

# COMMUNITY SERVICE

## URP 4942 COMMUNITY SERVICE

Section 4942; Class Number 26657

3 credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** Laura Dedenbach, Ph.D., AICP  
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**OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesdays 10:00a to 12:00p, or by appointment

**CLASS MEETING TIMES:** In lieu of meeting in a classroom, each student will work as a volunteer for a minimum of 60 hours during the academic semester.

**PREREQUISITES:** URP 3001 or URP4000 and be a declared URP minor

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Provides an opportunity to work directly with a community service agency. Public sector agencies, such as a city or county office and nonprofit organizations, qualify as community service agencies.

**PURPOSE OF COURSE:** Urban and Regional Planning is a field with strong links to communities. Practicing planners are often required to participate in community activities, deal with the public on a regular basis, and serve in some capacity that involves direct contact with citizens and community leaders.

The Community Service course, a 3-credit elective in the Minor of Urban and Regional Planning, provides students an opportunity to work directly with a community service agency in Gainesville, Florida. Public sector agencies, such as a city or county office, and non-profit organizations qualify as community service agencies. **The course is open to UF undergraduate students who are pursuing and have declared the URP minor with their home department.** This is a Department-controlled class, so students will not be able to sign-up for it on ONE.UF; the Department will register students after the Registration & Community Service Agency Agreement Form is signed by all parties.

Students interested in taking this elective class should contact Dr. Dedenbach during the enrollment period to complete necessary documentation and registration. **Students must secure their own community service placement.** Dr. Dedenbach is available to discuss

possible placement in advance of the registration period. Planning related organizations where students have volunteered in previous semesters include:

- Alachua Habitat for Humanity
- City of Gainesville, Cultural Affairs, Parks Department
- City of Gainesville, Department of Sustainable Development, Historic Preservation
- Alachua Conservation Trust
- Community Weatherization Coalition

### **REQUIRED READINGS & MATERIALS:**

Appropriate readings and materials may be posted to Canvas to provide support material. In addition, each student is responsible for seeking sources and resources to support their community service experience.

**COURSE GOALS AND/OR OBJECTIVES:** The main objective of the course is to expose students to planning issues in their community. By working directly with government agencies and non-profit organizations, students will learn first-hand how to deal with community issues related to urban planning and community development.

**METHODS & EXPECTATIONS:** In lieu of meeting in a classroom, each student will work as a volunteer in a public sector agency or a non-profit organization during the academic semester. Students are required to volunteer for **a minimum of 60 hours**, but are free to dedicate more hours during the semester and encouraged to continue working as a volunteer for the organization after completing the course requirements. Time spent attending community meetings or other activities involving beneficiaries of community service activity as well as time spent with routine meetings between student and supervisors can be counted towards service and can be logged on the time sheet.

During the Community Service course students are expected:

- to fill out the Registration & Community Service Agency Agreement Form and commit to honoring it;
- to comply with schedule agreed upon with Dr. Dedenbach and agency supervisor and provide advance notice of an absence;
- to attend required meetings listed in Canvas and any additional meetings required by Dr. Dedenbach and/or the agency's supervisor;
- to complete projects assigned by the Dr. Dedenbach and agency supervisor in a timely manner;
- to respect the policies and expectations of the agency;
- to behave professionally and respectfully while completing assigned tasks and projects;
- to be attentive towards citizens and members of the community while on duty;
- to serve in a manner that preserves the reputation and integrity of the University of Florida and the Department of Urban and Regional Planning;
- to communicate with Dr. Dedenbach in case problems arise and to provide adequate advance notice if service must be terminated.

**COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:** We will use Canvas, UF's e-learning system, as our online "homebase". It is your responsibility to check Canvas regularly for announcements related to

the course. Any changes to the syllabus will be posted on Canvas with appropriate notice. I may also send you emails through Canvas. It is your responsibility to ensure that you either login to Canvas to retrieve these emails or have them set to forward to the correct email account. You are also encouraged to download the Canvas App and allow notifications, so that you receive announcements and assignment due dates.

To login to Canvas you will need to provide your GatorLink User Name and Password. If you are new to Canvas or have any problems using Canvas, please contact the Help Desk at 392-HELP.

I will answer your email as quickly as possible but please allow up to 24 hours for a reply during the week, and 48 hours for a reply on weekends. Proper email etiquette is expected.

## COURSE POLICIES

**ASSIGNMENT POLICY:** Assignments will be posted on Canvas well in advance of their due dates. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY THE POSTED DUE DATES IN CANVAS.**

Assignments must be submitted by posting on Canvas. **Late work will not be accepted.** It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignments have been successfully uploaded to Canvas. See the Note on Computer or Canvas Problems below.

**MAKE-UP/ASSIGNMENT EXTENSION POLICY:** Missed deadlines for unexcused reasons will result in a zero. Examples of unexcused reasons include, but are not limited to, forgetting to do an assignment, being too busy with other coursework, or going on a family vacation during regularly scheduled class days on the UF calendar. If you are sick or have an emergency that prevents you from submitting an assignment at the scheduled time, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible. Documentation of the illness or emergency will be required. If you need to schedule an extension, please email me with a detailed explanation and attach documentation. Extension will be given at my discretion. Scheduling extensions is the responsibility of the student.

All assignment deadlines are posted on the syllabus and in Canvas at the beginning of the semester. If you know that you will have excused absences (for example, religious holidays, field trips, professional conferences, participation in official university activities), it is your responsibility to communicate any deadline conflicts well in advance, per UF Attendance Policies.

