VT UAP 5424 | Planning Healthy, Sustainable Communities
(Public Health, Nutrition, Food Policy & Planning)

Revised February 24, 2008

COURSE INFORMATION
School: Virginia Tech
Department: Urban Affairs and Planning (open to other departments)
Course Number: UAP-5424
Instructors: Joseph Schilling, LLM, Professor in Practice (jms33@vt.edu)
Kimberley Hodgson, MS, RD, PhD Candidate (khodgson@vt.edu)
Semester: Spring 2008
Campus: Alexandria & Blacksburg (via polycom)
Location: 1021 Prince Street, Suite 200
Room: Polycom Room in Architecture Annex (Blacksburg) and 2nd Floor (Alexandria Center)
Days / Times: Wednesday / 4:15-6:45pm
Credits: 3.0

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In light of the contemporary debates over the nation’s obesity crisis, climate change and social and environmental justice, this course explores the policy and planning challenges in developing healthy, sustainable communities through a multidisciplinary perspective (planning, nutrition, food policy and public health). Private industry, government, and non-profits alike are beginning to see the need for a more multidisciplinary approach to community development. Professional associations, such as the American Planning Association and the American Public Health Association have recently expressed the need for more collaboration between these disciplines to address health, environment, and planning issues.

- Co-taught by Joseph Schilling, LLM (land use, environmental and public policy expertise) and Kimberley Hodgson, MS, RD (public health nutrition and food policy expertise) and several guest lecturers currently active in the field.
- Examines the emerging intersection between planning, public health, nutrition, and food policy.
- Explores the relationship between land use, the built environment, food policy and health, with a focus on obesity, physical activity and healthy eating.
- Provides students with an overview of contemporary health issues and planning-related solutions.
- Enrolled students will have the opportunity to assist in the development and implementation of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Annual Active Living Research Conference (April 9 to April 12, 2008 in Washington, DC).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
VT’s Blackboard online system will be used to facilitate communication between students and faculty in Blacksburg and Alexandria. Therefore, students are required to check Blackboard regularly for announcements and updates to the course.

Required Reading Assignments
All required reading assignments are listed in the syllabus and can be found in the required textbook or will be available through VT’s Blackboard online system.

Required Text

Optional Texts


Films
Contested Streets, 2006 (http://www.contestedstreets.com/)
King Corn, 2007, Mosaic Films International (http://www.kingcorn.net/)

ASSIGNMENTS
Details on the following assignments will be provided in class and via Blackboard:

1. **Food System Planning Field Trip & Memo** *(Saturday, March 29, 2008)*
   - 5 Penny Farm (http://www.localharvest.org/farms/M8028)
   - Sustainable, organic produce farm in Southwest Virginia
   - Brett & Johanna Nichols, 1198 Thomas Farm Rd SE, Floyd, VA 24091 (540-745-7335)
   - Write a brief memo about your experience (12 pt. font, 1 page, single-spaced max)

2. **Film Memo** *(due March 19, 2008 by 11:59 pm)*
   - Individual or group assignment.
   - Watch one of the two films and write a brief memo (12 pt. font, 1 page, single-spaced max) about your reaction to the film and briefly discuss your reactions with the class.

3. **Food System/Healthy Eating Assignment** *(due March 12, 2008 by 11:59pm)*
   - Individual food system diary and analysis
   - Student neighborhood food assessment

4. **Active Living Assignment** *(due April 15, 2008 by 11:59pm)*
   - Individual student neighborhood active living assessment/audit
   - Urban/suburban neighborhood active living infrastructure comparison

5. **Term Paper & Informal Presentation** *(due May 7, 2008)*
   - Term Paper Idea due March 12, 2008 by 11:59pm.
   - Term Paper due May 7, 2008 by 3:30pm.
   - Term Paper Handout due May 7, 2008 by 3:30pm.
   - Term Paper Presentation in class on May 7, 2008.

