

UEP Policy and Planning Competency Grid

Course Name/Number: 294(02)

Instructor: Goldman

Semester: Spring

a) Knowledge Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. History, structure, function of urban and metropolitan settlements	
2. Economic influences on policy and planning (e.g. 'market' and 'polis' relationships)	The macro-economic environment is considered among implementation challenges in readings, class discussion, and students' examination of their cases in writing assignments.
3. Environmental, social and cultural influences on policy and planning	These factors are considered among implementation challenges and resources for innovative alternatives in readings, class discussion, and students' examination of their cases in writing assignments.
4. Understanding different roles in policy and planning	Understanding the roles of each of these are a key focus of the course and are included in readings, class discussion, and students' analysis of cases in writing assignments. The concepts of accountability and responsibility, how they are distributed among these actors, challenges of upholding them, and mechanisms for overcoming the challenges. Understanding and contending with frictions and synergies among the roles of actors in each of these sectors is also a core theme.
i) Levels of government	The above are considered in relation to devolution of responsibility to local levels of government and nonprofit and private contractors. Questions about scaling up interventions – replication and expansion of programs and considerations for federal policy adoption – is a theme carried through latter part of the course.
ii) Governance structures	The course examines the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of governance structures including networked structures of governance, inter-organizational collaboration, communities of practice, and contractual agreements.
iii) Citizens and residents	Residents are among the key stakeholders' perspectives and among the active agents considered throughout the course, in relation to each implementation strategy examined.
iv) NGOs	Core readings and student-selected cases address both public and nonprofit organizations.
5. History, theory and processes of policymaking	The first unit of the course reviews the history of the conception of implementation and the evolution of policy paradigms to contend with implementation challenges.
6. History, theory and process of planning	

7. Implementation of policy and planning	The entire course is about this.
8. Evaluation of policy and planning	Evaluation – particularly the use of performance measurements – is the topic of one full session and one of the options for a student writing assignment.
9. Administrative and legal aspects of policy	The entire course contends with administrative themes. One session is devoted to legal strategies for modifying policies and programs and as a strategy to complement community organizing. We also discuss the relationship between planning and policy and legal expertise.
10. Administrative and legal aspects of planning	Much of the above relates to planning as well as policy.
11. Politics of policy and planning	Attention to the political feasibility of policies and plans and changes to them is a recurrent theme in readings and discussions. A session on strategic framing aims to address how political attention and power might be redirected.

b) Skills Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. Critical thinking	We focus on challenges of implementing policies, programs, and plans that contend with the problems they aim to address as well as emergent problems (or characterization of the problems). Students write a paper based on this analysis.
i) Defining problem	
ii) Documenting the extent of a problem	
iii) Documenting the political and social context	Students analyze the political, social, and economic context of implementation in relation to the cases they choose to focus on for the course.
iv) Documenting the environmental and spatial context	Students <i>may</i> include analysis of these factors in their case analysis for written assignments.
v) Identifying possible analysis strategies and their implications	The final project for the course is a proposal to outline strategies for contending with implementation challenges and proposing innovative alternatives. Students have the option of designing a proposal for further inquiry that details analysis strategies. All proposals include definitions of success and a plan for evaluation.
vi) Identifying criteria for proposing solutions	

vii) Identifying criteria for selecting solutions	
viii) Evaluating the development and results of policies and plans	
Thinking critically as examining competing views of an issue.	Readings for each topic include opposing or differing perspectives. Students consider the merits of alternative views in weekly e-mail reflections, in class discussions, exercises, and formal debates. Critique of readings and their own arguments is a requirement for all student papers.
2. Research skills	
i) Understanding research design	
ii) Collecting relevant literature	
iii) Analyzing relevant literature	
iv) Identifying and assessing data sources and limitations	
v) Developing data collection instruments and tools	
3. Data Analysis skills	
i) Interpreting and synthesizing data	
ii) Drawing inferences from specific observations to make	
iii) More generalizable findings	
iv) Comparative analysis	
v) Longitudinal analysis	
vi) Recognizing and accounting for limitations to findings	

4. Qualitative Analysis skills i) Direct observation	
ii) Analysis of primary qualitative data	
iii) Analysis of secondary qualitative data	
5. Quantitative Analysis skills i) Descriptive statistics	
ii) Inferential statistics	
iii) Basic forecasting	
iv) Use of spreadsheets and statistical software	
6. Spatial Analysis skills i) Understand how to identify spatial problems and frame spatial questions for analysis and research	
ii) Use Geographic Information System for basic spatial analysis and mapping	
7. Communication skills i) Writing skills	There are 4 writing assignments (three 5-7 pages and 1 20 page). Students receive feedback on writing style as well as content.
ii) Speaking skills	Students give several presentations in class. We use a format for giving feedback on the content and clarity of presentations that also aims to develop skills in active listening. Debates give students practice in persuasive argumentation and impromptu public speaking.
iii) Graphic presentation skills	Some in-class exercises employ “on-the-fly” graphics to deepen thinking and communicate ideas to others.
iv) Presentation strategies and methods	see speaking skills above

c) Policy and Planning in Practice Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. Collaboration skills i) Negotiation	
ii) Group project management	The advantages and pitfalls of inter-organizational coordination and collaboration is examined in readings and exercises in two class sessions.
iii) Group problem solving	Several in-class exercises aim to develop collective problem solving skills. Class readings include problem solving strategies.
iv) Perspective-taking	A session on strategic framing aims to identify strategies for influencing the perspectives of key audiences.
v) Adaptability, flexibility	The course aims to impart strategies for adapting to the implementation environment.
vi) Networking	Class readings include the role of informal networks in policy and program implementation.
2. Organizational management skills i) Decision making	
ii) Strategic problem solving and adapting to change	Class readings include problem solving strategies. Students apply such strategies to a case they select for the course.
iii) Human resource development	Readings and discussion include strategies for motivating staff and residents and other stakeholders.
iv) Financial management and resource development	
3. Political and economic power mapping skills i) Understanding political and economic power structures and dynamics	Political and economic power structures are among the factors included in case analysis.
ii) Modes of influencing their use	Students may focus on strategies for influencing power imbalances in their final projects.

4. Ethical and professional behavior skills

- i) Understanding and upholding the role of ethics and accountability in professional policy and planning processes, practices, and behavior

Accountability and responsibility are core themes of the course