

URPL 812: Strategies for Planning Effectiveness  
Spring 2014  
Wednesday 1:30-4:00pm  
208 Music Hall

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This class addresses a central and continuing issue in contemporary American planning (and other public organizations). How can planners and planning agencies (and other such organizations), improve their effectiveness in the light of growing constraints such as:

- Tighter planning agency budgets
- More intense competition for scarce resources
- Increasing controversy about planning proposals aimed at serving the larger public interest
- Growing mistrust of government

An important purpose of the course is to help you hone some of the skills needed to be more effective as planners or in bureaucratic environments generally speaking. Given the limitations of what can be covered in one semester, some choices have been made. Consequently two principle skill areas will be covered in the rest of the course—scenario planning and strategic analysis and thinking. However, we will devote significant attention to communications, life in bureaucracies, and to your professional development. Occasional exercises and role-plays will be interspersed with lectures and class discussions to increase the learning potential. I will invite practitioners at mid semester to discuss mediation strategies and how they operated in their respective settings to achieve greater effectiveness.

**While this syllabus refers to planning, please substitute your discipline or profession as you go along, the principles you learn and we discuss will be useful in any professional setting.**

Active participation in class discussions and exercises is important. In the first nine weeks I have short assignments that you should prepare and email to the class, 15 minutes prior to class.

### **Books**

Hopkins, Lewis and Marisa Zapata. 2007. *Engaging the Future: Forecasts, Scenarios, Plans and Projects*. Cambridge, Lincoln Land Institute.

Schorr, Lisbeth B. 1998. *Our Common Purpose: Strengthening Families and Neighborhoods to Rebuild America*, New York, Anchor.

Recommended

Bryson, John. 2011. *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement*. Jossey-Bass, 4th edition.

## Articles and Other Readings

**They are listed for each week, I will make some available electronically, mostly you should use Findit at the library or acquire the readings yourselves.**

### The schedule for the class:

January	22	Introduction
	29	Individuals, Institutions, Organizations
February	5	Conceptions of effective planning
	12	Organizations—Internal dynamics
	19	Organizations—External dynamics
	26	Practical Project Practice
March	5	Conflict Management and negotiating
	12	Scenario Planning
	SPRING BREAK	
	26	Scenario Planning
April	2	Strategic analysis and strategic thinking
	9	Scenario Planning
	16	Strategic analysis and strategic thinking
	23	Scenario Planning
	30	Strategic analysis and strategic thinking
May	7	Wrap Up

**Each class has associated readings and questions, and sometimes assignments for you to do, *in advance of class*. Prepare and email those TO THE CLASS 15 minutes prior to class.**

## Readings and Assignments

**Again, while this syllabus refers to planning, please substitute your discipline or profession as you go along.**

### January 22 Introduction

Getting Things Done involves what? What is your definition of “effective planning?” Email the class an outline or graphic of some concrete activities and organizations for “effective planning.”

or “effectiveness in your field. Refer to your experience, something you have read from your chosen discipline or profession, or the reading below.

Browse Schorr’s webpage, <http://www.lisbethschorr.org>

Become familiar with the weekly assignments and with the assignments at the end of the syllabus.

## **January 29 Individuals, Institutions, and Relationships**

What tools have you, or should you have, in your go-to box of planning ideas and information? Email a prose or graphical summary of your knowledge/opinion/practice of the following topics, including other topics you might think relevant. Creativity, GIS – for instance <http://www.theatlanticcities.com/arts-and-lifestyle/2013/08/geography-americas-many-languages/6438/> communication <http://www.planning.org/communicationsguide/>, time management, your Meyers/Briggs score, regular reading, etc. Besides the summary, email the class a list of references to books, webpages, listserves, etc that you think are important resources for your interests.

Zucker, P. 1996. “Thirty How-To’s for Success.” In Mclendon, B. and Catanese, A., eds. *Planners on Planning: Leading Planners offer real-life lessons*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, pp. 77-88.