If you have a serious emergency or life event, please contact the Dean of Students Office ([www.dso.ufl.edu](http://www.dso.ufl.edu)), and they will contact all of your instructors so that you do not have to provide documentation of the emergency/death in order to make-up coursework. We will work together to create a schedule for make-up coursework upon your return.

**COMPUTER OR CANVAS PROBLEMS POLICY:** If you have computer or Canvas problems that prevent you from submitting an assignment, you have the ability to receive an extension if you follow these steps:

- Immediately contact the Help Desk (392-HELP (4357) or [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)) to report the problem and receive a ticket to document the problem. I can only extend the submittal deadline if you have contacted the Help Desk ahead of the assignment deadline and received a ticket. The Help Desk is available by phone and email 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- After contacting the HelpDesk and receiving a ticket, contact me, prior to the assignment due time, and let me know there is a problem.
- If you are having a computer problem (hardware, software), describe the problem to me and we'll work out a plan. Examples of an extension-worthy issue: "I dropped my computer in the parking lot and now it won't turn on." Examples of situations that are not extension-worthy: "I went home this weekend and left my computer behind." "I went to [insert your location here] and there was no internet connection." "My roommate disconnected our wi-fi router." Plan ahead; practice time-management; be resilient by backing up your work frequently to a back-up drive, jump drive, or the cloud.
- If Canvas or the UF Network is experiencing an outage that prevents you from submitting an assignment on time, I will receive a notice from UF IT about the outage. The assignment deadline will be revised accordingly. Students will not be penalized for system or network outages.

## UF POLICIES

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.disability.ufl.edu](http://www.disability.ufl.edu)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**Students submitting an accommodation letter must also schedule a meeting with me to discuss and develop a plan to ensure that access needs are met.**

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: "*We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Student Honor Code.*" You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community. On all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "*On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.*"

You will complete all work independently unless given explicit permission to collaborate on course assignments. We will be using TurnItIn, a plagiarism detection program. **Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in an honor code violation and potential failure of the course.** Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information, please read the [Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code](#).

**Important:** **Any use, access, or handling of technology (e.g., cell phone, smart watch) during an exam will result in an honor code violation and potential failure of the course.**

**Important:** Any requests for extra credit (beyond that given in class) or special exceptions to course grading policies will be interpreted as an honor code violation (i.e., asking for preferential treatment) and will be handled accordingly.

**NETIQUETTE: COMMUNICATION COURTESY:** All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. Please read the [UF Netiquette Guide for Online Course](#).

**COURSE EVALUATIONS:** Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>."

**MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FEE:** None

## HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCES

Resources available on-campus for students include the following:

- *U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [umatter.ufl.edu/](http://umatter.ufl.edu/) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center:* Visit [counseling.ufl.edu/](http://counseling.ufl.edu/) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center:* Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit [shcc.ufl.edu/](http://shcc.ufl.edu/).
- *University Police Department:* Visit [police.ufl.edu/](http://police.ufl.edu/) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:* For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center](http://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center).

**A PERSONAL NOTE:** If you are overwhelmed and feel like you just can't handle the pressure, don't be afraid to reach out or try to go it alone. Please contact me or someone at UF's Counseling and Wellness Center. I genuinely care for your wellbeing, and there are many resources available on campus to assist you.

## GRADING POLICIES & ASSIGNMENTS

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Attendance will be taken at any scheduled meetings. Students enrolled in this class *are* REQUIRED to attend scheduled check-in meetings on Zoom with the Dr. Dedenbach during the semester. These meetings will be scheduled as required at the start of

the semester to discuss volunteer site placement, at the midterm to discuss your volunteer experience and hours completed to date, and at the end of the semester to discuss your overall experience and review your final report and time sheet.

A Time Sheet is provided for students to keep track of hours worked during the semester. Dr. Dedenbach will provide an Evaluation Form to agency supervisors. Evaluation Forms should be submitted to Dr. Dedenbach by e-mail by the last day of classes for the semester.

Students will prepare a Midterm Report to discuss and reflect upon your experience. Students will prepare a Final Portfolio. This Portfolio is intended to be a packaged, professional takeaway of the work and experience that you've gained and the connection to urban and regional planning. It must contain the following:

- **3-5 page (double-spaced) written report**, detailing your professional experience. (Adobe Creative Cloud Express or ESRI StoryMap can be used as an alternative)  
Discuss:
  - Your collaborative efforts
  - Major milestones
  - Nature of the work
  - Connection to urban and regional planning
  - Overall experience
- **Photos, graphics, videos, or multimedia files**
- Any **final deliverables** (or samples of deliverables) that you helped to create

Information on current UF grading policies may be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/#gradingpoliciestext>

The following table outlines the point-accruing components of the course. The total points earned will be summed and divided by the total points in the course: 100

Assignments	Points Possible	Approx. % of Total Grade
<b>Completion of Required Hours (min. 60 hours)</b>	40	40%
<b>Midterm Report</b>	20	20%
<b>Supervisor's Evaluation</b>	15	15%
<b>Final Portfolio</b>	25	25%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

**URP4942 GRADING SCALE:** An S/U grade will be assigned based on compliance with the requirements of the Community Service course, participation in any scheduled meetings with Dr. Dedenbach, the quality of the work performed by student as reported by the community service agency supervisor, and a final portfolio relating the experience within the context of urban and regional planning as well as learning outcomes.