

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT
URBP-295: CAPSTONE STUDIO IN COMMUNITY PLANNING
SPRING 2025

Instructor	Rick Kos, AICP
Email	richard.kos@sjsu.edu
Office location	Washington Square Hall, Room 218-C
Office hours (Rick Kos)	Tuesdays (11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.) and Thursdays (12:30–2:30 p.m.) Appointments strongly preferred. Sign up via link on Canvas.
Class days/time	Tuesdays 1:30 – 7:15 p.m. beginning January 28, 2025
Classroom	“Studio on the Street” (76 South 1 st Street).
Class website	All course materials will be posted to Canvas.
Prerequisites	Completion of at least 24 MUP course units and/or instructor consent
Units	6 units

Course Catalog Description

Through fieldwork and laboratory assignments, the student applies theories and techniques of analysis to identify the assets, problems, and opportunities of an urban community.

Course Format

This is a synchronous class – we meet in person on the day and times listed above.

Course Overview

Professional planners are engaged in meaningful work that helps to create a comprehensive vision for a community. Since the practice of urban planning is inherently future focused, part of our job is to help community members envision what our future human habitat could look like.

The American Planning Association expands on this facet of our work:

The goal of planning is to maximize the health, safety, and economic well-being of all people living in our communities. This involves thinking about how we can move around our community, how we can attract and retain thriving businesses, where we want to live, and opportunities for recreation. Planning helps create communities of lasting value. While architects often focus on a single building, a planner's job is to work with residents and elected officials to guide the layout of an entire community or region. Planners take a broad view and look at how the pieces of a community —

buildings, roads, and parks — fit together like pieces of a puzzle. Planners then make recommendations on how the community should proceed.”¹

In this intensive project-based course you will be exposed to contemporary tools, terms, and methods of professional urban planning through two primary methods: (1) community assessment and (2) visioning, using urban design and placemaking techniques.

The first – **community assessment** – is a comprehensive documentation of current conditions in a study area including land use, transportation networks, urban form, streetscapes, demographics, and the identification of community stakeholders. A proper community assessment also involves direct *engagement* with local stakeholders to ascertain their community’s assets, challenges, and aspirations. Since we as planners serve the public interest, we must get the public involved.

The second method – **visioning** – will constitute the synthesis portion of the course, where we take what we’ve learned from the community assessment and develop specific planning and urban design recommendations for the Eastside Alum Rock Urban Village area of San José.

Urban Village Planning for the Eastside

The Eastside Alum Rock Urban Village area in east San Jose is characterized by many single-family neighborhoods built in the 1950s through 1970s. These neighborhoods are bisected by very wide, car-oriented, arterial streets with low-slung commercial development along Alum Rock Avenue, Capitol Avenue and White Road. The city envisions this area becoming an “urban village” and is now starting the planning process and related community engagement work. **We have been invited by the city’s planning team to play a substantive role in shaping the urban village plan.**

What you are likely to find interesting about this project is that this area of east San Jose offers unusual opportunities and special challenges in urban planning and design. Changes in demography also make this an interesting project area for a focused planning approach and additional planning attention, especially because of recent declines in school enrollment and increases in the local median age over time. This highlights the need to engage community members and stakeholders to understand their needs.

Together, these changes have highlighted the need to develop an Urban Village Plan for the Eastside. An urban village is an area that includes residential and jobs-based developments; has access to transit; and is walkable and bicycle-friendly. Creating urban villages is one of 12 major strategies in [San José's General Plan](#).

The City has hired a consulting team to develop the full Urban Village plan, but the partnership with our class will allow for certain elements of the work to progress faster than in the typical case. As a result, **in this course you will practice conducting the work of a professional urban planner.**

¹ American Planning Association, “What is Planning?” <https://www.planning.org/aboutplanning/> (accessed January 7, 2023)

Our Mission this Semester

The City staff and their consulting team seek innovative ideas and inspiration from our Capstone Studio students – **that’s where WE come in.** In this exciting studio course, we will employ an innovative approach that combines community assessment, resident engagement, and visioning to provide a clear sense of current conditions – and ideas for guiding the Urban Village towards becoming a reality.

Our mission is to make the Eastside Alum Rock area a model for how forward-looking communities can plan their current and future development to address multiple mobility and land use challenges. Many of these challenges were not on planners’ ‘radar’ when we began laying out suburbs in the United States: climate change, sustainability, housing affordability, providing mobility choices, the aging of our population, meeting recreational needs, achieving social and economic equity, and protecting our environment. Together, we will develop as our final products:

- A set of goals, planning principles, and policies to guide Urban Village planning for the Eastside Alum Rock Urban Village area.
- A prototype plan for what the future of the Urban Village area might look like if developed/redeveloped in conformance with those goals, planning principles, and policies.

Course Learning Objectives

This course implements one of the Urban & Regional Planning Department's Program Learning Objectives: teaching students how to “...develop planning strategies to advance community priorities through collaborative engagement with stakeholders, and to do so in a manner that deliberately incorporates multicultural and historical perspectives.”

