Plan 751 Crn# 77490 (6 cr.)

Planning Practicum Fall 2011

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Saunders Hall Room 119 Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. -11:45 a.m.

Course Description:
Practicum involving six or more students and a faculty member engaging in a planning process. Emphasis on dealing with an immediate set of planning issues. Topic varies. Pre 600, 601 and consent.

Each Practicum produces a final report and/or provides specific clients with planning assistance such as analyses, surveys, design and /or evaluation. Each practicum team is involved in bounding a selected problem, setting its objectives, assessing its own resources, determining the work to be performed, allocating its resources, delivering a product and /or service, and evaluating its effectiveness. The practicum provides a student with an opportunity to bring together multiple planning elements within the context of a real world-problem.

Some practicum produces widely disseminated, published reports, often for specific clients; others, especially those serving community groups, tend to produce analyses, draft testimony, survey and guides. Topic Varies.

The Practicum in General:
A traditional --yet novel--approach to university classroom education is the group practicum. This classroom experience integrates modern educational objectives: “learning community”, “service learning”, “critical thinking”, and “action oriented participatory research”. It is research done by students as part of their academic program.

The planning practicum teaches the planning process by addressing a variety of topics including environmental management and village planning issues, neighborhood visioning, assessment and planning, indigenous and inter-ethnic resource protection and land issues, among others. They involve and engage the community (grass root groups, neighborhoods, and public agencies) in a variety of ways: using surveys, workshops, focus groups, participatory rural appraisal and participatory mapping. Any discipline or field can have such a practicum, but there are some common aspects to strive for.

Key elements of the planning practicum are teamwork, client(s) orientation, and an agreed upon process and product. There are several learning objectives: (a) To be a culminating experience for graduating student who contribute their academic, professional, life knowledge and skills to a real planning project. (b) To learn professional ethics and planning practice by engaging the students in sorting out the needs and the agendas of their clients and of other stakeholders of the project and in attaining the objectives of the AICP Code of Professional Ethics To contribute individually and in sub-groups to an overall team-work managed by the students.
themselves.  (c) To engage in research that addresses a pressing planning issue of a particular community, thus transcending mere service oriented tasks.  (d) To provides the client(s) with a usable process/product that at the same time meets academic requirements and students/faculty learning objectives.

The basic premise is that the class can be structured as an expert team that can offer valuable service to the community.  There are specific conditions for a worthwhile practicum: Match the students’ broad interests (e.g. community planning) and the practicum topic to ensure a degree of compatibility, expertise, and willingness to work effectively.  Contacts the students before the semester starts to assist in identifying the client(s) and negotiate the terms of the practicum (scope of work, resource needed, mutual commitments, and collaborative arrangements with the client and with possible funding sources).  Integrate the clients’ input in the practicum activities and set up collaborative endeavors such as joint workshops, data collection tasks.

Each practicum is unique, but each one brings --literally--the classroom in the community and in the field, engaging people with their knowledge and students with their technical expertise.

The lessons that emerge have implications for instructional innovation, curriculum development, academic institutional support, impact on the community, partnerships, and networking with the community.

In conclusion, the team practicum meets certain needs of higher education research of the community via service learning, immerses the students in intercultural situations; propels them and community representatives to plan for the future; involves non-university people, youth or adults, in a research partnership; and encourages the university to adjust to community calendars and address societal needs.

The Fall 2011 Semester Practicum:

The Fall Semester 2011 project will fit into the following NOAA research project that DURP was able to obtain (Page 4).  Grade is based 50% on individual effort and 50% on group team effort.  Typical work sequence: reconnaissance, data collection, analysis, synthesis and report production to be finalized using the Fall Semester Academic Calendar.  Initial Pertinent references on community resilience, village planning and American Samoa will be provided in class.  The Spring 2011 Planning Practicum tailored the above topic by focusing on the Village of Leone, Tutuila Island.  It produced a report entitled Capacity Building for Community Resilience in American Samoa Providing Planning Tools that Promote Sustainable Ecosystem and Disaster Resilient Practices in Village Level.  A team of 4 graduate students Prof. Foley and Minerbi went to A. Samoa for this field-work.

