

# LAND USE PLANNING LAW

## URP 6131 SPRING 2026

Section 4880; Class Number 14884  
Campus Section



**INSTRUCTOR:** Laura Dedenbach, Ph.D., AICP  
Instructional Assistant Professor  
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**DR. D'S STUDENT HOURS:** Thursdays 1:00p to 3:00p, or by appointment.

**CLASS MEETING TIMES AND LOCATION:** Tuesdays Period 4 – 5 (10:40a – 12:35p)  
Thursdays Period 5 (11:45a – 12:35p)  
Rinker Hall 220

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Introduction to regulatory and nonregulatory techniques of plan implementation. Relationship of law and politics to the planning process. Police power as the basis for regulation. Mandatory planning and status of adopted comprehensive plans.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Juergensmeyer, J., Salkin, P., & Rowberry, R. (2023). Land Use Planning and Development Regulation Law. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. West Academic. [UF Library eBook Available]

Fisher, G.A. (2021) Local Government Law: A Practical Guidebook for Public Officials on City Councils, Community Boards, and Planning Commissions. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Routledge. [UF Library eBook Available]

Rouse, D.C., and Piro, R. (2022). *The Comprehensive Plan: Sustainable, resilient, and equitable communities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Routledge. [UF Library eBook Available]

Levine, J. (2021). *Leadership in Planning: How to Communicate Ideas and Effect Positive Change*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Routledge. [UF Library eBook Available and UF All Access]

Kousoulas, C. (2020). *Writing for Planners: A Handbook for Students and Professionals in Writing, Editing, and Document Production*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Routledge. [UF Library eBook Available]

Roger, F., Ury. W.L, & Patton, B. (2011). *Getting To Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Revision. Penguin Books. ISBN: 9780143118756. [Must purchase]

Ury, W. (1993). *Getting Past No: Negotiating in Difficult Situations*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Bantam. ISBN: 9780553371314. [Must purchase].

All other required readings for the course are posted to the class Canvas site or available through the UF Libraries Course Reserves.

**USE OF UF G SUITE & MICROSOFT TOOLS:** Throughout the semester, we will use various G Suite and Microsoft products to complete your assignments. For the use of these tools, you will need to sign in to your UF account for access. To access tools, please visit <https://cloud.it.ufl.edu/collaboration-tools/>. These tools are provided through UF at no additional cost to the student.

**COURSE GOALS AND/OR OBJECTIVES:** The following table describes the student learning outcomes (SLOs) for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program and the specific course goals of URP6131. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

MURP SLOs	URP6131 Course SLOs	Assessment Methods
<b>General Planning Knowledge: (Planning Law and Institutions)</b> <b>Understand behaviors and structures available to bring about sound planning outcomes; Evaluate the legal and institutional contexts within which planning occurs in the U.S. and/or internationally; and, Apply mechanisms and practices for</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Describe the role of planning policy and planning law in the urbanization and suburbanization of the United States</li><li>Explain basic concepts of planning policy and planning law</li><li>Discuss the role of Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Codes in shaping our cities, counties, and regions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Regulatory Project</li><li>Case Briefs</li><li>Statutory Analysis</li><li>Class participation</li><li>Final Exam</li></ul>

MURP SLOs	URP6131 Course SLOs	Assessment Methods
<b>ensuring equitable and inclusive decision-making.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Situate the planning process within the larger development process framework</li> <li>• Defend the role of planning and public participation in citizenship and good governance</li> </ul>	
<b>Skills &amp; Tools for Planning Practice: Apply knowledge to perform tasks required in the practice of planning; Evaluate methods of planning processes and community and stakeholder engagement; Analyze aspects of plan creation and implementation.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize basic planning techniques to analyze and evaluate city plans and their outcomes</li> <li>• Develop staff reports and planning testimony from submitted planning applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class participation</li> <li>• Planning Board Meeting</li> <li>• Case Briefs</li> <li>• Statutory Analysis</li> <li>• Regulatory Project</li> <li>• Leadership and Communication assignment</li> </ul>
<b>Professional, Communication, and Leadership Skills: Ability to work in teams; professional leadership in the planning context; written, oral, and graphic communication.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with peers and professionals using planning terminology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and Communication assignment</li> <li>• Planning Board Meeting</li> <li>• Class participation</li> </ul>

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:** Through new knowledge and new experiences, we can develop new ways of seeing. Students and instructors are co-producers of knowledge and together we can create new understanding.

