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**COURSE OUTLINE:  
Cities and Planning**

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**Lecture:** Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 2:30 – 3:50pm. Cornett Building B129

**Office Hours:** 1 – 2:30pm on Tuesdays and 8:30 – 10:00am on Thursdays. Also available at other times by appointment through Zoom

**Office Location:** David Turpin Building B214 or by appointment through Zoom

**Contact:** [vbarr@uvic.ca](mailto:vbarr@uvic.ca) or [Victoria\\_Barr@telus.net](mailto:Victoria_Barr@telus.net)

**We acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome to GEOG 340 – Cities and Planning! This course will give you a taste of the key components and issues within the planning field in Canada. The emphasis is on real-world examples and practising the skills that planners use every day. While we will explore some theory, I think it's more fun to focus on what is happening in cities and communities today. The readings, lectures, in class discussions, field trips and assignments are meant to help you to get excited about the role of planning in creating a better world. They are also meant to help you see the importance of using critical analysis of current policy and practice, so we can develop an excellent case for strengthening what is going well, while pinpointing what needs to change, and why.

**KEY THEMES:**

- Planning for healthy, sustainable communities
- Equity and social justice
- Governance and power

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**REQUIRED TEXT(S)**

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, a series of readings and videos (mostly community stories and online reports from governments, non-profit organizations, researchers and consultants) will be used. Class readings will be made available on Brightspace a minimum of 3 weeks prior to each lecture.

To do well in this course, it is essential to complete all assigned readings or videos prior to each class. Without that prior knowledge, it will be difficult for you to fully engage in the discussions each class, and it is through those discussions that you are likely to learn the most.

**RECOMMENDED TEXT(S)**

See Brightspace.

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## LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, you will:

- See urban places and spaces in new ways – appreciating that how they got that way is a result of deliberate interventions by a variety of parties over time.
- Understand how housing, transportation, urban design, parks and recreation planning, and other aspects of planning work together to shape each city and the region.
- Have basic knowledge of the different levels of government involved in planning, the tools those governments (and others) use, and the power structures that underlie government decision-making.
- Critically assess urban issues related to planning.

## EVALUATION

Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due Date
Public hearing attendance and critique	20%	October 17, 2025
Analysis of a specific strategy or plan	30%	November 7, 2025
Neighbourhood-based group project	35%	December 5, 2025
Participation – in class and online	15%	ongoing

This course has no final exam. For more details about each assignment, please see Brightspace.

## GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
<b>A+</b> <b>A</b> <b>A-</b>	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	<b>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent</b> performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
<b>B+</b> <b>B</b> <b>B-</b>	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	<b>Very good, good and solid</b> performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
<b>C+</b> <b>C</b>	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	<b>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory.</b> These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
<b>D</b>	1	50-59%	<b>Marginal</b> Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
<b>F</b>	0	0-49%	<b>Unsatisfactory</b> performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
<b>N</b>	0	0-49%	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

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## GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

- Geography Department website: [uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/](http://uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/)
- Geography Department Chair: [geogchair@uvic.ca](mailto:geogchair@uvic.ca)
- Geography Undergraduate Advising: [geogadvising@uvic.ca](mailto:geogadvising@uvic.ca)

## BRIGHTSPACE

Brightspace will be used in this class. There you will find all readings, lecture slides, assignment details, information about field trips and more. Please check it often!

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## POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

13-week classes move very quickly, and late work makes it hard to keep up and engage with your peers. As a result, late assignments will be accepted for up to 1 week after the due date with a 10% penalty (no questions asked/ no extension needed).

I know many unexpected things can happen and life can throw unexpected curves. If you are behind in the course or something happens that puts you behind/ you need an extension, please contact me immediately. If you need an extension, email me and together we will develop a new workplan.

After one week, I will not accept late work in this course unless it was agreed upon in email as part of an individualized workplan.

## POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

Participation in this course is key and is worth 15% of your final grade. I will be taking attendance on a regular basis. In each class we will be completing tasks, discussions, and activities that add to your understanding of the content, so it is essential that you are there. In addition, you will sometimes lead small group activities in class and reflect on that experience. We will use Brightspace for the class readings/videos, preparing for each class with some questions to consider, and learning more about the assignments. I will not be recording lectures but will provide my slides through Brightspace after each class.

I aim for this class to be so fun and interesting that you always want to attend! To that end, we will have guest speakers (all practicing planners), two local field trips, and activities in class.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on academic integrity, including policies on **cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of an editor, multiple submission**, and **aiding others to cheat**.

