CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

**CP6xxx: Public Health and Built Environment**

This interdisciplinary course, examines how cities and neighborhoods can have both positive and adverse effects on human health, and produces recommendations to improve these outcomes. Seminar is an elective planning and public health course that explores the interconnections between these fields and equips students with skills and experiences to plan healthy communities. The planning and public health disciplines emerged together with the common goal of preventing outbreaks of infectious disease. Since that time, the two disciplines diverged in their foci; public health following a clinical model and planning focusing on urban design and physical form. However, as the intimate connections between the built environment and disease continue to be revealed, the planning and public health fields have begun to converge once again. This course is organized along four units: unit 1, planning and public health foundations; unit 2, natural and built environments; unit 3, vulnerable populations and health disparities; and unit 4, health policy and global impacts. For the final exam, students will write a healthy communities plan on a neighborhood of particular interest, applying current evidence and best practices studied throughout the semester.

Readings are assigned and discussed during class sessions, coupled with experiential learning exercises. Students are expected to think critically and to incorporate their unique perspectives into the classroom discussions and semester assignments. The course involves academic and topical readings, mini-lectures, student presentations and both in-class and homework assignments. The course is designed to enhance students’ (1) awareness of how planning impacts health, (2) understanding of public health influences on the built environment, and (3) ability to create healthy communities.

*Pre-requisites:* Graduate standing at Georgia Institute of Technology or Emory University, or permission of instructor.

*Course objectives*: At the end of the course, students will be able to:

Unit 1 ⎥ Foundational Knowledge. Understand public health and planning history, evolution and significant movements to the present, and historical and current theories on the relationship between the built environment and public health.

Unit 2 ⎥ Application. Identify contemporary features of the built environment such as patterns of development, parks, public works projects, houses, and transportation systems that reflect past efforts to influence health, and use methods developed by architects, urban planners, public health professionals, sociologists and anthropologists to address current health impacts of the built environment.

Unit 3 ⎥ Human Dimensions. Learn about oneself and the context in which others operate to better integrate that understanding when evaluating differing built environments, socioeconomic positions, social and cultural backgrounds, and health status.

Unit 3 ⎥ Caring. Adopt new feelings, interests or values based on issues addressed throughout the semester.

Unit 4 ⎥ Learning How to Learn. Develop skills to identify studies and engage communities, critique methods and findings, and apply lessons from planning and public health research to current and future problems.

Final ⎥ Integration. Integrate current evidence regarding the impacts of the built environment on health with information and perspectives from other courses and/or personal experiences.

*Texts:* Available from the Georgia Tech bookstore on Spring Street, and the Engineer’s Bookstore on Marietta Street (or from various online vendors):

Frumkin H, Jackson R, Dannenberg A. 2011. Making Healthy Places: A Built Environment for Health, Well-Being, and Sustainability. Island Press.

Additional materials will be made available through the course folder on the CoA server or on our TSquare site. Consult the reading lists or the instructor, if unsure.

*Outline:*

I. Planning and Public Health Foundations

II. Natural and Built Environments

III. Vulnerable Populations and Health Disparities

IV. Health Policy and Global Impacts

*Procedures*: Classes will combine lectures, discussions, exercises, fieldwork, and student presentations. Informed participation in discussions is essential, so your first responsibility is to do required reading and other homework on time. Fieldwork may take place at times that do not correspond to the assigned class period. In such cases every effort will be made to accommodate other obligations you may have.

Written assignments should be prepared according to a standard social science format. Those not familiar with the conventions of social science writing should obtain and use any of the style manuals designed to present these (*e.g. Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* 5th ed. Washington DC: 2001). Effective communication is the primary goal, but clarity as to originality of ideas is vital. Ideas stimulated by others should be cited appropriately as, of course, should be quotes and facts taken from other sources. Timely submission of written assignments is important; late submissions will be penalized. In general, unless instructed otherwise, I believe it is useful to imagine that you are writing for a general national professional urban planning or public health audience. This requires that you not assume the reader will be familiar with the context, laws, and institutions of the plans or programs you are writing about, but it does suggest that you can use the language of planning and public health theory and methods efficiently without the need to explain fundamental concepts which are widely understood by the educated professional community.