**EXPECTATIONS:** Students can expect from me: enthusiasm for the course and the field of planning, engaging lectures, application of knowledge through classroom activities and

fieldwork, organized and neat course materials, and availability to meet outside of class. I expect students to approach the course with enthusiasm and an open mind. I also expect students to come to class prepared to actively participate in our class discussions and activities. The University standard is for students to expect to study at least 3 hours for each credit hour. For example, URP6131 is a 3-credit course. Therefore, you should expect to study 9 hours per week outside of class.

**FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES:** The first week of class during the drop/add period will consist of an introduction to the course. Please carefully read the syllabus and complete the Syllabus Quiz.

**STUDENT WORK:** The Department of Urban and Regional Planning reserves the right to retain any student work completed in the curriculum for accreditation purposes.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:** This course is based on lectures, discussion of assigned readings, viewing of multi-media materials, activities during and outside of class, and student research and writing outside of class. Class format will combine discussions, lectures, multi-media activities, practice-based activities, electronic communications, and assignments. We may also have guest lecturers. Students should take notes for lectures, guest speakers, and videos, as use of this material will be incorporated into class assignments. My lecture slides will be posted in the corresponding weekly modules on Canvas. My lecture slides are not a substitute for taking adequate notes.

You are expected to come to class on time, do the readings ahead of time, be prepared to discuss them, be an active listener, and participate regularly. Your participation will contribute to the learning of your fellow classmates. Sleeping, texting, being online without permission, or otherwise disengaged or disrespectful behavior will affect your class participation grade significantly.

If there are issues, ideas, or readings that you want to bring into the course, please share. You are encouraged to invest some of your time into finding relevant materials of interest and leading discussion on those new ideas.

#### **COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:**

**Canvas:** 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. Readings and changes to the syllabus will be posted on Canvas. 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.

**Email:** 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.

Professional, courteous standards for all emails and discussions includes:

- Descriptive subject line
- Address the reader using proper title and name spelling (Dr. Dedenbach or Dr. D)
- Body of the email should be concise but have sufficient detail
- Give a respectful salutation (e.g., thank you, sincerely, respectfully)
- Minimize textspeak (e.g., OMG, WTH, IMO)

**Netiquette:** 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 POLICIES

**PERSONAL CONDUCT POLICY:** Above all else, the classroom is a place of respect for people and ideas. You are expected to treat your fellow classmates, the instructor, guests, and others with respect and politeness. Please be on time and prepared to share your informed questions, impressions, and interpretations of that day's reading materials. If you need to leave class early, please let me know ahead of time. We will take a break in the middle of the two-hour block. Students engaging in disruptive behavior, including using their electronic devices for any non-class uses, will be asked to leave the class and will be marked absent for the day. Cell phones must be silenced and stowed away. Unless instructed to do otherwise, you should refrain from using your laptop during class. We will have in-class assignments where you will use your laptop, and I will clearly notify you of these opportunities. If you need to take notes of the lectures, please bring pen/pencil and paper to class.

**AI POLICY:** The learning that takes place in this course requires your unique perspective and human experience. Use of AI would make it harder to evaluate your work. It is not permitted to use any generative AI tools in this course, and the use of AI will be treated as an academic integrity issue.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** **Attendance is mandatory and is part of your class grade.** Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. After class, attendance will be entered into Canvas.

