

**FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND URBAN CHANGE  
YORK UNIVERSITY**

**ENVS 6124 3.0 URBAN-REGIONAL PLANNING:  
INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES**

**Winter 2025**

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**Course Instructor and Contact Information**

Laura Taylor, PhD, MCIP, RPP, MLAI  
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**Course Time and Location**

Fridays 10:30 – 1:20 p.m.  
HNES TBC

**Official Course Description**

Introduction to planning for urban centres and regions. Emphasis is on the history of urban regional planning thought and practice, key planning models and concepts, the planning process, and plan implementation.

**Expanded Course Description (Overview and Learning Objectives or Outcomes)**

This course is designed to provide a general introduction to planning for urban regions in theory and practice. More specifically, this course intends to:

- Engage students with scholarly literature related to planning for urban regions.
- Provide perspectives on the challenges of planning for urban regions in Canada, with a focus on the greater Toronto region.
- Provide perspectives on histories of planning for global urban regions as they affect contemporary understanding and practice.
- Encourage students to think about their own Plan of Study through exposure to the themes of this course and provide direction on where to look for additional materials to support their scholarship.
- Develop research, communication (visual, written, oral), and collaboration skills.

The course is seminar led by the instructor, with a guest speaker or two, with plenty of time for class debate and discussion. Each three-hour class will include a lecture component and a class discussion, including presentations by students.

**Anticipated Course Readings or Texts**

There is no textbook for this course. The following is a selection of readings that may be assigned by the instructor. Links to all available through eClass and YorkU Libraries.

Angelo, "From the city lens toward urbanisation as a way of seeing: Country/city binaries on an urbanising planet", *Urban Studies*, 2016

Davoudi, "Conceptions of the city-region", *Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers – Urban Design and Planning*, 2008

Escobar, "Whose knowledge, whose nature?" *Journal of Political Ecology*, 1998

Forman, "The urban region: natural systems in our place, our nourishment, our home range, our future", *Landscape Ecology*, 2008

Friskin, "The Toronto Story: Sober reflections on fifty years of experiments with regional governance", *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 2001

Garau, Zamperlin, & Balletto, "Reconsidering the Geddesian concepts of community and space through the paradigm of Smart Cities", *Sustainability*, 2016

Google research: who is Patrick Geddes and what has been his impact on regional thinking?

Hack & Simmonds (eds.), *Global city regions: Their emerging forms*, 2013 (excerpts)

Innes & Rongerude, "Civic networks for sustainable regions", *Planning Theory & Practice*, 2013  
international typology, *JAPA*, 2015

King, "Introduction", "Incorporating the Periphery: Colonial Cities", "Incorporating the Periphery: Urban Planning in the Colonies" in *Urbanism, Colonialism, and the World Economy*, 1990.

Neuman & Hull, "The futures of the city region", *Regional Studies*, 2009

Nirmal, "Being and knowing differently", *Palgrave Handbook of Gender and Development*, 2016

Sorensen, A. (2014). Taking path dependence seriously: an historical institutionalist research agenda in planning history. *Planning Perspectives*, 30(1), 17–38.

Taylor & Hurley, "The broad contours of exurban landscape change", *A comparative political ecology of exurbia*, 2016

Watson, "'The planned city sweeps the poor away...': Urban planning and 21st century urbanisation", *Progress in Planning*, 2009

Wheeler, "Built landscapes of metropolitan regions: an

Wheeler, "Regions, megaregions, and sustainability", *Regional Studies*, 2009

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

*Participation (25%)*: Attend class prepared and ready to participate. Co-facilitation of class discussions includes leading a weekly session and participating in weekly sessions. See eClass for description and requirements.

#### *Co-facilitation (25%)*

Each student will be assigned a weekly reading to co-facilitate class discussion with the instructor. Each student will prepare for class with at least three good questions from the assigned readings to support class discussion along with the instructor. Consider including a current event or issue related to your Plan of Study, as appropriate.

Evaluation based on a high level of preparation, usefulness of questions to engage the class, and level of engagement in the discussion.

*Group project (50%)*: Students will work in small groups to design and deliver an in-class presentation related to a new town. The new town may be planned or built, historical or contemporary, Canadian or international but must be approved by the instructor. During the term, the class will collaborate to create strategies to support their research, analysis, and presentation and students may be required to submit work in progress. Groups will present during the final two sessions of the term. Presentations may be presented in any suitable format, must be 20 minutes in length, and must include a list of all references cited in APA format. Following in-class presentation and discussion, presentation may be edited for final submission.

Evaluation will be based on evidence of genuine engagement, excellence in research, a high degree of creativity, collegiality, and excellence in oral, written, and visual presentation. A rubric may be provided. Each student may complete a self-evaluation and peer evaluation of their group members and this assessment may be taken into consideration in the evaluation.

### **Important Course information**

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the [Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy webpage](#)

- Senate Policy on Academic Honesty and the Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation

**Note:** A more detailed course syllabus will be available in the first week of class.