

## **PLAN 540A: OMNIBUS: BECOMING A GOOD SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING PRACTITIONER**

2010W, Term 1, M, 1330-1700, WMAX 150

Credit Hours: 3.0

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### **Course Description:**

Students enter SCARP's masters program with a rich diversity of education, employment and volunteer experiences. Their undergraduate majors may be in the natural, applied or social sciences, or the humanities or the arts. A few already have a masters degree and occasionally a doctorate in a field other than planning. Work and volunteer experiences are often equally varied with some students having been out of school for several years. Most bring some international experience and a few are coming to study in Canada from homes in other countries. The Omnibus is designed to capitalize on the wealth of knowledge, skills and perspectives that students bring to the program, while introducing them to the ever increasing variety of sustainability planning principles, practices and practitioners, and helping each student develop personal learning goals and strategies that meet their individual needs and career ambitions.

### **Learning Objectives:**

Six Primary Learning Objectives

1. To develop a preliminary understanding of planning practice and practitioners.
2. To explore differing perspectives on sustainability planning.
3. To introduce planning models, methods and analysis.
4. To acquire an initial familiarity with governance processes within which sustainability planning and actions take place.
5. To practice communication and interaction skills essential to planning practitioners.
6. To design a personal development strategy.

### **Course Organization:**

A variety of active learning formats will be used to present, discuss and develop ideas and to build communication and interaction skills. There will always be preparatory work

for a class session. When there are presentations by myself or a guest or students they will generally be relatively short and then shift to discussion formats. Much of the time I will be acting as a facilitator and thus modeling for you this critically important skill. I also like to pose questions that stimulate critical thinking and discussion and the creation of imaginative solutions. At times we will use breakout groups to expand the opportunities for involvement in discussion, to open up topics for exploration and to create ideas. They will also be used to provide opportunities to practice the skills and techniques for productive group work including facilitation, recording ideas and reporting results. Frequently we will use examples of the issues addressed by sustainability planning practitioners and place our consideration of them in a particular context. For example: "Assume that you are planning practitioners supporting Vancouver's Mayor. Please identify the criticisms of the City's ecodensity proposal that he should anticipate arising when he speaks in the community and recommend how he should respond to them. You have 30 minutes to generate your suggestions. We will then compare and contrast the proposals created by the three breakout groups." Increasingly web based tools are becoming readily available to assist in learning and in planning practice. We will experiment with the use of some of them including Google Apps.

### **Course Requirements and Grading:**

Grades for the course will be allocated as follows:

- Participation throughout the term (10%)
- Individual Assignment (35%)
- Group Assignment on a case (35%)
- Leading and facilitating session on case (20%)

### **Course Assignments:**

There will be two assignments, one Individual and the other Group. They will each have component parts with drafts of each staged through the term. They will be assigned at the first class and the final products due before the final class of the term.

### **Course Policies:**

For policies on participation in class and group work please see materials on the course website <http://tonydorcey.ca/Omnibus/08Omnibusindex.html>.

### **Course Materials:**

Almost all the materials for the course will be available from my website. There will be an agenda for each class which provides links to the preparatory readings, indicates

questions to consider in preparing for the session, and lists the items we will address along with how we will approach them. The agenda will usually include links and references to other sources where additional information can be found. As products are created during the course they will be uploaded to the web site. Class sessions will vary in length sometimes being four 45-minute sessions with a 10 break in between; other times, three 50-minute sessions with a 15-minute break in between; and on other occasions, two 90-minute sessions with a 30-minute break in between.