URBP-295 is a “learning by doing” course, a culminating experience where you apply what you've learned academically and professionally to a real-world planning study. Be prepared to contribute substantially each week, both individually and as a team member. Put another way, this is NOT a passive-learning, lecture-based class. A significant part of your grade will be earned by how effectively you contribute to the project. You can think of your role this semester as taking part in a 16-week internship, or working in a small consulting firm with your instructors as the project managers.

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

1. Use a systematic urban planning process to identify, analyze, communicate, and develop solutions to complex real-world situations. The planning processes that students will learn to conduct include, at a minimum, the following components:
 - A. Selecting, managing and applying appropriate research strategies for identifying the assets, problems and opportunities present in a community.
 - B. Selecting, managing and applying appropriate outreach strategies for engaging diverse community stakeholders in the planning process. Community engagement

strategies include, among others, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, door-to-door canvassing, community workshops and charrettes.

- C. Applying a collaborative, community-based process to develop a plan in partnership with a client community.
2. Create graphics (including base maps, analytical and conceptual diagrams, and illustrative plans), written materials and oral presentations to clearly communicate to a client community the results of the community assessment and plan development processes.
3. Evaluate, select, and develop the best means to disseminate the information synthesized in the plans. Dissemination methods include, among others, oral presentations at public meetings, visual displays, written reports, websites, and videos.
4. Work effectively as members and leaders of diverse planning teams and apply an understanding of interpersonal group dynamics to assure effective group action.
5. Prepare a plan to effectively facilitate a meeting.
6. Describe and explain how theories of community participation and engagement can be used to bring about sound planning outcomes.
7. Compare and contrast community participation in planning in different countries.
8. Describe and explain key ethical issues related to working with clients.
9. Describe and explain the role of officials, stakeholders, and community members in the planning process.
10. Describe and explain the social and cultural factors that influence urban growth and change.
11. Describe and explain the equity concerns of the community planning process.

Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) Knowledge Components

This course partially covers PAB Knowledge Components 1b, 1d, 1e, 1f, 2a, 2b, 2d, 2e, 2f, 3a-3e.

A complete list of the PAB Knowledge Components can be found at

<https://sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/graduate-programs/masters-in-urban-planning/pab-knowledge.php>

Field Work Safety Protocols

Student safety during field work is a top priority this semester. You will be asked to sign a few forms required by the university that are necessary when coursework is conducted off campus. Please let us know if you have any questions as you complete these forms.

Course Readings and Videos

There are no textbooks to purchase for this course. Instead, all readings and videos are available on Canvas, grouped into the categories shown in the grey-highlighted headings below. In four assignments, you will reflect on the readings, both in writing and during class discussions. From time to time, I may post additional short readings to Canvas to supplement the list below.

** Special thanks to Prof. Asha Agrawal Weinstein for sharing many of the readings in the themes related to effective visual, oral, and written communication.

Building an Understanding of San José's Physical and Regulatory Landscape

Required:

- City of San José (2018). Envision San José 2040 General Plan, Goal IP-5 – Urban Village Planning, Chapter 7, pgs. 13-17
<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/22359/637928744399330000> (accessed January 2, 2024)
- Gabbe, C.J. and Michael Kevane, William A. Sundstrom. (2021). “The effects of an urban village” planning and zoning strategy in San José, California.” Regional Science and Urban Economics, Volume 88, 103648, ISSN 0166-0462
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2021.103648>. (accessed January 2, 2024)
- KQED (2023). Podcast, November 16, 2023. “The 'American Dream' Led San José to Urban Sprawl, but the Future Requires Density.” <https://www.kqed.org/news/11967490/the-american-dream-led-san-jose-to-urban-sprawl-but-the-future-requires-density> (accessed January 2, 2024)
- SPUR (2020). “It Takes a Village: Strategies for successful implementation of San José’s urban village vision.” https://www.spur.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/SPUR_It_Takes_a_Village.pdf (accessed January 2, 2024)
- San Jose State University, 2024. “Three Places”, final report of the Capstone Studio in Community Planning graduate student team, Spring 2024
- San Jose State University, 2024. “Reimagining Saratoga Avenue”, final report of the Capstone Studio in Community Planning graduate student team, Fall 2024

Planning for Safer Roadways; Urban Village Planning

To be used as reference throughout the course:

- American Council of the Blind. Accessible Pedestrian Signals.
<https://www.acb.org/content/accessible-pedestrian-signals-aps>
- Caltrans (2010). Complete Intersections: A Guide to Reconstructing Intersections and Interchanges for Bicyclists and Pedestrians. <https://nacto.org/references/california-department-of-transportation-caltrans-2/>
- Dunham-Jones, Ellen & June Williamson. 2011. “Ch. 4: Retrofitting Social Life Along Commercial Strips” (pp. 59-107), in *Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbs*. Hoboken: Wiley. Ebook via the library: https://csu-sjsu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CAL_SJO/tu4ck5/alma991013802215902919
- Federal Highway Administration (2023). Zero Deaths and Safe System.
<https://highways.dot.gov/safety/zero-deaths>

