Environmental Land Use Planning and Management

URP 6421 – Fall 2025
Section 2749
Thursdays 8:30-11:30am
Little Hall 205

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Office hours:
Thursdays 11:30am-12:00pm and Fridays 11:00-11:30am in person or by appointment

This course surveys environmental land use planning and management practices across the breadth of the field through six modules. Each module examines environmental concerns and policies, associated land use planning and management goals and practices, and illustrative cases. Environmental planning is an important topic for those who want to be environmental planners, generalist planners, planners in other specializations, natural resource managers, environmental policy makers, and other environmental professionals.

Modules

1. Environmental planning framework and crosscutting methods
2. Watersheds, aquifers, and wetlands
3. Landscape conservation
4. Natural hazards and climate change
5. Soils, land resources, and land use
6. Sustainable settlements

At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to
- Identify the environmental policy context of planning.
- Describe cross-cutting planning practices that apply to environmental concerns.
- Identify a wide range of environmental concerns and specific land use planning practices to address them.
- Integrate knowledge and planning responses across environmental concerns, and include social and economic interests, for sustainability.
- Conduct environmental planning with an adaptive, learning approach for resilience.

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

Class Format

The required textbook is *Environmental Land Use Planning and Management, 2ⁿᵈ Edition* (2011) by John Randolph, Island Press. Additional optional readings will be provided on Canvas to relate the topics to current events.

The course's Canvas site will contain all assignments and grades. Each course module has specific learning objectives. Use these to guide your reading and assignments.

UF policy requires us to meet in person during the scheduled class times (unless you have an excused absence).

This course includes three required class field trips in and near Gainesville. Students will be responsible for their own transportation, and ride sharing is encouraged. One of the field trips will occur during regular class time. The other will occur on a Saturday morning. The day and time of the third trip will be determined with everyone's input. Accommodations can be made for scheduling conflicts with work, and for other concerns such as physical limitations.

Assignments and Grading

Assignment	Instructions (also see Canvas)	% of Grade
Attendance	Class attendance, preparedness, and participation, including field trips, is mandatory. Attendance will be taken throughout the semester.	20%
Field trip reflection	Write a short reflection essay about one of the field trips	10%
Lead class discussion	Present an emerging environmental planning topic to the class and facilitate discussion	15%
Project meeting report	Attend an environmental planning meeting and discuss in a report.	15%
Project presentation	As a small group, give a presentation of an environmental planning case and relate this to environmental policy.	20%
Project recommendations	Evaluate an environmental plan using each course module.	20%

All assignments have grading rubrics that show the points for each part of the instructions. Overall, an "A" grade requires a solid understanding and application of the course topics, reflection and analysis, clear and compelling communication, proper citations and references, 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.

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 to me as early as possible. The terms of making up missed work will be determined the professor in discussion with you. Refer to UF's attendance policies: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

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.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center: https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Honesty and Avoiding Plagiarism

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 with the instructor.

You must submit work that is *original to this course*, unless it is used as a reference and properly cited. Canvas will screen all written assignments for plagiarism using the text-matching tool Turnitin (http://turnitin.com/static/index.html). For guidance on avoiding plagiarism, including how to paraphrase, watch this video by the UF Writing Studio: https://mediasite.video.ufl.edu/Mediasite/Play/27e154a024d8432aad8baa9d6f50f3d61d.

Use of AI

The assignments in this course are designed such that ChatGPT or other AI are not needed and may be counterproductive. There may be limited use of these tools, which I am open to exploring with you, but you must describe them to me when submitting the assignment and preferably in advance. If you do not declare your use of AI, it will be considered plagiarism.

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/.

Getting Help

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.

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: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

About Professor Frank

Dr. Frank specializes in planning and engagement for sustainability, resilience, and social equity. Specific areas include sea level rise adaptation, ecosystem and watershed management, regional planning, rural planning, collaborative planning, neighborhood planning, and youth participation. She is the director of the Florida Center for Innovative Communities, which focuses on action research to design and pilot test new community engagement processes. She previously worked as a planning consultant and environmental engineer. She has a doctorate in City and Regional Planning from Georgia Tech and a master's degree in Community and Regional Planning from the University of Oregon. Her undergraduate majors were chemical engineering and mathematics.

SCHEDULE

Class Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignments due Wednesdays
Module 1 – Environmental Planning Framework and Crosscutting Methods			
Week 1 8/21	Course kick-off and class introductions		
Week 2 8/28	Environmental planning framework, part 1 Intro to environmental policy	Ch. 1-3	Start Project
Week 3 9/4	Collaboration Env plan framework, part 2	Ch. 4-5	
Module 2 – Watersheds, Aquifers, and Wetlands			
Week 4 9/11	Geographic information systems Surface water and watersheds	Ch. 7 (not append), 8	
Week 5 9/18	Aquifers and wetlands Water supply planning	Ch. 9, 10 (342-363)	
9/20 Sat 9a-12p	Field trip: Sweetwater Branch Watershed		
Module 3 – Landscape Conservation			
Week 6 9/25	Landscape ecology and land conservation Guest speaker: TBD	Ch. 10 (317-328), 11	
Week 7 10/2	Guest speaker: TBD	Ch. 15	Project meet report
Module 4 – Natural Hazards and Climate Change			
Week 8 10/9	Natural hazards	Ch. 13	
Week 9 10/16	Climate change Soils, erosion, agricultural practices	Ch. 12	

Module 5 – Land Resources

Week 10 10/23	NO CLASS (Prof. at conference) Work on project	Ch. 6	
Week 11 10/30	Integrated land use planning	Ch. 14	Project present

Module 6 – Sustainable Settlements

Week 12 11/6	Field trip: Alachua Conservation Trust (tentative) Sustainable cities, part 1 (recorded)	Ch. 16, 17	
Week 13 11/13	Sustainable cities, part 2 Growth management and regional planning	Ch. 18	Field trip reflection
Week 14 11/20	Course review		Project present continued
Week 15 11/27	*No class - Thanksgiving holidays*		
Week 16 12/4	No class (reading day)		
Week 17	Finals week		Project recom