11.920 “Planning in Practice” Syllabus

Number: 11.920  
Title: Planning in Practice  
Semester: Fall, 2021  
Time/Dates: Three class meetings, beginning, middle, and end of semester, to be arranged  
Instructors: Mary Jane Daly, daly@mit.edu  
Holly E. Harriel, hollyh@mit.edu  
Credits: by arrangement  
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 an 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. This course has expanded to empower students to enhance their knowledge and practice skills in addressing the intersection of structural racism and planning. Students will explore various planning contexts to help ground their observations and interpretations of their internship and planning’s response to COVID’s amplification of systemic inequities and tackling racism after the death of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and others. Through their internship, students 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 five 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 enhance student understanding of the intersection of structural racism and planning
- 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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class preparation and participation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Statement &amp; Professional Profile</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflections</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-semester Learning Matrix</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Reflection/Lessons Learned</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship Sponsor Evaluation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10%</td>
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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. 250 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, systemic racism and planning and advice for meaningful internship experiences. They will be selected for relevance to each student’s individual internship placement.

Some 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

Return to in-person teaching/learning

MIT and DUSP are excited at the opportunity for a return to in-person teaching and learning after 2+ semesters of remote life. To ensure that all classes can and will be delivered in person, MIT has worked hard to put into place policies, procedures and technologies to maximize the likelihood of a safe and uninterrupted semester. That said, the ever-evolving pandemic means we need to be prepared. If any student in class tests positive for covid-19, MIT Medical has established clear procedures for ensuring safety of everyone and MIT’s Class Notification and Support Team will help that student continue learning with the least possible disruption. If any of the Instructors in this class are unable to attend in person due to covid-19, we will work together with the leadership of DUSP, the School, and the Institute to ensure minimum disruption.

In the case of the need for any remote teaching, we will use this “zoom classroom”: https://mit.zoom.us/j/9534593302

Racial Justice

The class engages with the idea and practice of racial justice, by encouraging and offering the opportunity for reflection on the ways that systemic racism manifests in planning practice and in the ways in which planners and communities seek to address it.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

MIT acknowledges Indigenous Peoples as the traditional stewards of the land, and the enduring relationship that exists between them and their traditional territories. The land on which we sit is the traditional unceded territory of the Wampanoag Nation. We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced occupation of their territory, and we honor and respect the many diverse indigenous people connected to this land on which we gather from time immemorial.

Inclusive Classroom
MIT values an inclusive environment. I hope to foster a sense of community in this classroom and consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect. I welcome individuals of all backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, religious and political affiliations – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for every other member of the class. If this standard is not being upheld, please feel free to speak with me.

**Special Accommodations**

MIT is committed to the principle of equal access. Students who need disability accommodations are encouraged to speak with Disability and Access Services (DAS), prior to or early in the semester so that accommodation requests can be evaluated and addressed in a timely fashion. If you have a disability and are not planning to use accommodations, it is still recommended that you meet with DAS staff to familiarize yourself with their services and resources. Please visit the [DAS website](https://www.mit.edu/das) for contact information.

If you have already been approved for accommodations, class staff are ready to assist with implementation. Please inform Mary Jane Daly ([daly@mit.edu](mailto:daly@mit.edu)) AND Sue Delaney ([sld@mit.edu](mailto:sld@mit.edu)) who will oversee accommodation implementation for this course.

**Academic Integrity**

In this course, I will hold you to the high standard of academic integrity expected of all students at the Institute. I do this for two reasons. First, it is essential to the learning process that you are the one doing the work. I have structured the assignments in this course to enable you to gain a mastery of the course material. Failing to do the work yourself will result in a lesser understanding of the content, and therefore a less meaningful education for you. Second, it is important that there be a level playing field for all students in this course and at the Institute so that the rigor and integrity of the Institute’s educational program are maintained.

Violating the Academic Integrity policy in any way (e.g., plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, cheating, etc.) will result in official Institute sanction. Possible sanctions include receiving a failing grade on the assignment or exam, being assigned a failing grade in the course, having a formal notation of disciplinary action placed on your MIT record, suspension from the Institute, and expulsion from the Institute for very serious cases.

Please review MIT’s [Academic Integrity](https://www.mit.edu/academic-integrity) policy and related resources (e.g., working under pressure; how to paraphrase, summarize, and quote; etc.) and contact me if you have any questions about appropriate citation methods, the degree of collaboration that is permitted, or anything else related to the Academic Integrity of this course.
Student Support
Undergraduate Students: Student Support Services (S3)

If you are dealing with a personal or medical issue that is impacting your ability to attend class, complete work, or take an exam, you should contact a dean in Student Support Services (S3). S3 is here to help you. The deans will verify your situation, provide you with support, and help you work with your professor or instructor to determine next steps. In most circumstances, you will not be excused from coursework without verification from a dean. Please visit the S3 website for contact information and more ways that they can provide support.
Website: https://studentlife.mit.edu/s3

Graduate Students: GradSupport

As a graduate student, a variety of issues may impact your academic career including faculty/student relationships, funding, and interpersonal concerns. In the Office of Graduate Education (OGE), GradSupport provides consultation, coaching, and advocacy to graduate students on matters related to academic and life challenges. If you are dealing with an issue that is impacting your ability to attend class, complete work, or take an exam, you may contact GradSupport by email at gradsupport@mit.edu or via phone at (617) 253-4860.
Website: https://oge.mit.edu/development/gradsupport/

Writing and Communication Center

Writing and Communication Center is looking forward to working with MIT undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, faculty, and staff starting September 1st. All our consultations will be held remotely in the fall. When you make an appointment, you’ll receive information about the procedure. See also the sign-in page at mit.mywconline.com for complete instructions for remote WCC consultations. When we return to our offices, we look forward to meeting with you in Building E18, Room 233, 50 Ames Street.

The Writing and Communication Center offers free one-on-one professional advice from communication experts. The WCC is staffed completely by MIT lecturers who are experienced college classroom teachers of communication as well as published writers. The WCC works with undergraduates, graduate students, post-doctoral scholars, faculty, and staff.
Our consultations help you produce outstanding written, visual, and spoken communication. We'll help you succeed with:

- Theses, dissertations
- Journal articles
- Dissertation proposals
- CVs/resumes, cover letters
- Personal statements
- Research and teaching statements
- Writing for any MIT class
- Grant and fellowship proposals
- Creative writing
- Procrastination
- Scientific and technical reports
- English Language Learning issues
- Start-up materials and elevator pitches
- Classroom and professional presentations
- Conference and job talks
- Interview practice
- Dissertation defense
- Slide design
- Poster design
- Pronunciation and conversation practice
- Shyness/stage fright
- Writer’s block