11.920 “Planning in Practice” syllabus

Number: 11.920
Title: Planning in Practice
Semester: Spring, 2020
Room: TBD
Time/Dates: TBD
Instructor: Mary Jane Daly, 9-421, (617) 253-0525, daly@mit.edu
Office hours: dusp.mit.edu/officehours

Course Description:
This course will introduce students to the practice of planning in the United States, by requiring actual experience in professional internship placements. The course provides students with an opportunity for experiential learning – learning through practice and reflection. The course will also serve as introduction to American planning practice for international students. We will examine the range of opportunities available to professionals in the field of planning in the U.S., across disciplines as well as across sectors and working at a variety of scales. Through their internship, the student will learn what planners do and the skills and competencies they need to be effective.

Planning in Practice will require students to reflect on and see the connections between their studies and experiences in the internship setting. They will get the opportunity to both apply what they are learning in class in an actual professional setting and to reflect in a classroom setting on the learning growing out of their internship experience.

Readings will provide background on contemporary American planning practice, guidance on various aspects of interning and the practice of reflection.

Format:
The class will meet three times over the course of the semester – once at the start, mid-point and end of the semester – for one hour in a seminar format. Students are expected to come to class fully prepared to participate actively in the class.

Course Goals
The course is oriented toward four basic goals:

- To provide students the opportunity to apply knowledge acquired in the classroom to a professional context and to learn from their professional experience in the field
- To acquaint international students with the practice of planning in the U.S
- To encourage reflective practice in a professional setting
- To support students’ professional growth by facilitating student professional experience in a meaningful context
Learning Objectives
Through readings, practical experience and reflection, empirical observation, and contact with practitioners, students will gain a deeper general understanding of the practice of the profession, as well as a keener knowledge of their own interests in the field of planning, enabling informed consideration of such questions as:

- What skills do I need to work in the area of planning I’m interested in?
- What classes should I take to help reach my professional objectives?
- What internships should I seek to support my professional growth?

Assignments and Grading
This seminar is a pass/fail course. The final grade is cumulative, based on timely completion of readings and written assignments, as well as active participation in class discussions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class preparation and participation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Profile</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-semester Learning Matrix</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Report, Lessons Learned and Learning Matrix</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship Sponsor Evaluation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
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Assignments
Students will choose a combination of tools in assignments aimed at meeting the goals and learning objectives of the course. These tools are intended to support individual reflection, reflection with classmates and reflection with internship staff. These will include some of the following:

1. Professional Profile
   a. 300 Words on their Professional and Academic Self
2. Goal Statement
3. Reflections
   a. Prompts will be provided to support their reflection and writing
4. Learning Matrix
5. Final Report
6. Internship Sponsor Evaluation

Readings
The readings for this course focus on a variety of topics including planning practice in the U.S., the practice of reflection, and advice for meaningful internship experiences. They will be selected for relevance to each student’s individual internship placement.
Selections chosen from:

- ICMA Green Book, Local Planning
- The Successful Internship, Personal, Professional, and Civic Development in Experiential Learning
- ‘Reflective Practice’ by Raphael Fischler in Planning Ideas that Matter
- Co-Lab’s ‘Reflective Practice Manual’

**Class One**

**Class:** Setting our Agenda  
**Format:** Course Overview – Mary Jane Daly  
Discussion

**Class Two**

**Class:** Where are we now? How does it compare with where we thought we’d be?  
**Format:** Discussion

**Class Three**

**Class:** What can we say about where we’ve been and where we’re headed?  
**Format:** Discussion

**Disabilities** If you have a documented disability, or any other problem you think may affect your ability to perform in class, please see me early in the semester so that arrangements may be made to accommodate you.

**Academic Misconduct**
Plagiarism and cheating are both academic crimes. Never (1) turn in an assignment that you did not write yourself, (2) turn in an assignment for this class that you previously turned in for another class, or (3) cheat on an exam. If you do so, it may result in a failing grade for the class, and possibly even suspension from the Institute. Please see me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism.

**Writing and Communication Center**
The WCC at MIT (Writing and Communication Center) offers free one-on-one professional advice from communication experts. The WCC is staffed completely by MIT lecturers. All have advanced degrees. All are experienced college classroom teachers of communication. All are all are published scholars and writers. Not counting the WCC’s director’s years (he started the WCC
in 1982), the WCC lecturers have a combined 133 years’ worth of teaching here at MIT (ranging from 4 to 24 years). The WCC works with undergraduate, graduate students, post-docs, faculty, staff, alums, spouses and partners. The WCC helps you strategize about all types of academic and professional writing as well as about all aspects of oral presentations (including practicing classroom presentations & conference talks as well as designing slides). No matter what department or discipline you are in, the WCC helps you think your way more deeply into your topic, helps you see new implications in your data, research, and ideas. The WCC also helps with all English as Second Language issues, from writing and grammar to pronunciation and conversation practice. The WCC is located in E18-233, 50 Ames Street). To guarantee yourself a time, make an appointment. To register with our online scheduler and to make appointments, go to https://mit.mywconline.com/. To access the WCC’s many pages of advice about writing and oral presentations, go to http://cmsw.mit.edu/writing-and-communication-center/. Check the online scheduler for up-to-date hours and available appointments.