UNSW Course Outline

PLAN7149 Planning Thesis - 2024

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General Course Information

Course Code : PLAN7149
Year : 2024
Term : Term 1
Teaching Period : T1
Is a multi-term course? : No
Faculty : Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture
Academic Unit : School of Built Environment
Delivery Mode : In Person
Delivery Format : Standard
Delivery Location : Kensington
Campus : Sydney
Study Level : Postgraduate
Units of Credit : 12

Useful Links

Handbook Class Timetable

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

Planning Thesis deepens your knowledge of planning and urban studies by writing a research thesis. You will develop and evaluate arguments, undertake critical analysis and synthesis, and apply creative thinking to a complex problem. You will have the opportunity to choose your research topic and to build on the research proposal and literature review you developed in

BENV7020. You will be assigned a supervisor who will give you advice and feedback throughout your research process and thesis preparation. You will undertake primary fieldwork and put into practice core research and analysis skills developed throughout your degree. You will produce a thesis that demonstrates coherence, logic, structure, relevance and accuracy and that presents your ideas in a creative and compelling way.

Relationship to Other Courses

This thesis course follows on from BENV7020 which prepares MCP students to undertake a capstone planning thesis.

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CLO1 : Translate a problem or area of interest into a coherent research program.
CLO2 : Critically review existing literature and use your insights to shape your research.
CLO3 : Synthesise academic and policy material to produce a compelling argument.
CLO4 : Apply relevant and robust research methods to address your research questions.
CLO5 : Appreciate the value of research to your future work as a planner, and understand its strengths and weaknesses.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CLO1 : Translate a problem or area of interest into a coherent research program.	• Final thesis
CLO2 : Critically review existing literature and use your insights to shape your research.	• Final thesis
CLO3 : Synthesise academic and policy material to produce a compelling argument.	• Final thesis
CLO4 : Apply relevant and robust research methods to address your research questions.	• Final thesis
CLO5 : Appreciate the value of research to your future work as a planner, and understand its strengths and weaknesses.	• Final thesis

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

Learning and Teaching in this course

This course focuses upon assisting students with their individual task to progress and finalise a

research project of interest to them and relevant to the wider (and diverse) field of planning and urban studies. That assistance comes via both intellectual and practical support.

The key goal is to help provide some of the necessary tools and confidence to tackle your subject matter through a well-structured, rigorous research approach.

All students are encouraged to think independently and critically. This is ultimately a personal journey and exercise. However, the group meetings underline the commonalties in that process with shared learnings for all.

For T1 2024 the group meetings will be live/face to face and not recorded. Their intent is to complement and not compete with the advice and direction of designated advisors. In the scheduled class meetings lecturer presentations will outline key general issues to be considered in progressing your work at a considered pace. This may to some extent revisit and discuss knowledge already gained through BENV7020 and revisions undertaken subsequently. Two main foci are (1) writing and (2) visualization.

The small class size facilitates an informal, flexible and responsive teaching approach to learning. Students will be taken through the expected elements of the final thesis – abstract, introduction, conceptual framework, literature and policy review, methods, findings and analysis, conclusions, plagiarism declaration – and cover basics such as referencing protocols, writing and presentation standards. The course also supports the end-of-year on-line planning catalogue/exhibition with a written abstract and selection or preparation of an iconic image.

Please note that while there are only five set meetings there are tasks required to be completed between and in advance of some meetings, as well as email interactions with the lecturer outside of those class times. Please check the Course Schedule for details!

At the end of the term, students will make short final presentations of their research findings. Advisors are invited to these presentations. Students will be provided with feedback and thoughts from the class that might help finalization of their thesis (due a fortnight later).

Additional Course Information

A note on thesis supervision: The broader understandings and feedback delivered in this course are intended to complement and not supplant the primary advice of your advisor. Each student has an advisor assigned by the commencement of the course as a result of their work in BENV7020. Advisors provide advice at principal stages in the research process and offer

feedback along the way. Students will be expected to meet with them on a regular basis, with the frequency and terms of engagement agreed. A timing guideline would be once a fortnight on average for half an hour with the expectation of your preparing for the meeting in order to make the most of the time available. Sending through a short progress update or draft section in advance of the meeting and flagging of key issues to discuss is desirable. Advisors are not on call 24/7 should also be able to respond to email queries outside formal meetings commensurate with their commitments and timelines.

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Final thesis Assessment Format: Individual	100%	

Assessment Details
Final thesis

Assessment Overview

You will produce a research thesis that addresses a relevant contemporary planning issue. The completed project will address all key components of the research process in a clearly structured and well-presented format. While most of you will produce a thesis in a conventional written format, you will also have the option of incorporating a significant multi-media component (with prior approval). Your thesis will be double marked, and you will receive written feedback from each of your examiners. Examiners will assess your work based on the quality of project content, organisation and presentation.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Translate a problem or area of interest into a coherent research program.
- CLO2 : Critically review existing literature and use your insights to shape your research.
- CLO3 : Synthesise academic and policy material to produce a compelling argument.
- CLO4 : Apply relevant and robust research methods to address your research questions.
- CLO5 : Appreciate the value of research to your future work as a planner, and understand its strengths and weaknesses.

General Assessment Information

The final thesis provides the major output of this course. There is no rigid template to follow beyond respecting the conventions that have been established to date. The maximum length is

100 pages all-up (average range would be 40-80) and the text word length is 10-15,000 words maximum (excluding references, tables and preliminary pages.

The thesis is marked by two people. One is your advisor and the other is another member of the full-time or part-time planning teaching staff. The second examiner is chosen by the Head of Program.

Examiners will be looking for strengths and weaknesses in your work. Three over-arching criteria are (1) quality of project content (originality, initiative and value-add evident) (2) organisation (structure, completeness and comprehensiveness of the final product), and (3) presentation (written and visual communication standards).

