CMP & UP 892
Research Seminar in Construction Management & Planning
Fall 2013

Instructor: Dr. Sinem Korkmaz
201D Human Ecology Bldg., 517-353-3252, Email: korkmaz@msu.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 1:00 – 3:00 PM
Credits: 2

Meeting Time and Location:
Mondays 3:00 – 4:50 PM
209 Human Ecology Building
Course Web Site: https://angel.msu.edu

Course Description:
This course aims to expose construction management (CM) and urban planning (URP) graduate students to the concept of research and possible areas, topics, and methods of research. The course will familiarize the students with the interest areas and research backgrounds of graduate faculty members in the CM and URP within the School of Planning, Design, and Construction (SPDC). The students will learn about various resources of information, ethics, data collection and analysis methods, and effective writing/oral communication skills for academic research.

Course Objectives:
The goals of this course are to introduce the students to the concept of research, give them the skills to effectively analyze and understand research products such as reports, papers, theses, and posters as the consumers of research, and build a strong basis for producing successful graduate research. The expected student learning outcomes of the course are:
• Understanding of the concept of research and specific topics in the areas of CM and URP;
• Understanding of the elements of research design;
• Familiarity with the ethics and methods to successfully carry out research projects;
• Develop effective search and analytical evaluation skills of the published literature;
• Ability to analyze research products (e.g., reports, proposals, papers, and theses);
• Knowledge basis to conduct research projects that can contribute to science;
• Skills to effectively communicate written and verbal presentation of academic materials.

Texts:
4. Lecture notes and assignments will be handed out in the class or will be posted on the course site on ANGEL.

References:

Writing:
This course places a special emphasis on improving the student writing. A literature review paper, and a report will be assigned to the students to reinforce course concepts and their writing skills. The instructor will look for critical thinking (e.g. organization and content), use of language, relevance to the topic, and the quality of used references in writing evaluation. There are many resources available that can help improve writing quality. Some of those resources are listed under the references.

Attendance Policy:
Students should attend all classes. Students are encouraged to participate in the class discussion and ask questions. If the student misses a class, he/she should ask a friend to pick up your copy of the handout and other announcements. The instructor does not keep extra copies of the handouts.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:
Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a disability specialist, call 353-9642 (voice), 355-1293 (TTY), or visit MyProfile.rcpd.msu.edu.

Religious Observance
If a student wishes to be absent from class to observe a religious holiday, the student must make arrangements with the instructor at least one full week in advance of the class to be missed.

Course Guidelines:
• Assignments will be given based on course material and readings.
• In general, if you expect to be delayed in coming to class, you must inform the instructor beforehand of your particular need and situation.
• The due date for all submittals will be firm. An electronic copy of each submittal will be submitted on the ANGEL site of the course in the assigned folders before the start of class on the due date. Following penalty system will apply to delays:
  a. Each 24 hours delay after the due date and time: - 20%;
  b. Submission after the due time will be considered as one-day delay;
  c. No submission will be accepted after the graded work is returned to the class.
• Timely submission of all assignments and receiving a minimum success of 75% in the assignment b and c submissions are required in order to pass this course.
• No makeup exam or assignment will be given.
• Since the class policy is no makeup exams and assignments, it is the student’s responsibility to plan ahead to avoid conflicts in advance of the submittal and exam dates. In case of genuine emergency, the students should bring it to the instructor’s notice with appropriate substantiation. Excuses related to minor sickness, preplanned doctor’s appointment, employment, sports, ROTC, student club activities, and other extracurricular activities will not be accepted.
• Any act of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism in the submitted assignments, will result in failing the entire course. See university policies at http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/dishonestyFAQ.html
• Students are encouraged to ask questions about the course material and the assignments’ content at any time during the class, in the instructor’s office hours, and/or via e-mail. It is the
students’ responsibility to comprehend the requirements of the class and the assignments. The instructor will not be responsible for the results of lack of understanding these requirements.

- Students are encouraged to use the ANGEL system if they decide to e-mail a question to the instructor regarding the course material and/or the assignments, so that the other students can also benefit from this dialog.
- ANGEL will be actively used for this course. Students are responsible for keeping track of the announcements, course material, etc. on the ANGEL course website. Therefore, students should enable e-mail forwarding option on their ANGEL settings to receive the course updates in a timely manner.
- As a byproduct of this course, the graduate students are encouraged to get to know each other well and start meeting regularly as a group to present and critique each other’s ideas and interest areas.