Browse Zucker’s webpage, <http://zuckersystems.com>

Recommended Readings for time management:

Mann, Thorbjorn. 2004. *The Nature of Design Problems; Mismatched Problems and Approaches; and The Trap of Working Sequentially. Time Management for Architects and Designers: Challenges and Remedies*. New York/London: W.W. Norton.

Covey, Steven. 1994. *First Things First*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Hunt, Diana, and Pam Hait. *The Tao of Time*. New York, Simon and Schuster.

## **February 5 Conceptions of effective planning, Organizations and Institutions**

Effective work in any organization requires some understand of organizations, as well as acknowledging conflict, cooperation, habits and different scales and time horizons. How do we understand and use these ideas? See below topics and writing...

Organizations - Schorr, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2, Email an outline to class,  
Conflict - Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument, Email your response,  
Cooperation – Email 1-2 paragraphs that exemplify Ostrom’s lessons on Cooperation and Collective Action, <http://www.cooperationcommons.com/node/361> as well as the current fad of “collective impact,” [http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact](http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective_impact), and in an

additional paragraph or two contrast with the article by Rittel and Webber, “Dilemmas of a general theory of planning;”

Common or collective interests, produce one paragraph about what this means with respect to your particular interests; and finally...

Communication – refer again to the APA guide and summarize another part of it.

## **February 12 Organizations—Internal dynamics and Introduce Scenario Planning**

What knowledge do you need to operate in an organization?

Email a summary of the reading (for Howe, briefly describe the different roles) and your ideas about two of the following topical configurations. A) What is a bureaucracy and why have it, B) The idea of profession and professionals, and roles-responsibilities and role conflict, C) leadership vs management, D) relationships-reporting-networks; and E) resource flows and allocation.

Planners roles – Howe, Beth, Chapter 6 from *Acting on Ethics in City Planning*

Organizations – Schorr, Chapters 3-4,

Recommended:

Meeting of the Minds, <http://www.amazon.com/Meeting-Minds-Guide-Successful-Facilitation/dp/0944661300>

## **February 19 Organizations—External dynamics**

How can we help our organization work best in its external environment?

Email your outline of the readings and an example from your experience or reading of how external dynamics were managed or manifested, among possibilities are grant writing, relationship building, networks and alliance building, conflict resolution, transitioning roles or responsibilities or jobs, communications, skills in observation, engaging the public and public participation, and etc.

Guests to discuss scenario/strategic planning opportunities.

Schorr, Chapters 5; 9, Epilogue

Bryson, Designing Public Participation Processes, *Public Administration Review*, v 73, 23-34

...and lecture/discussion led by Ariel Kaufman

## **February 26 Practical Project Practice**

What practical tools have we to advancing planning projects? Observation of emergent and existing activities, Change Labs <http://changelabsolutions.org> , APA PAS reports and division newsletters, Atlantic Cities, Urbanage Institute <http://urbanage.org>, update your list from January 29 and Email it to class.

Guests to discuss scenario/strategic planning opportunities.

Solnit, A. 1988. The Job of the Practicing Planner. APA Planners Press, pp. 25-29 (“Skills needed to be an effective planner”)

**March 5      Mediation Skills Training with Donna Erez-Navot, Clinical Attorney, Mediation Clinic, Economic Justice Institute, University of Wisconsin Law School**

Reading TBD

Recommended:

Urey, W. 1991. Getting Past No: negotiating with difficult people. Bantam books, pp. 5-10 and 149-153

**March 12      Scenario Planning**

Hopkins and Zapata – chapters 1 and 4, summarize the key ideas in 2-3 paragraphs, and describe your potential scenario project in one paragraph.

**March 19      SPRING BREAK**

**March 26      Scenario Planning**

Hopkins and Zapata – Bring 1-2 paragraph outline and summaries of two chapters of your choice/interest and the following:

**April 2      Strategic Analysis and Strategic Thinking**

What is it to think strategically? To act strategically? To work with others strategically? Email your summaries of these articles prior to class.

Bryson, What to do when stakeholders matter? Public Management Review, V. 6 n 1.

