ASSIGNMENTS #3A AND #3B: DRAFT AND FINAL LITERATURE REVIEW  
SJSU URBP 298A – SPRING 2018  
Instructors: Serena Alexander, Gordon Douglas, and Rick Kos

Overview
For this assignment you will prepare a draft and final literature review for your Planning Report that analyzes at least 20 different sources of literature, of which at least 12 must be peer-reviewed journal articles. You will submit the draft literature review to your adviser by April 3, 2018. The final version of the literature review, due April 24, 2018, should incorporate the feedback you received from your adviser.

Purpose
In-depth knowledge of the field you wish to study is a pre-requisite for credible research. The literature review assignment is your chance to show that you are familiar with the literature pertinent to your general topic of research, as well as to your more specific research question. A well-written literature review will help you with your Planning Report (and work as a professional planner) in many ways. For example, a good literature review helps you to:

1. Assess whether planning policies or tools you could recommend achieve specific outcomes.

   This outcome is likely to be particularly important to most 298 Planning Reports—and to your work as a planning professional. Planners are often asked to evaluate the potential effectiveness of a new policy under consideration, and one extremely useful technique for doing so is to review existing research. When decision makers consider adopting a new policy approach to a problem, one of the first questions they ask is: Will it work? A literature review is a method to see how past research can inform your answer to that question. Imagine that the Sunny Shores Village planning staff want to require all new commercial buildings to include rooftop solar panels as a strategy to reduce carbon emissions. The Sunny Shores Village Council asks you to find out (1) how much this policy will actually reduce emissions, (2) if there are other positive or negative environmental impacts, and (3) what the economic impact to building owners and tenants would be over a building’s lifetime. Various methods may help you to answer these questions, but one of the best can be a literature review. Among other advantages, conducting a literature review is often much cheaper than experimenting with different policy options to test their effectiveness.

2. Justify the value of your general research topic and/or specific research question.

   For many studies, a literature review provides evidence that a particular issue is an important current problem for communities (and thus worthwhile to study further). The literature review is also often the best way to demonstrate that there is a gap in knowledge about an issue, a gap your study can help to fill.

3. Assess whether certain methods will be useful to your project and/or how best to implement particular methods.

   A literature review can show you what methods other researchers have used to answer questions similar to yours, as well as best practices in how to implement those methods. For example, if you want to assess public opinion on a particular topic, you may learn whether
scholars looking at public opinion on similar topics have found it most useful to rely on surveys, interviews, or analysis of media coverage. Or if you are conducting a GIS analysis relating urban form and travel behavior, it is useful to see what variables and data sources other researchers have used to quantify urban form factors such as density and mixed use. Also, studying other scholars’ methods may show useful ways to narrow down your subject of study, such as by selecting a smaller geographic area or a narrower research question than you originally planned to address.

URBP 298A students often use their review of the literature to fulfill all three of these purposes. For this assignment, however, students typically work on the first purpose, assessing whether a particular planning tool or policy will have a specific outcome.

(Occasionally students choose to prepare one of their two literature review questions on the third purpose, assessing how best to implement a particular method. If you think you want to write one literature review question about a methodological issue, you must first consult with your adviser.)

What documents to include—and not to include—in the literature review

You will read many documents while thinking about, researching, and writing your Planning Report, but not all documents should be part of this literature review assignment. Keep in mind that for this assignment you are only reviewing those documents—or those parts of larger documents—that help you to write about the objectives described above.

The literature review should evaluate items that are themselves analytical and research-oriented in nature. These will primarily be academic or professional pieces that report on a particular research project completed on your topic, though you may also include a few published literature reviews prepared on your topic.

The documents you review must include at least 12 peer-reviewed journal articles, but you may include other sources as well to reach the required minimum of 20 sources reviewed. Other types of documents that may be appropriate include research reports published by government agencies, university centers, or interest groups; masters theses or doctoral dissertations; and conference papers that present the details of a research project.

One type of document you should not include in the literature review is “primary documents” that you intend to analyze as part of your work. For example, you would not review the City of San Jose’s building code if the primary objective of your Planning Report is to suggest improvements to that code. (However, you might include a review of a journal article that critically evaluates the building codes of several cities). You also would not include in your literature review other city documents like the zoning code and general plan, even though these may be critical to your Planning Report.

