

USP 549: Regional Planning and Metropolitan Growth Management

Fall Term, 2013

10 am – 12:40 pm, Thursday, URBN 270

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Office Hours: By Arrangement, or anytime via email.

Introduction:

This course will explore regional planning and metropolitan growth management in the United States today through an examination of historical and contemporary regional planning practice. The course will begin with an overview of the history of regional planning in America, including the evolution of thought regarding regionalism and the nature of regions. Examples of regional plans will be used as the basis for examining assumptions, approaches, and methods serving as the foundation for regional planning practice. Given current efforts to address issues of regional growth at the metropolitan scale throughout North America, the course will pay particular attention to the principles, approaches, and methods of growth management generally, and specifically with respect to metropolitan regions. The focus for the class project this year will be metropolitan fiscal equity among jurisdictions in the Portland metropolitan region.

Course Reading: All books are available at the PSU bookstore and all other readings are posted on the D2L site for this course....

Benner, Chris and Manuel Pastor 2012 Just Growth: Inclusion and Prosperity in America's Metropolitan Regions New York: Routledge

Porter, Douglas R. 2008 Managing Growth in America's Communities, Second Edition Washington, D.C.: Island Press ... **NOTE: 2nd Edition only.**

Seltzer, Ethan and A. Carbonell 2011 Regional Planning in America: Practice and Prospect Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Course Schedule:

October 3: Course overview/what is a region/regional planning history (Fishman 2: Death and Life; Hise: Whither the Region?; Seltzer and Carbonell: Chapter 1)

Introduction to the Class Project (see below). Delivery of project charge and expectations by Martha Bennett, COO of Metro.

October 10: Regional Planning in America – History and Theory (Reading: Lester and Reckhow – Network Governance; Healey: Collaborative Planning; Seltzer and Carbonell: Chapter 3; SPUR Regional Governance Report)

Class Project Working Groups formed.

October 17: Regional Planning in America – Environment (Seltzer and Carbonell: Chapters 2 and 6; MacKaye: Regional Planning; McHarg: Nature in the City; Lincoln Institute Large Landscape Conservation)

October 24: Regional Planning in America – Equity and Economy (Reading: Seltzer and Carbonell: Chapters 4; Benner and Pastor: Chapters 1 and 5)

October 31: Growth Management (Reading: Porter: Chapters 1, 2, 7, 8, 9)

**Midterm Essay Assignment Distributed
Class Project Working Group Report Outlines Due**

November 7: Metropolitan Planning (Reading: Seltzer and Carbonell: Chapters 7 and 8; Benner and Pastor: Chapter 6)

Midterm Essay Due

November 14: Metro - Making the Greatest Places
(Reading: Metro Our Place in the World; Metro Regional Framework Plan; Metro Regional Framework Plan Appendix D; Metro Charter; Metro Community Investment Strategy)

November 21: Regions, resilience, and sustainability (Reading: Seltzer and Carbonell: chapter 9; Ecotrust Resilience Report; SPUR Seal Level Rise report (http://www.spur.org/publications/library/report/sealevelrise_110109))

Class Project Working Group Draft Reports Due

November 28: **THANKSGIVING... NO CLASS... UNIVERSITY CLOSED**

December 5: Presentation by Class Project Working Groups of final reports to Martha Bennett and Metro staff at Metro (600 NE Grand Avenue).

Class Project Working Group Final Reports Due

December 12: Course wrap-up/future prospects (Reading: Seltzer and Carbonell: Chapter 10)

Final Paper Due

Course Requirements:

- Midterm Essay – 20%
- Class Project: Metro and Fiscal Equity – 35%
- Paper – 30%
- Class Participation – 15%

Class Project: Metro, Local Fiscal Capacity, and Getting Things Done (35% of final grade)

Problem: Metro COO Martha Bennett has raised the following question:

“The economic gaps between the communities that are prospering in the region and those that are struggling is growing. If Metro wanted to use its authorities to help mitigate that gap, what would be the best tools to use? Metro has categorized its tools in the following general categories: invite (convene); inspire; teach (research and model); provide financial incentives; provide as a direct service; and regulate.”

Background: Economic theory has posited metropolitan regions as a “Tiboutian World,” populated by a multitude of jurisdictions offering consumers/citizens a range of options for the “market basket” of public goods available to them. If you don’t like the services you’re getting, or if you want a different mix, pack up and move to the town next door to get the package you want. In this sense, jurisdictions, so the theory goes, operate in a competitive market, and if city hall is attuned to the desires of the consumers/citizens it wants to attract and retain, it can tailor the public goods it offers to do so.

Though this perspective is strongly supported by the localism that characterizes American planning and public service delivery, it suffers from a number of problems:

- Not all jurisdictions have the same access to resources and to households, particularly households with resources.
- Not all public goods that matter in household or firm locational decisions are under the control of local jurisdictions.
- No jurisdiction is an island, and instead, all jurisdictions depend on services, flows, systems, and dynamics that far exceed jurisdictional boundaries.
- No jurisdiction lives within its own economy.
- Growing local fiscal capacity is tremendously difficult, jurisdiction by jurisdiction, in a metropolitan economy and context.
- In addition, the impacts of local decisions are rarely contained solely within the boundaries of the jurisdiction making them.