**Absences:** There are two types of absences – excused and unexcused. Absences for reasons of illnesses, religious holidays, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements, military obligations, court-imposed legal obligations, or participation in official university activities, as described in the Graduate Catalog are excused. Please inform me of your absence

as soon as possible and be prepared to provide appropriate documentation. Students are expected to follow UF's Attendance Policies and procedures published in the Academic Regulations of the Graduate Catalog. You are responsible for contacting a classmate to obtain notes on the materials covered. If you encounter an emergency or illness that may cause a prolonged absence, you should contact the Dean of Students Office (202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261) for assistance.

**Tardiness:** Consistent tardiness (or leaving early) will affect your attendance and class participation evaluation dramatically. When you arrive more than 10 minutes late without explanation or leave early without prior approval, I consider that a missed class.

**ASSIGNMENT POLICY:** Assignment due dates are posted on Canvas at the beginning of the semester. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY THE POSTED DUE DATES IN CANVAS.** Assignments must be submitted by posting on Canvas. ***A points reduction of 10% per day will be assessed for late work.*** **It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignments have been successfully uploaded to Canvas.** See the Note on Computer or Canvas Problems below.

**Notice:** Certain activities require attendance at events that occur outside of our normal class meeting time. **Review the schedule carefully.** If you have valid reasons for being unable to attend these activities (e.g., work, another class), then it is your responsibility to inform me of the conflict at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you know of the conflict. Accommodations for alternate assignments may only be made in advance of an assignment.

**MAKE-UP/ASSIGNMENT EXTENSION POLICY:** Students that miss deadlines for acceptable reasons pursuant to UF Academic Policy will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered during absence from class or inability to engage in class activities. Scheduling make-up work is the responsibility of the student.

**USABILITY AND DESIGN:** I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made. I am always happy to consider creative solutions if they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity. I welcome feedback that will assist me in improving the usability and experience for all students.

**GROUP WORK POLICY:** There are two types of assignments in this course – individual and group. Design professions have a long history of collaborative, group-based work (such as charrettes), and individual work completed in a group setting (such as studios). As planners, we often work in multidisciplinary groups. For group assignments, you are expected to: Be a good team member. Be on time, be respectful. Be responsive with group communication. In addition, everyone is expected to participate and contribute equally to complete the

assignment. If there are problems with group dynamics or participation/effort levels, please come and talk to me.

**COMPUTER OR CANVAS PROBLEMS POLICY:** If you have computer or Canvas problems that prevent you from submitting an assignment, you may 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 away this weekend and left my computer behind." "I went to [insert your location here] and there was no internet connection." "My [insert relationship here] 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, if needed. Students will not be penalized for system or network outages.

## UF ACADEMIC POLICIES & RESOURCES

Please access the following link for up-to-date UF academic policies and resources:

<https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>

**MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FEE:** None

## GRADING

Grades will be based on evidence that students have completed assigned reading, completed all assignments, and completed class activities throughout the semester. All completed tasks will be evaluated based on content, critical thinking, and communication. Details of each assignment, including rubrics, are posted on the Canvas site.

An "A" grade requires following the instructions completely, demonstrating a solid understanding of the course topics, active participation in the course, organized and sufficient writing and presentation, and timely submittals.

A "B" grade is basically sound, but there is a minor deficiency in one of the above areas.

A "C" grade or lower has significant deficiencies in one or more of the above areas.

Information on current UF grading policies may be found at: [Grades and Grading Policies](#)

URP 6131 is part of the core MURP curriculum. A minimum grade of C is required for graduate and MURP credit. Letter grades of C-, D+, D, D- or E are not considered passing at the graduate level.