The following heading below guide examiners in the examination process:

Topic aims and purpose

Literature review

Methodology

Structure and style

Findings and significance

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

There are several tasks which must be undertaken (e.g. drafting an abstract and selecting an iconic thesis image, plus producing and delivering a powerpoint presentation on your major findings to the class) however the only formal assessment is for the the thesis (100% of course mark).

Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 12 February - 18 February	Blended	Tuesday 13 February Introduction: course requirements; your progress and issues arising since BENV7020; lessons from past students; examples of past theses for reference; and ethics
Week 2 : 19 February - 25 February	Other	No class
Week 3 : 26 February - 3 March	Blended	Tuesday 27 February Written presentation
Week 4 : 4 March - 10 March	Other	No class
Week 5 : 11 March - 17 March	Blended	Tuesday 12 March Visual presentation; preparing abstracts & images
Week 6 : 18 March - 24 March	Online Activity	Tuesday 19 March (Flex week) No class – but a task - draft abstract and image
Week 7 : 25 March - 31 March	Blended	Tuesday 26 March Revision and discussion – putting the pieces together
Week 8 : 1 April - 7 April	Online Activity	Tuesday 2 April No class – but a task - draft presentation
Week 9 : 8 April - 14 April	Presentation	Tuesday 9 April (Final class) Final Presentations
Week 10 : 15 April - 21 April	Online Activity	Tuesday 16 April No class – but a task - final abstract and image
Week 11 : 22 April - 28 April	Assessment	Tuesday 23 April Thesis due

Attendance Requirements

You are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes for the School of Built Environment courses in which you are enrolled. If and where individual courses have specific attendance requirements, these will be stated in the course outline.

If you do not attend, engage, or participate in scheduled class activities, including lectures, tutorials, studios, labs, etc, you run the risk of failing a course.

If illness or unexpected and beyond your control circumstances prevent you from completing a task on time, or substantially disturb your assessment performance, you should apply for Special Consideration, as soon as practicable, accompanied by appropriate documentation.

No special consideration will be provided if you miss out on essential course information and

materials, or if you miss assessment tasks and deadlines due to unexplained absences or an unapproved lack of attendance.

You may be advised by the Course Convenor to withdraw from the course if significant learning activities are missed.

General Schedule Information

(1) Meetings with advisors are to be arranged between students and advisors

(2) Fortnightly Face to Face (F2F) meetings from Week 1 on Tuesday afternoons (Weeks 1,3,5,7 and 9). On average two hours duration with (1) presentation/lecture and (2) discussion/tutorial. Meeting from 4pm in Quadrangle Building Room Quad G055.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

N/A

Recommended Resources

Planning/urban studies/built environment

Crane, R. and Weber, R., eds. (2012) *The Oxford Handbook of Urban Planning*, Oxford University Press.

Dandekar, H.C., ed. (2019) *The Planner's Use of Information* (3rd ed.), Routledge.

Farrell, P. (2011) *Writing a built environment dissertation: Practical guidance and examples*, Blackwell.

Farthing, S. (2016) *Research Design in Urban* Planning, Sage.

Knight, A. and Ruddock, L. (2008) *Advanced Research Methods in the Built Environment*, Wiley-Blackwell.

Kousoulas, C. (2020) *Writing for Planners: A Handbook for Students and Professionals in Writing, Editing, and Document Production*, Routledge.

MacCallum, D., Babb, C. & Curtis, C. (2019) *Doing Research in Urban and Regional Planning: Lessons in Practical Methods*, Routledge.

Patton, C.V., Sawicki, D. and Clark, J. eds. (2012) *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning* (3rd ed.), Taylor and Francis.

Piccolo, F.L. and Thomas, H. (2009) *Ethics and Planning Research*, Ashgate.

Sanchez, TW, ed. (2018) *Planning Knowledge and Research*, Routledge.

Silva, E.A., Healey, P., Harris, N., and Van Den Broeck, P. eds. (2015) *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Research Methods*. Routledge.

Temple, M. (2004) *Studying the Built Environment*, Palgrave.

Ward, K., ed. (2014) *Researching the City*, Sage.

Wang, X. and Hofe, R. (2007) *Research Methods in Urban and Regional Planning*, Springer.

Additional Costs

N/A

Course Evaluation and Development

Evolution has capitalised on the expetiences of several different convenors + MyExperience feedback.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	Robert Freestone		Anita B Lawrence Centre, Room 2002	93854836	Appointments by email.	No	Yes

Other Useful Information

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided).

Please see: https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/

[protocols-guidelines](#) for essential student information relating to:

- UNSW and Faculty policies and procedures;
- Student Support Services;
- Dean's List;
- review of results;
- credit transfer;
- cross-institutional study and exchange;
- examination information;
- enrolment information;
- Special Consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;

And other essential academic information.

Academic Honesty and Plagarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.
- Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.
- Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.
- Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

The UNSW Academic Skills support offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items. UNSW Library has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW, but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Use of AI for assessments

As AI applications continue to develop, and technology rapidly progresses around us, we remain committed to our values around academic integrity at UNSW. Where the use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, has been permitted by your course convener, they must be properly credited and your submissions must be substantially your own work.

In cases where the use of AI has been prohibited, please respect this and be aware that where unauthorised use is detected, penalties will apply.

Use of AI for assessments | UNSW Current Students

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au

Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin, you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support, you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone, you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, alternative submission details will be stated on your course's Moodle site. For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Late Submission Penalty

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per calendar day,
- for all assessments where a penalty applies,
- capped at five calendar days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines and to request Special Consideration as early as possible before the deadline. Support with Time Management is available here.

School Contact Information

beadmin@unsw.edu.au