

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT
URBP 298A: SPECIAL STUDY – PLANNING REPORT DEVELOPMENT
SPRING 2020

Instructors:	Serena Alexander (Coordinator), Gordon Douglas, Rick Kos
Office location, office hours & contact info:	Serena.alexander@sjsu.edu, gordon.douglas@sjsu.edu, richard.kos@sjsu.edu For information about office hours and location, please check your Canvas course site.
Class days/time:	Four Tuesdays, 7:30 – 10:00 pm: January 28, February 04, February 18, March 10
Classroom:	WSQ 111
Prerequisites:	Passage of the Writing Skills Test, Graduate Adviser approval, and passage of URBP 297P
Units:	3

Course Catalog Description

Advanced research and report writing. Students develop a plan and complete the initial research to write a planning report that demonstrates their capacity to do independent research, analysis, and writing about a complex planning problem. Prerequisites: (1) passage of the Writing Skills Test; (2) Graduate Adviser approval; (3) passage of URBP 297P.

Course Description and Course Learning Objectives

The two-course sequence of URBP 298A and URBP 298B gives planning students an opportunity to prepare a Planning Report based upon independent research, analysis, and possibly design work about a complex urban or regional problem. Preparing this Planning Report is the capstone experience for students in the MUP program. Students draw upon the material they have learned from coursework, internships, and professional experience to demonstrate their ability to:

1. **Conceptualize problems from complex, real world situations so the problems are meaningful to clients and research-worthy.** In particular, students will be able to:
 - a. Define and clearly state a research question and/or goals
 - b. Demonstrate in-depth familiarity with relevant literature on the research subject
 - c. Design an ethical methodology appropriate to answer a research question
2. **Collect, analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources.** In particular, students will be able to:
 - a. Collect data of sufficient quality and depth to answer a research question
 - b. Perform direct, competent, and appropriate analysis to answer a research question

- c. Draw sophisticated conclusions based on the results of the analysis, that are a logical extension of the findings
 - d. Show how the analysis and findings fit into the larger context of the literature and current professional practice
3. **Communicate effectively in writing and in visual terms.** In particular, students will be able to:
- a. Organize material logically, so that a reader can easily follow the writer's train of thought
 - b. Write text that is grammatically correct and free of typos
 - c. Create and integrate into the report tables and figures that add useful/important information for readers
 - d. Design reports that are attractive and professional in appearance
 - e. Include citations where appropriate, and format footnotes and bibliographies properly

In addition to these three requirements for the Planning Report, students are encouraged to demonstrate originality and creativity in the choice of research question, methodology, and analysis techniques.

Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) Knowledge Components

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

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

Required Course Texts to Purchase

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013. (ISBN-13: 978-0-226-81638-8. Price: around \$15 on Amazon.) Note that there is now a 9th edition of this book. You can check with your advisor to see which version is preferred.

Other readings may be emailed to students and/or posted to the Canvas course site and/or determined in consultation with the student's adviser.

Course Requirements and Assignments

In URBP 298A, students begin the report writing process by finalizing a research proposal; reviewing relevant literature on their Planning Report topic; completing an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Exclusion Worksheet and (if applicable) an IRB proposal requesting permission to work with human subjects; and drafting parts of the final Planning Report. By completing these steps, students position themselves to successfully complete the Planning Report in URBP 298B.

To complete URBP 298A and receive credit for the course, students must attend all scheduled class meetings, complete the assignments listed in the table below, and read all assigned materials.

Class meetings: Students are required to attend all four class sessions. Please note that students who miss a class session are at significant risk of failing an assignment, since the class sessions are specifically designed to help students succeed with the assignments. Should you need to miss a class

because of illness or family emergency, make sure to contact a classmate to get notes on the material missed. Faculty advisers will not be able to provide this assistance.

Overview of assignments: Course assignments and due dates are listed in the table below:

Assignments	Due Date	Learning Objectives
1a. Research Proposal – Version 1	February 18	1, 3
1b. Research Proposal – Version 2 (required only if Version 1 does not satisfy the assignment requirements)	March 03	1, 3
2a. IRB Exclusion Worksheet	March 10	1
2b. IRB Protocol Materials (if applicable)	March 17	1, 3
3a. Draft Literature Review	March 24	1, 2, 3
3b. Final Literature Review	April 14	1, 2, 3
4. Draft report sections (4,000 words, or as decided between the advisee and adviser)	May 05	2, 3

Directions for all assignments are posted on the URBP 298A Canvas site.

Grading Information

URBP 298A is graded on a Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) basis. Students will receive a grade of CR for URBP 298A if they:

- Score a grade of B or better on the research proposal (Assignments #1a or #1b) and final literature review (Assignment #3b).
- Submit an acceptable IRB Exclusion Worksheet (Assignment #2a). The assignment will be graded Pass/Fail.
- If applicable, prepare and submit an acceptable IRB Protocol Narrative and associated materials to the SJSU IRB Coordinator, requesting permission to work with human subjects (Assignment #2b). The student’s adviser must approve the application before it is submitted.
- Submit an acceptable draft report section (Assignment #4) that totals at least 4,000 words (or as decided between the advisee and adviser).