**SIRS (Student Instructional Rating System):**

MSU takes seriously the opinion of students in the evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction, and has implemented the SIRS (Student Instructional Rating System) process to gather student feedback. This course utilizes the online SIRS system. You will receive an e-mail sometime during the last two weeks of class asking you to fill out the SIRS online form at your convenience. Please note the final grade for this course will not be accessible on STUINFO for seven days following the University grade submission deadline published by the Office of the Registrar unless the SIRS online form has been filled out. You will have the option in the online SIRS form to decline to participate in the evaluation of the course we hope, however, that you will be willing to give us your frank and constructive feedback so that we may instruct students even better in the future.

**Grading Distribution:**

The final grade in this course will be based on class participation, homework and other assignments. A brief description of the assignments is given below:

- a. Homework Assignments
  1. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Training
  2. Peer Review
  3. Development of a roadmap at graduate school in the form of a presentation
- b. Conducting a literature review: using library resources, referencing, using concept mapping tools, writing skills.
- c. Critical analysis of a research Plan B report or a Plan A / PhD thesis in CM/URP.

The weights of these assignments in final evaluation for the course grade are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Overall</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>4.0: 90% 2.0: 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Homework Assignments</td>
<td>3.5: 85% 1.5: 72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Assignment b</td>
<td>3.0: 80% 1.0: 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Assignment c</td>
<td>2.5: 77.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example Evaluation Guidelines for Homework and Other Assignments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria:</th>
<th>Description:</th>
<th>Assessment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization:</td>
<td>Flow of the ideas, connections, strength of supporting evidences and conclusions.</td>
<td>____ / 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content:</td>
<td>The quality of the presented material.</td>
<td>____ / 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Language:</td>
<td>Punctuation, grammar, spelling, style, and usage.</td>
<td>____ / 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance:</td>
<td>Relevance to the assignment.</td>
<td>____ / 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References:</td>
<td>Quality (good balance of web, journal, etc. resources) and appropriateness.</td>
<td>____ / 10</td>
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Course Outline:
The tentative topics to be covered in this course are given below.

1. Introduction / Why study research methods? (1 class)
2. Science: The way to create and expand knowledge (1 class)
3. Mechanics and Elements of Research (1 class)
   3.1 Ethical Issues
   3.2 How to support your research project through courses and assistance at MSU
   3.3 Elements of Research Design
4. Literature Review (2 classes)
   6.1 Critical Thinking and Organization
   6.2 Search Tools on the Web and in the Library
   6.3 Referencing
   6.4 Idea Generation and Concept Mapping
5. Data Collection and Analysis Methods (2 classes)
   7.1 Types of Research (Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods)
   7.2 Data Collection Methods
   7.3 Survey Methods
   7.4 Handling of Human Subjects
   7.5 Data Analysis Methods (Qualitative, Quantitative, Mixed Methods)
   7.6 Validity and Reliability
6. Academic Writing and Research Project Organization (1 class)
   8.1 Technical Writing
   8.2 Thesis/Proposal and Report Organizations
   8.3 Proposals, Research Reports
   8.4 Journal and Conference Papers
7. Presentations and Oral Communication (2 classes)

Tentative Course Outline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week / Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Activities / Assignments Due / Coming Workshops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (8/28)</td>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 (9/9)</td>
<td>2. Science</td>
<td>! SEPT. 18@ 6 PM – WORKSHOP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 (9/23*)</td>
<td>3. Mechanics &amp; Elements of Research</td>
<td>* Reflections on the workshop / Class Discussion – Ethics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Weeks 5, 7 (9/30*, 10/7**) | 4. Literature Review | *HW a.1 – IRB Training
*Librarian’s visit
! OCT. 16 @ 6 PM – WORKSHOP
**Reflections on the workshop / Class Activity / Peer review |
| Weeks 8, 10 (10/21*, 11/4**) | 5. Data Collection & Analysis Methods | *Assignment b
**HW a.2 – Peer Review
! OCT. 30 @ 6 PM – WORKSHOP
** Reflections on the workshop / Class activity: Paper review |
| Weeks 12 (11/11*) | 7. Academic Writing | * Reflections on the workshop / Class Activity
! NOV. 20 @ 6 PM – WORKSHOP |
| Final Exam Day (12/12*) | Final Report Development | * Assignment c |

! Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Workshops Conducted by the Graduate School at MSU
Location: Room 103 Erickson Hall (the Kiva) - Early Registration to all workshops is required

9/18/2012 - RCR: Being an Early Scholar
10/16/2012 - RCR: Scientific Communications, Rights to Data, and Authorship
10/30/2012 - RCR: Crediting the Works of Others and Avoiding Plagiarism
11/20/2012 - RCR: Record Keeping, Data Management, and Sharing of Information

RCRs Continue in the Spring semester and are required to take RCR certification from the graduate school.