

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT
URBP 297P – PLANNING REPORT PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL
SPRING 2020

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Telephone:	408-354-6837
Office hours:	Contact me directly and we will arrange a time and place.
Class days/time:	4:30 – 7:15 p.m. on five Mondays: 1/27, 2/10, 2/24, 3/16, and 4/20
Classroom:	DMH 347
Class website:	Canvas (https://sjsu.instructure.com/)
Prerequisites:	None
Units:	1

Course Catalog Description

Advanced research and proposal writing. Students conduct background research and develop a preliminary research proposal that demonstrates their capacity to do independent research, analysis, and writing about a complex planning problem.

Course Description and Course Learning Objectives

This course provides students with the skills and knowledge to prepare the preliminary research proposal required to enroll in URPB 298A. Students will learn how to frame effective research questions and identify appropriate peer-reviewed literature relevant to their research topic. In addition, the class explores the question of how to identify which research methods might be appropriate to answer a research question. Finally, students will develop their skills at providing constructive feedback on a colleague's writing.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Conceptualize problems from complex, real-world situations so the problems are meaningful to the intended audience and research-worthy.
2. Identify and summarize appropriate peer-reviewed literature relevant to a proposed area of research.
3. Prepare constructive, tactful feedback to help colleagues improve their writing.

Note that MUP students who entered the program in Fall 2012 or later must pass URBP 297P with a grade of C or higher in order to enroll in URBP 298A. In addition, if students decide that they wish to work in URBP 298A on a topic *different from* the one they write about for the 297P Preliminary Research Proposal, then before the semester they take URBP 298A they must prepare a new Preliminary Research Proposal that is assessed by the URBP 298 Faculty Coordinator as being of the same quality required to pass the Preliminary Proposal assignment in URBP 297P.

Remember also that in order to register for URBP 298A, you must have passed the Writing Skills Test (WST) OR have a bachelors or masters degree from a California State University campus. If you have not yet met this requirement, you should register for a WST test date immediately (<http://testing.sjsu.edu/wst/>).

Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) Knowledge Components

This course partially covers the following PAB Knowledge Components 2a, 2b, 2c, and 2f.

A complete list of the PAB Knowledge Components can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/courses/pabknowledge.html>.

Course Texts

Required

This class has two required books:

Johnson, Gail. *Research Methods for Public Administrators*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002. (Available free as an e-book through the SJSU library. ISBN 156720449X)

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013. (New copies on Amazon for about \$13.00. ISBN 9780226816388)

Additional short readings will be sent to the class by email and/or posted to Canvas.

Recommended

The books listed below are about the research design process in general. All are available as e-books through the SJSU library.

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *Craft of Research*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. (Straightforward advice on planning and writing research reports.)

May, Tim. *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*. 4th ed. Berkshire: Open University Press, 2011. (A more theoretical discussion of the research process.)

Rugg, Gordon, and Marian Petre. *Gentle Guide to Research Methods*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 2007. (Lots of practical tips on academic research projects, written in a breezy, lighthearted style.)

The readings below will be helpful for learning about qualitative and survey methods. Also, for advice on quantitative methods and policy analysis, the textbooks from URBP 204 and URBP 236 are a good starting place.

- Auerbach, Carl F., and Louise B. Silverstein. *Qualitative Data: An Introduction to Coding and Analysis*. New York: New York University Press, 2003. (This book lays out simple, practical strategies for designing a qualitative study and the process of coding and analyzing the data.)
- Berkowitz, Susan. "Chapter 4: Analyzing Qualitative Data." In *User-Friendly Handbook for Mixed Method Evaluations*, edited by Joy Frechtling and Laure Sharp, prepared for the National Science Foundation, 1997. Chapter 4 is available at www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/chap_4.htm and the full report is at www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/start.htm.
- Burnard, P., et al. "Analyzing and Presenting Qualitative Data." *British Dental Journal* 204, no. 8 (2008): 429 – 432. The article is available at www.nature.com/bdj/journal/v204/n8/full/sj.bdj.2008.292.html.
- Dillman, Don A. *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley & Sons, 2009. (Lots of practical advice on designing surveys. There's a more recent 2014 edition, too, though the SJSU library doesn't own a copy.)
- Gill, Paul, et al. "Methods of Data Collection in Qualitative Research: Interviews and Focus Groups." *British Dental Journal* 204, no. 6 (2008): 291-296. This article is available at www.nature.com/bdj/journal/v204/n6/full/bdj.2008.192.html.
- Josselson, Ruthellen. *Interviewing for Qualitative Inquiry A Relational Approach*. New York: Guilford Press, 2013. (Lots of very specific, practical advice about how to design and conduct an in-depth interview designed to understand another person's experience. The book does *not* discuss how to analyze the data collected.)
- LeCompte, Margaret Diane, and Jean J. Schensul. *Analyzing and Interpreting Ethnographic Data*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1999. (A good book for learning about how to analyze interview or other qualitative data.)
- Stewart, K., et al. "Qualitative Research in Dentistry." *British Dental Journal* 204, no. 5 (2008): 235-239. This article is available at www.nature.com/bdj/journal/v204/n5/full/bdj.2008.149.html.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Your grade for the course will be based on the following assignments:

Graded Assignments	% of Course Grade	CLOs Covered	Due Date
Draft Preliminary Research Proposal #1	5%	1 & 2	3/16
Draft Preliminary Research Proposal #2	5%	1 & 2	4/13
Final Preliminary Research Proposal	90%	1 & 2	5/11

In addition to the graded activities listed in the table, students must complete several ungraded homework assignments designed to help you learn the course material, meet at least once with me during a designated period to discuss my feedback on Draft #1, and prepare written feedback on the Draft #2 papers prepared by one other student. Due dates for all these ungraded activities appear in the course schedule at the end of this syllabus.

Course Workload

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

The Preliminary Research Proposal Assignments

You will write two drafts and a final version of a preliminary research proposal. The proposal will include your proposed URBP 298 planning report's research question, an explanation of its importance, an overview of the methods you anticipate using, and an annotated bibliography of at least 15 substantive sources related to your topic. The drafts and the final assignment will receive a letter grade.

I will give additional instructions for these assignments in a separate handout.

Policy on Late and Missing Assignments

Late penalties are as follows:

- For all graded assignments, late work will be penalized one-third of a grade for every day it is late (e.g., an "A" assignment will be downgraded to "A-" if it is one day late; to "B+" if it is two days late, etc.).

Calculation of Final Course Letter Grade

I calculate the final letter grade for the course by weighting the grade for each assignment according to the percentages in the table above.

To do this, I first convert the letter grade for each assignment to a 4-point scale (A = 4.0, A- = 3.67, B+ = 3.33, B = 3, B- = 2.67, C+ = 2.33, C = 2.0, C- = 1.67, D = 1, and F = 0).

I then use these scores and the weights for each assignment shown in the table above to calculate a final, numerical grade for the course based on the 4-point scale. That number is converted back to a letter grade (A = 3.85+, A- = 3.50 – 2.84, B+ = 3.17 – 3.49, B = 2.85 – 3.16, B- = 2.50 – 2.84, C+ = 2.17 – 2.49, C = 1.85 – 2.16, C- = 1.50 – 1.84, D+ = 1.17 – 1.40, D = 0.85 – 1.16, F = 0 – 0.84).

Classroom Protocol

Proper decorum in the classroom is critical. As a courtesy to your colleagues, cell phone/electronic device use for calls, texts, games, web use, or other activities is not permitted during class time. Phones and devices may be used during breaks. Laptops and tablets may only be used for taking notes or referring to readings during class sessions.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), University-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g., learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these University policies and resources.

Plagiarism and Citing Sources Properly

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's language, images, data, or ideas without proper attribution. It is a very serious offense both in the university and in your professional work. In essence, plagiarism is both theft and lying: you have stolen someone else's ideas, and then lied by implying that they are your own

Plagiarism will lead to grade penalties and a record filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. In severe cases, students may also fail the course or even be expelled from the university.

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, it is your responsibility to make sure you clarify the issues before you hand in draft or final work.

Learning when to cite a source and when not to is an art, not a science. However, here are some common examples of plagiarism that you should be careful to avoid:

- Using a sentence (or even a part of a sentence) that someone else wrote without identifying the language as a quote by putting the text in quote marks and referencing the source.

- Paraphrasing somebody else's theory or idea without referencing the source.
- Using a picture or table from a webpage or book without reference the source.
- Using data some other person or organization has collected without referencing the source.

The University of Indiana has developed a very helpful website with concrete examples about proper paraphrasing and quotation. See in particular the following pages:

- Overview of plagiarism at www.indiana.edu/~istd/overview.html
- Examples of plagiarism at www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html
- Plagiarism quiz at www.indiana.edu/~istd/test.html

Finally, you can use TurnItIn.com as a tool to help you identify any text that may be plagiarized, so that you can fix the problem before submitting the assignment. When you submit assignments to Canvas, the system will generate a “report” that highlights all text that TurnItIn.com identifies as possibly plagiarized. The report will give you a “score” that shows how much text has been flagged. Please note that the TurnItIn.com reports are helpful but not perfect – they tend to highlight lots of material that isn’t actually plagiarized, and the reports can also potentially miss problematic text. Therefore, it is recommended that you ignore the numeric score and instead carefully review all text that is highlighted in the report, to see if anything needs revision.