As appealing as the market view of jurisdictions in a metropolitan economy may be to some interests, it is best understood as an ideological position rather than as a fact or “law of nature.”

Nonetheless, the fact remains that individual jurisdictions have a tremendous amount of power to acknowledge or deny their role in a metropolitan setting. The choice as to whether issues in the jurisdiction next door will affect their own decisionmaking is, in the American tradition, up to the jurisdiction making the decisions.

That said, the existence and persistence of interjurisdictional impacts of local decisions among jurisdictions sharing a metropolitan region are well known. These differences in fiscal capacity are further compounded by conditions of racism, the unequal distribution of region-serving but locally unwanted land uses, and pure chance that enable some jurisdictions to flourish while others continually struggle. This combination of factors has

resulted in what some have called fiscal “inequities” among jurisdictions sharing a metropolitan setting.

The Portland region has a unique resource with the potential to address the gaps in fiscal capacity, namely Metro, the only directly elected regional government in the US. Can Metro exercise its powers to usefully enable the communities of this region to grow their fiscal capacity, and to meet local and regionally shared needs?

Approach: We will divide the class into working groups to develop a series of reports that together will be used to address the whole question. Each working group will produce a report and a presentation, to be assembled into a final report document at the end of the term. The working groups will include:

- The Metropolitan Context in general in the US: What is the case for being concerned with and attempting to address differences in fiscal capacity among jurisdictions in the region? The metropolitan basis for the economy and landscape ecology of city regions. Tibout versus other perspectives. Does the “market basket” approach really fit the situation presented by jurisdictions in a metropolitan setting? What conditions would need to exist for that model to be effective and legitimate? Fiscal capacity as a metropolitan concern. The suburbanization of poverty. Recent work by Brookings and others.
- Strategies for Addressing Fiscal Capacity in other metros. Best practices, MPLS case study of tax base sharing, legal issues, etc.
- History of Fiscal Capacity as a Regional Issue here: How have differences in fiscal capacity between jurisdictions emerged here over the last 40 years? Have they always been the same? Have things changed? What decisions mattered, and where?
 - The work of the Portland Organizing Project and Metropolitan Coalition for Common Good.
 - The 2040/IMS/CLF/RFP/Equity Atlas 1.0 and 2.0/Greater Portland Pulse story.
 - The Statewide planning goals/UGB/Metropolitan Housing Rule/Metro Fair Share Affordable Housing/Metro Sustainability initiative story.
 - Equity initiatives in area jurisdictions and within the context of state law.
- Fiscal Capacity Conditions Here Today: What are the actual differences in fiscal capacity among jurisdictions within Metro’s boundaries, and what are the trends? Definition and application to the Portland region. Updating of Orfield’s analysis. Relationship of fiscal capacity to community needs and trends. How does the capacity provided by special districts figure in to the total, if at all? Do they make the differences less or more stark?
- Strategies for Addressing Fiscal Capacity here: What aspects of the gap in fiscal capacity among jurisdictions should be Metro concerns and what can/should Metro do about it? Applications in Metro context using COO’s list of “tools.”

Timeline:

- Martha Bennett comes to class on first day to lay out her interests and expectations. Groups formed provisionally on first day.

- Groups firmed up in second class.
- Groups deliver outline by end of fifth week.
- Groups deliver drafts by end of 8th week.
- Groups provide final reports in 10th week. Reports presented to Martha Bennett and Metro staff at Metro during class in 10th week.
- Ethan Seltzer works with Metro designer to develop final report, delivered to Metro and posted online by end of year.

Class Participation: Though this will be a large class, I will try to build in as much discussion as I can. What you think about the material is important to not only your learning, but to the learning of everyone in the class, including the instructor. The reading material listed in the syllabus for the class that day will be the material covered and discussed in class. Each class period will consist of both discussion of the reading and time for the class project. That said, working groups for the class project should expect to need to meet outside of class time. Class participation will count for 15% of the course grade. Class participation will be evaluated by the Instructor based on his assessment of contributions made by each student during class discussions, participation in their class project working group, and may include a peer assessment on the last day of the term.

Midterm Take-Home Essay: There will be a short but engaging mid-term essay covering the readings and class discussions that we'll have in the first half of the course. You can use any resources you want, consult with anyone you want, but must submit your own work. The midterm will provide 20% of your final grade.

Paper: Regional planning and metropolitan growth management cover a lot of ground. There is a lot to look at and much to wonder about. Each student in the class will develop a short research paper on a topic of their choosing. It can address theory, practice, methods, or any combination. We'll discuss possible topics in the first part of the course, with the final paper due on the last day of class. For those interested, I've developed and posted two bibliographies drawn from the regional planning literature on my website. You can get there off the "faculty" page in the "people" section of the "about" page of the TSUSP website. There will be no final for this course. The paper will account for 30% of your final grade.

Please note: Incompletes will not be granted. Please plan accordingly. Finally, please see the instructor if you have a documented disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this course.