

USC Price School of Public Policy
University of Southern California
Summer, 2015

**PPD 531L – Domestic Lab in Affordable Housing
Section 51329R - 4 units**

Days & Time: Wednesday & Friday, May 22 – June 19. 8:30 – 2:00
Room: TBA
Instructor: Jan Breidenbach, PhD. Email: breidenb@usc.edu. Phone: 323-662-7512.
Office Hours: By appointment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

PPD531L is a studio course focused completely on affordable housing, a normative term referencing housing that is publically subsidized and/or available to low-income households. The objectives of the course are: 1) that students will learn and understand the economic, social and political history of low-income housing, including what types of interventions have been attempted; and 2) the role that advocates play in shaping policies on affordable housing.

These public interventions may be a direct public or private subsidy; it may be provided directly to residents, directly to developers for the production of the home(s), or created through land-use regulation and policy. Additionally, although not specifically income-restricted, price limits (i.e., rent control) also result in housing that is affordable to low-income people. These interventions may occur at the federal, state or local level.

The interventions allow low-income households to pay no more than 30% of their gross income for their home. What constitutes low-income is determined by the household income compared to the area median (AMI). Moderate-income is a household income between 80% - 120% of AMI, Low-income is below 80% of AMI. Very low-income (VLI) is below 50% of AMI and Extremely low-income (ELI) is below 30% of AMI.

Students will: 1) gain an understanding of the world of affordable housing and how it sits in the larger universe of housing in the United States; and 2) improve research skills, including both quantitative and qualitative.

CLASS OPERATIONS

This learning takes place through a combination of readings, in-class discussions, panels and lectures; site visits to affordable housing projects and a practitioner-based research project for a course “client”. The course meets twice/week for five-and-one-half hours. We will alternate between meeting on campus and visiting affordable housing sites. On Wednesdays we will discuss readings, engage in discussion and have panels on specific topics. ***We will take breaks during the time we’re on campus but come prepared with snacks/lunch in order to make the most of our time.*** The site visits will all take place on Fridays. We ***may also meet on campus*** on site-visit days before or after the visits. The site visits are scheduled to be relevant to the week’s topic so students can meet with individuals and visit their organization to learn first-hand the range and focus of different affordable housing policies and programs. The last day of class will include presentations on the projects to the class and clients.

CLIENT PROJECT.

The client for summer 2015 is the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE. www.laane.org). LAANE’s mission is to reduce economic injustice and inequality through campaigns, research and advocacy. They were the organizers of LA’s Living Wage Ordinance, have led coalitions in negotiating for Community Benefits Agreements for major LA developments; they have a “good food” campaign improving working conditions and wages in the grocery sector and are part of the food delivery chain network. In many of their coalitions, the demand for affordable housing has been a central part.

The class will research the potential for the construction affordable housing and grocery stores as joint development projects on land owned by Metro as staging areas for transit station construction.

READING/DISCUSSION

In the interests of sustainability and student pocketbooks, all readings are electronic, and include chapters from books, academic articles, as well as ‘think-tank’ reports and studies from both the public and private sectors. Not having a single-author textbook requires that students be able to synthesize ideas and theories from different writers, different styles, etc. I try to keep the reading to a level that is not onerous, as I see no reason in assigning reading that is likely to go undone. Further, the reading is front-loaded so that it does not interfere with completion of the client project. ***However, this is a full semester of credit and there is basic learning that has to be completed.***

Please note that book chapters provided for students enrolled in PPD 531L, Summer 2014 for your use only. Any unauthorized copying or distribution may be a violation of copyright law.

NOTE: Reading is to be completed *before* each on-campus session. Each on-campus session will start with a discussion of the reading for that week. Although the preponderance of each grade is based on the client project, grades will be reduced if students have not completed the reading before each session.

GRADING

For the group projects, grades will be determined by a combination of the following: a grade for the whole project, along with input on each student from all others in his/her group (provided to me privately and confidentially). Further, individual grades may be reduced if students come to class without having completed the reading and fail to participate.

Please note re use of laptop in the class: It is expected that graduate students know and understand the parameters of professional behavior and bring this understanding to the classroom, especially a hands-on course such as this. It is both unprofessional and rude to engage in personal correspondence and/or web-surfing during a class session. We will take breaks so that all of us can check email, texts, etc. Insofar as there is a need for notes, we will make a collective arrangement for how notes will be taken and distributed.

DISABILITIES & ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday. The DSP phone number is (213) 740-0776.

INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is of paramount importance to the University of Southern California. The full statement, definitions and list of sanctions for violation of the University's code is available through the USC website. Any violation of academic integrity will be sanctioned to the fullest. Please pay attention to this document and ask if you have any questions. Additional material is reprinted each year in SCAMPUS.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

NOTE: THERE WILL BE A PANEL DISCUSSION WITH INVITED GUESTS EXPERT IN THE TOPICS FOR THAT WEEK DURING EACH ON-CAMPUS SESSION

Week 1	Topics	Readings
Wed. 5/20	I. Introduction to course, each other and client project. II. Siting affordable housing in context: housing markets & exclusion. III. Discussion with client, formation of research grps.	* Breidenbach, J. (2015). Land, Justice and a Place to Call Home, <i>LA Public Interest Law Journal</i> . * CA Housing Partnership Corporation (CHPC) (2014). <i>How California's Housing Market is Failing the Needs of Low-Income Families</i> . * Nat'l Low-Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC). <i>Housing Spotlight</i> , February 2015. * Sayaraman, S., et al. (2014). Executive Summary, Chap I & II. <i>Shelved: How Wages and Working Conditions for California's Food Retail Workers Have Decline As the Industry Has Thrived</i> .
Fri. 5/22	TBA	

