

UEP Policy and Planning Competency Grid

Course Name/Number: UEP250 – Foundations

Instructor:

Semester: Fall 2011

| a) Knowledge Competencies | Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course |
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| 1. History, structure, function of urban and metropolitan settlements | Minor focus. Brief discussion of urban America in colonial and modern ages. Case studies provide a deeper look at how Boston metro area has evolved. |
| 2. Economic influences on policy and planning (e.g. 'market' and 'polis' relationships) | Major focus. Readings on efficiency, equity, security, and their tradeoffs. Major focus on rational model of policy and planning and its limits and challenges. Explore these influences in looking at stakeholders, as well as in case studies. |
| 3. Environmental, social and cultural influences on policy and planning | Major focus. Classes on framing of policy, agenda setting, and communications/media. Explore these influences in looking at stakeholders, through power mapping as well as case studies. |
| 4. Understanding different roles in policy and planning | Major focus (see below for more details). Community meeting assignment is one window to examine roles in the policy/planning process. Policy/Planning brief requires targeting recommendations to a specific decision maker. |
| i) Levels of government | Focus on legal and legislative foundations for planning, federal/state interactions, and devolution. Slightly more emphasis on state and local government, particularly in case studies. |
| ii) Governance structures | Focus on interaction among layers of government. |
| iii) Citizens and residents | Focus on community participation, civic engagement, participatory democracy, and community organizing as ideals for democracy. |
| iv) NGOs | Focus on non-profit sector in US and role in governance and privatization. |
| 5. History, theory and processes of policymaking | Major focus, through first half of course on “what” and “why” of policy and planning, particularly historical roots and justifications for intervention through policy, the rational model and alternatives.. |
| 6. History, theory and process of planning | Major focus, through first half of course on “what” and “why” of policy and planning, particularly historical roots and justifications for intervention through planning, the rational model of the planning process and alternatives. |
| 7. Implementation of policy and planning | Moderate focus. One class dedicated to implementation issues. Touch on in review of comprehensive plans and policy examples, as well as policy/planning brief assignment. |

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| 8. Evaluation of policy and planning | Minor focus. |
| 9. Administrative and legal aspects of policy | Major focus, particularly through case studies. |
| 10. Administrative and legal aspects of planning | Major focus, through readings and understanding how constitutional principles, federal statutes, administrative regulations, and judicial decisions intersect with planning activities. |
| 11. Politics of policy and planning | Major focus, looking at stakeholders, power analysis and mapping, particularly in case studies. Community meeting assignment and policy/planning brief require understanding the political context. |

| b) Skills Competencies | Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course |
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| 1. Critical thinking | Major focus in public problem framing. Literature review and policy/planning brief assignment require this. |
| i) Defining problem | |
| ii) Documenting the extent of a problem | Major focus of literature review assignment, case studies, and review of plans and policies. |
| iii) Documenting the political and social context | Same as above. |
| iv) Documenting the environmental and spatial context | Same as above. |
| v) Identifying possible analysis strategies and their implications | Major focus of policy/planning brief assignment, and review of plans and policies. |
| vi) Identifying criteria for proposing solutions | Major focus of policy/planning brief assignment, policy solutions class, and review of plans and policies. |
| vii) Identifying criteria for selecting solutions | Major focus of policy/planning brief assignment, policy solutions class, and review of plans and policies. |
| viii) Evaluating the development and results of policies and plans | Minor focus. |
| 2. Research skills | Minor focus, through literature review assignment. |
| i) Understanding research design | |

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| ii) Collecting relevant literature | Major focus, through literature review assignment and mandatory library research workshop. |
| iii) Analyzing relevant literature | Major focus of literature review assignment. |
| iv) Identifying and assessing data sources and limitations | |
| v) Developing data collection instruments and tools | |
| 3. Data Analysis skills | Minor focus of community meeting assignment and analyzing comprehensive plans and policies. |
| i) Interpreting and synthesizing data | |
| ii) Drawing inferences from specific observations to make | Minor focus of community meeting assignment and analyzing comprehensive plans and policies. |
| iii) More generalizable findings | |
| iv) Comparative analysis | |
| v) Longitudinal analysis | |
| vi) Recognizing and accounting for limitations to findings | Minor focus through literature review assignment. |
| 4. Qualitative Analysis skills | Major focus of community meeting assignment. |
| i) Direct observation | |
| ii) Analysis of primary qualitative data | Major focus of community meeting assignment. |
| iii) Analysis of secondary qualitative data | Major focus of literature review assignment, analyzing comprehensive plans and policies, and policy/planning brief. |
| 5. Quantitative Analysis skills | |
| i) Descriptive statistics | |

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| 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 | Major focus. Through writing assignments, an opportunity to develop writing skills in various styles: journalistic news account, academically-focused literature review, research-based analysis, and decision briefing. |
| i) Writing skills | |
| ii) Speaking skills | Minor focus. Verbal communication skills in small discussion groups. |
| iii) Graphic presentation skills | Possibly in policy/planning briefing. |
| iv) Presentation strategies and methods | |

| c) Policy and Planning in Practice Competencies | Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course |
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| 1. Collaboration skills i) Negotiation | While Foundations does not cultivate these skills, it lays theoretical groundwork for the importance of these skills in policy and planning, encourage critical thinking about these skills, and will in some cases model them through class exercises. |
| ii) Group project management | |
| iii) Group problem solving | |
| iv) Perspective-taking | |
| v) Adaptability, flexibility | |
| vi) Networking | |
| 2. Organizational management skills i) Decision making | |
| ii) Strategic problem solving and adapting to change | |
| iii) Human resource development | |
| iv) Financial management and resource development | |
| 3. Political and economic power mapping skills i) Understanding political and economic power structures and dynamics | Major focus. Direct focus of stakeholder portion of class, including power mapping. |
| ii) Modes of influencing their use | Major focus. |

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

Major focus. Class introduces framing questions about impact of values and UEP's appreciation of the deeply embedded nature of gender, age, race, class, dis/ability, culture and sexual orientation in all aspects of public policy and planning. We examine these questions throughout case studies and readings, and finish with explicit focus on professional ethics.