

ARC 6306C. Public Interest Design: Contemporary Issues and Practice
School of Architecture, University of Florida
3-credit course

Course Syllabus
Fall 2025

Instructor: Assistant Professor Sarah Gamble
Class Meeting Times: Thursday periods 7 – 9
Instructor Contact: sarah.gamble@ufl.edu or Canvas mail
Office Location: AH 250 (formerly known as the Architecture Building)
Office Hours with Instructor: Monday + Wednesday 1 – 2pm

Course Prerequisites: None

Course Co-requisites: None

Course Restrictions: The course is required for students participating in the Certificate in Public Interest Design and Master of Science in Public Interest Design. This course is open to graduate students outside of the certificate program from the College of Design, Construction, and Planning and other colleges with instructor's / departmental approval.

Required Textbook / Readings

Students will access required readings in a digital format through UF Libraries and/or links through the course Canvas page. A primary source will be Public Interest Design Practice Guidebook, which is available online through UF Libraries, or if preferred, printed copies can be purchased.

Course Description + Background

This course explores the interdisciplinary field of Public Interest Design (PID), with a focus on contemporary issues and professional practice. Just as public health is a subset of the medical profession, PID developed as a subset of the architectural practice, having evolved from the practice of Community Design that emerged in the 1960's. PID draws on facets of urban planning, architectural design, the arts, community engagement, and education to create a collaborative, inclusive, and interdisciplinary design process. Described by John Cary, a thought leader in the field: "Inherently participatory and human-centered, public interest design seeks to improve the quality of life for all people, regardless of their socio-economic background".

This course will serve an introduction to the field, including a basic history presented in the context of emerging issues for today's practitioners. Students will explore how PID can address social, economic, and environmental issues, including people and places that are often overlooked by the mainstream design fields. While exploring the fundamentals of practice, the primary steps of a PID process will be explored in the context of common project typologies. Case study research and presentations by students will further the students' collective knowledge of the field and opportunities to apply their design skills within the public realm.

Course Objectives

- Identify the need and potential for built environment professionals to positively benefit the public realm and community-at-large
- Explore the range of interdisciplinary, professional practice opportunities, including private practice, governmental, non-profit / NGO, and more, that comprise Public Interest Design
- Identify the current barriers to the practice of Public Interest Design
- Analyze project examples, including community engagement processes, design processes, and completed works, to understand the range of impacts and outcomes
- Apply PID principles in the development of an original project that meets a community need

Course Format

This course is taught in a seminar format, meeting for 3-hours once per week. Brief lectures will provide an overview of the week's focus and provide context for in-class discussion. Student reading presentations and questions will

reinforce course content, while jumpstarting dialog between students and instructor. Student presentations at the mid-point and final weeks of class will provide the opportunity for students to explore the application of PID principles through case studies analysis and the development of original PID projects. Guest lectures from leading PID practitioners and academics will provide a broader perspective on the field and contemporary practice.

Graded Assignments + Participation

Student Lead on Readings

Each student will be assigned one week of course readings to lead discussion on the content and key take-aways. The student will plan 15 minutes of presentation content, which should include: a brief background on the author and their perspective/point-of-view, summary of the reading content, and a response to the content to voice the student's perspective and opinion. The student may include time and space to engage with the student audience and ask questions. At the conclusion of the presentation, the Student Lead will engage in dialog with the Student Lead on Reading Questions, aiming to include all students in on-going dialogue.

Student Lead on Reading Questions

Each student will be assigned one week of course readings to prepare questions regarding its content. The student will ask questions about the content to the Student Lead on Readings to spur dialog and discussion within the class about the week's course material.

Midterm Project: Concept Proposal

Students will develop a PID project Concept Proposal to address an identified community need. Students will present their project to the class and stakeholders for feedback.

Midterm Project: Final Presentation

Students will develop their PID project and produce final drawings/documents to communicate the project to others. Students will present their project to the class and stakeholders for feedback.

Final Project: Case Study Selection + Concept Proposal

Each student will select a PID case study for presentation to the class. Preceding the presentation, each student will submit a concept proposal highlighting their case study selection, key facts / topics engaged, and research sources available. Feedback will provided be from the instructor to guide the case study research.