Students who receive an NC for URBP 298A must re-enroll in URBP 298A and:

- Re-do all assignments (draft and final versions) for which they did not receive a passing grade (B or higher) during the first semester.
- Attend any class sessions they missed, plus any additional sessions that the adviser feels the student would benefit from repeating.
- Enroll in URBP 298A and URBP 298B over two additional semesters.

In addition, receiving an NC in URBP 298A has the following implications:

- An NC is the equivalent of failing the class. The NC will remain permanently on the student's record, though the SJSU Office of Graduate Records does not include the NC when calculating the student's GPA.
- Students who receive an NC in URBP 298A can only enroll again in URBP 298A if there is space available, with the department giving enrollment priority to students who meet the prerequisites for URBP 298A and have not yet enrolled in a semester of URBP 298A.
- Students who receive an NC in URBP 298A will be placed on Administrative-Academic Probation. To be removed from administrative-academic probation, a student must re-enroll in URBP 298A and receive a grade of CR.
- Students who receive a second NC in URBP 298A will be disqualified from the MUP program.

Other Grading and Assignment Issues

Students are expected to hand in all draft and final assignments by the assigned due dates. Students who turn assignments in on time (including drafts) will normally receive comments from their adviser within five business days. For late papers, the turnaround time may well take ten or more business days, which could significantly impede a student's ability to pass the course.

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.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

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:

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- 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 SJSU MLK Library provides a short (15 minutes) and informative plagiarism tutorial. The MUP faculty highly encourage all students to complete it. Details are here:

<https://libguides.sjsu.edu/c.php?g=853661&p=6111789>

Also, 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 URBP 298A 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 to the instructor that says, “draft only – not for review.” (The instructors promise you that they 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 your instructor 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-13: 978-0-81638-8). Copies are available in the SJSU King Library. Additionally, the book is relatively inexpensive, and you may wish to purchase a copy. 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. Check with your advisor to see which format is preferred.

Library Liaison

The SJSU Library Liaison for the Urban and Regional Planning Department is Ms. Peggy Cabrera. If you need research assistance, you can contact her at peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu or 408-808-2034.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Notes:

Schedule subject to change with notice in class or by email.

See electronic version of the syllabus to access links below.

January 28 – Class Meeting #1 (Instructors: All)

Lecture: Introductions; overview of the 298A and 298B process; review of the 298A syllabus; explanation of the research proposal assignment; guidelines for writing the research methods portion of the research proposal.

February 04 – Class Meeting #2 (Instructor: Serena Alexander)

Lecture: Conducting interviews; analyzing qualitative data (e.g., interviews, field notes, or primary documents).

Required Readings: The first item is an introduction to qualitative interview design. The other two help you develop your interview skills. Although both of the last two articles come from a website designed for people working in the “user experience” (UX) field, much of the advice about conducting interviews applies well to any type of interview.

1. [Daniel W. Turner, III, “Qualitative Interview Design: A Practical Guide for Novice Investigators,” *The Qualitative Report* 15, no. 3 \(2010\): 754-60.](#)
2. [Mia Northrup, “Developing Your Interviewing Skills, Part I: Preparing for an Interview,” January 17, 2011, UXmatters.](#)

Be sure to watch at least 3 minutes of the embedded video, too.
3. [Mia Northrup, “Developing Your Interview Skills, Part II: During the Interview,” February 7, 2012, UXmatters.](#)

February 18 – Research Proposal, Version 1 due (Assignment 1a)

February 18 – Class Meeting #3 (Instructor: Rick Kos)

Lecture: The IRB process; review of the “candidacy form”; tips for professional writing

Reading(s):

1. Sample IRB protocol, prepared by Rick Kos (read this to get a sense of what documentation a researcher prepares, if the project needs IRB approval). The protocol can be found on the 298A Canvas site.

Homework:

Prepare to describe your research project to other students at our “298A cocktail party” activity.

Complete your “Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy” form and bring a printed copy to class on February 18.

- Visit the Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations (GAPE) website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/> and then scroll down to the “Current Students” section.
- Download the “Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy” form. It will be in an editable/fillable PDF format.
- Instructions for completing the form are available on the 298A Canvas site under the heading “Completing the Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy Form.” If you have any questions, please contact the department's Graduate Advisor, Rick Kos, at richard.kos@sjsu.edu
- **IMPORTANT:** When you're finished with the form, **please bring a printed copy to class** on February 18.
- If the form is complete, the Graduate Advisor will sign it and submit it to GAPE for you.

March 03 – Research Proposal, Version 2 due if required (Assignment #1b)

March 10 – IRB Exclusion Worksheet due (Assignment #2a)

March 10 – Class Meeting #4 (Instructor: Gordon Douglas)

Lecture: How to write a literature review assignment; preview of what to expect in URBP 298B

Reading(s): TBD.

March 17 – Assignment #2b due: IRB Protocol Materials due (if required)

March 24 – Draft literature review due (Assignment #3a)

April 14 – Final literature review due (Assignment #3b)

May 05 – Draft report sections due (Assignment #4)