

**Syllabus  
Land Use Planning  
UAP 5304**

**Alexandria Center  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Urban Affairs and Planning**

**CLASS LOCATION:**

Virginia Tech Alexandria Center  
1021 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA

**MEETING TIMES:**

Thursdays, 4:15 - 6:45 p.m.  
August 23 – November 29, 2007

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**INSTRUCTOR:**

Shelley S. Mastran Ph.D., [shellmast@comcast.net](mailto:shellmast@comcast.net)

Office Hours: Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, 2:00 – 4:00 or by appointment.  
Office: 1021 Prince Street, Room 228  
Phone: 703-318-0276 (O), 703-927-4584 (c)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course deals with the basic concepts, principles, strategies, and tools of local-level urban land use planning. The focus is on the real-world planning process and implementation. We will consider information requirements for planning, policy considerations, environmental analysis, residential and non-residential land use needs, and a range of planning tools and put them into practice through a series of real-world exercises. The class will include at least two field trips.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this course are to:

- Understand the general local and regional comprehensive planning process
- Appreciate the administrative and political aspects of plan making
- Understand the importance of natural resources as the basis for comprehensive planning
- Understand the basic strategies for accommodating residential population growth and non-residential employment
- Appreciate the role of urban design in comprehensive planning
- Learn to collaborate in working with land use planning issues

- Understand the relationship among the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, and other types of ordinances
- Understand what constitutes a good comprehensive plan

**SCHEDULE:**

August 23 – Introduction – Conceptual Framework for Land Use Planning

August 30 – The Natural Resource Base; Land Suitability Analysis

September 6 – No Class

September 13 – Population and Housing

September 20 – Land Use and Economics; Introduction to North Alexandria

September 27 – No Class

October 4 – Field Trip (North Alexandria)

October 11 – Infrastructure and Community Facilities

October 18 – Land Use Goals and Design; Land Classification

October 25 – Planning for Residential Use

October 27 – Field Trip (Reston)

November 1 – Planning for Non-Residential Use

November 8 – Special Planning Tools: Special Ordinances; Historic Preservation; Regulating Aesthetics

November 15 – Planning and Design Exercise

November 22 – Thanksgiving Holiday

November 29 - Final Presentations

December 9 – Final Papers Due

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:**

The course will involve a number of class projects, an interim exam, and a final short paper and presentation.

Grades will be computed on the following basis:

- Class projects – 50%
- Final paper and presentation – 40%
- Class participation – 10%

## **LATENESS POLICY**

For every day (from 2 to 24 hours) an assignment is turned in late, your paper will drop one letter grade, unless you have received my permission for lateness due to extraordinary circumstances.

## **GRADUATE HONOR CODE:**

The tenets of the Virginia Tech Graduate Honor Code will be strictly enforced in this course, and all assignments shall be subject to the stipulations of the Graduate Honor Code as outlined in the 2006-2007 Graduate Catalog. For more information on the Graduate Honor Code, please refer to the GHS Constitution, located online at <http://fbox.vt.edu/studentinfo/gradhonor>. Please contact the instructor immediately if you have questions.

## **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Students with special needs or circumstances are encouraged to meet with the instructor after the first class or a.s.a.p. Please do not wait until later in the semester. In all cases, please feel free to contact the instructor, should you have any questions.

## **READING MATERIALS:**

There is one required textbook for the course:

Berke, Philip R., David R. Godschalk, and Edward J. Kaiser, with Daniel A. Rodriguez, *Urban Land Use Planning* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.), Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006.

Other texts are recommended:

Hoch, Charles J. (ed.), *The Practice of Local Government Planning*, Washington, D.C.: International City/County Management Association, 2000.

Kelly, Eric Damian and Barbara Becker, *Community Planning: An Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan*, Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2000.

Randolph, John, *Environmental Land Use Planning and Management*, Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2004.