This course provides a general overview of the legal aspects of urban and regional planning, including institutional structures, sources of and limits on legal authority, and traditional and evolving approaches to land use control. The principle focus of this course will be on the relationships between planning as a public policymaking process and the laws that both authorize and are used to implement planning initiatives. The requirements for the course include:

- Course lectures (required) and discussion sessions (highly recommended)
  - 2-minute quizzes (combined worth 20% of final grade)
- Several short written assignments
  - Legal research assignment (worth 10% of final grade)
  - 2 case briefs
  - Planning commission meeting summary
  - Code evaluation
- Multiple-choice midterm exam
  - Exam (worth 30% of final grade)
- 48-hour take-home final exam
  - Exam (worth 40% of final grade)

Discussion sessions will be led by the GSI every Friday from 1-2:30. This will be your opportunity to consolidate the week’s materials and ask questions of the GSI. Please plan on attending these sessions.

**Required text and materials:**


Course reader (available from the A&AB copy shop)
Readings:

We will be working through the Mandelker and Payne casebook. Readings will be assigned on an ongoing basis.

Assignments:

*Legal research*: A short legal research assignment will be given sometime during the first several weeks of class. This assignment will require taking a self-guided tour of the law library and responding to selected questions. An introductory lecture and assignment will be provided during a Friday discussion session.

**Case briefs**: 2 full cases will be assigned for you to brief early in the term.

**Planning commission meeting**: At some point during the semester, please attend and observe one city planning commission meeting (Ann Arbor or some other Michigan municipality of your choice), paying attention to: the conduct of the meeting, the number of people attending, the issues before the commission, the decisions that were made or not made, and the involvement of any lawyers present. Write a short synopsis (no more than 3 pages, 1.5 line spacing) summarizing your observations, focusing on one or more legal issues addressed during the meeting.

**Code evaluation**: Please obtain a copy of a municipal or county zoning code from a local government in Michigan of your choice. We will use these ordinances periodically to identify differences and similarities across localities during the term. As we finish our coverage of zoning ordinances, I will ask you to prepare a short (~3 page) assessment of the code. In obtaining the ordinance, pay attention to the public officials with whom you speak. Was it easy to obtain the ordinance? Was it free? Did they ask questions? Please bring your ordinance to class starting on **Monday, October 4**.

**Note**: Planning commissions only meet once or twice a month. You should identify a meeting to attend early during the semester to ensure that you are able to complete this assignment. You can turn your summary in at any time during the term, but NO LATER than the **last day of class**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

**Examinations**:

**Midterm**: The midterm will consist of a 1.5 hour, 30-question multiple choice exam (tentatively). It will be given on **Monday, November 1** during the scheduled class period.

**Final**: The final exam will consist of a 48-hour take home assignment. **Tentatively**, it will be available at 1 p.m. on **Wednesday, December 15**, and will be due no later than 1 p.m. **Friday, December 17**.