- Federal Highway Administration (2017). Improving Intersections for Pedestrians and Bicyclists. <https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/2022-06/fhwas2017.pdf>
- National Cooperative Highway Research Program (n.d.). *Urban Street Design Guide*. (Peruse the different sections.) <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/>
- National Cooperative Highway Research Program (2022). “Traffic Signal Control Strategies for Pedestrians and Bicyclists.” <https://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/182635.aspx>
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (2019). Don’t Give Up at the Intersection. <https://nacto.org/publication/dont-give-up-at-the-intersection/>
- Smart Growth America. Complete Streets Policies. <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/policy-atlas/>
- Transportation Research and Education Center at Portland State University (2021). “An Assessment of Bicycle Detection Confirmation and Countdown Devices.” (video) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6qvajdpA0A>
- Tseng, Thomas, et al. (2006). *Growing Urban Villages: Cultivating a New Paradigm for Growth and Development in California*. Malibu: Pepperdine University Davenport Institute. (Especially valuable are pp. 1-6, 18-20, 21-32.) <https://publicpolicy.pepperdine.edu/davenport-institute/content/reports/urban-villages.pdf>

Community Engagement Considerations

Required:

- Biggs, David, et al. (2018). “100 great community engagement ideas: tips, tricks, and best practices to help guide planners to better results!”, Metroquest. (uploaded to Canvas)
- Federowicz, Martha with Olivia Arena and Kimberly Burrowes (2020). “Community Engagement during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond: A Guide for Community-Based Organizations.” Urban Institute.
- Myerson, Deborah L. (2004). “Involving the Community in Neighborhood Planning”. ULI Community Catalyst Report Number 1. http://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Report-1-Involving-the-Community-in-Neighborhood-Planning.ashx_.pdf (accessed January 28, 2023).
- Planetizen (2021). “Why is Community Engagement Important?” (YouTube video) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaLGjOzWc9k> (accessed January 28, 2023)

Tips for Effective Visual Communication

Required:

- APIAHF (2013). Webinar: Letting Your Data Speak: Tips for Presenting Data Effectively. (YouTube video) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45lxHF_eHdE (accessed January 28, 2023)
- Davis, M., & Hunt, J. (2017). "Visual communication design: An introduction to design concepts in everyday experience." Bloomsbury Publishing. https://csu-sjsu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?context=L&vid=01CAL_SJO:01CAL_SJO&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&tab=Everything&docid=alma991013770419602919 (accessed January 28, 2023) Students can read this online after logging in with their SJSU library account credentials.
- Munter, Mary (2003) Excerpts from "Chapter III: Writing: Macro Issues." In Guide to Managerial Communication: Effective Business Writing and Speaking, 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall (pp. 51-63).
- Munzner, T. (2014). "Visualization analysis and design." CRC Press. <https://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm/talks/minicourse14/vad17stat545-4x4.pdf> (accessed January 28, 2023)
- Sage Publishing (2018). Presenting Data Effectively. (YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BGJjYJisyA> (accessed January 28, 2023)
- Williams, R. (2015). "The non-designer's design book: Design and typographic principles for the visual novice." Pearson Education. https://csu-sjsu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?context=PC&vid=01CAL_SJO:01CAL_SJO&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&tab=Everything&docid=cdi_askewsholts_vlebooks_9780132103923 (accessed January 28, 2023) *Students can read this online after logging in with their SJSU library account credentials.*
- Zelazny, Gene (2001). Excerpts. In Say It With Charts: The Executive's Guide to Visual Communication, 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill (pp. 9-27).

Recommended:

- Hairston, Maxine et al. (2002). "Chapter 19: What Is Document Design?" In The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers, 6th ed. New York: Longman (pp. 330-345).
- Oliu, Walter E. et al. (2004.) "Creating Tables and Illustrations" in Strategies for Business and Technical Writing, 5th ed. New York: Longman (pp. 207-211)
- Tufte, Edward R. (2001). Chapter 2: Graphical Integrity & Chapter 4: Data-Ink and Graphical Redesign. In The Visual Display of Quantitative Information, 2nd ed. Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press (pp. 53-77, 91-105).

Turabian, Kate L. (2018). "Chapter 8: Presenting Evidence in Tables and Figures." In *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (pp. 86-101).

Turabian, Kate L. (2018). "Chapter 26: Tables and Figures." In *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (pp. 370-392).