GRADING
Participation (15%)
Field Trip Participation & Memo (5%)
Film Memo (5%)
Active Living Assignment (20%)
Food System/Healthy Eating Assignment (20%)
Term Paper & Presentation (35%)

LECTURES

**LECTURE 1 | January 16, 2008**

Introduction

Content
- Introductions
- Overview of syllabus
- Public health, nutrition and planning connection
- Major themes of course

Readings
- Frumkin, Frank & Jackson, Urban Sprawl & Public Health 2004 (Preface)
LECTURE 2 | January 23, 2008

History of Planning and Public Health

Content
- Public health roots of planning
- Tenement housing reform
- Urban water and sewerage systems
- Design of parks and playgrounds

Readings
- Frumkin, Frank & Jackson, Urban Sprawl & Public Health 2004 (Chapter 3 | The Evolution of Urban Health)
- Morris, Planning Active Communities 2006 (Chapter 3 | Reconnecting with Our Roots: A Critical History of American Planning and Public Health for the Twenty-First Century)

LECTURE 3 | January 30, 2008

Environmental Health (Guest Lecture)

Content
- Overview of environmental health and planning connection
  - Water quality (biocontaminants, cancer, etc.)
  - Air quality (asthma and other respiratory illnesses)
  - Mental health (road rage, commuting, etc.)
  - Environmental impact assessments (EIAs)
  - Health impact assessments (HIAs)
- Guest Lecture
  - Charles Konigsberg, Jr., MD, MPH, Health Director, Alexandria Health Department

Readings
- Frumkin, Frank & Jackson, Urban Sprawl & Public Health 2004 (Chapters 4 | Air Quality; Chapter 7 | Water Quantity & Quality; Chapter 8 | Mental Health)

LECTURE 4 | February 6, 2008

Health, Nutrition & Physical Activity

Content
- Energy in (food)
  - Energy density & nutrient density
  - Dietary guidelines
  - Factors influencing food choice and eating behavior
- Energy out (physical activity)
  - Physical activity recommendations
  - Factors affecting physical activity behavior
- Obesity & chronic disease
  - Causes of overweight and obesity
  - Overview of main chronic disease (heart disease, type 2 diabetes and cancer)
  - Health disparities

Websites
Become familiar with the following websites and corresponding available information:


Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/


CDC, http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/


Readings


Levi, Jeffrey, Emily Gadola, and Laura M. Segal. 2007. "F as in Fat: How Obesity Policies are Failing in America." Washington DC: Trust for America's Health. (Section 1, pages 5-16; Section 4, pages 51-63)


February 7-9, 2008

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference (Washington DC)

Lecture 5 | February 13, 2008

The Role of the Built Environment in Physical Activity and Eating Behavior

Content

- New Partners for Smart Growth Conference overview
- Obesogenic environments
  - Built environment
  - Food environment
- Built environment and physical activity
  - Active recreation
  - Active transportation
- Built environment and nutrition
  - Community nutrition environments
  - Consumer nutrition environments

Readings

- Frumkin, Frank & Jackson, Urban Sprawl & Public Health 2004 (Chapter 1 | What is Sprawl? What Does It Have to Do with Health?)
LECTURE 6 | February 20, 2008
Healthy Eating & Land Use Planning: Part 1, Food System Planning

Content
- Food system definition and models
- Conventional food systems
- Alternative food systems
- Social and environmental context of the food system
- Food systems and planning
- Food justice

Required Readings

Optional Readings

LECTURE 7 | February 27, 2008
Healthy Eating & Land Use Planning: Part 2, Planning for Food Availability & Access

Content
- Types of food stores
- Location and availability of food stores
- Food availability and access disparities
- Affordability disparities
- Nutritional quality disparities

Required Readings

Optional Readings

NO LECTURE | March 5, 2008
Lecture 8 | March 12, 2008
Healthy Eating & Land Use Planning: Part 3, Policy/Tools/Best Practices

Content
- Food policy coalitions, networks or councils
- Community food assessment (inventory, mapping, assessment)
- Local and regional food system policy (farmland preservation, urban agriculture, green infrastructure, vacant property conversion, farm to institution programs, etc.)
- Land use policy for food access (general/comprehensive plan, permissive zoning, conditional use permits, restricted use regulations, land use designations, nutrition-related performance standards, etc.)
- Economic development policy for food access (permissive zoning, financing tools, business-enhancement tools, etc.)
- Transportation policy for food access (transportation plan goals, shuttle services, inclusion requirements for new transit stops, transit oriented development, new transit routes, etc.)