Bryson, Ackerman, Eden, Putting the Resource-Based View of Strategy and Distinctive Competencies to Work in Public Organizations. Public Administration Review July/August 2007

Bryson, Crosby, Stone, The Design and Implementation of Cross-Sector Collaborations: Propositions from the Literature. Public Administration Review, December 2006

**April 9      Scenario Planning Practice**

How do scenario and strategic planning inform each other? Email 2-3 paragraphs prior to class.

This is the first of three class working days, today and 4/16; 4/23 class will be devoted to principally to preparing your work for presentation to your clients.

**April 16      Practicing Strategic Analysis and Strategic Thinking**

What are Evaluation and Logic Models? See the UW-Extension, Program Development and Evaluation webpage and email three one-paragraph summaries of information you deem useful to you on this site.

**April 23      Practical Project Practice**

**April 30      Presentations of strategic planning assignments**

**May 7      Presentations of scenario planning assignments**

**Scenario Planning Assignment**

**Purpose:** Scenarios are devices to consider choices and think beyond conventional ideas about how to cope with futures that people can influence, but not control. This assignment provides your practice in developing scenarios for clients.

**Process:** Use class lecture and readings to execute the assignment. First, identify a client and in groups of your choosing create four scenarios that imagine structurally different futures for the client. Work with the client and community to specify the “driving forces” that are producing these structural differences. Specify the relative importance and fluidity of these forces. Name and narrate the story lines producing these forces that produce these alternative futures. (Generate some catchy names for each alternative scenario that is emerging.) These scenarios should account for issues and uncertainties related to unique locational characteristics, (such as planning for the Park Street Corridor, the Driftless identity, multi-state regional identity, and etc.). Prepare a graphically vivid presentation of these scenarios to deliver to the client.

Prepare a presentation to the client or (if no client) a report of about 2500 words (not including bibliography or graphics), summarizing the scenarios. It is essential that all scenarios be plausible and rich with variety of differences across social, technological, economic, ecological, and political possibilities. This report should also include a brief “user’s guide” that explains how the scenarios were created and how they might be used.

**Due:** 3:00PM May 9, 2014

## Strategic Planning Evaluation (SPE) Assignment

**Purpose:** The strategic planning evaluation is your individual written exploration and assessment of how URPL 812 concepts relate to an organization you are familiar with or one you want to be familiar with. If possible, work with this organization to understand its strategic situation. Either way, describe and assess what this organization is doing to prepare for the future. Concern yourself with the organization's strategy content, roles and structure, and strategy development processes including how the organization thinks about the future, how it develops strategic objectives, action plans, how the plans are deployed and how performance is tracked.

**How to Create and Share your work.** You develop your strategy "notes" throughout the semester. Near the end of the semester, you share oral highlights of the contents of your draft strategy practice notebook. You will submit your final SPE paper as cumulative evidence of your learning in the course.

**Sources:** Please use only available written sources about your organization.

**Length:** Estimated 2500 words, 12-point font, double-spaced, if you work with an organization you write what they expect, either a report or presentation.

**Due:** 3:00PM May 9, 2014

Describe the organization's strategy – might include, for example:

### Strategy Content

Mandates, legal regulations

Mission, (purpose)

Vision, values,

Driving forces/macro level trends affecting the organization

Products and services in portfolio, value created

Dominant strategy (e.g., growth, retrenchment, stability, collaboration)

How is the strategy codified and communicated? (Website? Document? Etc)

### Strategy Roles, Structure, Processes

Who is responsible for strategic planning and management (roles, offices)

How does strategic planning link to other organizational systems (e.g., budgeting, quality control, quality improvement, performance measurement, evaluation, etc.)

Stakeholders, partners, allies,

Competition

What approach(es) are used to formulate strategy and how often

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Identify one strategic challenge you think the organization is (or should be) facing to effectively create social value over the next five to ten years. Develop ideas for how the organization might address this strategic challenge using some URPL 812 readings or related literature.

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Conclusion  
Bibliography