Tips for Effective Oral Presentations

Required:

Abrahams, Matt (2015) "Tips and Techniques for More Confident and Compelling Presentations." <https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/matt-abrahams-tips-techniques-more-confident-compelling-presentations> (accessed January 28, 2023)

Abrahams, Matt (2015) "No Freaking Speaking: 3 Techniques for Managing Speaking Anxiety." (YouTube video). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5naThX63pF0&t=230s> (accessed January 28, 2023)

Columbia College (n.d.) "Giving Presentations." <https://columbiacollege-ca.libguides.com/presentations/planning> (accessed January 28, 2023)

Ten Simple Rules for Making Good Oral Presentations. (n.d.), University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Office of Graduate Studies, Graduate Connections. <https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/connections/ten-simple-rules-making-good-oral-presentations> (accessed January 28, 2023)

University of New Hampshire (n.d.) "Tips for Conducting an Oral Presentation." https://www.unh.edu/sites/www.unh.edu/files/departments/undergraduate_research_conference/pdf/tips_oral_presentation_final.pdf (accessed January 28, 2023)

Recommended:

Barron, Brenda (2020). "Importance of Body Language in Presentations: How to Use It Effectively." <https://business.tutsplus.com/articles/importance-of-body-language-in-presentations--cms-33171> (accessed January 28, 2023)

Daly, John, and Isa Engleberg (2004). "Coping with Stage Fright: How to Turn Terror into Dynamic Speaking". In *The Results-Driven Manager: Presentations That Persuade and Motivate*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press (pp. 49-58).

DeVito, Joseph A. (1987). "Unit 15: Elements of Persuasive Speaking." In *The Elements of Public Speaking*. 3rd ed. New York: Harper & Row (pp. 203-214).

Fujishin, Randy (2006). "Chapter 7: Delivering Your Speech: Being Yourself." In *The Natural Speaker*, 5th ed. Boston: Pearson (pp. 107-128).

Jerz, Dennis G. (2018). "Oral Presentation Tips: How to Deliver a Speech for School or Work." <https://jerz.setonhill.edu/writing/technical-writing/oral-presentations-tips/> (accessed January 28, 2023)

Munter, Mary (2003). "Chapter VI: Speaking: Visual Aids." In *Guide to Managerial Communication: Effective Business Writing and Speaking*, 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall (pp. 108-141).

Urech, Elizabeth (1998). "Control Your Nerves with the 3-B Exercises." In *Speaking Globally: Effective Presentations Across International and Cultural Boundaries*. Dover, NH: Kogen Page (pp. 75-77).

Zelazny, Gene (n.d.) "Sketching Your Storyboard" (handout uploaded to Canvas)

Tips for Effective Written Communication in Planning Reports

Required:

Elbow, Peter (2001). "Freewriting." In *Visions across the Americas: Short Essays for Composition*, edited by JS Warner and Judith Hilliard. Fort Worth: Harcourt (pp. 13-16).

Fowler, H. Ramsey, Jane E. Aaron, and Kay Limburg, eds. (1992). Excerpts from "Chapter 3: Composing Paragraphs." In *The Little, Brown Handbook*, 5th ed. New York: Harper Collins Publishers (pp. 70-81).

Hairston, Maxine et al. (2002). "Chapter 5: How Do You Revise, Edit, and Proofread?" and "Chapter 15: How Do You Manage Transitions?" In *The Scott Foresman Handbook for Writers*, 6th ed. New York: Longman (pp. 60-82, 220-228).

Limerick, Patricia (2000). "Limerick's Rules of Verbal Etiquette." In *Something in the Soil: Legacies and Reckonings in the New West*. New York: W.W. Norton (pp. 342-43).

Lipson, Charles (2004). "Chapter 3: Plagiarism and Academic Honesty." In *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (pp. 32-48).

Orwell, George (1984). "The Politics of the English Language". In *The Orwell Reader: Fiction, Essays, and Reportage*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company (pp. 355-66).

Rothfeder, R., & Ewing, R. (2020). "Technical Writing. In *Basic Quantitative Research Methods for Urban Planners*." (pp. 18-45). Routledge.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Writing Center. (2002) "Revising."
<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/revision.html>.

Recommended:

Iacone, Salvatore J. (2003). "Email: To Send or Not to Send?" In *Write to the Point: How to Communicate in Business with Style and Purpose*. Franklin Lakes, NJ: Career Press, (pp. 123-136).

Kousoulas, C. (2019). "Writing for Planners: A Handbook for Students and Professionals in Writing, Editing, and Document Production". Routledge.

(for fun): Remnick, David. "Postscript: Miss Gould." *New Yorker* (February 28, 2005): 34-35.

Turabian, Kate L. (2018). "Chapter 11: Revising Sentences." In *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed.: Univ of Chicago Press (pp. 113-123).

Fundamentals for Success in this Course

I will make every effort to help you succeed in this course so that you can apply what you've learned to your professional development as an urban planner. Naturally, it is your responsibility to complete all assignments and to take advantage of the many learning opportunities this semester. Your final grade will reflect your overall commitment to learning; higher grades correlate with student efforts that clearly meet – or exceed – expectations for graduate-level work. Here are some tips to help you succeed this semester:

Enjoy Learning: A strong motivation to learn, explore, and have fun while learning is essential. This course will require a significant amount of independent work and relies heavily on your initiative. The course is a culminating experience in which you apply all of your knowledge from previous coursework, professional practice, and your own life experiences to create a planning document for a real-world community. As in the planning profession itself, a great deal of self-motivation is required. A sense of humor always helps, too!