Required Readings

Optional Readings

Assignment
- Food System/Healthy Eating Assignment is due on March 12 by 11:59pm (via Blackboard, Digital Dropbox).
- Term Paper Idea is due on March 12 by 11:59pm (via Blackboard, Digital Dropbox).

Lecture 9 | March 19, 2008
Active Living & Land Use Planning: Part 1, Suburban Neighborhoods

Content
- Active Transportation
- Physical activity and transit
- Bicycle and pedestrian planning
- Commuting
- Destinations
- Trip utility
- Recreational activity
Required Readings
- Morris, Planning Active Communities 2006 (Chapter 2 | Defining Physical Activity and Active Living: Framing the Issue)

Optional Readings

Assignment
- Both film memos are due on March 19 by 11:59pm (via Blackboard, Digital Dropbox).

LECTURE 10 | March 26, 2008
Active Living & Land Use Planning: Part 2, Urban Neighborhoods

Content
- Safety and traffic
- Safety and crime
- Recreational and active transportation based physical activity patterns
- Park, open space and recreational facilities disparities
- Job, housing, school, and shopping location

Required Readings

LECTURE 11 | April 2, 2008
Active Living & Land Use Planning: Part 3, Policy/Tools/Best Practices

Content
- Growth Management
- Smart Growth
- Transit Oriented Development
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- New Urbanism
- Multi-Modal Transportation Policy
- Innovative Active Living Policy

Required Readings
- Morris, Planning Active Communities, 2006. (Chapters 4-6)

Optional Readings

**NO LECTURE | April 9, 2008**
**Active Living Research Conference (Washington DC)**

**NO LECTURE | April 16, 2008**
**Virginia Tech: A Day of Remembrance**

**Assignment**
- Active Living Assignment is due on April 15 by 11:59pm (via Blackboard, Digital Dropbox).

**LECTURE 13 | April 23, 2008**
**Creating Healthy, Sustainable Communities**

**Content**
- ALR conference overview.
- Connection between public health, built environment, nutrition, food policy and the environment.
- Health Impact Assessments.
- Sustainable, healthy communities.
- Leading communities in U.S. and Canada.

**Required Readings**
- Frumkin, Frank & Jackson, Urban Sprawl & Public Health 2004 *(Chapters 11 | From Urban Sprawl to Health for All)*
- Morris, Integrating Planning and Public Health, 2006. *(Chapter 6 | Health Impact Assessment)*

**Optional Readings**

**NO LECTURE | April 30, 2008**
**American Planning Association Conference (Las Vegas, NV)**

**LECTURE 14 | May 7, 2008**
**Term Paper Presentations and Discussion**

**Content**
- APA conference overview.
- Informal presentations of term paper (PowerPoint is not required).

**Readings**
- No assigned readings.
Assignment

- Term papers due May 7 by 3:30pm (via Blackboard, Digital Dropbox).

USEFUL LINKS

Active Living Network
http://www.activeliving.org/

Active Living by Design
http://www.activelivingbydesign.org/

Active Living Research
http://www.activelivingresearch.org/

Active Living Resource Center
http://www.activelivingresources.org/

Active For Life
http://www.activeforlife.info/default.aspx

American Planning Association, Food System Planning
http://www.planning.org/divisions/initiatives/foodsyste.htm

American Planning Association, Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning
http://www.planning.org/policyguides/food.htm

American Public Health Association
http://www.apha.org

American Public Health Association, Environmental Public Health
http://www.apha.org/programs/additional/revitalizeenviro.htm

American Public Health Association, Environment Section
http://depts.washington.edu/aphaenv/

American Public Health Association, Food & Nutrition Section
http://www.apha.org/membergroups/sections/aphasections/food/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Designing and Building Healthy Places
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Health
http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/default.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Health Impact Assessment (HIA)
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Community Environmental Health Assessment (CEHA)
http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/CEHA/default.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH)
http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/default.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), PACE EH: A Tool for Community Environmental Health Assessment
http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/PIB/PACE.htm

Community Design for Healthy Eating