Tips for finding appropriate literature: If you find that you aren’t coming up with relevant literature to use in this assignment, here are two suggestions:

1. The literature is out there, but you just haven’t figured out how to find it. It may be that you aren’t yet using the right search strategies. First, review your URBP 297P notes from the session on using library resources and the SJSU library webpage on research in urban planning (http://libguides.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning). Be sure to review the tab with a list of suggested databases for ideas on new places to search. Also, experiment with new search terms (keywords) and different combinations of terms. For example, if you get few...
results when searching for “crime in urban plazas,” you might try searching for “safety in public spaces.” Or if you searched for “strategies to combat global warming in cities,” also try “local strategies to combat climate change.”

The strategy of searching for slightly different keywords is helpful even if you find many articles. Often, you need to familiarize yourself with the literature to know what the most useful keywords are. For example, if you are interested in strategies to attract fast growing companies to your city, after reading a few articles you may find that such companies are commonly called “Gazelles” or “high-impact firms,” so you’ll want to do new searches on those terms. In sum, the process of finding literature relevant to your study is not necessarily linear: you may need to go back to searching again and again, as you read and analyze many articles.

If you still struggle finding relevant literature after using these strategies, you may want to make an appointment with the SJSU librarian who supports our department, Ms. Toby Matoush (toby.matoush@sjsu.edu).

2. **There truly just isn’t much (or any) literature on your specific research topic.** If there really is not an extensive published literature on your exact topic, you will need to work with literature that looks at closely related fields that can help you with your project. For example, if you find that there is very little literature on the design factors that reduce crime in urban plazas, then it might be useful to review literature that examines the design factors that reduce crime in public spaces similar to urban plazas, like parks or streets.

**The two-step process for writing a literature review**

Writing a literature review requires thinking critically about a huge amount of information, likely many hundreds of pages. The human brain does not have the capacity to handle all this information effectively! Thus, it is very important to employ an effective strategy as you read and organize your thoughts. The best strategy you can use is to complete this assignment in two steps. First, you’ll read the studies critically and take notes in table format. Only after that table is completed will you start to write the paper. More information about creating the summary literature review tables is provided in Section 6 below.

**The format for the final literature review**

Organize the final literature into six clearly identified sections using the following headings:

**Section 1: Introduction**

In a paragraph or two, describe the literature review questions you will explore, explain why these questions are important, and describe how the rest of the paper is organized. (The last gives your readers a short “road map” as to how you have organized the entire paper.)

**Section 2: Analysis of Main Literature Review Questions**

This section, the majority of the text in the assignment, will evaluate and synthesize what you learned from reading at least twenty research studies (total) that help to answer two or more literature review questions related to your area of study.
Plan to pick literature review questions for which you assess whether a particular planning tool or policy achieves a specific outcome. (If you wish to pick one question that instead assesses how to implement a specific method, consult with your adviser about how you might do this.)

Here are samples of the types of literature review questions that would work well for the assignment:

- What methods of community outreach most effectively engage youth?
- How do urban growth boundaries impact housing prices?
- What design features will successfully attract users to urban public plazas?
- Are cordon congestion pricing schemes equitable?

Your goal in writing up this section is to evaluate and synthesize the studies you read that address each literature review question, so that you can provide a detailed and nuanced answer to the questions.

What is good evaluation and synthesis? At a minimum, for each literature review question you should describe the similarities and differences between the findings of the studies, discuss methodological or other issues that may explain differences among the studies’ findings, and summarize the key conclusions you draw from reviewing all the studies on each literature review question. Also, it is important to discuss whether you think the overall findings from the studies are likely to apply to other places or groups of people (i.e., are the findings “generalizable”?). The appendix to this document, on the “The Qualities of a Good Literature Review,” provides more information on how to prepare your analysis and synthesis.

For most students, Section 2 of the paper will cover two literature review questions and be around 1,500 words (that is about 4 double-spaced pages if a 12-point Times New Roman font is used).

**Tips to remember:**
- This section should evaluate and synthesize, rather than just describing the studies you analyzed.
- Write about at least 20 different studies, of which at least 12 must be peer-reviewed journal articles.

**Section 3: Conclusion**
In a few paragraphs, summarize what you learned and convince the reader that your research is important, interesting, and relevant to the field of planning. You should recapitulate the summary conclusions you drew for each literature review question and also discuss how your project will contribute to the current bodies of literature on your topic. If your study will address a major gap or limitation in the literature, make sure to explain this clearly. You may also wish to discuss the potential policy implications of the findings from the literature.

