Urban Planning 370 Draft Syllabus A
Introduction To Health Systems Planning
Fall 2015

Time & Location: MWF 3:00-3:50 AM, BSBE 115

Syllabus

Office Hours and communicating with the professor:
Office hours are MWF after class from 4pm to 5pm, and by appointment. I don’t mind making appointments. Just ask or email. I’ll do my best to coordinate with your schedule.

Email seems to be the most reliable way to communicate between classes. Since there are so many students, my replies tend to be succinct. Please don’t misinterpret brevity or terseness as negativity. It is just an effort to give you the information you need as efficiently as I can, and still have time to answer other students’ questions.

Prerequisites
Junior or Senior classification, or permission of the instructor.

Texts


Other readings as assigned.

Course Overview
Health systems planning is an entire professional field with a broad interdisciplinary body of knowledge. It requires and attracts participants from many different disciplines. You will be attending class with people from a number of different majors.

This is the introductory course to this interdisciplinary field of study. 54% of the world's population now lives in urban places. Over 80% of Americans and Texans live in urban places. Improved knowledge about sustainable, livable environments, particularly urban environments influence the qualities of the places where we live, and the lives we can live in them.

Healthcare accounts for nearly a fifth of the American economy. The health system in the United States is a vast enterprise that every American interacts with as patients, while assisting relatives or as health professionals. The costs, quality and access to care in the health system have been at the center of public debate since Franklin Roosevelt introduced Social Security in the 1930's. URPN 370 introduces students to the history and organization of the health system in social, cultural and political context, in a way that creates informed citizens with a foundation from which to judge the great issues of today.

The purpose of planning, be it urban planning or strategic planning, is to create the future. To
that end we make decisions today in light of their future effects in order to guide our communities or organizations to our preferred future. Health care, health systems and our society at large are undergoing many changes, not only because of the Affordable Care Act, but also because of continuing innovation in the sciences and related technologies, and changes in care delivery and access. Demographic and economic forces create challenges to our community systems and health systems.

People in numerous professions, not just in healthcare, are practicing in a fluid environment. Many of the jobs you may have 20, 30 or 40 years from now do not exist today. URPN 370 introduces you to how long term planners think about issues, design solutions to problems and create actionable strategies to meet the challenges of the future. The methods of strategic planning taught in URPN 370 are broadly applicable in our students’ professional and personal lives, and as citizens.

While looking at how the health system fits into the urban systems of American communities, URPN 370 provides an overview of how individuals and groups interact with institutions generally. The course addresses current events like the debates on the Affordable Care Act, the disastrous explosion in West, TX, the ebola epidemic, the tsunami in Japan, and other current issues, to illustrate the general importance and broad scope of health related issues in our society. Current events and innovations also fuel the discovery of surprising connections between seemingly unrelated developments like driverless cars, 3D printing, touchscreen technology and high impact solutions to healthcare access, organ and limb replacement, and implantable regulators and monitors.

These class encounters demonstrate the wide applicability of the knowledge and techniques learned in this course by exploring the behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions while making decisions about the preferred future for their organizations or communities. Strategic planning is an inclusive and interdisciplinary process that fosters evidence based decision making to guide the creation of a mutually agreed upon desirable future. The processes and plans people create reflect the built and natural environment, and the cultural, political, economic, technological and health context of our organizations and communities, using the health system to illustrate them.

Given this broad interdisciplinary body of knowledge, our course in health systems planning cannot be comprehensive. Our course is an introduction to health systems planning. We will take an overview of how the health system is organized in the United States and how it got that way. The course will also introduce students to health systems planning in the U.S. (How do we anticipate and plan for the future of our businesses, organizations, or communities? Can we create our preferred future?)

There is not near enough time to lecture on every significant point in every resource, so I will highlight some points and add comments on current events, planning or administrative practice where appropriate. As time permits, I will also introduce topics not covered in our texts but valuable for perspective or to fill in gaps.

Course activities focus on strategic planning process at the community and organizational levels, different models of “health,” changing values, demographics, national health policies, and many other pressures impacting health, health care and the broader society where those systems operate in the United States.

Learning Objectives
As a result of successfully completing URPN 370, students will:

1. recognize many of the effects of core beliefs, values and world views on decisions made by individuals, organizations, and communities and the cumulative effects of decisions in creating futures;
2. be able to develop, express and defend informed opinions issues based on knowledge, using the historical development and structure of the U.S. health care system to illustrate;
3. possess a working knowledge of a widely applicable planning process;
4. be ready to contribute to an organization’s or community’s planning process through the application of their understanding of the goals of strategic planning and each of the steps in that process, including their familiarity with basic methods and techniques associated with strategic planning processes.

Course Requirements

- Assigned readings in texts and supplemental materials
- Homework assignments related to major elements of the health planning process and related topics
- Several quizzes online and in class
- Group projects.

Relative Weight of Course Activities in Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Pct w/o Final</th>
<th>Pct of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests (3 cumulative tests in class @ 10% each, &amp; 3 minor tests in eCampus @ 3.33% each)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Project 1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Project 2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework:</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBTotal</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (optional)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The course will be guided down several pathways. However, your choices on homework assignments and projects will allow you to choose about 1/3 of the topics you study within that framework.

