

UEP Policy and Planning Competency Grid

Course Name/Number: UEP-255 Field Projects

Instructors: Rachel Bratt & Rusty Russell Semester: S09

NOTE: Some competencies will be fulfilled by all projects. However, due to the wide variety of projects that our students do in this class, different projects will provide opportunities to develop different competencies, to greater or lesser extents.

a) Knowledge Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. History, structure, function of urban and metropolitan settlements	Many of the Field Projects focus on the needs and problems of cities; for example, projects often focus on such issues as downtown revitalization, gentrification, and transportation
2. Economic influences on policy and planning (e.g. 'market' and 'polis' relationships)	This is an element of at least some Field Projects, such as how the economy impacts urban areas (e.g., deindustrialization and its impacts, housing price increases)
3. Environmental, social and cultural influences on policy and planning	This is an element of most Field Projects. For example, a recent environmental project focused on opportunities for developing alternative energy resources for the City of Boston.
4. Understanding different roles in policy and planning	
i) Levels of government	Important aspect of many projects; different projects focus on how various levels of government and NGOs can best intervene in policy and planning initiatives.
ii) Governance structures	Same
iii) Citizens and residents	Same
iv) NGOs	Same
5. History, theory and processes of policymaking	
6. History, theory and process of planning	

7. Implementation of policy and planning	This is a key focus of the course. Students are challenged to analyze current problems and to develop clear recommendations and implementation plans.
8. Evaluation of policy and planning	Some Field Projects involve an evaluation question
9. Administrative and legal aspects of policy	Pertains to some projects
10. Administrative and legal aspects of planning	same
11. Politics of policy and planning	Students engage with a full spectrum of political issues in their various projects.
b) Skills Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. Critical thinking	Yes; students are given the broad framework but must articulate specific research goals. These are presented to the class early in the semester.
i) Defining problem	
ii) Documenting the extent of a problem	Yes, each project must provide full documentation on the issue being examined
iii) Documenting the political and social context	Usually
iv) Documenting the environmental and spatial context	Usually
v) Identifying possible analysis strategies and their implications	Always, to some extent
vi) Identifying criteria for proposing solutions	Always
vii) Identifying criteria for selecting solutions	Yes
viii) Evaluating the development and results of policies and plans	This is often a key component of Field Projects

2. Research skills	
i) Understanding research design	Yes, to an extent
ii) Collecting relevant literature	Yes, essential
iii) Analyzing relevant literature	Yes
iv) Identifying and assessing data sources and limitations	Yes; all projects require that students carry out this task
v) Developing data collection instruments and tools	Yes; students must decide on the type of data needed and then develop the appropriate tools and instruments. These must get approved by the IRB.
3. Data Analysis skills	Yes; depending on the project, different amounts and levels of quantitative and qualitative analyses are needed.
i) Interpreting and synthesizing data	
ii) Drawing inferences from specific observations to make	Yes
iii) More generalizable findings	Yes
iv) Comparative analysis	Yes
v) Longitudinal analysis	Sometimes
vi) Recognizing and accounting for limitations to findings	Yes; projects must acknowledge the ways in which their work is limited by time, resources, distance etc.
4. Qualitative Analysis skills	Yes, usually. Most Field Projects require students to carry out interviews with key stakeholders or to observe a streetscape, or attend public meetings.
i) Direct observation	
ii) Analysis of primary qualitative data	Yes; see above
iii) Analysis of secondary qualitative data	As needed, depending on the demands of specific projects.

5. Quantitative Analysis skills	Projects often use descriptive statistics to present portraits of city/down demographics.
i) Descriptive statistics	
ii) Inferential statistics	
iii) Basic forecasting	
iv) Use of spreadsheets and statistical software	Infrequently
6. Spatial Analysis skills	Occasionally
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	Maybe a third of the Field Projects involve GIS
7. Communication skills	Yes; students complete a final report that is about 50-60 double-spaced pages in length
i) Writing skills	
ii) Speaking skills	Yes; students have to make a number of presentations on their project throughout the course of the semester One class session is devoted to speaking skills
iii) Graphic presentation skills	Yes; all final reports much include a significant amount of graphic representation One class session is devoted to graphic presentation skills
iv) Presentation strategies and methods	Yes; see above
c) Policy and Planning in Practice Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. Collaboration skills	Yes; students must decide among themselves who does what, within what time frame
i) Negotiation	
ii) Group project management	Yes; key aspect of the Field Projects experience
iii) Group problem solving	Yes; see above

iv) Perspective-taking	Yes; projects typically involve views of specific stakeholders
v) Adaptability, flexibility	Yes; students must learn to be flexible, as projects change in scope and detail over the course of the semester
vi) Networking	Yes; informants are typically identified through networking
2. Organizational management skills	Yes; students learn how organizations make decisions and they also gain experience in making decisions concerning their projects.
i) Decision making	
ii) Strategic problem solving and adapting to change	Yes; see above
iii) Human resource development	
iv) Financial management and resource development	
3. Political and economic power mapping skills	Yes; projects typically involve the need to tease out power relationships
i) Understanding political and economic power structures and their use	
ii) Modes of influencing their use	Yes; see above
4. Ethical and professional behavior skills	Yes; many Field Projects raise ethical and professional issues, in terms of confidentiality of information being collected.
i) Understanding and upholding the role of ethics and accountability in professional policy and planning processes, practices, and behavior	