**Section 4: Annotated Bibliography**
The bibliography should include a numbered table with the following information for each of at least 20 sources of literature:

1. A properly formatted citation of the source that follows the citation style guidelines explained in the URBP 298A syllabus. (Confirm with your adviser whether you should use Turabian’s “Bibliography” style or “Reference List” style.)
2. Identification of the type of literature (peer-reviewed journal article, article from a popular journal, book chapter, book, newspaper article, magazine article, dissertation/thesis, internet web page, etc.).

If you aren’t sure what a “peer-reviewed” journal is, you’ll find an explanation here: library.fgcu.edu/RSD/Instruction/peerrev/peerev.html. Also, the SJSU library subscribes to the database “Ulrich’s Periodical Directory,” which tells notes if a journal is “refereed,” which is synonymous with “peer-reviewed.”

Here is a template for the Annotated Bibliography:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Section 5: Appendix A (List of On-Line Databases, Catalogs, and Keywords Searched)

This section will list all the on-line library catalogs and databases you searched. For each catalog/database searched, list the keywords used.

Section 6: Appendix B (Summary Tables of Literature Reviewed)

In order to organize your thoughts about each literature review question before you write your analysis, prepare a table summarizing the findings of the literature on that question, as shown in Table 1 (below).

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tip: It is critical that you prepare the table before you begin to write up the analysis of the literature review question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each row of the table will describe one study you read. The columns of the table should include, at a minimum: the study (just the author and date is fine), the main method, the key findings related to your literature review question, notes on any key limitations or weaknesses of the study, and notes on anything else that might be useful to you later on.

Put the following content in each column:

- **Findings:** List only those study findings that directly answer the literature review question for that table. Avoid ambiguous or lengthy descriptions; you need only enough information to remind you of the key findings that answer your literature review question.

- **Key limitations or weaknesses:** List your reservations about using the study findings as the basis for recommending a planning or policy action. As part of this analysis, think about how much confidence you have that the study findings can be generalized to other places/situations. Examples of common limitations of research studies include small sample sizes, unusually low response rates, inappropriate measures or techniques used to collect the data, failure to use suitable control or comparison groups, unclear or invalid variable definitions, and poorly described methods or findings.
• **Other notes:** Include important information about the study not included in the other columns, such as a particularly useful table or figure, interesting policy recommendations relevant to your study, or a reminder to yourself to review the bibliography again later.

Feel free to add additional columns if there are other factors you want to analyze systematically across the studies. (For example, the year data was collected, the state where data was collected, or whether the study confirms or disproves a particular hypothesis you have.)

**Tip:** You’ll need to revise this table as you work on the assignment.

Complete the table for each study the first time you read the article. Later, as you become more familiar with the literature, you’ll want to make changes. For example, you may want to add information you didn’t initially realize was important, delete findings you realize aren’t directly relevant to your literature review table, or break up the material in the Key Findings column into two or more columns.
### Table 1: What methods of community outreach most effectively engage youth? (Literature review question 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Key findings relevant to the literature review question</th>
<th>Key limitations or weaknesses</th>
<th>Other notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smith 2011</td>
<td>Focus groups with 29 teens in Chicago</td>
<td>- Liked idea of being asked to do interviews with other teens on a topic of interest.</td>
<td>- Focus only on at-risk teens, so findings may not apply to other types of youth.</td>
<td>- Table 1 (p. 34) lists the common methods of community outreach for engaging youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Didn’t like idea of attending community meetings where city staff will present information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ko &amp; Liu 2008</td>
<td>Survey of 498 parents of elementary schools kids in Kansas</td>
<td>- Parents think their kids will like game-based exercises and interviewing their neighbors.</td>
<td>- Do parents really know what will engage kids?</td>
<td>- The conclusion lists interesting policy options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Parents randomly selected from public schools across the state, so a fairly diverse sample (of Kansas).</td>
<td>- The conclusion lists innovative research ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reminder: You may find it useful to have several columns for the findings so that you can separate out findings into narrower sub-themes.
Instructions for Assignment #3a
(Draft Literature Review, due April 3, 2018)

For the draft, you do not have to prepare all the material that will appear in your final paper. Instead, prepare a paper that covers a single literature review question. More specifically, the draft must include the following sections:

- **Section 2: Main literature review questions and questions:** Write fully about ONE literature review question and question of your choosing. In addition, state the other literature review question(s)/question(s) that you plan to write about in the final paper.
- **Section 4: Annotated Bibliography:** Include all the sources you used to write about the single literature review question you focus on in the draft.
- **Section 5: Appendix A:** List all the catalogs and databases you searched, plus the keywords used, for the single literature review question you focus on in the draft.
- **Section 6: Appendix B:** Prepare a summary table for the sources used to write about the single literature review question you focus on in the draft.