Understand Roles: URBP-295 will mirror professional planning practice in order to help you develop transferable workplace skills. My role as the instructor of a studio course is to guide, mentor and encourage the project teams. Your role is to take full advantage of the academic freedom and flexibility offered by a studio course to collaborate with fellow students, to complete assigned tasks in a manner that exceeds expectations wherever possible, to serve San José communities, and to produce a professional-grade document and presentation.

Focus and Respect: I fully understand the temptations and distractions we all face today with phones vying for our attention. Please turn off or mute your phone during class. If you have to "get something else done" during the class period, please step outside and do it elsewhere so as not to distract your peers and me.

Professional Conduct: Since this course is designed to mirror professional practice, let's be in agreement that the standards in the following two sections will apply:

My responsibility to you as the instructor is to:

- Create a physically and intellectually safe and stimulating environment for learning

- Assist you as much as possible with your learning goals
- Help resolve conflicts that hinder learning by answering your questions clearly and promptly, or to research answers and reply to you as soon as possible
- Treat you with respect and kindness, using encouragement and humor to foster learning
- Arrive prepared and organized, with clear learning objectives and a schedule for the day
- Evaluate/grade your work fairly and accurately while providing constructive feedback

Your responsibilities as a graduate student earning a professional degree are to:

- Attend each class session and arrive punctually, bringing all needed materials
- Treat peers and me with respect, supporting your peers whenever possible with their learning objectives and minimizing distractions in class
- Complete all assignments on time, to professional standards listed in each assignment
- Read this syllabus to understand the trajectory of the course and expectations of students
- Actively and consistently participate in class discussions and team meetings
- Demonstrate self-reliance and self-direction in setting and completing learning objectives
- Accept responsibility for working collaboratively in the learning process

More Success Tips

Students who typically do well in studio courses:

- Pull their weight by sharing the workload equally with team members and attending all team meetings and discussions
- Consistently demonstrate enthusiasm for the project, even when deadlines loom and stress levels elevate
- Consistently demonstrate full support of their teammates
- Proactively raise concerns with team members and, if necessary, the instructor, and attempt to address them in a respectful and positive manner
- Devise strategies for carrying out the team's short- and long-term objectives
- Are organized, respectful and professional in their conversations with community members and agency officials since you are a representative of the planning profession and San José State University
- Embrace the flexibility and inherent creativity of a studio course to actively pursue career interests and acquire new skills
- Quickly adapt to changes in project goals and schedule changes (though these will be minimized to the extent practicable)
- Have confidence in their abilities and recognize that their contributions are valuable and important
- Know when to ask for help, then ask for it
- Are organized and diligent note-takers
- Share ideas with others and offer constructive suggestions to improve work processes and project goals

Students that typically do **not** do well in studio courses:

- Expect the course to be “an easy A” – it’s most definitely not
- Rely on their team members to perform an inequitable amount of work

- Do not take initiative at key moments to move their team and the project forward
- Focus on setbacks and negativity rather than finding proactive solutions
- Are consistently late to class and to group meetings
- Fail to ask for assistance when it is needed

You should always feel welcome to ask for help or constructive feedback this semester. Asking for assistance will never be perceived as a liability and will never impact your grade negatively.

Course Assignments and Grading Policy

Each course assignment is designed to produce written and/or graphical material that can be integrated into our final course report and presentation due on May 13. Our work needs to be well researched, clearly written, authoritative, and with easily understood graphics. I will set high standards and provide frequent feedback to achieve this.

Your grade for the course will be based on the following assignments and other graded activities:

Assignments and Other Graded Activities	Maximum Earnable Points	Course Learning Objectives Covered
PHASE ONE Existing Conditions Assessment and Community Engagement		
Assignment 1 – Getting to Know the Study Area		
This assignment, completed individually, will help you understand the physical conditions in our study area, including land uses and mobility conditions. You will use a variety of digital tools for this purpose, including Google Street View, San José’s crash map, and portions of adopted city policies. Then you will prepare responses to questions on these materials in preparation for conversations with the city’s urban village planning team and staff from the San José Department of Transportation (SJDOT). You will also review the final reports produced by your predecessors in this course from Spring 2024 and Fall 2024.	10	1, 2
Assignment 2 – Demographic Mapping with Esri’s Community Analyst		
You will work individually to produce demographic maps of our study area using Esri’s Community Analyst webapp. The maps and related tables will reveal several demographic and tapestry segmentation characteristics at the census block group level. Related infographics and written reflections will give you opportunities to explore patterns in the mapped data.	10	2, 10
Assignment 3 – Phase One Team Organization Materials		
This assignment will guide each Phase One team to organize their work for the first half of the course. Teams will collaboratively develop a weekly work plan, decide on rotating facilitator and documentarian roles, choose a team liaison, and a write Team Charter to summarize communication protocols.	5	4, 5
Assignment 4 – Urban Montage Presentation		
You will work as part of a small team to prepare physical or digital display boards featuring a variety of found objects, maps, sketches, and other items to depict your team’s preliminary observations of the study area.	15	2, 3, 4