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: 1,000

Assignments	Points	Approx. % of Total Grade
<b>Attendance &amp; Active Participation</b>	200	20%
<b>Regulatory Project</b>	100	10%
<b>Planning Board Meeting</b>	100	10%
<b>Leadership and Communication Assignment</b>	50	5%
<b>Case Briefs</b>	150	15%
<b>Statutory Analysis</b>	50	50%
<b>Final Exam</b>	250	25%
<b>Total</b>	1,000	100%

**URP6131 GRADING SCALE:** All grades will be posted directly into the Canvas gradebook. Any discrepancies with points displayed in the gradebook should be pointed out to me. There is no curve for this course and grades will not be rounded up.

Points	Grade
940 – 1000	A
900 – 939	A-
870 – 899	B+
840 – 869	B
800 – 839	B-
770 – 799	C+
740 – 769	C
700 – 739	C-
670 – 699	D+
640 – 669	D
600 - 639	D-
Below 600	E

## DESCRIPTION OF GRADED WORK

**ATTENDANCE AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION:** Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each discussion class and recorded in the Canvas gradebook. Please refer to the attendance policy above for more information about excused absences. A participant shows evidence of having done the assigned reading before each class, consistently offers thoughtful points and questions for discussion, and listens considerately to other discussants.

- **Preparation:** You are expected to come prepared for each class by completing all assigned readings/videos. To help you prepare for discussion, consider the weekly objectives and questions.
- **Contribution to class discussion:** You are also expected to share your ideas (and questions!) during class discussions. Consistent, thoughtful and informed contributions will be rewarded.
- **'Participation days':** There will also be a few days (2-3) when you are asked to do very specific preparation + participation. For example: You will be asked to review a selected text, highlight specific features & share your findings in class. You will also be asked to give thoughtful feedback to 1-2 peers when they present their work in class.
- **Collegiality:** Basic classroom courtesy and collegiality are expected. Please give others your full attention and be respectful of their opinions (polite disagreement is fine but no insults). Cell phones must be silenced and stowed away. Unless instructed to do otherwise, you should

refrain from using your laptop during class. We will have in-class assignments where you will use your laptop, and I will clearly notify you of these opportunities.

**REGULATORY PROJECT:** Planners must be able to work within a regulatory context. In this exercise, you will complete an analysis of land use policy, zoning regulations, and development regulations pertaining to a specific piece of property. You will learn to read and interpret land use policies and regulations, determine the appropriate regulations governing land uses, and define the applicable planning process for a specific use.

**STATUTORY ANALYSIS:** Court decisions often arise in response or a challenge to a land use issue. The Court's ruling, in turn, often leads to a demand for legislative action: a new statute or law. This occurs on both the local and state level, and sometimes on a federal (Congressional) level. The 2026 Florida Legislative Session will begin on January 13, 2026, and adjourn on Friday, March 13, 2026. We will follow several bills that could amend regulations that affect planning. In this assignment, you will be tasked to review and analyze an assigned bill. You will learn how to research the legislative history, understand the issues the legislation is attempting to address, and determine where the statute (or the amendment to an existing statute) fits within the structure of Florida land use and planning laws.

**PLANNING BOARD MEETING:** Most planners will interact with appointed and elected boards on planning-related applications and projects. In this assignment, you will attend one of the City of Gainesville Plan Board or Alachua County Planning Commission meetings in January or February. Before the meeting, you will read the meeting's agenda and summarize the agenda components. Then, you will attend the meeting. You will pay special attention to the public hearing process. After the meeting, you will analyze a Staff Report or Memorandum from that meeting. You will be expected to do an in-depth analysis of how the public hearing was influenced or affected by the Staff Report (if at all) and explain what role the Staff Report and staff's recommendations played in the outcome.

**LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION ASSIGNMENT:** Students will analyze a real land use planning conflict involving policy, law, and competing stakeholder interests (e.g., rezoning, housing density, environmental protection, infrastructure siting, historic preservation, or growth management). Students will assume the role of a professional planner tasked with leading a contentious process toward resolution. The assignment has three integrated components: 1) Leadership Analysis; 2) Negotiation Strategy Memorandum; and 3) Communication & Reflection Brief.