*Assignments:*

IC#2 ⎟ Current Events Discussion (10% of course grade)Each class will begin with a 10 minute discussion of a *healthy communities* current event related to the session topic. This may be gleaned from any media source. Review the ‘popular beph links’ and on the bephc.com homepage in addition to TED talks and other sources. You will present at least once in class on a topic that caught your interest. You should describe the topic and prepare at least two discussion questions for the class. There will be a sign-up sheet the first day of class. Please send your topic link and question three days prior to the assigned class session.

HW#1 ⎟ So you Think you can … *Communicate* about Healthy Communities(15% of course grade) Students will complete a Print (500 word Op-Ed or blog entry), Audio (2-minute radio spot), or Video (2-minute video) that communicates details about a built environment and health topic discussed in unit one of the course and seeks to persuade the audience to action. Focus your work on a specific neighborhood or topic that will also serve as your focus for assignments to follow. Students will present their work and receive feedback from peers through anonymous voting.

HW#2 ⎟ Identifying and Filling the Gap(15% of course grade)What is the gap between *what we know* and *what we do* to create healthy communities? Follow these steps in completing this assignment. (1) Complete a community assets map, (2) Reflect on how this assets map compares to neighboring communities, (3) Select one stressor that overlaps with a topic discussed in unit 2 and summarize *what we know.* (4) Based on the literature, evaluate *what we do* with concrete examples based on your neighborhood or topic selection. Refer to *the community guide* and the *design for health key questions* for summaries of various topics form this emerging field.

HW#3 ⎟ Photovoice Applications to Vulnerable Populations’ Needs (15% of course grade) (1) Participate in a local activity (a minimum of 60 minutes) with a population that falls into a vulnerable population category. Such activities may include a senior citizens water aerobics class, children’s story-time at a nearby library, volunteering at a soup kitchen, or attendance at a minority organization’s sponsored program. Write a 500-word reflection on your observations and how they reinforce or challenge what we’ve learned in Unit 3 about vulnerable populations and health equity. (2) With your summary, submit two photos that capture the essence of the top two health equity concerns of vulnerable populations in the neighborhood of focus for your semester’s project. Through the photovoice process, we will review photo submissions, categorize them into appropriate groupings, then develop recommendations supported by evidence and best practices.

HW#5 ⎥ Communities Creating Healthy Places (CCHyP) (15% of course grade)In teams according to your assigned roles, debate the various options presented to create a healthy community and present the agreed upon plan with evidence based justifications for your selections. Student teams will present to the class and submit both the powerpoint and summary report.

FINAL ⎥ Individual⎟ Healthy Communities Plan (oral=10%; final=20%). Based on the neighborhood or topic you focused on throughout the semester, write a report guiding the local planning agency on ways to create healthy neighborhoods or to address a specific problem of interest to residents. Your report should include the following: (1) a critique of the current state of that location’s built environment and health, (2) recommended approaches (policies, interventions, stakeholders, etc.) toward improvements measured against Health People 2020. The report should be formatted as a professional product, single-spaced, 10 pages including tables, charts and references.

Students are required to incorporate peer feedback on the Healthy Communities Plan before final submission. Indicate which of your classmates reviewed your work on this assignment and how their contributions helped improve your submission. Submit this short comment in the text box on the submission website.

*Grading Practices*: Assignments are graded in the usual A, B...F system. In general, I endeavor to follow these grading standards:

"A" : exemplifies excellence: including clear reasoning, sound methods, forceful exposition, and stimulating ideas in comparison with others at the same stage of career. Independent and creative thinking utilizing a thorough understanding of course concepts is evidenced. Language usage, calculation, attribution, and formatting are essentially free of error.

"B" : allowing for growth in performance between now and graduation, the work would be considered satisfactory professional planning work given the time and resources allocated to it. Assertions are correct; arguments are persuasive. Mastery of course concepts is evidenced. Errors in language usage, attribution, calculation and/or formatting are minimal.