Assignments and Other Graded Activities	Maximum Earnable Points	Course Learning Objectives Covered
<p>Assignment 5 – Reading Reflections #1 of 4 (Effective Oral Presentations) The four reading reflections in this course are designed to stimulate class conversations on various facets of professional urban planning practice. In this first reading reflections exercise, you will individually write reflections based on assigned readings and videos on techniques for effective oral presentations.</p> <p>You will share your written reflections in Canvas Discussions and be encouraged to respond to postings by your peers to earn a few extra points. Your submission will be evaluated on substance, insights derived from the readings and videos, and the quality of writing.</p>	5	1
<p>Assignments 6A & 6B – Draft and Final Phase One Deliverables; Preparations for Mid-Semester Findings Presentation You will work as part of a small team to collect data and summarize your Phase One findings in graphical, written, and oral formats. At least one practice session will prepare your team to present confidently to our project partners on March 25.</p> <p>A portion of your Assignment 6B grade will be based on the quality of <i>team</i> performance. Another portion of your Assignment 6B grade will be customized for <i>you</i>, based on my observations of your performance and informed by confidential peer reviews completed at the end of Phase One.</p>	20	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11
<p>PHASE TWO Recommendations for Urban Village Planning; Final Report Production and Final Presentation</p>		
<p>Assignment 7 – Reading Reflections #2 of 4 (Community Engagement Techniques) In this second reading reflections exercise, you will individually write reflections based on assigned readings and videos on community engagement techniques.</p>	5	5, 6, 8, 9, 11
<p>Assignment 8 – Phase Two Team Organization Materials This assignment will guide each Phase Two team to organize their work in the second half of the course. Teams will collaboratively develop a weekly work plan, decide on rotating facilitator and documentarian roles, choose a team liaison, and a write Team Charter to summarize communication protocols.</p>	5	4, 5
<p>Assignment 9 – Reading Reflections #3 of 4 (Effective Graphic and Visual Communication) In this third reading reflections exercise, you will individually write reflections based on assigned readings and videos on techniques for effective graphical and visual communication.</p>	5	1, 2, 3
<p>Assignment 10 – Reading Reflections #4 of 4 (Effective Written Communication) In this fourth and final reading reflections exercise, you will individually</p>	5	1

Assignments and Other Graded Activities	Maximum Earnable Points	Course Learning Objectives Covered
write reflections based on assigned readings and videos on techniques for effective written communication.		
<p>Assignments 11A & 11B – Draft and Final Phase Two Deliverables; Preparations for Final Findings Presentation</p> <p>You will work as part of a small team to summarize your Phase Two findings in graphical, written, and oral formats. A practice session will prepare your team to present confidently to our project partners on May 13.</p> <p>A portion of your Assignment 11B grade will be based on the quality of <i>team</i> performance. Another portion of your Assignment 11B grade will be customized for <i>you</i>, based on my observations of your performance and informed by confidential peer reviews completed at the end of Phase Two.</p>	15	1 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11

Calculation of Final Course Letter Grade

Each assignment will earn points reflected in the table above. For example, for Assignment 11 you can earn between 0 and 15 points. At the end of the semester, I will sum the points you earned on each assignment and assign a letter grade for your work in the course according to this scheme:

- **A+** (98-100 points); **A** (94-97 points); **A-** (90-93 points)
- **B+** (87-89 points); **B** (84-87 points); **B-** (80-83 points)
- **C+** (77-79 points); **C** (74-77 points); **C-** (70-73 points)
- **D+** (67-69 points); **D** (64-67 points); **D-** (60-63 points)
- **F** (<60 points)

Please read the “URBP-295 Grading Standards” document on Canvas for more details about how I will evaluate your performance in this course.

Participation in Class and Attendance

Your participation in class discussions is a vital component of this course and you should make every attempt to attend all classes and actively participate. You can participate in many ways such as helping explain a concept to others, sharing a thoughtful perspective that aligns with the topic covered in section, monitoring yourself so you don’t hold the floor for too long and dominate the discussion, coming to office hours with thoughtful questions, commenting on your peers’ work, asking questions, and responding to questions thoughtfully.