Final Project: Final Report

The students will prepare a final report documenting their selected case study. The instructor will provide a report template and outline of key topics to be covered to allow comparison between the range of case studies selected by the students.

Final Project: Final Presentation

Each student will give a 15 to 20-minute presentation on their selected case study. The instructor will provide an outline of key topics to be covered to allow comparison between the range of case studies selected by the students.

Participation

Students will be graded on their participation in the course, with a focus in-class discussion and engagement. In addition, students will be asked to participate in with local PID efforts outside of class time to experience course content in action. Opportunities may include: community engagement events, local government / commission hearings, observing the use of public space, neighborhood meetings, etc.

Grading Criteria

Your final grade will be a tabulation of the following assignments:

- 10% Student Lead on Readings
5% Student Lead on Reading Questions
- 10% Midterm Project: Concept Proposal
15% Midterm Project: Final Presentation
- 10% Final Project: Case Study Selection + Concept Proposal
20% Final Project: Final Report
10% Final Project: In-Class Presentation
- 20% Class Participation
- 100% TOTAL GRADE**

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Numeric Grade	93-	90-	87-	83-	80-	77-	73-	70-	67-	63-	60-	0-
Grade	100	92	89	86	82	79	76	72	69	66	62	59
Quality Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	0.67	0.0

Course Schedule

- Week 1: Introduction to Public Interest Design
Week 2: Models of Contemporary Practice
Week 3: Shaping a PID Project (Introduce Mid-term Project)
Week 4: Engaging Stakeholders
Week 5: Building a Project Team + Funding PID Work
Week 6: Project Typologies (Mid-term Concept Proposal Due)
Week 7: Design Process for PID
Week 8: Mid-term Project Presentations
- Week 9: Furthering PID Practice within Built-Environment Fields (Introduce Final Project)
Week 10: Innovative Collaborations / Guest Lecture
Week 11: Public Education + Advocacy / Guest Lecture (Final Project Concept Proposal Due)
Week 12: PID Education + Career Paths / Guest Lecture
Week 13: Emergent Topics
Week 14: Course Wrap-up + Final Project Presentations by Students
Week 15 / Exam Period: (Final Report Due)

Course + Required Policies

For UF "Academic Policies & Resources," go to: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolices>. These resources include information about:

- Requirements for class attendance, make-up exams, and assignments
- Processes for students with disabilities who may require accommodations
- Current UF grading policies
- Expectations for course evaluations and constructive feedback
- The University's Honesty Policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc.
- In-class recording of class lectures for personal use
- Academic resources, including contact information

- Campus health and wellness resources, including contact information

Syllabus + Course Updates

As we move throughout the semester, students should expect minor revisions and updates to the course and syllabus. These changes and updates will be clearly communicated in class and/or via Canvas "Announcements".

Attendance + Make-up Work

Attendance is expected and required. The interactive nature of the seminar environment relies on students' attendance and participation to achieve the course's learning objectives. The course will have 14 meetings (14 Thursdays within the academic calendar). Upon the second unexcused absence, a student's grade will be impacted. Upon the third unexcused absence, a student will be asked to drop the course.

Students have multiple days to submit work for each assignment, therefore the Make-Up Policy for the course is VERY limited. Reasonable allowances will be made for serious illness, family, or personal crisis that are accompanied by an appropriate documentation.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. For UF "Academic Policies & Resources," go to: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>.

Communication

Questions related to the course and course content should be asked in class, as the question/answer will benefit the entirety of the class. Questions of a private nature should be directed to Instructor by email, Canvas message, or during weekly office hours.

Submitting Assignments + Late Work Policy

All assignments will be submitted through Canvas. Each assignment has a unique date / time that the assignment is 'available' and 'due'. Assignments submitted past the 'due' date will receive an automatic 10% deduction per 24-hour period the assignment is late. It is entirely the responsibility of the student to verify due dates to ensure on-time submission. Be sure to provide ample time to get assignments properly submitted, keeping in mind technological glitches and problems often arise.

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. See the "[Get Started With the DRC](#)" webpage on the Disability Resource Center site. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor via email at sarah.gamble@ufl.edu and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals,
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.blueria.com>.

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Honesty Policy

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 Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Campus Resources: Health + 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.

Campus Resources: Academic

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. Call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.

Teaching Center: 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.

Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.

In-Class Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic

exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.