"C" : even allowing for growth in performance between now and graduation, the work would be considered less than satisfactory in a professional planning environment. There may be errors in fact or in understanding of course concepts. Arguments may not be convincing; there may be multiple errors in language usage, grammar, attribution, calculation and/or formatting.

“D” : the work does not meet expectations for graduate students. The core prompts in the assignment may not be followed; arguments may be hard to understand or may ignore key lessons understood broadly in our profession and/or developed in the course; language usage, attribution, calculation and/or formatting may have serious flaws or widespread errors.

"F" : the work does not address the assignment, fails to meet ordinary expectations for English language exposition, or appears to have been completed in a manner violating the Institute Honor Code.

Any assignment received electronically by 11:55pm on the announced due date will be considered on time. Please take precautions to make multiple copies of files related to your coursework; I have sympathy for problems related to computer malfunctions or lost materials, but can offer no grading concessions. Submissions after 11:55pm on the due date are downgraded 1/4 letter grade; submissions more than one week late are downgraded a full letter grade. Submissions received after the graded assignment has been returned to the class will receive the grade of F.

Those with *bona fide* illness or serious family problems should make this known and seek suitable arrangements at the earliest possible date. Such personal crises are the only acceptable justifications for the **I**ncomplete grade.

*Communicating with the instructor* Office hours and contact information provided here.

Please use the course T-Square site to submit assignments: we will discuss how to do this in class. Do not send assignments by e-mail or fax. Name your files with identifiers that are unique (eg StakeholderAnalysis.Jones.8Feb08.rtf), combine all graphics, spreadsheets and text into one file, and submit in a standard software format (.wpd; .doc; .pdf or .rtf). Certain course materials are available from the course folder on the CoA server or on the course T-Square site. I will endeavor to provide all important course documents and information through these two online locations.

*Academic Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct*: The Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code (http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18b.php) and Student Code of Conduct (http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/19b.php) outline the Institute’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading these two documents fully and for living up to them. Among the Codes’ provisions are expections about unauthorized access, unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, false claims of performance, grade alteration, falsification, forgery and distortion. You should be absolutely clear in indicating when you have used ideas or words that are not your own. You are permitted to discuss the written assignments in this course with your fellow classmates, but, except for group assignments, you should not collaborate on your submissions. If you are unclear about the boundaries, ask the instructor or assume that the joint action in question is not allowed.

*Students with Disabilities:* Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should provide documentation to the Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students (http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/) and bring an ADAPTS accommodation letter to the instructor indicating the nature of accommodations required. This should be done within the first week of class or as soon as possible after a new disability condition arises. All effort will be made to provide reasonable accommodation.

# *Course Evaluations:* All students are expected to complete on-line course evaluations at the end of the semester.

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Course Schedule

I. Planning and Public Health Foundations

Week 1 Introduction to Healthy Communities

Week 2 Researching Healthy Communities, Effective Communication for Healthy Communities

Week 3 Planning and Pubic Health History and Frameworks

II. Natural and Built Environments

Week 4 Physical Activity, Land Use and Transportation

Week 5 Food, Healthy Housing, Schools and Workplaces

Week 6 Water Quality, Air Quality

Week 7 Measuring, Assessing and Certifying Healthy Places (HIA, Walkscore, LEED), Contact with Nature

III. Vulnerable Populations

Week 8 Vulnerable Populations and Health Equity Mental Health

Week 9 Social Capital and Community Engagement, Healthy Communities Photovoice Workshop

IV. Policy, Ethics and Global Perspectives

Week 10 Health Policy Domestically and Internationally post PPACA, Urbanization in low and middle-income countries

NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Week 11 Climate Change, Disaster Resiliency

Week 12 Training the Next Generation to Address Emerging Opportunities

Week 13 Ethics of Health and the Built Environment

V. Case Studies

Week 14 CCHyP Presentations

Week 15 Semester Review: Reflect on Semester Lessons and Next Steps

Finals Week Final Healthy Communities Plan due.