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## GEOG 579.01: Graduate Seminar in Planning

Sarah J. Halvorson

*University of Montana - Missoula*, [sarah.halvorson@umontana.edu](mailto:sarah.halvorson@umontana.edu)

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**GEOGRAPHY 579: GRADUATE SEMINAR IN PLANNING**  
**Tuesday, 6:10-9:00 p.m., Social Sciences 262**

**Instructor:**

Sarah J. Halvorson  
Office: Social Sciences Building 211  
Phone Number: (406) 243-2793  
E-mail: sjhalvor@selway.umt.edu  
Office Hours: TR 12:30-2:30

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The purpose of this course is to explore contemporary perspectives on the nature of land-use planning, its historical development, its significance as an institution and profession, the processes by which it is carried out, and the ethics and role of the planner. This is a core course for the Planning emphasis within the Geography M.A. Program. The place of this course in this program is to develop a critical understanding of the constantly evolving issues and perspectives that underlie planning activity and thought. This course provides students with an appreciation of the intellectual roots of the planning field as well as the basic theoretical and conceptual tools necessary to enter the inevitable debates regarding how planning should be accomplished and in which directions the field should move.

The primary focus of the course is planning in the rural and mountain community contexts, however, regional and international dimensions of planning will also receive some attention. We cannot ignore the fact that the evolution and development of rural planning in America and beyond has been based to a large degree on planning approaches and techniques formulated for applications in urban planning environments. These urban planning approaches have sometimes been inadequate to address or respond to the variety of economic, cultural, environmental, and demographic situations which characterize rural places. Some of the recent developments that are reshaping the course of rural and community planning practice and thought include, but are not limited to: one, shifts in rural population dynamics; two, economic restructuring in response to the global economy; three, rapid technological changes; four, landscape fragmentation; five, increasing participation of community and citizen involvement; and six, a widening acceptance of the concept of sustainability and sustainable planning strategies.

**COURSE READINGS**

In addition to readings on reserve or on-line, the following texts are required:

Platt, Rutherford. 1995. Land Use and Society: Geography, Law, and Public Policy (Revised edition). Washington, DC: Island Press.

Wright, John B. 1998. Montana Ghost Dance: Essays on Land and Life. Austin: University of Texas.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. Your Perspective on Planning (Due September 10)**

Prepare a short (two-page) paper outlining your initial views of planning. In formulating your position on planning as you would hope to practice it, consider these questions: What is planning? What is a plan? Why do we plan? What is the planner's role in society? To whom does the planner answer? In whose interests does the planner work?

### **2. Lead Discussion of a Reading**

During one of our class meetings, you will be the lead discussant of a course reading that has been assigned to you.

### **3. Term Project**

As part of the requirements for this class you are expected to prepare a 15-page (minimum) research paper on a selected topic directly relevant to material covered in the course. The topic is purposefully not specified at the outset but open-ended in order to accommodate your particular interests. In the paper you should describe, analyze, and critically evaluate the topic. You should also frame out the theoretical and historical contexts and your own original thoughts as you question the assumptions which others have made in addressing the topic. You will be expected to submit your paper for peer review to two colleagues in the class before turning in the final draft for a grade.

Some examples of suitable topics include:

- An analysis of change or continuity over time of the physical and social space of a specific neighborhood, rural community, or region.
- An examination of one specific planning policy, strategy or process with reference to physical, social, and spatial outcomes or impacts.
- An analysis of the cultural and social history and geography of a specific group in a community or region as defined by gender, race, ethnicity, health status, religious affiliation, etc. (settlement patterns, specific needs, spaces utilized).
- Examination of the history, planning, and development of one specific urban/rural artifact or public space, e.g., playground, historic district, affordable housing development, infill project, river front, open space, greenway, bike/trail system, sanctuary, etc.

Here are some steps to follow as you carry out this project:

#### Step 1: Pick a topic and begin initial research

You are expected to explore the availability and accessibility of different types of materials, e.g.:

- a. The historic built environment itself;
- b. Maps, plans, aerial photos, historic photographs;

- c. Oral history and interviews with users, builders, architects, planners, activists;
- d. Documents such as surveys, reports, and archival records;
- e. Secondary sources such as books, articles, bibliographies, guides

Step 2: Prepare Research Topic Prospectus

On October 15 you will submit a 2-3 page research topic prospectus that describes your research topic and scope and outlines the basic sections of the paper with a brief description of their content. Along with this outline, you should also submit: a brief summary of your research methodology, the primary and secondary sources you plan to draw upon in your paper, the bibliographic database search results, and a preliminary bibliography.

Step 3: Research and Write First Draft

Step 4: Ask Two Colleagues to Critique Your Draft Paper

When you have completed your first draft of the research paper, have two colleagues in the seminar read and critique your paper. Each of the reviewers will be responsible for answering a set of questions as they critique your research.

