**PPD 629: Capstone in Urban Planning**

**Spring 2021, 4 Units | Monday, 6 to 9:20 PM**

**Location:** Zoom

**Instructor: Clare Kelley, MPL**

City Planner

Los Angeles City Planning

Adjunct Instructor

Sol Price School of Public Policy

**Office Hours:** 4 pm to 5 pm, Friday or by appointment via Zoom

<https://usc.zoom.us/j/9663120768?pwd=bzhvSS9FNEhabGllSlJjQWpFRGVLZz09>

Meeting ID: 966 312 0768

Passcode: 352192

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

**Contact Info:** chkelley@usc.edu (emails shall be returned within 48 hours)

**Course Description**

With the restructuring of the old Master of Planning (MPL) curriculum into the Master of Urban Planning (MUP) curriculum, the comprehensive examination was transitioned to a capstone course. In this course, students will produce both individual and group documents related to a specific, real site. The work products will be staged, with the individual project completed and reviewed by concentration faculty members at mid-semester, followed by the inter-disciplinary group plan to be presented to the same concentration faculty members at the end of the semester.

The capstone is designed to test your knowledge of the concepts and skills you have gained in the MUP curriculum, internships, and other experiences obtained during your study at USC. The capstone is not a forum for rote echoing of course materials. It challenges you to synthesize concepts and methods that are appropriate to addressing a current real-world planning problem. You will be able to demonstrate your command of the core course materials, and your expertise in one of the prevalent areas of the planning profession. This is also an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to communicate your analysis of the situation and your ideas.

The goals of the course are to:

* Provide an opportunity to demonstrate creativity and general grasp of planning theories, issues, and constructs in a true “capstone” experience;
* Integrate and synthesize knowledge gained throughout the MUP core and concentration curriculums, and
* Mirror real world planning and development practice by giving a taste of the challenges, tensions, and issues of the profession in an interdisciplinary context.

The requirements of the course are to produce professional caliber individual and inter-disciplinary group reports that meet all the expectations of current practice.

The capstone course has two parts.

* In Part I, the *Concentration Analysis*, you answer questions individually related to your MUP concentration: Economic Development, Design of the Built Environment, Arts and Culture, Environmental Planning and Analysis, Housing and Real Estate or Transportation. You will also explore a range of alternatives that address the problem as described in the project brief. These ideas will emerge from your understanding and analysis of the problems and potentials of the existing site, and the requirements of the program. You will have to develop concrete and detailed proposals for one of these plans or programs.
  + Deliverable: Individual Project Report
* In Part II, the *Recommendations & Strategy* section, you will answer questions as part of an interdisciplinary group that summarizes the problem, your group solution, and key opportunities and challenges to implementing your solution. This is an opportunity for you to collaborate with fellow planners/professionals to explore ideas and synergies emerging from the partnership amongst various concentrations, and develop and synthesize recommendations and strategies for the client.
  + Deliverable: Group Project Report & Presentation

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

You will be provided a project brief and additional reading materials to be provided on a regular basis.

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Please see assignments in the project brief.

**Grading Breakdown**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment Tool** | **Points** | **% of Grade** |
| Individual Project | 50 | 50% |
| Group Project | 25 | 25% |
| Group Project Presentation | 10 | 10% |
| Class Participation | 15 | 15% |
|  |  |  |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100%** |

**Grading Scale**

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A 95-100

A- 90-94

B+ 87-89

B 83-86

B- 80-82

C+ 77-79

C 73-76

C- 70-72

D+ 67-69

D 63-66

D- 60-62

F 59 and below

**Assignment Submission Policy**

Assignments are to be submitted per the schedule outlined in the syllabus.

**Grading Timeline**

Grades will be provided within two weeks of assignment submittal.

**Additional Policies**

Late assignments will be graded down substantially, and a passing grade will not be assigned unless all assignments are completed. **Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

**Week 1**: **January 18**  MLK Holiday

**Week 2**: **January 25**

* Site introduction (capstone instructors)
* Conduct student survey of core classes (first week) (capstone instructors, assisted by MUP program administrator)
* Present students with the rubric for evaluating individual assessments and analyses and inter-disciplinary group plans (capstone instructors)
* Introduce concentration questions & template for individual assessments and analyses (capstone instructors)

**Week 3: February 1**

* Client briefing with Fred Jackson, Assistant General Manager at the Economic and Workforce Development Department, City of Los Angeles
  + Option to attend briefing during the afternoon section or view recording - Zoom links to be provided
* Office hours

**Week 4: February 8**

* Community context briefing with Naima Greffon, Watts Labor Community Action Committee
  + Option to attend briefing during the afternoon section or view recording - Zoom links to be provided
* Limited Q & A session with concentration faculty to answer questions and speak to expectations. (optional for concentration faculty)

**Week 5: February 15** Presidents Day

**Week 6: February 22**

* Community planning context briefing with Los Angeles City Planning staff, TBD
* Informal progress check-in and feedback opportunity

**Week 7: March 1**

* Informal progress check-in and feedback opportunity

**Week 8: March 8**

* Faculty review of individual assessments and analyses (concentration faculty and capstone instructors)

**Week 9: March 15**

* Students hand in their final assessments and analyses for grading (capstone instructors)
* Introduction of interdisciplinary group assignment

**Week 10:** **March 22**

* “Life of a Planner” session, TBD
* In class work time

**Week 11: March 29**

* “Life of a Planner” session, TBD
* In class work time

**Week 12: April 5**

* “Life of a Planner” session, TBD
* In class work time
* Informal progress check-in and feedback opportunity

**Week 13: April 12**

* In class work time
* Informal progress check-in and feedback opportunity

**Week 14: April 19**

* Group plans due
* Faculty review of group plans[[1]](#footnote-0)(concentration faculty and capstone instructors)

**Week 15: April 26**

* Presentation of honors groups to the client
* Student grades finalized by capstone course instructors

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct:**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

**Support Systems:**

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling/)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault/)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298*

[equity.usc.edu](https://equity.usc.edu/), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*

[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\_report](https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776*

[dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu/)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710*

[uscsa.usc.edu](https://uscsa.usc.edu/)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu/)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu/)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)