Planning, Public Policy, and Social Theory
Fall 2020 Monday 9:50-12:30  34:762:624 (doctoral)/833:624 (policy) /970:624 (planning)

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Office Hours: Wed 9-12, 1-2 and by appointment

Purpose
This is a seminar course to introduce you to theories and assumptions about social theory and
to challenge you to think about how you think. Theory is developed and used for a variety of
purposes. It can help us make sense of the complicated world around us. It can isolate
particular aspects, especially ones that are hard to envision such as structure. Though some
social theories are built on “universal” ideas about human nature or ideas of justice, for
example, other theories emerge as people work together to make sense of how we understand
the world today and what we want it to be like in the future. We will think about where
theories come from and why and we will consider power, politics, structure, difference and how
ways of thinking become institutionalized.

Planning Advisory Board Core Competencies (PABCC)
This course addresses all three of the Planning Advisory Board’s “required components.” Stressed
competencies are highlighted in bold.
1) General knowledge: a) Purpose and meaning of planning; b) Planning theory; e) The Future,
and f) Global Dimensions.
3) Values and Ethics: b) Equity, Diversity and Social Justice, c) Governance and Participation, e)
Growth and Development.

Learning Objectives
1) Introduce you to social theory and ways of thinking about the world (PABCC 1a, b, e, f; 3 b, c, e).
2) Enable you to synthesize these ideas and consider your own in class discussions, critical reflection
papers, and a thoughtful final essay exam (PABCC 2b).

Assessment
Assessment of these learning objectives will be accomplished by:
1) participating in class discussions (learning objectives 1 and 2),
2) completing four critical essays about the class readings (learning objectives 1 and 2), and
3) completing a take home exam essay and final presentation (learning objective 2).

Read and Participate (40%)
Read all material before class meetings and come to class ready to discuss the readings.
Identify a set of discussion topics and add those to our timeline and theme document on
Canvas before/at the start of class. Add to our collective timeline and notes project as you read
each week. If you think about your class preparation and in-class experience as the beginning
of a long term investment, you might find it useful to adopt a note taking strategy with this
long term view in mind. The notes on readings and your thoughts about them will help you prepare for exams, construct a dissertation project, and think about thinking for a lifetime.

**Four Critical Essays (40%)**

Select four class sessions and complete four critical essays of 6 – 10 pages about the readings in each session (one paper for each session). The objective is to think about and reflect on the material. Avoid summarizing the author’s arguments and quoting extensively. Submit your essays on Canvas no later than the Monday following the week you write about. Please do your best to submit all work on time.

**Take Home Final Exam and Class Presentation (20%)**

Reflect on the readings and discussions in a 6-10 page culminating essay. Essays are due before the final class meeting period.

**Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism will result in a grade of F or 0 for the assignment in question. If you have any questions about citing material, refer to an academic citation and style guide or ask me, another faculty member, or a research librarian at one of the University’s libraries. You can learn more about plagiarism and the Rutgers University policy on academic integrity here: [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu)

**Required Readings (purple are available full text from RU library)**


Seminar Schedule and Readings

**September 8. TUESDAY!! Introduction**
What do you want to take away from the course for your work?
How do you craft strategies to learn the material and make it useful to you?

*Recommended*

**September 14. Knowledge, Technology, Power, and Policy**


*Recommended*
MacKenzie, Donald. 2006. *An Engine Not a Camera*
**September 21. Constructing the Subject**


**Recommended**


**September 28. Power, Politics, Policy and Planning**

Flyvberg, Bent. *Rationality and Power*

**Recommended**


**October 5. States and Markets (meet Oct 9th Friday due to Accreditation Site Visit?)**


**Recommended**


Parnell, Susan and Robinson, Susan. 2012. “(Re)theorizing Cities from the Global South: Looking Beyond Neoliberalism.” Urban Geography 33 4:593-617.


October 12. State Regulation

Polanyi, Karl. The Great Transformation pps 136-268

Recommended


Fraser, Nancy. 2014. “Can society be commodities all the way down” Post-Polanyian reflections on capitalist crisis.” Economy and Society 43:541-558.


October 19. Thinking about Intersections


Recommended


October 26. The State


Recommended


**November 2. Democracy, The State and the Public**


**Recommended**


**November 9. Difference, Structural Inequality, and Democracy**


**Recommended**


**November 19. Politics, Policy-Making and the Policy Process**


**Recommended**


November 23. Governance, Power and Powerlessness

Alice O’Connor. Poverty Knowledge

Recommended

November 30. Theory and Practice: Thinking and Knowing

Cruikshank, Barbara. The Will to Empower

Recommended

Recommended

**December 7. Summary**

Summary discussion

**Other Readings You Might Find Helpful**