This Fall Semester a team of 5 will also go to A. Samoa to discuss the Leone Village Report, a draft manual and do field work for the Village of Pago-Pago, Tutuila Island that will be the focus of this second practicum.  The Pago-Pago Village Chiefs at a kava ceremony gave permission and encouragement to do this study in Spring 2011.
Proposed Fall Schedule:

- Sept 5-12 A.S. Trip
- August 15
- September
- October
- November, December 15

Reconnaissance, Data collection, Analysis, Synthesis, Report production

Output Standards

The graduate planning practicum class should help students to address and to learn:

- A pressing planning issue(s)
- To study individually and collaborate to team group work by helping each other, exercise gregarious and leaderships tasks and roles
- To conduct service learning instructional research by providing useful research to clients
- Apply professional ethics and the search for the public interest as outlined by the AICP Code of Conduct.
- To engage in and discharge well a research tasks within the semester time constraint as well as conducting field work or research.
- To produce an useful deliverable or a research report.
NOAA Research Project Synopsis

Capacity Building for Community Resilience: Providing Planning Tools that Promote Sustainable Ecosystem and Disaster Resilient Practices at the Village Level

The purpose of this project is to support NOAA’s mission to “Protect, Restore, and Manage the Use of Coastal and Ocean Resources through an Ecosystem Approach to Management.” This project will focus on American Samoa and explore existing practices and assist in the development of community planning practices that promote community resilience within a sustainable ecosystem framework. The extensive damage to many communities and the ecosystem from the September 2009 Tsunami in American Samoa has highlighted the need to develop planning tools at the local level. The Principal Investigator conducted a training needs assessment for the University of Hawaii National Disaster Preparedness Training Center (NDPTC) and heard from numerous stakeholders in American Samoa that there was a need to build village level planning capacity. In discussions with the Governor, government officials, village mayors and community member the need for developing village level planning capacity was expressed as well as support for the University of Hawaii to initiate a project. The project would be designed to work at multiple levels to assess and develop planning capacities and promote collaboration between communities, government agencies and planners. The project team would work with government officials at the American Samoa Department of Commerce as well as other departments to assess strengths and weaknesses of existing regulations and develop recommendations for revisions. The project would develop and adapt planning tools and community resilience training programs for American Samoa Communities. The Project Team includes Department of Urban and Regional Planning faculty and graduate students. The team would work with the Department’s National Disaster Preparedness Training Center’s efforts to develop courses and the Department’s Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Program in project development and delivery. The team will also collaborate with NOAA’s Pacific Services Center.

The focus will be on American Samoan communities to develop strategies to promote community resilience. The proposed project timeline comprises three years. Faculty and graduate students from the Department of Urban and Regional Planning will first assess traditional practices toward community resilience to disasters and existing regulatory frameworks. During the first year the team will facilitate community meetings and meet with government officials, village leaders and members to identify specific communities as pilots for development of community resilience training. Utilizing existing tools such as the Coastal Community Resilience Guide and relevant planning tools the team will train community members. It will also disseminate lessons learned from other communities in Hawaii and elsewhere to promote community level planning. Guidelines for a village level community resilience course will be disseminated through workshops. During the second year revisions from the workshops will be incorporated into pilots throughout American Samoa communities. Evaluation of course content and delivery mechanisms will take place during the third year. Project products include adaption of planning tools and community resilience course curriculum for American Samoan communities and a final report on lessons learned and policy recommendations.
Capacity Building for Community Resilience:
Providing Planning Tools that Promote Sustainable Ecosystem and Disaster Resilient Practices at the Village Level

With its proximity to the Pacific Ring of Fire, American Samoa and the whole Pacific region experience frequent seismic activities. The concern about its vulnerability increased after the September 2009 Tsunami; whereas cyclones are recurring events.

Death and damage to many communities and the ecosystem highlighted the need to develop planning tools at the local level to reduce the risk to the people and to the place.

“Lutia i Puava a e mapu i Fagalele”
It is important to continuously demonstrate how the precautions we take now will make us stronger in the end.

The 2011 Fall Practicum is part of a 3 year NOAA project to develop community resiliency through enhanced community capacity building in developing and maintaining resilience and hazard mitigation management system using a sustainable ecosystem framework in American Samoa.

Leone and Pago Pago are the pilot villages for community resilience. The practicum will produce a village manual where collaboration with the ASCCC Samoan Studies Institute is also possible. We will organize key materials for a manual on resource management, hazard mitigation and village community development to be utilized in a resilience planning process. This NOAA study will be extended to other communities in the later phases.