Week 2	Topics	Readings
Wed. 5/27	I. US affordable housing policies and practices II. Anatomy of a Deal	* NLIHC (2015). Public Housing, Vouchers, Preservation & the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. Definitions from the NLIHC 2015 Advocate's Guide * Ben Hecht. (2006). Introduction, Chaps I, II & III. <i>Developing Affordable Housing: A Practical Guide for Nonprofit Organizations</i> .
Fri. 5/29	TBA	

Week 3	Topics	Readings
Wed. 6/3	I. The coming train: $\Delta \downarrow \text{GHG}$: ($\Delta \downarrow \text{VMT} + \Delta \uparrow \text{P}$) $\nrightarrow \Delta \uparrow \text{AH}$. II. Community Planning for affordable housing	* NRDC (2009). <i>Communities Tackle Global Warming: A Guide to SB 375</i> OR * SCAG (So Cal Assoc. of Govts) (2012). <i>Sustainable Communities Strategy, 2012-2035</i> . * LA Housing Dept/Reconnecting America (2012). <i>Preservation in Transit-Oriented Districts: A Study on the Need, Priorities, and Tools in Protecting Assisted and Unassisted Housing in the City of Los Angeles</i> * Schwartz, M. (2013). <i>Building and Preserving Affordable Homes Near Transit: Affordable TOD as a GHG Reduction & Equity Strategy</i> . * Review the <i>South Los Angeles Community Plan</i> , & <i>Southeast LA Community Plan (DRAFT)</i> view two short film clips about the Cornfields/Arroyo Seco Specific Plan (CASP).
Fri. 6/5	TBA	

Week 4	Topic	Readings
Wed. 6/10	I. Alternatives: Housing co-ops, MHAs, Community Land Trusts. II. Price controls	* T.R.U.S.T.SouthLA. (2014). <i>Community Mosaic: Targeted, Cost Effective Affordable Housing</i> * Davis, J.E. (2006). Chap II. The Organizational Landscape of Share Equity Homeownership, in <i>Shared Equity Homeownership: the Changing Landscape of Resale-Restricted, Owner-Occupied Housing</i> . Keating, D. (1998). Chaps I & II. From <i>Rent Control: Regulation and the Rental Housing Market</i> .
Fri. 6/12	TBA	

Week 5	Topics	Readings
Wed. 6/17	I. New revenue sources and land use policies II. After lunch, class time devoted to presentation preparation.	Sources of affordable housing production revenue and land policies (combined into one large PDF): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Funds: NHTF (collected documents) • CA State Housing Trust Fund: CA SB 391 (collected documents) • CA Cap-and-Trade (CA) (re-read CHPC Bldg & Preserving AH Near Transit) • Local housing fees: (LA Affordable Housing Benefit Fee, Exec.Summary) ○ N.Calavita talk at Lincoln Land Institute conference on land value capture (http://www.ovguide.com/value-capture-9202a8c04000641f80000000009f4e47)
Fri. 6/19	Class presentation to client	

PPD531L Summer 2015 Client Project

CLIENT: LA Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)

PROJECT: Affordable Housing and Grocery Stores in TODs

Project goal: Provide LAANE with a report on the potential of mixed-use (affordable housing/grocery store) projects in Metro staging areas.

Background: With the advent of transit-oriented development as the new planning paradigm, the issue of affordable housing has taken on new urgency. California's land use policies now emphasize and reward denser development around transit, both as "smart growth", and as a major mitigation response to climate change. While environmentally desirable, this new planning model raises two connected, and serious, contradictions: 1) increased density around transit increases land prices, making the production of affordable housing less feasible; and 2) the smart growth, new urbanism development attracts younger, higher income households to these transit-oriented districts (TODs) and research indicates these households use transit less (and drive more) than low-income households.

Transit in Los Angeles County is built and operated by Metro. When building transit, Metro purchases land for 'staging areas', i.e., parcels that they use to keep equipment, etc., during the construction of a new station. When all is completed, this land can be sold by Metro. Recently, Metro set a goal that 30% of all new housing built on this land will be affordable. This is a portfolio-wide goal, not specific to any one station. This will, to some extent, assure that low-income transit riders will not be displaced from these areas due to increases in land prices and rents.

This year's PPD531L class will conduct community-based research on the feasibility of joint-development projects combining affordable housing and grocery stores. The reasoning behind this is that many low-income neighborhoods have a dearth of both affordable housing and healthy food. Further, adding grocery to affordable housing projects can provide good jobs, not only in the production phase, but also the jobs in the grocery. This is not a given, however, as Metro has job requirements for construction but good jobs in grocery can be guaranteed only through policy. One of LAANE's policy goals is to assure that grocery stores built on Metro land do provide good wages and benefits. This research will assist in this goal by researching which staging areas are best suited for joint development projects.

Students will work in groups to:

- * Using the list of Metro stops with staging area land that are, or will be, available for development, research and map present demographics in terms of need for both affordable housing and fresh food.
- * Using affordable housing data bases, research the number of affordable housing developments within the 1 /2 mile radius of each staging area.
- * Research existing data on food deserts and overlay these with the 1 /2 mile radii of the staging areas identified as available for affordable housing/joint development.
- * Research existing data on full-serve grocery stores in the same 1 /2-mile radii.

Using this data and the "amenity" point system that makes affordable housing projects competitive for financing, students will determine those staging areas where joint-development projects are most feasible and finalize a report for the client.