

Land Use Curriculum at Yale F&ES

What:

The concentration in land use and planning is for those students interested in the interface of environmental issues with land use, growth, planning, and development. F&ES offers four land use courses are designed to be completed in the course of a two-year degree, building upon each other and giving students a comprehensive study of the multi-faceted environmental problems and solutions in regards to land use. They are part of the MEM Specialization in Sustainable Land Management.

Proposed Course of Study:



FES 835: LAND USE PLANNING SEMINAR

Faculty: John Nolon, 1 credit

Land use plans and the techniques used to implement them determine where development occurs on the American landscape. They play a key role in determining how the needs of the nation's growing population for housing and non-residential development are accommodated and how natural resources and environmental functions are protected from the adverse impacts of land development. This survey course explores the multifaceted discipline of land use planning and its associated ecological implications, particularly related to climate change. Land use encompasses the interacting factors of land function, building design, economic development, and community support. Land use strategies identify land functions, incentivize energy efficient and climate resilient structures, and harness community and market support for effective land use decision making. When done well, land use planning possesses the capacity to maximize utility while minimizing environmental damage.

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In this seminar, students will learn from guest speakers and related readings. Speakers will include professionals involved in sustainable development, land conservation, smart growth, and climate change management. Each session will focus on a key issue in the emerging field of sustainable development as a method of addressing global climate change. Because of its interdisciplinary nature, this course provides students the opportunity to explore the ways in which complex development and conservation plans and projects must be managed and effective methods of creating environmentally responsible, livable, healthy, dynamic, and equitable communities.

FES 820: LAND USE LAW AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (3 CREDITS)

Faculty: Marjorie Shansky, 3 credits

This course explores the regulation by local governments of land uses in urban, rural, and suburban areas and the effect of development on the natural environment. The course helps students understand in a practical way how the environment can be protected through effective regulation at the local level. It introduces students to federal, state, and regional laws and programs that affect watershed protection and to the laws that delegate to local governments primary responsibility for decision making in the land use field. Theories of federalism, regionalism, states' rights, and localism are studied. The history of the delegation of planning and land use authority to local governments is traced, leading to an examination of local land use practices particularly as they relate to controlling development in and around watershed areas and to encouraging sustainable development.

Course participants engage in empirical research working to identify, catalogue, and evaluate innovative local laws that successfully protect environmental functions and natural resources, and the manner in which towns, particularly on the coast, incorporate climate change into their planning and regulations. Nearby watersheds are used as a context for the students' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of local planning and regulation. Attention is paid, in detail, to how the development of the land adversely affects natural resources and how these impacts can be mitigated through local planning and subsequent adoption of environmental regulations and regulations designed to promote sustainable development in a climate-changing world. The course includes examination of the state and local response to climate change, sea-level rise, growth management, alternatives to Euclidean zoning, low-impact development, brownfields redevelopment, and innovative land use strategies.

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FES 817: LAND USE PLANNING AT THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

Faculty: David Kooris, 3 credits

This course explores land use planning practice, regional planning, and the tools planners use to gain consensus amongst diverse constituencies. Land use plans and the techniques that implement them determine where development occurs on the American landscape. Planners play a key role in determining how the needs of nation's growing population for housing and non-residential development are accommodated and how the landscape is protected from the adverse impacts of additional land development.

Planning, zoning, and other land use regulations are the principal techniques employed to achieve safe and livable communities and to conserve critical landscapes. In most of the 50 states, land use planning and regulation is conducted principally at the local level, while regional planning is encouraged, but seldom required. For regional landscapes to be planned effectively, the competitive tensions among local governments--and their land use plans--must be mediated

FES: LAND USE STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SITES

Faculty: Andrew Tung, 3 credits

This course will provide students with an overview of the different processes and players involved in planning, creating and managing sustainable sites, through the lens of the framework and principles of the Sustainable Sites Initiative. Main topics include: framework and assessment of sustainable sites, site implementation aspects such as planning, design, construction, and maintenance, and real-world applications.

The course will consist of core lectures by principal instructors, with guest lectures by Sustainable Site practitioners- ecologists, planners, designers (architect & landscape architect), contractors, and site managers. A semester-long group project will allow students to develop site strategies for a local development proposal.

For more information:

CONTACT A PROFESSOR: John Nolon: jnolon@law.pace.edu

JOIN THE STUDENT INTEREST GROUP: Land Use Coalition at Yale (LUCY)

<http://environment.yale.edu/sigs/lucy-studs/>

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