Participation in walking tours, data collection, group studio work, and other class activities is also essential for the learning objectives of this course. In cases where you miss a significant number of lectures or do not actively participate in discussions, this will impact the final course grade negatively. According to SJSU policy F69-24, “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to ensure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

Completing Assignments on Time and Professionally

Assignments are due at the date and time specified in Canvas and in this syllabus. In only rare instances will late assignments be accepted, as described below. In fairness to students who submit their work on time, late assignments will receive a one-half letter grade deduction for each day an assignment is late. For example, if the assignment would normally receive a grade of “B” but is submitted one day late, it will receive a final grade of “B-minus”; after two days late it will receive a grade of “C+”.

I realize that life happens. If you expect not to be able to complete an assignment on time, it is important for you to do two things:

1. Contact me **at least 24 hours prior to the due date** and, if applicable, the other students on your team. If you do not communicate an anticipated late assignment within this timeframe, the grade reduction standards above will apply.
2. Provide a **date and time** by which the late assignment will be submitted. If you do not communicate an anticipated late assignment within this timeframe or if the late assignment is not received on the date promised, the assignment will begin losing points for every day it is late, as described above. If submission of the assignment continues to be delayed, a final grade of 50 is likely.

A maximum of one late assignment (or parts of assignments) that adhere to this policy will be accepted; all subsequent late assignments will receive an automatic grade of 50. Sorry, no exceptions to these policies will be granted, in fairness to the majority of students who submit their assignments on time.

Since this course focuses on the development of professional skills used by urban planners, the presentation of submitted materials will be considered as part of the assignment’s grade. All assignments must include the student’s name, date, course number, assignment number and other items as directed by the instructor. Neatness, clarity and organization will influence your grade.

Assignments not meeting these fundamental practices of professional presentation will generally receive a reduction in the grade.

Final Examination or Evaluation

The many activities that you will undertake as part of Assignment 11 will essentially constitute the final examination for this course, along with an individual end-of-the-semester written reflection on the studio experience. Attendance on the last day of the course (May 13) is mandatory.

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.

Because this is a six-unit class, you can expect to spend a minimum of fifteen hours per week in addition to time spent in class; some weeks will be busier than others as is typical for a project-based course. You should plan to set aside a significant amount of time for out of class activities

including, but not limited to, required course readings, data collection and analysis, group meetings, research, preparation of final client materials, etc.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#) relevant university policy concerning 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 [Syllabus Information web page](#) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). 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 to the source.
- Using data some other person or organization has collected without referencing the source.

The SJSU MLK Library provides a short (20 minutes) and informative plagiarism tutorial. The MUP faculty highly encourages all students to complete it. Details are here:

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

If you still have questions, feel free to talk to me. 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*, 9th edition (University of Chicago Press, 2018). Copies are available in the SJSU King Library or are relatively inexpensive to purchase.

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, you should use the "notes" style plus corresponding bibliography.

Library Liaison

The SJSU Library Liaison for the Urban and Regional Planning Department is Ms. Lauren DeCelle. If you have questions, you can contact her at lauren.decelle@sjsu.edu.

About the Instructor: Rick Kos, AICP

I am very much looking forward to working with you this semester and expect that you will learn quite a bit in our sixteen weeks together. We'll have some fun along the way, too. My goal is to serve as a mentor as we practice a number of fundamental community assessment skills used by today's planners while demonstrating professional project management techniques.

A little about my background: my formal training is in environmental planning and urban design (B.S., Rutgers University, 1985) as well as regional planning and New Urbanism (Masters, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1993). In the late 1980s, I worked as an assistant planner in Middlesex County, NJ, reviewing subdivision and site plan proposals for compliance with county regulations. In the 1990s, I served two rapidly-growing North Carolina municipalities in a dual role as town planner and GIS coordinator (the latter being a role I created for both towns), so I am equally conversant in the language of both disciplines. From 1996 - 2000, I served as Senior Town Planner for Huntersville, North Carolina - the fastest-growing town of its size in the state at the time. The New Urbanist principles mandated by the Town's development regulations applied to both greenfield and infill sites. Since the regulations were design-based (i.e., non-Euclidean), they required me to make frequent subjective judgments on the visual qualities of streets, the orientation of proposed buildings to public spaces, and the relationship of buildings and land uses to one another. I thoroughly enjoyed defending the principles of traditional town planning, often to developers and citizens that weren't particularly receptive at first to deviations from conventional suburban planning.

After relocating to the Bay Area in 2000, I worked with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission as a GIS Planner/Analyst. The Bay Area Lifeline Transportation Map that I completed for MTC located disadvantaged neighborhoods and thousands of geocoded essential destinations (e.g., grocery stores, daycare centers, clinics) within the 9-County region, along with existing public transit services. The spatial analyses enabled by this mapping work allowed transportation planners to locate gaps in transit service so that decision-makers could direct funding to alter bus schedules, connections and routing for improved neighborhood connectivity.

From 2003 to 2007 I served as GIS Manager for Design, Community & Environment, a 45-person planning and design firm in Berkeley. I managed all aspects of the firm's GIS practice and took great pride in keeping hundreds of data layers organized across multiple projects, ensuring that the firm's metadata was up-to-date, training staff to use ArcGIS, and managing the production of hundreds of maps for General Plans and EIRs throughout California.

