

Planning Research Design

URP 6203 – 17484/Sec 4403 – Spring 2024
 Mondays 3:00-3:50pm &
 Wednesdays 1:55-3:50pm
 Rinker 230



Dr. Kathryn Frank

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 ARCH 460

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Office hours: Wednesdays 4:00-5:00pm or by appointment

Course Description

This course covers how to do research in planning practice and academia. It focuses on defining planning problems and suitable research questions, conducting literature reviews, developing conceptual frameworks, and selecting types of study designs and data collection methodologies. It includes writing skills and templates for research proposals, IRB protocols, and theses.

The course is a core requirement for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning and Master of Historic Preservation degrees. There are no course pre-requisites, however you should be ready to develop your master's thesis proposal.

At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to

- Frame research questions.
- Identify steps in the research process.
- Select research designs appropriate to the questions, information availability, and researcher strengths.
- Select suitable methods of information gathering and analysis, and uphold the ethics regarding human subjects.
- Write research proposals, including for your master's thesis.

The required textbook is *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project*, 4th Edition (2021) by Zina O'Leary, Sage Publications.

Supplemental readings will also be assigned; they will be provided in the course's Canvas site.

The course is organized as 7 modules that follow standard research steps:

1. Entering the research world
2. Identifying a research problem
3. Selecting a research design
4. Collecting data
5. Analyzing data

6. Presentations for peer feedback
7. Writing a research report/thesis

This syllabus is subject to minor change with advance notice to students.

Classes and Communications

Classes. All classes will be held in person. Classes will include instructor, guest, and student presentations, discussions of the required readings, and small group exercises.

Canvas. The course Canvas site will contain all class materials and recordings, assignments, and grades.

Instructor assistance. Instructor office hours will be Wednesdays 4-5pm, or other times by appointment. Email through Canvas is the best initial contact to ask questions or arrange an appointment. You can also reach Dr. Frank at kifrank@ufl.edu. You will receive a reply within 24 hours during the workweek and within 48 hours on weekends.

Assignments and Grading

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Instructions (also see Canvas)</i>	<i>% of Grade</i>
<i>Attendance</i>	Attend class, be prepared (do the assigned readings in advance), and participate in class activities. Attendance will be taken each week.	20%
<i>Research journal</i>	In five assignments, apply modules to thesis examples and your chosen research topic, consult experts for guidance, and practice writing.	35%
<i>Human subjects compliance training</i>	Conduct the IRB-02 training and pass the exam. This may require a VPN connection.	5%
<i>Class presentation</i>	Present your draft thesis proposal for peer feedback.	10%
<i>Peer feedback and response</i>	Provide written peer feedback for one classmate's presentation and respond to the feedback you receive.	5%
<i>Thesis proposal</i>	Write a 20-page thesis proposal.	25%

Each assignment has a grading rubric based on the instructions. Full credit ("A" grade) requires following the instructions, demonstrating a solid understanding of the course topics, research and analysis if required, compelling writing and presentation, proper source attribution, and timely submittal. A "B" grade is basically sound, but has a deficiency in one of the areas above. A "C" or lower grade has significant deficiencies.

The relationship between letter grades and numeric grades is: A (≥ 94.0), A- (≥ 90.0), B+ (≥ 87.0), B (≥ 83.0), B- (≥ 80.0), C+ (≥ 77.0), C (≥ 73.0), C- (≥ 70.0), D+ (≥ 67.0), D (≥ 63.0), D- (≥ 60.0), and E (< 60.0). Where A=4.0, A-=3.67, B+=3.33, B=3.0, B-=2.67, C+=2.33, C=2.0, C-=1.67, D+=1.33, D=1.0, D-=0.67, E=0.0.

Incomplete Grade

UF policy states: “An incomplete grade may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor as an interim grade for a course in which the student has completed a major portion of the course with a passing grade, been unable to complete course requirements before the end of the term because of extenuating circumstances, and obtained agreement from the instructor and arranged for resolution of the incomplete grade. Instructors are not required to assign incomplete grades.” For more information see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Student Honor Code and Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students 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.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. To read the Conduct Code: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult the instructor.