Grading
Grades will not be curved. Every student has an opportunity to make an A. The best way to get a good grade in this course is to make a serious effort to meet the criteria and intent of each assignment and turn it in on time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Percent grade</th>
<th>Course grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>89.5 plus</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.5-89.4</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.5-79.4</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.5-69.4</td>
<td>D</td>
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</tbody>
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ECampus

ECampus is still fairly new at Texas A&M, so I would not be surprised if we run into some glitches along the way. With the assistance of the ITS department, I will continue to explore the communication abilities available through eCampus. In the meantime, you can reach me at deanboyd@tamu.edu.

ECampus also has numerous tools to support group projects. ECampus also has other capabilities that might prove useful as we progress through our various activities this semester.

Homework Assignments (details on separate documents)

Homework will include assignments related to aspects of health planning process conducted by community groups and health care institutions. Assignments will illustrate various aspects or characteristics of the health system or planning, or be designed for deeper understanding of the assigned readings. I will provide details for each type on separate documents.

Reading Assignments

Reading assignments as noted in the semester schedule or as added during the semester. Supplemental readings may be distributed by links to online resources, posted in eCampus or by other means from time to time. Students should be prepared to discuss readings in class. Although I will discuss topics covered in the assigned reading, I will also take time for other relevant material from time to time. When possible, we will also welcome guest speakers.

Turning in Assignments

I prefer receiving assignment both in the drop boxes I will provide in eCampus and in hard copy. I can frequently read through hard copies much more quickly than I can click through the assignments in eCampus. However, if you turn in a copy in eCampus, it gives me a way to provide feedback and guidance that you can receive quickly, if it is necessary. Please turn your assignments in as MS Word documents, unless directed to do otherwise by me. Handwritten assignments are almost never acceptable.

Since you may be asked to briefly discuss your work during class, it might be a good idea to have a copy of your work available for yourself in class. If you have a problem getting eCampus to accept your assignment, bring a hard copy to class and tell me what happened.
Late assignments – It is important to turn in assignments on time. Unless you have a university approved excuse, assignments turned in one class after the due date will receive half of whatever grade they would have earned if turned in on time, 2 classes late will receive ¼ credit, 3 classes late will receive no credit.

Written Assignments
There will be several types of written assignments, all related to topics relevant to our class. I suggest that you use quotation marks, give credit where credit is due, and run any abstracts or research papers through Turnitin before you turn it in.

Examinations
There is not enough time to discuss every significant point covered in the readings in class. Any study materials that might be provided are not intended to be comprehensive. It would be wise to employ all your skills as an experienced college student to keep up with the reading, and study.

There will be several quizzes. Unannounced pop quizzes as needed.

3 minor quizzes/exams will be delivered in eCampus. 3 major quizzes will be taken in class. You will need a "SCANTRON" (the large, grey, 8.5 x 11 size) form for these tests. Test material will derive from reading assignments, class discussion and speakers’ presentations.

ONLY STUDENTS WITH EXCUSED ABSENCES AS PER UNIVERSITY RULES AND REGULATIONS WILL BE ALLOWED TO MAKE UP TESTS.

Group Projects
There will be 2 group projects presented at the times designated on your schedule. One project will be based on a scenario provided by your professor. The other project will allow more freedom of choice.

The end product of the team project will be a PowerPoint or video presentation. (Other presentation media can be approved, let me know what you have in mind.) The project will be on a topic pre-approved by the professor. There can be more than one project on one general area of inquiry. For example, there could be many different presentations for Project 1 on the future of health or health care in the next 10 to 20 years. Although the project will be future oriented, it will be based on research, not mere fantasy. A combination of academic research published in scholarly journals and other more popular sources (Science, Smithsonian, the Futurist, Kurzweil’s website, business and design publications, online or off) would be viewed favorably by your professor, and should stimulate some liberated thinking.

Peer Review: The professor will randomly assign you to a group of 5 or 6 people. Depending on the number of students in the class, each team should have about 4 or 5 minutes for each of their project presentations. The professor will grade the project. Each team member will grade the quality and level of participation of each of the other team members. It will be in the interest of each student to make a meaningful effort to contribute to their team’s project. The team will give every team member a chance to make a useful contribution to the project.

Additional information will be provided on a separate document and in class.
Semester Schedule
A separate document will provide details. Depending on their availability, there will be guest speakers during the course of the semester. Depending on their schedules, we may have to adjust the schedule or the order in which we study various topics.

Late assignments – It bears repeating that it is important to turn in assignments on time. Unless you have a university approved excuse, assignments turned in one class after the due date will receive half of whatever grade they would have earned if turned in on time, 2 classes late will receive ¼ credit, 3 classes late will receive no credit.

Attendance & General Class Policies
Attendance is assumed and expected. Attendance is mandatory when we have guest speakers or outside activities. The only exception is university approved absences. I will not take roll every class period, but I will from time to time. Every student should have a full size (8½ x 11) piece of paper with them at each class for attendance. Since some test material and other assignment information will come from class activities, it will be in your best interest to come to class. Attendance also counts as 10% of your grade. A deduction will be made from your grade if you happen to have an unexcused absence on a day we take attendance.

NO CAMERAS, PHONES OR ANY OTHER DEVICE FOR RECORDING AUDIO OR VISUAL INFORMATION MAY BE USED DURING CLASS WITHOUT ADVANCE PERMISSION.

The Aggie Honor Code is alive and well in this course. Dishonesty in any form (plagiarism, cheating,....) will not be tolerated. Sanctions for such behavior can include an F in the class and possibly dismissal from the University.

Students with Disabilities
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit http://disability.tamu.edu.

Academic Integrity Statements
The Aggie Honor Code states that “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.” Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student commits to uphold the Honor Code by accepting responsibility to learn and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment to doing so on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. For additional information visit: http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/