Upload the draft literature review in MS Word format to the Assignments tab in Canvas (sjsu.instructure.com).

Instructions for Assignment #3b
(Final Literature Review, due April 24, 2018)

Prepare a revised literature review that covers all six of the required items and includes at least two main literature review questions. Be sure that the final literature review incorporates the feedback received from your adviser on the draft assignment.

Upload the final literature review in MS Word format to the Assignments tab in Canvas (sjsu.instructure.com).

Grading

**Draft:** You will not receive a letter grade, but you will receive comments from your adviser on the following criteria:

1. Does the draft include all required sections and content?
2. Does the draft clearly identify three or four literature review questions in the literature useful to preparing your Planning Report, and have you framed a clear, answerable question related to each literature review question?
3. Does the paper evaluate and synthesize with nuance and depth the key findings from the literature on the single literature review question that is the focus for the draft? At a minimum, the draft should describe the similarities and differences between the findings of the studies on that literature review question, discuss methodological or other issues that may explain differences among the studies’ findings, and summarize the key conclusions you draw from reviewing all the studies on the literature review question.
4. Is the writing clear and easy to understand?

**Final:** Your adviser will assess the paper on the criteria below and assign a letter grade. To pass the assignment (and the URBP-298A course), you must receive a grade of “B” or higher.
Grading criteria:

1. Does the literature review include all required sections, as well as the required number of peer-reviewed articles (12 minimum) and total number of items (20 minimum)?

2. Does the literature review clearly identify two or more main literature review questions in the literature and pose a question about each one?

3. Does the paper evaluate and synthesize with nuance and depth the key findings from the literature on each literature review question? At a minimum, the paper should describe the similarities and differences between the findings of the studies on each literature review question, discuss methodological or other issues that may explain differences among the studies’ findings, and summarize the key conclusions you draw from reviewing all the studies on each literature review question.

4. Is the writing grammatically correct and free of typos?

5. Is the writing clear and easy to understand?

6. Are all citations in both the footnotes and bibliography properly formatted?

Note on late papers: Be sure to submit the assignments on time, as late submissions may result in substantially delayed feedback from your adviser.

Appendix: The qualities of a good literature review

It is critical that the literature review not be a summary of your 20 sources in isolation from one another. Instead, you are seeking to evaluate and synthesize the material you collected by showing patterns, literature review questions, consistencies, and inconsistencies across all of the sources related to a particular literature review question. This appendix provides some additional guidance about how to evaluate and synthesis the literature effectively (and what not to do).

You are trying to show what we know about a topic from the research already conducted by others. To do this, you need to identify the common findings across different research on a single topic, as well as the issues where research seems to come to contradictory conclusions (debates in the field). To accomplish these tasks, it is not enough to say “Albert Green says X, and Mariko Kuo says Y.” You have to explain whether “X” and “Y” are similar or different. In addition, you should try to explain any differences.

The following samples give simplified examples of two papers writing about the same literature review question. The first example provides no evaluation and synthesis, while the second example has quite good evaluation and synthesis, as emphasized by the underlined sections. Note that the studies cited in these examples are imaginary, not real.

Example 1:

According to a 2006 study by Doodlebury, TODs in the Bay Area were found to attract primarily higher-income earners.¹ According to a 2000 study by Snozwinkle of TODs in the Washington, DC, area, it was revealed that TODs there were explicitly marketed to wealthier households.² In 2008, Escobar's research on TODs in Phoenix proved that, despite

aggressive marketing aimed at wealthier households, the TODs attracted new residents from a broad array of income groups due to the lower cost of living in TODs. She found that, due to proximity to public transit, the need for one less car in the household created substantial savings that appealed to persons across all income cohorts. Obama looked at one TOD in Buffalo, New York, and found people from a wide variety of income groups living there, but most were relatively lower income. Deng Kim also looked at two TODs in the same region. She found that families tended to be either considerably below or considerably above the local median income.

