

Course Outline

Course Code : RE3901
Course Title : Advanced Urban Planning
Semester : Semester 1, Academic Year 2024/2025
Faculty : Assoc Prof Lee Kwan Ok
Department : Real Estate
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Overview

Urban planning offers the platform for most real estate projects and real estate professionals can benefit from an understanding of urban planning. To best assess where and how to prioritize real estate investment, it is important to understand urban planning processes as well as local-specific contexts under which urban planning operates. Adopting an urban planning attitude of “doing what’s right” rather than simply “doing what’s profitable” can also help real estate professionals create long-term, successful projects.

This course will provide an in-depth analysis of urban planning that should be addressed as part of any real estate project. Embedded in urban planning theories, it will introduce the various contemporary urban planning issues and interdisciplinary approaches that could help real estate students think holistically and innovatively beyond conventional returns on investment. Next, this course will move to main components of urban planning, covering from infrastructure, housing, and environmental planning to urban design and international planning. There will also be a discussion of plan implementation. Through diverse local and international examples, the course will demonstrate dynamic interactions between urban planning and real estate and discuss challenges in these interactions.

Learning Outcomes

Students who have successfully completed RE3901 will be able to:

1. Have sound knowledge of traditional urban planning principles as well as emerging trends in urban planning that real estate professionals will encounter.
2. Analyse the evolution of urban forms and contemporary urban challenges and understand how alternative planning approaches can (or cannot) address them.
3. Identify the dynamic interactions between urban planning and real estate.
4. Familiarize themselves with main components of urban planning including infrastructure, housing and community, environmental planning, urban design, and international planning.
5. Understand major issues in each of the planning component and critically evaluate current practices of urban planning in both national and regional contexts.
6. Discuss the complexity of urban planning processes that require a lot of negotiations and collaborations between different planners, stakeholders (including real estate professionals) and public.
7. Understand the importance of socioeconomic, political, and institutional contexts under which urban planning operates through local and international examples of urban planning practices.

Course Prerequisite(s)

RE2701 Urban Planning (can be exempt depending on students’ course requirement – e.g., Minor in Urban Studies)

Course Preclusion(s)

Nil

General Guide & Reading

- **The City Reader. 6th edition. (2016).** LeGates, Richard and Stout, Frederic (editors). Routledge Urban Reader Series. (E-book available via NUS library website)
- **Cities of Tomorrow. 4th edition. (2014).** Peter Hall (editor). Wiley Blackwell. (Available at CL RBR: TH166 Hal 2014)
- **Introduction to Urban Planning. (1979).** Anthony J Catanese and James Snyder. McGraw-Hill. (Available at CL RBR: HT166 Urb)

All other reading non-online materials will be posted on CANVAS.

Tentative Schedule & Outline

Schedule

This is a one semester course, and the class will usually meet once per week with three hours per session.

Format

RE3901 follows a seminar format that includes a lecture (100-120 minutes with a break) and in-class activities.

Lectures present the primary themes and concepts from the assigned readings, with an opportunity for questions and comments from students. I will usually introduce several discussion questions at the end of each lecture. Due to limited time during the lectures, I will mainly utilize the CANVAS Discussions for this. Please note that active participants in Discussions will gain participation marks. The Discussions platform will be also used to share questions and answers for the group project and final exam.

In-class student activities consist of: (1) structured discussion of topics related to the lectures and readings and (2) role play debates on several topics related to lectures. Active participation of all students is expected especially for tutorials.

Synopsis

The course is thematically organized into three main parts.

Part I: Contemporary Concepts of Urban Planning

- Spatial Restructuring
- Urban Redevelopment
- Globalizing Cities

Part II: Components of Urban Planning

- Land Use
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Environmental Planning
- Urban Design

Part III: Urban Planning Implementation

- Interactions between Planning and Real Estate
- Stakeholder engagement
- Embracing innovations and execution

| Lesson/ Week | Lecture Topic | Main In-Class Activities |
|-----------------|---|---|
| 1 | Introduction and Review of Traditional Planning Principles: Garden city and city beautiful movement; Contemporary/radiant city ideas; New town planning; Course objectives; Topics to be covered; Tasks and responsibilities | |
| 2 | Part 1 Contemporary Planning Concepts I (Spatial Restructuring): Suburbanization and urban sprawl; Spatial inequality and spatial mismatch; Smart growth and new urbanism; Polycentric model | |
| 3 | Part 1 Contemporary Planning Concepts II (Urban Redevelopment): Failures of urban renewal; Issues surrounding gentrification; Loss of sense of community and social capital; Community-oriented redevelopment; Place making | Group project kick-off |
| 4 | Part 1 Contemporary Planning Concepts III (Globalizing Cities): Globalization and world city hypothesis; Issues arising in global cities; Importance of creative class; Search for sustainability | Mini-presentation and Discussion on Singapore's Planning Concepts |
| 5 | Part 2 Components of Urban Planning I (Land Use): Zoning and development control; Evolution of land use planning; White site; Mixed use; Evolution of planning regulatory frameworks | Role Play Planning Debate I: Pros vs. Cons of Traditional Zoning vs. Form-Based/ Incentive Zoning |
| 6 | Part 2 Components of Urban Planning II (Infrastructure): Infrastructure requirements; Transportation planning; Public transportation; Smart mobility <i>Guest Speaker (Prof. Raymond Ong, CDE)</i> | Zoning |
| | MID SEMESTER BREAK | |
| 7 | Part 2 Components of Urban Planning III (Housing): Housing demand analysis; Housing affordability | Role Play Planning Debate II: Efficiency and Effectiveness of Different Affordable Housing Policies |
| 8 | Part 2 Components of Urban Planning IV (Environmental Planning): Climate change; Natural hazards; Environmental sustainability; Importance of urban resilience | |
| 9 | Part 2 Components of Urban Planning V (Urban design): Public space needs; Interactions between urban planning and design; Heritage conservation <i>Guest Speaker (Mr. Kelvin Ang, URA)</i> | Role Play Planning Debate III: Dilemma between Conservation and Development |
| 10 | Part 3 Urban Planning Implementation I: Tension between private and public interest; Cities as real estate growth machine; Incentives given to real estate; Public benefits provided by developers | |
| 11 | Part 3 Urban Planning Implementation II: Top down vs. bottom up; Evolution of urban institutions; Governance; Participatory planning | Role Play Planning Debate IV: Pros vs. Cons of Public Private Partnership |
| 12 | Part 3 Urban Planning Implementation III: Embracing innovations, From concepts to execution, Smart cities | |