For specific guidance to avoid plagiarism, see <http://www.correspondencestudy.ufl.edu/students/handbook/Plagiarism/PlagiarismAlert.html>. Turnitin will be used to screen all assignments for plagiarism (<http://turnitin.com/static/index.html>). You must submit work that is original to this course, unless it is used as a reference and properly cited.

Attendance and Late Policies

Class attendance is required. Readings for each module should be completed prior to the class day they are assigned in the schedule below. If you miss a class, check Canvas and inquire with classmates. Absence can be waived for UF-excused reasons with prompt communication and documentation, which should be provided in advance when possible.

Late assignments will be marked down 10% of the total grade if they are not turned in by the deadline, and an additional 10% for each week they are late. *Missed class* and *makeup work* are allowed with acceptable, documented, and prompt reasons for absence, with communication with the instructor as early as possible:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>. The terms of making up missed work will be determined by the instructor in discussion with you.

Students with extenuating circumstances that interfere with attending class, including significant illness, are encouraged to use the Instructor Notification process: <https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications/> Through this process, the student can submit their information to DSO for verification. Then, DSO sends a notification to the student's instructors. The DSO has additional services to students through their Care Area: <https://care.dso.ufl.edu>

For the latest information and UF policies and procedures related to the Covid-19 pandemic, see <https://coronavirus.ufl.edu>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

To request classroom accommodations, you must first register with the UF Disability Resource Center: <https://disability.ufl.edu>. They will provide assistance and documentation for instructors.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) 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 the Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) 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; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

[Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

[Teaching Center](#): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

[Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)

Course/Instructor 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://bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

About Professor Frank

Dr. Kathryn Frank specializes in environmental, coastal, rural, and participatory planning for sustainability and resilience. At the University of Florida, she has led \$1 million in funded research projects. Recent publications have appeared in the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, the *Journal of the American Planning Association*, and *Planning Theory and Practice*. She previously worked as a planning consultant and environmental engineer. Dr. Frank received a doctorate in City and Regional Planning from Georgia Tech. Her doctoral dissertation examined the impacts of collaborative planning processes for the Everglades ecosystem. Her master's degree is in Community and Regional Planning from the University of Oregon, with a thesis about the impacts of a project-based, volunteer wildlife monitoring program on its youth participants. Her undergraduate majors were chemical engineering and mathematics.

URP 6203 Spring 2024 Schedule

Class Date	Topics	Textbook Chapters	Assignment Due Sunday 11:59pm
Entering the research world			
Week 1	Course overview and class introductions Begin introduction to research		
Week 2	What is research and why do it? Navigating the process	1-2	
Identifying a research problem			
Week 3	Developing your research question(s) Research ethics	3-4	Journal 1
Week 4	Crafting a research proposal Reviewing the literature Creating a conceptual framework	5-6	
Selecting a research design			
Week 5	Designing a research plan Quantitative and qualitative approaches	7-8	Journal 2
Week 6	Mixed, evaluative, and other approaches	9-10	
Collecting data			
Week 7	Selecting samples, informants, and cases Primary data: surveys, interviews, and observation	11-12	Journal 3
Week 8	Secondary and online data IRB protocols	13-14	IRB-02 training
Week 9	Spatial data (GIS), modeling, and additional ways to collect data		Journal 4
Week 10	Spring Break		

Analyzing data

Week 11	Analyzing quantitative data	15	
Week 12	Analyzing qualitative data	16	Journal 5

Presentations for peer feedback

Week 13	Begin student presentations		Presentation slides
Week 14	Continue student presentations		

Writing a research report/thesis

Week 15	Writing a research report Disseminating your research	17-18	Peer feedback
Week 16	Course conclusion		
Week 17	Finals week		Thesis proposal