

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
**MASTER OF URBAN PLANNING**  
**Proposed New Course**  
**UP 7500, MASTER'S PROFESSIONAL REPORT**  
Version, February 9, 2017

**Overview**

The MUP Professional Report is an individualized project that applies the skills and competencies learned in the MUP program to a project proposed by a student and approved by a faculty member (called Report Supervisor). Under the close guidance of the supervisor, the student will analyze a planning topic, issue, or community project, and write a professional report based on this study. The goal is that the student demonstrate an understanding of urban planning theory and practice, public policy and planning processes, analytical techniques, and appropriate professional skills in written and oral presentation. A part of the core MUP curriculum, this class is a capstone experience and is to be taken towards the end of the student's tenure in the 48-credit hour program. 3 credits. Grading: A-C, I

Note: UP 7500 (Plan C) replaces UP 7999, Master's Essay (Plan B), effective Fall 2017 (or the semester following approval). Students admitted prior to that semester will have the option of enrolling in UP 7999 until August 20, 2018 (or one year after approval, whichever is later), but are encouraged to select UP 7500 instead.

**Learning Outcomes**

In completing the Master's Professional Report, students will demonstrate an ability to:

1. examine a particular planning question or issue by using appropriate urban planning theories, analyses, and methods
2. synthesize data and findings and their possible applicability to a particular place or organizational context of their choice
3. develop appropriate recommendations for planning, policy, and/or practice
4. organize and present in written and oral forms, the above-mentioned material (theories, analysis, applications, recommendations, etc.) with text, graphics, and data, as appropriate, in a report of a standard consistent with professional practice.

These learning outcomes correspond to the following competencies required by the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) of all accredited planning curricula:

A1a. General Planning Knowledge: Purpose and meaning of planning (Learning outcomes 1, 2, and 3 above)

A1b. General Planning Knowledge: Human settlements and history of planning (Learning outcomes 1, 2, and 3 above)

A2a. Planning Skills: Research (Learning outcome 2 above)

A2b. Planning Skills: Written, Oral, and Graphic Communication (Learning outcome 4 above)

A2c. Planning Skills: Qualitative and quantitative methods (Learning outcome 2 above)

Write [DUSP@wayne.edu](mailto:DUSP@wayne.edu) to learn more about these and other competencies required by the PAB.

## **Course Meetings**

UP 7500 will meet as a group twice each term, Fall, Winter, and Spring-Summer, with dates and times communicated with sufficient notice before the start of each term. The first session will orient students who are enrolled in the course and those interested in taking it in a future semester, to the course's requirements and expectations. The second session will feature brief presentations by each student completing their Professional Report that semester, to an audience of students, faculty, and possible invited guests. Instructions related to the presentations will be given during the orientation. The rest of the course is designed primarily as an independent study with the work plan and timelines negotiated between the student and their Faculty Supervisor.

## **Grading Scheme**

To be awarded a graduate degree, a student must have achieved at least a 'B' (3.0) overall grade point average in their coursework. Thus, all students should aim for a grade in UP 7500 that is as high as possible, but no lower than a B. The following scheme is used for grading in the course:

**A** is reserved for a superior report and oral presentation in a way that places the student above others in the class or above beginning planning professionals. To obtain an A, work must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the selected topic; thoughtful use of scholarly and professional literature; skilled analysis of relevant data; and appropriate planning, policy, and/or action recommendations based on the synthesis of and application of findings to a particular context. With regard to writing, this includes good technical writing skills (e.g., how to structure a paper, the use of sections and paragraphs, careful articulation of arguments, the use of tables and graphs, etc.), and proper grammar, formatting, and citations.

**B** is awarded for generally satisfactory work that is on par with the average of students in the class or is considered professionally passable. Understanding of the concepts related to the selected topic is still required although some gaps in knowledge are permitted. Similarly, analysis may be partial or application of findings to developing recommendations may be incomplete or otherwise less than fitting. Less than superior writing and presentation are evident in the student's deliverables. Examples of these may include poorly structured papers, inadequate citations, presentations that fail to follow acceptable guidelines, etc. Note that a grade of B or above will not be awarded based solely on good writing or presentation skills.

**C** is awarded if the deliverables fall short of demonstrating satisfactory understanding or application of concepts, analytic methods, and/or application to context, combined with poor writing and/or presentation skills. Work awarded this grade likely will not be accepted by a superior in a planning agency, a planning commission, or a community-based organization.

**I--Incomplete** is awarded if a student fails to submit required deliverables—the professional report and oral presentation—on time, if those submitted are incomplete relative to basic requirements, or if the student fails an oral presentation. It is a strong expectation that the student completes the Report the semester in which they enroll in the course. As in all courses, non-completion by the end of the semester will yield an "I" grade, which automatically reverts to a failing "F" grade after 12 months if requirements remain unmet.

Precise weighting of the report's sections graded against each the above four learning outcomes will depend upon the questions, methods and analysis selected, and the nature of contributions made in the sections, as negotiated with the faculty supervisor. The following scheme associates grades with percentages that individual supervisors may use in aggregating scores across the report's sections:

A	95.0-100.00
A-	90.0-94.9
B+	87.0-89.9
B	83.0-86.9
B-	80.0-82.9
C+	77.0-79.9
C	73.0-76.9
F	Below 73.0

### **Timeline**

Students should begin thinking of possible Professional Report topics throughout their coursework but enrollment in UP 7500 will occur after the completion of most coursework, as indicated in their plan of work. Students are encouraged to discuss potential Professional Report topics/questions with many faculty and select one as their Professional Report Supervisor. Enrollment in UP 7500 requires permission by the Professional Report Supervisor following an agreement with the student related to the topic, methods, work plan, and draft Report outline. The student should work closely with the Report supervisor to establish timelines for review of drafts and submittal of final requirements.

### **Publication Style Manual Guidelines**

Students should select an appropriate style manual after consultation with their Supervisor. Copies of the style manuals listed below can typically be found in libraries or can be purchased at a bookstore.

Gibaldi, J. (2009). MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th ed.). New York, NY: The Modern Language Associate of America.

Grossman, J. (1993) (Ed.). The Chicago manual of style: The essential guide for writers, editors, and publishers. (14<sup>th</sup> ed.). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Turabian, K. L. (1996). A manual for writers of term papers, term papers, theses, and dissertations. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.