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| 13 | Class Wrap-up and Review | Group project presentation (with invited jury members) |
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Assessment

The assessment for this class is based on 100% CA

| Assessment Components | Weightage |
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| <p>Group Project: Singapore’s Next Generation of Urban Planning: 2025 Draft Master Plan for the New Planning Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select one planning area among five new planning areas including 1) Lim Chu Kang; 2) Paya Lebar; 3) Seletar; 4) Simpang; and 5) three central planning areas including Marina South, Marina East and Straits View. Discuss why you chose the specific planning area and document existing plans. • Analyze problems and potentials of your chosen planning area in a comprehensive manner. • Propose a draft master plan for your chosen planning area, which simulates some, but not all, aspects of the Master Plan (e.g. planning vision, goals, land use allocation). • Deliver your draft master plan effectively and propose implementation strategies. | 40% |
| <p>Role Play Debate + Policy Briefs (Individual)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are four topics for role play debates included in the syllabus addressing challenges in various fields of planning. 25% of the students will be assigned to represent two different groups (about 6 people in each group) in each debate. As one topic will have debates over 2 weeks (2 questions*2 weeks), each group needs to coordinate main presenters for four different questions. After listening to one group’s 5-minute presentation, another group in a 5-minute presentation will defend the opposite point of view followed by one more round of debates. All the students will have to prepare policy briefs for four different topics and are expected to ask questions and provide comments. Rotation of topics will allow every student to participate in the course of the semester. • Each policy brief is a 2-page report (1.5 spacing, excluding references) summarizing and synthesizing the assigned readings and lecture materials covered in class. In total, you will write four briefs. You should highlight the key issues of the debate. For example, what are the main reasons scholars argue about the issue? What are the main arguments against either a course of action? Policy Briefs must be turned in the day of the second role debate of each topic. | 25% |

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| Weekly online quizzes (Individual) | 15% |
| Participation in Discussions the CANVAS Discussions and Other In-class Activities (Individual) | 20% |

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Academic integrity and honesty is essential for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The University and School expect every student to uphold academic integrity & honesty at all times. Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources, including AI tools like ChatGPT.

In this regard, representing an AI's output as your own work is plagiarism. Improper uses of AI tools which can be construed as plagiarism include, but are not limited, to the following:

- a) Generating an output and presenting it as your own work
- b) Generating an output, paraphrasing it and then presenting it as your own work
- c) Processing an original source not created by yourself to plagiarize it (*e.g. using an AI paraphrasing tool to disguise someone else's original work*)

The University and School will not condone plagiarism. If you have used an AI tool to complete any assigned work, in whole or in part, you must acknowledge it at the end of the assignment. Your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is entirely your own work. You have the obligation to declare when it is not. This is a minimum standard. In case of any doubt, you should consult your instructor.

Additional guidance is available at:

- <http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/administrative-policies-procedures/acceptance-record#NUSCodeofStudentConduct>
- <http://nus.edu.sg/osa/resources/code-of-student-conduct>

About me

I am Associate Professor and Dean's Chair of Urban Planning at the Business School at the National University of Singapore (NUS). I am also the Deputy Head in the NUS Department of Real Estate. I received numerous awards, including the Annual Teaching Excellence Award for 2016/2017, the Business School Teaching Excellence Awards for 2020/2021 and 2022/2023, and the School Teaching Excellence Awards for 2015/2016, 2016/2017, and 2018/2019.

I truly enjoy teaching real estate and urban planning that have practical and interdisciplinary natures between economic, socio-political and physical components. I am proud that my education exposing students to international cases and application to local contexts has inspired some students to shatter stereotypes to become critical thinkers and aspire changes in the built environment. Teaching these subjects also means that I and students could achieve mutual growth because there is no single answer for any question raised. As we learn from each other and collaborate for research, I am strongly motivated for my education as both a teacher and a learner.

At the intersection of real estate and urban planning, my research delves into housing and urban neighborhoods—the spaces where households reside and interact within geographically localized communities within a big city. Her current research interests include household residential choice, neighborhood dynamics, neighborhood effects, and housing affordability. I serve as Editor, Co-Editor, or Associate Editor of four prominent journals in the field of housing and urban planning, including *Housing*

Studies. I have also served as an academic expert and commentator for international organizations and government bodies including the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the Office of Policy Development and Research of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of South Korea. Prior to joining NUS, I received her PhD in Policy, Planning, and Development from the University of Southern California and Master in Urban Planning from Harvard University.

By teaching this course and interacting with students, I hope to produce more real estate professionals and urban planners who will significantly contribute to the built environment in Singapore and beyond.