Step 5. Rebuttal of Critiques

On another page, state whether the suggestions from the critics would improve your paper. That is, do you agree with the criticisms, and how would you change your paper to address these suggestions and/or recommendations. Revise your first draft with these suggestions in mind.

Step 6. Submit the Final Draft of Term Paper

The peer review comments and your rebuttal must be attached to your paper. The final papers will be due on the last day of class, December 10.

**4. Class Presentation of Term Project**

You will be expected to give a presentation of your paper in the style of a professional conference. The presentation should be accompanied by visual documentation which could include Power Point, slides, brief video, and/or overheads. Student presentations will begin on November 26.

**5. Class Participation**

As is appropriate for a graduate level experience, full participation in class discussion is expected. You should come to class prepared to raise interesting questions and to respond to guest and student presentations and planning board meetings.

**EVALUATION**

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Short Paper           | 5%  |
| Readings presentation | 10% |
| Term Paper            | 50% |
| Presentation of Paper | 25% |
| Participation         | 10% |

## SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### **Week 1 (September 3)**

Introductory Comments and Overview; Geographical Landscapes and Their Uses

*Reading:* Platt Part I and Riebsame et al.'s Atlas of the New West: Portrait of a Changing Region

### **Week 2 (September 10)**

Research Workshop at the Mansfield Library led by Michelle Millet

*Assignment: Short Paper Due*

### **Week 3 (September 17)**

Planning Philosophies, Ideologies, and Traditions; Attend Missoula Planning Board Meeting at City Council Chambers, 7:30 p.m. See the Office of Planning and Grants web site for meeting agendas (<http://www.co.missoula.mt.us/OPG/opgweb> OR <ftp://www.co.missoula.mt.us/ljordan/Agendas/ConsolidatedPlanningBoard/2002> )

*Reading:* Platt Part II

### **Week 4 (September 24)**

Land Use Interventions and Reinventions: Policies, Processes and Procedures

*Readings:* Platt Part III

*Event:* “Rocky Mountain Summit: Sustaining Ecosystems and their People”  
Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish, September 22-26  
<http://www.cares.missouri.edu/rms2002/index.html>

### **Week 5 (October 1)**

‘Radical’ Planning: Mathis Wackernagel, co-author of Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth, “Lighten Up: Getting Serious About Sustainability With the Ecological Footprint,” Gallagher 123, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

*Readings:* Platt Part IV

*Event:* Montana Association of Planners Conference, Whitefish, October 2-4

### **Week 6 (October 8)**

Tim Davis, Montana Smart Growth Coalition, “Thriving Communities in the Big Sky: Making Montana's Smart Growth Future a Reality,” Gallagher 123, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

*Readings:* The 2001 State of Growth in Montana and the APA Montana Study, both available at [www.mtsmartgrowth.org](http://www.mtsmartgrowth.org)

### **Week 7 (October 15)**

Roles and Ethics of Planners I; Attend Missoula Planning Board Meeting in City Council Chambers, 7:30 p.m.

*Readings:* Wright Preface and pp. 1-103

*Assignment: Research Topic Prospectus Due*

**Week 8 (October 22)**

Roles and Ethics of Planners II

*Readings:* Wright pp. 104-end

**Week 9 (October 29)**

Bob Giordano, FreeCycles/Missoula Institute for Sustainable Transportation, “Moving Missoula: Models for Achieving Sustainable Transportation,” Gallagher 123, 7-9:00 p.m.

*Readings:* TBA

**Week 10 (November 5)**

Planning as Social Learning; Research Project Consultations

*Readings:* David Orr’s The Nature of Design: Ecology, Culture, and Human Intention (2002)

*Event:* David Orr, Oberlin College, “Designing a World that Works,” **November 7**, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

**Week 11 (November 12)**

Emerging Perspectives on Planning: Women, Children, Minorities, Indigenous Communities

*Readings:* On Reserve

**Week 12 (November 19)**

Tom Elliot, rancher, Lazy S Land & Livestock LLC and the Community Alliance for Interdependent AgriCulture, “Sex, Goats and Desolation: Transforming Your Relationship with Agriculture, Community and Local Economics,” Gallagher 123, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

*Readings:* On Reserve

*Event:* Big Sky or Big Sprawl 3 Conference put on by the Alternative Energy Resources Organization (AERO) and the Montana Smart Growth Coalition, November 22, Helena

**Week 13 (November 26)**

Student Presentations

**Week 14 (December 3)**

Student Presentations

**Week 15 (December 10)**

Student Presentations; *Final Drafts of Term Projects Due*

**Week 16 (December 17)**

Student Presentations; Course Wrap-up and Evaluation