You are encouraged to submit draft papers to Canvas well before the assignment due date, so that you can check the TurnItIn.com report and make any needed revisions before the assignment is due. If you submit a draft for this purpose, add a note in Canvas that says, “draft only – not for review.” (I promise that I won’t look at these reports.) For instructions on how to find your TurnItIn.com reports in Canvas, see <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-3120>.

If you still have questions after using all these online resources, feel free to talk to me personally. There is nothing wrong with asking for help, whereas even unintentional plagiarism is a serious offense.

Citation Style

It is important to properly cite any references you use in your assignments. The Department of Urban and Regional Planning uses Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition (University of Chicago Press, 2013, ISBN 780226816388). Please note that Turabian’s book describes two systems for referencing materials: (1) “notes” (footnotes or endnotes), plus a corresponding bibliography, and (2) in-text parenthetical references, plus a corresponding reference list. In this class, may use either system and must use the same system for all assignments.

Library Liaison

The SJSU Library Liaison for the Urban and Regional Planning Department is Ms. Toby Matoush. If you have questions, you can contact her at toby.matoush@sjsu.edu or 408-808-2096.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Notes:

- The schedule is subject to change with notice by email, Canvas, or in-class announcement
- Readings are to be completed by the dates listed
- Assignments are due by class time on the dates listed (or by midnight, if it's not a class meeting day)

January 27 – Class meeting 1

Topics covered

- Introductions and course overview
- Research in planning: what is it, why do it, and how to do it?
- Overview of the Planning Report process (what to expect in 297P, 298A, and 298B)
- Overview of 297P and the Preliminary Research Proposal assignment
- How to develop a research question

Reading

- Required
 - Turabian, Chapters 1 and 2 (on developing research questions)
- Recommended
 - Booth et al, Chapters 1 – 4 (the purpose of research and developing research questions)
 - Johnson, Chapter 3 (developing research questions)
 - May, Chapters 1 – 3 (philosophical and intellectual debates about the research process)

February 10 – Class meeting 2

In Class: Be prepared to discuss past URBP Master's Theses (Homework #1).

Topics covered

- Identifying elements of successful Master Theses:
- Choosing research methods
- Storyboarding the concept for your project (in-class exercise)

Readings

- Required
 - Review at least one of the Honors level Master's Thesis: <http://www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/courses/URBP298/Sample298urbanplanningreports/>. Be prepared to discuss the elements of a successful project and to ask questions about the research process.
 - Johnson, Chapters 4 – 6 (designing methods)
 - Daniel R. Montello and Paul C. Sutton, “An Introduction to Quantitative and Qualitative Methods,” in *An Introduction to Scientific Research Methods in Geography* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2006), 38 – 41.
 - To get ideas on methods books that you may wish to read for your project, review the recommended readings above and scan the UC Berkeley's Environmental Design Library's webpage “Thesis & Dissertation Research” list of research method texts at <http://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/environmental-design-thesis/methods>
- Recommended
 - May, Chapters 4 -7 (theoretical and practical discussion of various methods)
 - Rugg and Petre, Chapter 1 (nature of research and designing methods)

February 24 – Class meeting 3

Due by class: Homework #2: Using Sources Ethically

In Class: Be prepared to inform me of your proposed research question.

Topics covered

- Finding library resources
- Using sources ethically
- Strategies for reading technical articles

Required readings

- Turabian, Chapters 3 and 4 (finding and engaging with sources)
- UniLearnings's “Reading Efficiently” and “Reading Critically” webpages. Start at <http://unilearning.uow.edu.au/reading/1d.html>. Follow the “next” buttons at the top left to read all the relevant pages. On the first page, be sure to click on the “Journal article” link at the bottom.

March 16 – Class meeting 4

Due by class: Draft Preliminary Research Proposal #1

In Class Exercise: Freewriting on good and bad feedback (preparation for Class Meeting 5 and Homework #3: Peer Feedback)

Topics covered

- The process of revising drafts
- How to provide constructive peer reviews
- In-class peer feedback on the draft preliminary proposals

Required readings

- Peter Elbow, “Freewriting,” in *Visions across the Americas: Short Essays for Composition*, edited by J. Sterling Warner and Judith Hilliard (Fort Worth: Harcourt, 2001), 13-16.

Optional Reading

- Jerrold H. Zar, “Candidate for a Pullet Surprise,” *Journal of Irreproducible Results*, 39, no. 1 (1994), p 13, available at <http://www.jir.com/pullet.html>.

March 17 to April 10 – Required meeting with instructor to discuss Draft #1

April 13 - Draft Preliminary Research Proposal #2 due

April 20 – Class meeting 5

Due by class: Written critique of your peers’ Draft Preliminary Proposal #2 (Homework #3)

Topics covered

- Peer feedback on Draft Preliminary Research Proposal #2
- Group discussion of peer feedback observations
- Quick review of citation formatting
- More on what to expect in URBP 298A/B

May 11 – Final Preliminary Proposal due