

Urban Studies Core Curriculum Objectives

A) URBS 101: Urban Life

Considerations for the URBS 101- needs more rigor and more exposure to relationship between academic readings to real world examples.

Substantive Objectives:

- Define urban experience.
- Broaden students' horizons to engage and excite them about the city/urban life by supplementing text with relevant media, field trips, and guest speakers.
- Utilize a diverse literature to define the urban experience suggested topics include neighborhood life, use of public spaces e.g. (subways, parks, sidewalks, and streets) and the convergence of race, class, gender and sexual orientation.

Skill Based Objectives:

- Ability to compile and analyze data based on primary and secondary research for papers
- Ability to assemble qualitative/quantitative data
- Ability to read and comprehend different types of publication from text books to academic journals and scholarly books.

Exam type: Multiple choice, short answer

Assignments: Neighborhood description, census lab, hand drawn map, short papers.

Reading type: popular readings, text book, newspaper

B) URBS 102: Structure of the Urban Region

Considerations for the URBS 102- introduction to the frameworks and concepts that govern metropolitan regions through the lens of sustainability while giving students and increased skill set for the next step in URBS 201

Substantive Objectives:

- Introduce metropolitan regions—suburbanization, land use patterns, infrastructure, and sprawl
- Introduce political frameworks—city council, mayor, planning commission, MPOs
- Use critical viewpoint of sustainability to discuss current affairs and content.

Skill Based Objectives:

- Ability to read charts, tables, and maps using foundations established in 101 with data assembly and analysis.
- Development of oral presentation skills
- Introduction to working in groups, combined research presentation and group dynamics
- Ability to write analytical papers in a clear concise cogent format emphasizing proper grammar usage and citations.

Exam Type: Short answer or essay, no multiple choice Assignments- Short papers, group projects, oral presentations

Reading material should include: textbook, journal articles, newspaper articles and books.(Death and Life of Great American Cities)

C) URBS 201: Contemporary Plans and Policies

Substantive Objectives:

- To gain knowledge about policy making process and plans and policies— physical/social and historic/contemporary
- Use political theory to understand policy/planning outcomes
- To present opposing viewpoints on plans and policies
- To understand the role of non-profits in urban planning and policy making

Skill Based Objectives:

- To develop critical thinking skills
- To write with clarity coherence and precision
- To hone oral presentation skills
- To use tables, charts, and maps for critical analysis of policies and plans
- TO interpret difficult to read text and to be able to succinctly and clearly articulate complex ideas thru writing.
- Written assignments and exams requiring comparative analyses of readings and concepts.

Assignment/Exam: Comparative analysis minimum of 2 pages or comprehensive paper.

Readings: Plans, policies, legislation

D) URBS 310: Methods of Urban Research and Policy Analysis

Substantive Objectives:

- To build upon theory about policy and plans discussed in URBS 201
- Understand process of policy analysis through the use of qualitative research methods
- To present case studies that are real world examples of implemented policies.

Skill Based Objectives:

- To do a complete analysis of policies which would include: problem definition, data collection, data synthesis, and creating an oral and written report to develop group management skills.
- To acquire the skills to work cooperatively in a group
- To work under pressure with a deadline
- To learn about interviewing and other primary research methods
- Conduct problem solving with limited guidance and supervision

Assignments/Exams: Policy paper, individual and group papers, oral presentations

Reading: Bibliography for comprehensive research paper

E) URBS 311 Quantitative Approaches to Urban Analysis

Substantive Objectives: The class will deal with three broad subject areas:

- Basic Data Analysis, which explores data collection, analysis, and presentation as a means to define urban trends and activities.
- Demography which focuses on an in depth look at census data and basic demographic concepts that define urban populations
- Quantitative approaches to policy analysis with a focus on benefits/costs analysis

Skill Based Objectives:

- To use MS Excel and SPSS software as an analytical tool, the class will introduce students to basic quantitative methods needed to analyze populations and urban structure.

Assignments/Exams: Data analysis assignments

Reading: Bibliography for quantitative data analysis