**Policy on Academic Integrity:** [web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html](http://web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html)

If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For more information, see [uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php](http://uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php). AI tools may be used for brainstorming and research, but not for generating final submissions. Students must cite any AI-assisted work and are responsible for the quality of their final work. We will discuss this more fully in class.

## ACCESSIBILITY

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a documented disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible ([uvic.ca/services/cal/](http://uvic.ca/services/cal/)). The CAL staff is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

## **POSITIVITY AND SAFETY**

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

## **SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE RESOURCE OFFICE (SVRO)**

If you have been directly or indirectly impacted by sexualized violence, reach out to the SVRO for information, advice, resolution options (restorative and disciplinary) as well as support options and referrals. The SVRO is both survivor-centred and trauma-informed in their approach.

[eqhr01@uvic.ca](mailto:eqhr01@uvic.ca)

Sedgewick C Wing

[www.uvic.ca/svp](http://www.uvic.ca/svp)

## **EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS (EQHR)**

UVic Equity and Human Rights is a resource for students, staff and faculty who have experienced discrimination and harassment and are looking for informal and formal resolution options as well as advice, coaching and/or education. We are available for confidential consultations so that you can ask questions and learn your options.

[eqhr01@uvic.ca](mailto:eqhr01@uvic.ca)

Sedgewick C Wing

[www.uvic.ca/equity](http://www.uvic.ca/equity)

## **RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

The University of Victoria offers a number of resources to support international students as they pursue their studies. UVic's [International Centre for Students](#) is the primary office supporting international students on campus at the university-wide level and provides various supportive program through the [UVic Global Community Initiative](#), including a Mentorship Program and Conversation Partner Program. For academic advising-related questions, students in the Geography Department are also encouraged to meet with the Geography Undergraduate Advisor ([geogadvising@uvic.ca](mailto:geogadvising@uvic.ca)) as well as an academic advisor in the [Academic Advising Centre](#) early in their studies to help map out a plan to declare a major and complete university program requirements. Other resources include the [Centre for Academic Communication](#) and the [Math and Stats Assistance Centre](#). International students are also encouraged to contact the International Student Liaison in Geography (Prof. CindyAnn Rose-Redwood, [cindyann@uvic.ca](mailto:cindyann@uvic.ca)), who can assist in making connections with other international and domestic students in the Geography Department and share opportunities for getting involved in departmental activities more broadly.

## **COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY (CES)**

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed online and

can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please think about this important activity during the course.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR** **[\*\* indicates a guest speaker]**

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS COVERED IN CLASS
1	Wednesday September 3	Introductions + review syllabus What is planning?
2	Tuesday September 9	Brief history of planning
	Wednesday September 10	What are the tools of planning in BC?
3	Tuesday September 16	Planning for healthy communities
	Wednesday September 17	Equity and social justice in planning**
<b>September 16<sup>th</sup>:</b> Last day for 100% reduction of second term fees for dropped courses		
<b>September 19<sup>th</sup>:</b> Last day for adding courses that begin in the second term		
4	Tuesday September 23	Housing policy and practice
	Wednesday September 24	Poverty and homelessness
<b>September 30:</b> National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – no class		
5	Wednesday October 1	Urban (local) field trip
6	Tuesday October 7	Transportation systems – policy and practice
	Wednesday October 8	Equity and mobility**
7	Tuesday October 14	Neighbourhood planning and urban design
	Wednesday October 15	Ethics and professionalism for planners**
8	Tuesday October 21	Food systems
	Wednesday October 22	Poverty and food insecurity
9	Tuesday October 28	Local field trip – Half of the class **
	Wednesday October 29	Local field trip – Other half of the class **
<b>October 31<sup>st</sup>:</b> Last day for withdrawing from full year and second term courses without penalty of failure		
10	Tuesday November 4	Parks and recreation planning
	Wednesday November 5	Climate change – mitigation & adaptation through planning**
11	READING WEEK – NO CLASSES	
12	Tuesday November 18	Community engagement and agency
	Wednesday November 19	Power in planning**
13	Tuesday November 25	Student presentations
	Wednesday November 26	
14	Tuesday December 2	Student presentations
	Wednesday December 3	Last class – review and celebrate!

## DISCLAIMER

The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

### NOTE:

A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

Counselling Services - *Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.* [uvic.ca/services/counselling/](http://uvic.ca/services/counselling/)

Health Services - *University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.* [uvic.ca/services/health/](http://uvic.ca/services/health/)

Centre for Accessible Learning - *The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations* [uvic.ca/services/cal/](http://uvic.ca/services/cal/). *The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.*

Elders' Voices - *The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.* [uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php](http://uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php)