**CASE BRIEFS:** One of the key learning objectives of this course is to understand how court decisions guide planners and public officials in making land use and planning decisions. In this assignment, you will learn how to look up and review a published court opinion and evaluate how the decision impacted land use planning procedures. You will be provided a list of 19

essential court cases. You will provide a case brief for each. A case brief is a written summary of the case in your own words.

**FINAL EXAM:** The final exam consists of your responses to three essay questions: Two required questions and a third essay question from a list of choices. Your essays (min. 500 words each) will follow the traditional analytical essay format of introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. Analytical essays go beyond simple summary and description. They offer a critical examination and interpretation, often presenting an argument or interpretation supported by evidence and analysis. Remember that we are looking for critical thinking and originality in your responses as well.

#### **STUDY AND SUCCESS TIPS:**

- Read the material before you come to class. Take notes. Interact with your notes and materials early and often.
- Engage your classmates and study as actively as possible.
- Do not fall behind or procrastinate your studies. You cannot cram the night before and expect to do well.
- Check Canvas announcements/emails daily. I will post important and helpful information as announcements or emails.
- Have a positive attitude! Planning is an exciting and dynamic profession! You are learning knowledge and skills that will help you be a more engaged member of your planning community.

#### **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

##### **FINAL EXAM: DUE APRIL 26TH**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Module</b>	<b>Readings &amp; Assignments</b>	
January 15	Course Introduction	<b>Readings:</b> The Syllabus Kousoulas Ch. 1 [13 pages] <b>Assignment:</b> Syllabus Quiz	
January 20 & 22	Constitution and Land Use Controls	<b>Readings:</b> Jurgensmeyer Ch. 10 [Sections I, II, III, and IV] Levine Ch. 1 [21 pages] Fisher Ch. 1 and 5 [52 pages]	
January 27 & 29	Constitution and Land Use Controls	<b>Readings:</b> Jurgensmeyer Ch. 10 [Sections V, VI, and VIII] Levine Ch. 2 and 3 [31 pages]	

Date	Module	Readings & Assignments	
February 3 & 5	Comprehensive Plans and the Planning Process	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 2 Rouse and Piro, Part 1 [52 pages]
February 10 & 12	Comprehensive Plans and the Planning Process	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 9 Rouse and Piro, Chapters 7 and 8 [44 pages] Kousoulas Ch. 2 [87 pages] Fisher Ch. 2 and 3 [33 pages]
February 17 & 19	Control of Land Use by Zoning	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 3 Fisher Ch. 9 [24 pages] Rouse and Piro, Chapter 13 [17 pages] Levine Ch. 4 [19 pages]
February 24 & 26	Control of Land Use by Zoning	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 4 Levine Ch. 5 [21 pages]
March 3 & 5	Control of Land Use by Zoning	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 6 Kousoulas Ch. 3 [84 pages]
March 10 & 12	The Zoning Process	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 5 Levine Ch. 6, 7, and 8 [39 pages] Rouse and Piro, Chapter 16 [10 pages]
Week of March 16		<b>No classes: Spring Break!!!</b>	
March 24 & 26	Subdivision Controls and PUDs	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 7 Levine Ch. 9 [16 pages]
March 31 & April 2	Aesthetics	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 12
April 7 & 9	Agricultural Land Protection & Preservation	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 13 and 14
April 14 & 16	Regulation and Protection of Environmentally Sensitive Lands	<b>Readings:</b>	Jurgensmeyer Ch. 11 Rouse and Piro, Chapter 6 [21 pages]
April 21	Last Week	<b>UF Reading Days: 4/23 and 4/24</b>	
Finals Week	Final Exam	<b>Final Exam due April 26<sup>th</sup></b>	

**Disclaimer:** This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected. Please refer to the course Canvas site for updated course plans.