Course Description:

Planning occurs in and for real places, in a context provided by a unique combination of local history, culture, politics, economics, and ecology. This course will use an examination of the Pacific Northwest as a means for exploring the links between place and planning. There are historians, writers, artists, critics, and others engaged in an ongoing process of interpreting the nature of this region in their work. Along with more traditional sources of planning information, planners can draw on this body of work as a means for understanding the state of the region, and the role(s) for their plans in this place.

This course will utilize the work of Pacific Northwest historians, writers, planners, critics, and others as a vehicle for equipping planners with a somewhat systematic and mostly eclectic cultural overview of this region. Particular emphasis will be focused on the Columbia River and the Oregon Statewide Land Use Planning Goals as lenses for understanding the interaction between plans, planners, and place. During the term we'll be joined by a number of guests who will reflect on the links between their creative accomplishments and their location in the landscape of this region. Though focused on the Pacific Northwest, the general approach used in this course is applicable to other regions as well.

The course will have two main components: class sessions and a class project:

- **Class Project – Climate Refugees in the Willamette Valley:** Though there are a wide range of opinions about everything having to do with climate change, the science pretty conclusively indicates that things are changing and that those changes will have a whole host of implications for communities throughout the globe. One of the issues that has captured the attention, if not the imagination, of some is the prospect of “climate refugees,” populations displaced from their current locales due to climate-induced impacts on livability. Many of the impacts have to do with water, either too much or too little, though other concerns, like dust or ecological change, have also been considered.

With relatively large populations in the southeast and southwest now vulnerable to prolonged drought and consequent water shortages, the Willamette Valley may emerge as the site where population displaced by climate change may seek to relocate. Some projections of climate impact suggest that the Valley may end up being as wet or wetter in the future, but whether it is or isn’t, the proximity to the...
Columbia River system may make this a desirable location for thirsty migrants. Though we are projecting growth here in the future, if migration due to climate materializes, we may be dealing with far more population than we currently anticipate and are planning for.

This raises some interesting questions. What is the prospect for climate refugees becoming an important stream of in-migrants in coming decades? How vulnerable is our planning to an increase in migration? Where might these people come from, and what kinds of values or expectations for land use and lifestyle will they bring with them? What kinds of concerns do climate refugees versus other kinds of migrants bring with them? Perhaps most important, given the interests that we have in this course, what might we use as principles for accommodating unanticipated growth in the Willamette Valley, and how might those principles role into scenarios for future growth and change?

Oregon has gone through this exercise before. The “Willamette Valley: Choices for the Future” study done by Lawrence Halprin and Associates in the early 1970s set the stage for SB 100 and the Oregon Land Use Planning Program. In the 1990s, additional work was done to try to revisit planning for the Valley. Recent work by the Oregon Climate Change Commission has provided new background on both anticipated climate impacts and possible adaptive strategies.

For this class, we’ll try to address three central challenges:

- Challenge 1: What is the current thinking about climate refugees, about climate refugees in the western US, and how might this affect population change in the Willamette Valley?
- Challenge 2: What are the core principles for planning in the Willamette Valley based on broadly held community values, history, and the ecology of the place?
- Challenge 3: How might unanticipated growth be accommodated in a manner that enhances livability, sense of place, and ecological sustainability and integrity? Under what, if any, circumstances could unanticipated growth be an important positive force for livability and furthering sustainability in the Valley?

The product of our inquiry will be an attractive, engaging “presentation” of our findings for each of these three challenges. It will be presented during the last week of class to an audience of interested stakeholders concerned with how Oregon responds to the impact of climate induced changes far beyond its borders. We’ll divide the class initially into two groups to address challenges one and two. We’ll reassemble into teams to create scenarios in response to challenge three. There will be time set aside during each class session to work on this project, though student should expect to meet in project teams between classes as well.

Class Sessions: Each class session will incorporate discussion of assigned reading, short lectures, and occasional guest speakers. Class participation is crucial for the success of this class. Six books have been ordered and will be required:

o William Kittredge, *Who Owns the West?* (Mercury House, 1996)


o Robbins and Foster, eds., *Land in the American West* (UW Press, 2000)


There is a D2L site for the course. You must have an ODIN account to access D2L. I will use that course website to communicate, post class information and keep track of grades under the appropriate sections of the site. In addition, links to required readings and websites, and actual readings themselves will be posted on the site. Books are available at the PSU Bookstore, at Powell’s, and on-line.

In addition to the two main course components outlined above, there will be short, integrating, take-home midterm and final essays. Grading will be based on the following:

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<th>Component</th>
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<td>Midterm Essay</td>
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<td>Final Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Climate Refugee Project</td>
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<td>Class Participation</td>
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**Schedule and Reading:**

**September 28**  Distribution of Syllabus… discussion/organization of project  
Reading:  
Bullard, “The Specialty of Place,” on D2L.  
Lopez, “American Geographies,” on D2L.  
Visitors: Climate Refugee Project Mentors

**October 5**  Land in the West  
Reading:  
Robbins and Foster, all.  
White, “Born Modern,” found at:  
Stafford, “Two Stories Becoming One,” on D2L.

**October 12**  The Pacific Northwest  
Reading:  
Robbins, all.  
Maps and other tidbits, attached.

**October 19**  The Columbia River  
Reading:
White, all.
Mumford, “Regional Planning in the Pacific Northwest,” on D2L.
Midterm Essay Assignment Distributed.

October 26  Sense of Place
Reading:
Gustafson, “Sense of Place,” on D2L.
Visitor: Darrell Grant
Midterm Essay Assignment Due.

November 2  Reading the West
Reading:
Kittredge, all.

November 9  Reading the Region
Visitor: David Oates
Reading:
Oates, all.
Abbott and Margheim, “Imagining Portland’s UGB,” on D2L.

November 16  Policy and Place
Reading:
Harrison, all.

November 23  Policy and Place, continued.
Reading:
Manzo and Perkins, “Finding Common Ground,” on D2L.

November 30  Project Presentation and Course Wrap-up
Reading:
Myers, “Future in Planning,” on D2L.
Final Essay Assignment Distributed

December 7  Final Essay Due.

Notes:

■ Please see me if you have a documented disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this course.
■ Please see me well in advance if you anticipate having difficulty meeting any of the deadlines listed above. LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.