT expected to conduct or complete the research during this semester; the final project is only a research proposal. Students will also present their research proposal at the end of the semester.

Participation and Attendance:

This portion of your grade will be based on class attendance and your engagement with in-class activities, class discussions, and guest speakers. Learning is a social activity; we all (students and instructor) share responsibility for the teaching and learning that we accomplish in each class.

Detailed instructions for the assignments will be available on CANVAS.

Course Schedule and Required Reading

Week	Dates	Topics + Activities	Readings + Assignments
Module 1: Introduction to Urban Planning Research and Analysis			
1	8/18	Course Overview & Introduction	Syllabus
	8/20	Introduction to Planning Research I	<i>Andranovich, p.1 – 14</i>
2	8/25	Introduction to Planning Research II	<i>MacCallum et al., p.7 – 33</i>
	8/27	Literature Review	<i>Schutt, p. C1 – C7</i> Research Article Review Activity (Aug 31)
Module 2: Quantitative & Qualitative Research			
3	9/1	No Class (Labor Day)	
	9/3	Quantitative Research	<i>MacCallum et al., p.34 – 42</i> Research Memo 1 (Sep 5)
4	9/8	Quantitative Research	<i>Erickson, p.1451 – 1469</i>
	9/10	Qualitative Research	Piccolo & Thomas
5	9/15	Qualitative Research	Observation Activity (Sep 15)
	9/17	Working with Census and Government Data	Research Memo 2 (Sep 19)
Module 3: How do we Analyze Urban Economies?			
6	9/22	Urban Economies, Development + Planning	Readings on Canvas
	9/24	Analysis Techniques for Urban Economies	Online Quiz 1 (Sep 26-27)
7	9/29	Economic Base Analysis Lab I	Readings on Canvas
	10/1	Economic Base Analysis Lab II	Research Memo 3 (Oct 3)
Module 4: How do we Analyze the Built Environment?			
8	10/6	Analyzing Built Environment	Readings on Canvas
	10/8	Irvine Minnesota Inventory	Research Proposal: Problem Statement (Oct 10)

9	10/13	Built Environment Lab: Research Design	Field Data Entry (Oct 17)
	10/15	Denton Street Audit Field Work	
10	10/20	Built Environment Lab: Analyzing Field Data I	Research Memo 4 (Oct 24)
	10/22	Built Environment Lab: Analyzing Field Data II	
Module 5: How do we Analyze Future Change?			
11	10/27	Scenario Planning and Forecasting	Readings on Canvas
	10/29	Guest Lecture: Introduction to UrbanFootprint	Research Proposal: Literature Review (Oct 31)
12	11/3	Scenario Planning Lab I	Research Memo 5 (Nov 7)
	11/5	Scenario Planning Lab II	
Module 6: How do we Analyze Public Behavior and Opinions?			
13	11/10	Survey	Readings on Canvas
	11/12	Focus groups and Interviews	Readings on Canvas Online Quiz 2 (Nov 14-15)
14	11/17	Survey Development Lab I	Research Memo 6 (Nov 21)
	11/19	Survey Development Lab II	
15	Thanksgiving Break (11/24 – 11/30)		
16	12/1	Research Proposal Presentations	Presentations
	12/3	Research Proposal Presentations	Presentations Final Research Proposal (Dec 10)

Minimum Technology Requirements

To succeed in this course, students should have access to a computer with Microsoft Excel or a similar spreadsheet software and be comfortable using Canvas. Students should also be familiar with presentation and graphics programs (i.e. PowerPoint) and the Internet.

Assignment Policy

Assignment due dates are listed in the syllabus and posted on Canvas. For each assignment, you can find instructions and additional materials on Canvas. All assignments should be submitted via Canvas, unless indicated otherwise.

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Late Work

All assignments are due by 11:59 PM, the end of the due date. For assignments turned in within 24 hours of the due time, grades will be reduced by 10%. Assignments turned in more than 24 hours late will not be accepted. If unexpected circumstances prevent assignment completion on time (e.g. hospitalization, emergency travel), email the instructor as soon as possible to make alternative due date arrangements. All assignments will be checked for plagiarism.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. Please send me an email if you are unable to attend a class meeting because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community.

Syllabus Change Policy

We reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, including augmenting readings and adding activities. Any changes for a specific class meeting will be posted at least one week before the class, with notifications sent out to students via email and Canvas. UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the [ODA website \(https://disability.unt.edu/\)](https://disability.unt.edu/).