Example 2:

Five studies looking at whether TODs attract only high-income residents came to contradictory conclusions—or at least it appears this way on first glance. According to a 1999 study by Doodlebury, TODs in the San Francisco Bay Area were found to attract primarily higher-income earners. This finding was supported by Snozwinkle in a 2000 study of TODs in the Washington, DC, area that revealed TODs there were explicitly marketed to wealthier households.

However, Escobar’s 2011 study contradicted these findings. Her research on TODs in Phoenix showed that despite aggressive marketing aimed at wealthier households, the TODs attracted new residents from a broad array of income groups due to the lower cost of living in TODs. Living close to public transit meant that households needed fewer cars, a substantial savings that appealed to persons across all income cohorts. Two studies from TOD projects in Buffalo, New York, support this conclusion. They found that the median or mean income of residents was similar to, or lower than, local averages.

Although it is true that the overall conclusions to the studies are contradictory, a careful assessment of the detailed findings shows that the conclusions are not all as different as it might seem at first glance. In particular, the definition of income is important. Doodlebury’s study provides the best evidence that TOD residents might actually be high-income. However, the study defined the highest income group as families (of any size) with annual household incomes of $75,000 or more. Even back in 1999, that is a household income level that many researchers would consider middle-income rather than high-income for the San Francisco Bay Area. And since Doodlebury does not break down income levels farther, we cannot know how many of the families in the study had incomes close to that income level and how many had much higher incomes.

In addition, the different geographies and dates of the studies suggest two reasons why they may have come to different conclusions. First, Doodlebury and Snozwinkle’s studies, which found that the residents of TODs were wealthier, were both conducted in regions

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6 Doodlebury, “High-Roller TODs.”
7 Snozwinkle, “Assessment of Marketing Approaches.”
8 Escobar, “Phoenix TODs.”
9 Obama, “A Multidisciplinary Study”; Kim, “Roaming Buffalo.”
10 Doodlebury, “High-Roller TODs.”
with large numbers of affluent residents and a high, unmet demand for housing. The other three studies, by contrast, focused on communities suffering from high unemployment and many properties on the market. The fact that the Phoenix and Buffalo studies found residents of all incomes attracted to the TOD suggests that there is nothing inherent in TODs that makes them undesirable to middle and lower-income residents. The high income levels found among residents in the Bay Area and DC studies may simply reflect the high demand for and cost of new housing in those markets. Second, it is important to note that the two studies finding TODs lacked residents from a mix of income groups are both a full decade older than the more recent studies by Escobar, Obama, and Kim, which did find residents from a mix of income groups. It may be that changes in the economy or increased supply of TOD units over that decade explain the divergent findings.

In sum, the research suggests – or at least does not contradict – the hypothesis that newer TODs built at modest cost can attract residents with a range of incomes. The exception might be in high-income communities like the Bay Area and Washington, D.C. It is not clear from the evidence reviewed if in these regions TOD living is so desirable that higher-income families will price out poorer ones.

Let us compare some of the differences between the two examples:

1. Example 2 demonstrated LINKAGES between the authors’ research (some of these linkages are illustrated with underlining). This is the type of evaluation that makes it possible to take the next step and synthesize the findings from the literature review. By contrast, Example 1 simply lists findings without tying them together to find commonalities or inconsistencies.

2. Example 2 summarizes the author’s key findings across all the studies: that the evidence is mixed about whether TODs attract only high-income residents. This is what we are looking for when we talk about “synthesis.” (Note, also, that this key finding is handily placed at the beginning of the paragraph, letting readers immediately know the “core idea” that will be discussed in the rest of the paragraph.)

3. Example 2 evaluates the differences among the studies to see if there are methodological or other factors that may explain the differences among them.

4. Example 2 gives readers a sense of how much literature was reviewed. It is not strictly necessary to include this number for each section of the literature review, but doing so can be helpful to show how in-depth the review was. For example, if 12 studies all conclude one thing, readers will probably have more confidence in the finding than if only two studies were reviewed.

5. Example 2 uses language that is less absolute, which is usually more appropriate when writing about research findings. In example 1 the phrase “Escobar’s research on TODs in Phoenix proved that . . .” implies that Escobar’s research presents the absolute truth on TODs, while in example 2 the phrase “Her research on TODs in Phoenix showed that . . .” accurately summarizes the findings without making strong claims about absolute truths.

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