



URBAN AND REGIONAL STUDIES INSTITUTE  
MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

## **URBS 667: URBAN STUDIES GRADUATE STUDIO SYLLABUS, Spring, 2009**

### **Instructors:**

David Laverny-Rafter ([rafter@mnsu.edu](mailto:rafter@mnsu.edu); tel. (507)389-1540 and  
Perry Wood ([perry.wood@mnsu.edu](mailto:perry.wood@mnsu.edu); tel. (507)389-6949  
Office: 106 Morris Hall

### **Purpose of the Course:**

The Urban Studies Studio (URBS 667) is not like any other course in the URSI program since it is an advanced learning experience working on an applied “real world” problem for a client. The team approach to problem-solving will be stressed. Each participant working on the project will be responsible for bringing to the group the materials, ideas, and skills that a professional planner or manager working in the public or private sector would be expected to produce. The overall project report (oral and written) and the constituent components will ultimately be brought together in the form of a professional presentation to the client, your fellow students and any other faculty who wish to attend. In the past, students have reported that, while challenging, this course was one of the most valuable experiences in their graduate education and community clients have been very please with the products of this Studio.

### **The Studio Report**

One finished professional document will be required that will become part of the permanent record and will be furnished to the client and will qualify as meeting the “Capstone” requirement and the Oral Exam requirement of the Graduate College.

## **The Studio Class Meetings and Outcomes**

The participants in the studio will meet formally every Monday afternoon from 2-5 p.m. in Morris 112. At these meetings, the teams (or sub-groups) will review their project management plan, make an oral status report on their task assignments, agree on future tasks, and work together on project design, data analysis, etc. In addition, it will be expected that team participants will meet informally outside of posted class time to work through the processes leading to the completion of the project (e.g. meet with client, conduct field research). The final requirements of the Studio will be that each team will make a formal PowerPoint presentation of the project findings to the client and to the class and will prepare a written report describing findings, conclusions, recommendations. etc.

## **Studio Grades**

The grades for the Studio will be assigned through an evaluation done by faculty, participants' peers, and the responses/feedback from the client. The final product will be evaluated by the faculty on the basis of 40% of the grade. The final presentation will be evaluated on the basis of 20% from the faculty and 10% from your peers. The overall work effort and contribution of each student will be evaluated on the basis of 20% peer and 10% from the faculty.

## **Disabilities**

Every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see the instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss the necessary accommodations and/or contact the Disability Services Office at (507)627-3529 or (800)627-3529.

## **Spring 2009 Graduate Urban Studies Studio Project: A Plan for Creating a Bicycle-Friendly Campus at MSU-Mankato**

### **Background**

Due to the prospects of increasing energy costs and the concerns with global warming, air pollution and health/obesity many transportation planners have promoted pursuing alternatives to the fossil fuel automobile such as emphasis on bicycle, pedestrian, electric vehicle, etc. Because of their focus on the needs of future generations, universities and colleges have been called upon to be leaders in these areas by promoting a bicycle-oriented campus. Here at MSU-Mankato there have been ongoing discussions, and some actions, among faculty, students and staff about strategies to achieve this goal.

### **Goals of the Project**

Professor Perry Wood has been involved with the MSU Campus Planning Meet and Confer Committee which have endorsed President Davenport's statements supporting an "auto-free campus." It is generally assumed that a bicycle-oriented campus would be a central element in achieving this policy. Some possible goals of a bicycle-oriented campus plan would include:

- Document current system of bicycle trails on campus and in the Mankato area and identify where there are gaps in the bike route system.
- Document existing bicycle parking and types (e.g. open rack, enclosed bicycle storage) of parking facilities on campus.
- Explore a bike rental program whereby students can rent bikes for a trip, a day, or for an entire term. Examine fee structure.
- Develop a plan for implementing strategies needed to achieve a bicycle-oriented campus.

### **Project Elements**

The study could consist of:

- Research experiences of other universities and colleges in Minnesota (e.g. Univ. of Minnesota-Twin Cities, St. Olaf, Carleton) in promoting a bicycle-friendly campus by meeting with college officials, reviewing documents, etc.
- Conduct internet and literature research into how universities and colleges around the U.S. have adopted pro-bicycle transportation

policies on their campuses (e.g. Univ. of California-Davis, Univ. of Colorado-Boulder)

- Examine design strategies to better integrate bicycle, transit and auto on campus.
- Explore federal and state grants that may be available to help finance bicycle infrastructure projects (e.g. bike paths, bike parking).
- Implement a survey of a sample of MSU-M student population to determine their bicycle use attitudes and behaviors.
- Interview students, staff, and faculty on MSU-M campus to explore their interest in bicycle-oriented strategies.
- Prepare a PowerPoint presentation of findings
- Prepare a written report of findings and recommendations.

Therefore, the studio will create a plan identifying strategies needed to strengthen the use of bicycle on campus and thereby create a healthy, environmentally responsible campus environment.