Through my private consultancy I also engage in occasional freelance GIS projects. For example, I am assisting Mobility Planners, LLC in the preparation of bus routing studies in various rural California communities. I am also assisting the Mori Foundation (Japan) with the collection of geospatial data sets for the City of Los Angeles in support of a project that compares the competitiveness of major world cities using a variety of metrics.

I've been teaching at SJSU since 2007 and, I must admit, it is my favorite job of the many I've listed above. Welcome! Let's work hard, with kindness, and have fun.

URBP 295: CAPSTONE STUDIO IN COMMUNITY PLANNING

SPRING 2025 COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule serves as a general guide to discussion topics and assignments. Details are subject to change, as is sometimes the case with a dynamic, project-based studio course. I will explain changes to this schedule via email, Canvas, and in-class announcements.

Date	Class Activities	Assignment Due Dates
PHASE ONE Existing Conditions Assessment and Community Engagement		
Week 1 January 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions and course/project overview • Guest speaker Dr. Michael Oye: role of CommUniverCity • Study area overview (Annie Jones) • Success tips from recent URBP-295 ‘alumni’ • Aerial photo observations of the study area • Overview of course assignments • Preparations for walking tours 	
Week 2 February 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Trip: walking tour of the study area #1 of 2. (tip: this is a great opportunity to gather material for Assignments 4 and 6) • Discussion: findings from Assignment 1 and today’s walking tour • Form Phase One teams and kickoff Phase One 	Assignment 1 Due Virtually Explore the Study Area
Week 3 February 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Trip: walking tour of the study area #2 of 2. (tip: another great opportunity to gather material for Assignments 4 and 6) • Discussion: findings from Assignment 2 and today’s walking tour 	Assignment 2 Due Demographic Mapping with Esri's Community Analyst Webapp
Week 4 February 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Trip: working session at City Hall; meet with SJDOT and urban village planning teams • Studio work session: Phase One tasks 	Assignment 3 Due Phase One team organization materials
Week 5 February 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studio work session: field work as needed; meetings with instructor on team progress 	

Date	Class Activities	Assignment Due Dates
Week 6 March 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field trip: SOM office, downtown San Francisco • Presentations: Assignment 4 Urban Montages • Studio work session: field work as needed; meetings with instructor on team progress 	Assignment 4 Due Study Area Urban Montage Presentations
Week 7 March 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: findings from Assignment 5 • Phase One team progress presentations #1 (15 minutes per team) • Guest Speaker: Dr. Terry Christensen • Studio work session: field work as needed; meetings with instructor on team progress 	Assignment 5 Due Reading Reflections #1 of 4 (tips for effective oral presentations)
Week 8 March 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: findings from Assignment 6 • Phase One team progress presentations #2 (15 minutes per team) • ‘Dress rehearsal’ for March 25 presentation 	Assignment 6A Due Draft Phase One Deliverables
Week 9 March 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-semester presentation to project partners • Students complete Phase One peer reviews • Overview of Phase Two of the course • Form Phase Two teams and get to work 	Assignment 6B Due Final Phase One Deliverables; Mid-Semester Findings Presentation to Project Partners
Week 10 April 1	No class meeting this week – it’s Spring Break!	
PHASE TWO Recommendations for Urban Village Planning; Final Report Production and Final Presentation		
Week 11 April 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase Two studio work session: field work as needed; meetings with instructor on progress • Discussion: findings from Assignment 7 	Assignment 7 Due Reading Reflections #2 of 4 (community engagement techniques)
Week 12 April 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase Two studio work session: field work as needed; meetings with instructor on team progress 	Assignment 8 Due Phase Two team organization materials
Week 13 April 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase Two studio work session: field work as needed; meetings with instructor on progress • Discussion: findings from Assignment 9 	Assignment 9 Due Reading Reflections #3 of 4 (tips for effective visual and graphic communication)

Date	Class Activities	Assignment Due Dates
<p>Week 14 April 29</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase Two studio work session: field work as needed; meetings with instructor on progress Discussion: findings from Assignment 10 'Dress rehearsal' #1 for May 13 final presentation 	<p>Assignment 10 Due Reading Reflections #4 of 4 (tips for effective written communication)</p>
<p>Week 15 May 6 Last day of regular class meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase Two studio work session: field work as needed; meetings with instructor on progress 'Dress rehearsal' #2 for May 13 final presentation 	<p>Assignment 11A Due Draft Phase Two Deliverables; Preparations for Final Findings Presentation</p>
<p>Week 16 May 13 "Final exam" day; course culmination activities; attendance required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final presentation to project partners Submit all Phase Two final deliverables Written reflections on course accomplishments Complete Phase Two peer reviews Complete course evaluation (SOTES) End of semester celebration! 	<p>Assignment 11B Due Final Phase Two Deliverables; Final Findings Presentation to Project Partners</p>