

PSPA 631: Urban Planning and Zoning

Department of Public Administration
Northern Illinois University
Fall 2020, Second Eight Weeks

Meeting Time: Wednesdays 5:30pm

Meetings: Synchronous online via Zoom at

<https://niu-edu.zoom.us/j/89673021458?pwd=VmQwU2xsLytUbG00T21mMWMvZDBsUT09>

Meeting ID: 896 7302 1458

Passcode: 1111

Dial-in if necessary: +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Skuzinski

Email: tskuzinski@niu.edu

Office hours: Please schedule at <http://www.calendly.com/skuzinski/office-hours>. Be sure to follow all instructions (i.e., the purpose of the meeting, and a URL or phone number).

What will I learn in this course?

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Assess how planners balance competing interests, such as public versus private and regional versus local.
- Engage in key contemporary debates in land use planning.
- Critically read key documents in the practice of land use planning and regulation, including the comprehensive plan, zoning regulations, the site plan, and the development agreement.
- Analyze the constitutionality of land use planning and regulation, both generally and with regard to specific practices.
- Describe the advantages and disadvantages of the contemporary tools used to manage growth and manage decline.

What will the instructional mode be for the course?

The course will be taught fully online, consistent with department guidelines, and will use both asynchronous (on your own outside of class, and roughly at your own pace within a given week) and synchronous (virtually together at the same time in an online meeting platform) learning. The synchronous meetings will be Wednesday evenings, with a hard start time of 5:30pm and a typical duration of 2.5 hours. This anticipated duration is highly dependent on your preparation and engagement, and you should not plan evening activities expecting an early finish.

This is a survey elective meant to introduce a wide range of topics, and you will be consuming a lot of content, including readings and videos. I need to know that you are keeping up, and my evaluation of you (described below) will require that you demonstrate you know key concepts and can apply this knowledge. Rather than use memoranda or other written deliverables, I rely on your in-class participation and quizzes to provide evidence of this.

What if I need an accommodation for a disability?

Many students need accommodations for physical, mental, and other disabilities. I have had to make such requests as a student, and have afforded students many accommodations in prior courses. Communicating about this is a normal part of professionalism.

If you need an accommodation, please contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The DRC coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities. It is located in the Campus Life Building, Suite 180, and can be reached at 815-753-1303 or drc@niu.edu.

Also, please contact me privately (by email, or on Slack via direct message) as soon as possible so we can discuss your accommodations. Please note that you will not be required to disclose your disability, only your accommodations. The sooner you let me know your needs, the sooner I can assist you in achieving your learning goals.

How will the course accommodate the challenges of COVID-19?

I believe the policy regarding professionalism covers this fully, but I will emphasize it again here: I regard you as professional colleagues, and this means that your responsibility is communicating clearly with me (and with your colleagues in any group work) when adverse life events happen. We can work together to try to devise a plan that ensures you meet the learning objectives of the course and gain the competencies associated with it, but also maintain your physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Also, a note about anxiety. These can be extremely stressful times. We are all living with unsettling uncertainty and it affects the way we perceive the world, ourselves, and others. Such feelings may be persistent or may come on suddenly. Let's all promise to be patient with each other and help support a healthy learning environment. If you or somebody you know is struggling with anxiety or other issues, do not hesitate to reach out. You can find resources at the following websites:

<https://www.niu.edu/counseling/>

<https://www.niu.edu/disability/index.shtml>

<https://www.niu.edu/helping-huskies-thrive/get-help-now/index.shtml>

Or you can call 815-306-2777. As always, in the event of a crisis call for immediate help via 911.

What are the ethical standards in the course?

Good academic work must be based on honesty. If you present as your own work or ideas something you did not produce, this is a serious offense. Students are guilty of cheating if they copy the work of another. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Cheating and/or plagiarism may result in a grade of F for the course, and the student(s) involved may be suspended or dismissed from the university. You can find Academic Integrity Tutorials at this link if you feel confused by these standards: <https://www.niu.edu/academic-integrity/index.shtml>.

What are the professional standards in the course?

Professionalism is a quite broad concept, and certainly includes the ethical standards outlined above. With regard to your time in this course, it also includes expectations about the following:

Communication: All your written and oral communication with me and with your colleagues should be timely, respectful, and genial.

- Timeliness means meeting deadlines. It also means that when issues arise that affect your ability to function well as a student and colleague, you share them with me and/or your colleagues before they have a negative impact on your work or the work of others.
- Respectfulness means that you critically engage ideas but do not attack or critique a person, endeavor to accommodate communicative preferences (e.g., in use of pronouns, titles, and the like), allow others to share their perspectives without unreasonable interruption, and strive to work with me to ensure the virtual classroom is a safe space for discussion. Please mute your microphone when not speaking!
- Geniality means that you work to maintain a tone that is friendly, patient, and encouraging.

Engagement: Stated simply, you should be present and diligent.

- Presence means coming to every synchronous class meetings fully prepared to participate, dressed as you would for any in-person professional meeting, with your webcam turned on so you are visible, and with distraction kept to a reasonable minimum. You must have a fully functioning computer, internet connection, webcam, and microphone. Many of us are in work environments that are difficult to isolate from family, pets, and the like, so simply make a reasonable effort to manage your ability to be genuinely present.
- Diligence means completing all required work by the required deadline, and doing so to a high personal standard. You should set aside time each week—probably about 6-8 hours in addition to the synchronous class meeting—to ensure that you can be successful.

How will communication happen in the course?

You can communicate with me via email. The norm is a response within 24 hours, but if your message slips through the cracks you should email me again. I also use Calendly to schedule office hours via Zoom. The link is <http://www.calendly.com/skuzinski/office-hours>. A tip about effective use of office hours: reserve them for interactions that you think would need about 5 to 15 minutes of dialog. Anything less should use email. For major personal issues, feel free to request a separate appointment with me.

How will I be evaluated?

Your grade in the course is determined by your performance on the following. Note that all quizzes and exams are untimed and open materials.

Component	Weight
In-class participation: call list (weeks 2 through 7)	12%
In-class participation: discussion/reflection prompts (weeks 1 through 8)	16%
Quiz: Zoning	10%
Quiz: Planning	10%
Quiz: Property	10%
Quiz: Development	10%
Quiz: Density	10%
Quiz: Accessibility	10%
Final exam (or optional deliverable determined in consultation with me)	12%
Grading scale: 94-100: A, 90-93: A-, 87-89: B+, ... , 60-63: D-, 59 or lower: F	

MPA Competencies	Week #							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Evaluate public service issues in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, equity and economy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Incorporate professional codes of ethics in public service decision-making to enhance integrity of public services	X		X					X
Communicate effectively...in writing (analytical and persuasive) for a public service organization and in the public policy process.		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Identify strategies for improving democratic accountability in governance, including improved transparency and civic participation			X			X	X	X