

## UEP Policy and Planning Competency Grid

**Course Name/Number: UEP 294BC**

**Instructor: Levine**

**Semester: Summer 2011**

<b>a) Knowledge Competencies</b>	<b>Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course</b>
1. History, structure, function of urban and metropolitan settlements	Moderate focus: discussion of traditional and historic methods of financing local government and the impacts on urban growth and development since the 1800s. Discussion on the heavy reliance on the property tax and its effect on growth and development in states without income taxes, in states with “property tax reform” programs and in states that have not authorized the use of impact fees on new growth. Purpose of local government studied.
2. Economic influences on policy and planning (e.g. ‘market’ and ‘polis’ relationships)	Heavy focus- relationship of land use changes and ability to finance local services studied, with a focus on how state and federal tax laws affect the planner’s role in shaping growth and change. The difference between public and private services and the idea of cities as “clubs” is explored.
3. Environmental, social and cultural influences on policy and planning	
4. Understanding different roles in policy and planning	Heavy emphasis on the roles played at the local level of government as enabled by state constitutions and statutory approvals.
i) Levels of government	Moderate focus- we study intergovernmental transfers and their role in public finance. Heavy emphasis on the reliance of state and local government for limited tax dollars with particular focus on the property tax and property tax “revolts” in California and Massachusetts.
ii) Governance structures	
iii) Citizens and residents	Heavy emphasis on the responses of citizen organizations to tax programs, particularly the property tax. Emphasis on the responses to new taxation approaches, including impact fees, by the development community and the claim that such fees are disguised taxes. Discussion and review of judicial responses to these claims.
iv) NGOs	
5. History, theory and processes of policymaking	
6. History, theory and process of planning	

7. Implementation of policy and planning	Heavy focus- the class seeks to bridge the gap between finance theory and finance practice
8. Evaluation of policy and planning	Moderate focus- we look at different tax systems and structures and how they compare on theoretical tests of fairness and efficiency. Heavy emphasis on the statutory framework authorizing or prohibiting revenue raising techniques relied upon by local governments to fund municipal services.
9. Administrative and legal aspects of policy	Moderate focus- the cost and practicality of administering different tax types is studied
10. Administrative and legal aspects of planning	Moderate focus- Impacts of public finance laws on land use planning is studied.
11. Politics of policy and planning	Moderate focus- the need to have finances supported politically in order for them to be sustainable is studied.

<b>b) Skills Competencies</b>	<b>Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course</b>
<b>1. Critical thinking</b>	
i) Defining problem	Moderate focus- final paper involves choosing a public finance issue and outlining the basic issues affecting it.
ii) Documenting the extent of a problem	Moderate focus- looking at the extent to which local laws and politics affect ability to run local government is studied
iii) Documenting the political and social context	See above
iv) Documenting the environmental and spatial context	
v) Identifying possible analysis strategies and their implications	Moderate focus- looking at ways to frame public finance issues is studied
vi) Identifying criteria for proposing solutions	Moderate focus- legal and political issues that may affect public finance changes is studied
vii) Identifying criteria for selecting solutions	Moderate focus- one paper asks students to develop their ideal public finance scheme for local government and explain why these solutions are preferential.

viii) Evaluating the development and results of policies and plans	
<b>2. Research skills</b>	
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	
<b>3. Data Analysis skills</b>	Major focus- learning how to look at financial documents is studied
i) Interpreting and synthesizing data	
ii) Drawing inferences from specific observations to make	Moderate focus- one paper asks students to evaluate one public organization's financial plan and suggest changes
iii) More generalizable findings	Moderate focus- students are constantly asked to identify patterns in local finance
iv) Comparative analysis	
v) Longitudinal analysis	
vi) Recognizing and accounting for limitations to findings	
<b>4. Qualitative Analysis skills</b>	
i) Direct observation	
ii) Analysis of primary qualitative data	Heavy focus- we look at the nuts and bolts of how taxes are determined and use frequent case studies
iii) Analysis of secondary qualitative data	

<b>5. Quantitative Analysis skills</b> i) Descriptive statistics	Moderate focus- tests of looking at the robustness of local public finance is studied.
ii) Inferential statistics	
iii) Basic forecasting	Moderate focus- basic financial forecasts given land use and other trends is learned and applied.
iv) Use of spreadsheets and statistical software	Heavy focus- the ability to model finances and explore the impact of alternatives is examined through use of spreadsheets.
<b>6. Spatial Analysis skills</b> 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	
<b>7. Communication skills</b> i) Writing skills	Moderate focus- class has 2 papers and 2 short assignments. The goal is to develop skills in data presentation, particularly in a limited-length memorandum.
ii) Speaking skills	Some focus- class participants present their paper findings as practice for public speaking.
iii) Graphic presentation skills	
iv) Presentation strategies and methods	

<b>c) Policy and Planning in Practice Competencies</b>	<b>Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course</b>
<b>1. Collaboration skills</b> i) Negotiation	
ii) Group project management	
iii) Group problem solving	
iv) Perspective-taking	
v) Adaptability, flexibility	
vi) Networking	
<b>2. Organizational management skills</b> i) Decision making	
ii) Strategic problem solving and adapting to change	Moderate focus- the ability for the planner or policy-maker to respond to external factors that affect a municipal ability to operate is studied.
iii) Human resource development	
iv) Financial management and resource development	Heavy focus- most of the class is about financial management on the local level
<b>3. Political and economic power mapping skills</b> i) Understanding political and economic power structures and dynamics	Moderate focus- importance of having an understanding of the political environment as a part of choosing how to fund public services, and the ability of some residents to choose to “vote with their feet” is studied.
ii) Modes of influencing their use	Some focus- presenting the need to raise revenue as a choice and allowing residents to understand alternatives is studied.
<b>4. Ethical and professional behavior skills</b> i) Understanding and upholding the role of ethics and accountability in professional policy and planning processes, practices, and behavior	

