

UEP 411
Senior Comprehensive Seminar in
Urban and Environmental Policy

Spring 2023

Mondays

12:45pm-2:30pm (every week except for as noted below when class doesn't meet)

12-3pm full class for lightening presentations and presentation weeks

Professor Bhavna Shamasunder:

Office Hours Tuesdays 3-4pm; Fridays 12-1pm and by appointment

Professor Seva Rodnyansky:

Office Hours selectively Mondays 12-3pm, [sign up in advance here](#)

The senior comprehensive seminar in Urban and Environmental Policy (UEP 411) is a capstone course that facilitates the research, analysis, and writing necessary to complete your senior comprehensive project. The majority of the semester is dedicated to your independent research, analysis, and writing. Class meetings are opportunities to take stock of your progress, share your accomplishments and challenges, and learn from your colleagues. Participation is important and bears on your final course grade (30%).

Key Dates

Monday, 1/23	Progress Report discussion in class; Overview of semester and format of your final comps paper.
Monday, 1/30	Written detailed progress report posted to your folders by 5pm
Sunday 3/5	Data/Findings and Findings Analysis Section due by 11:59pm
Sunday 3/12	Recommendations and Conclusion Sections Draft due by 11:59pm
Monday 3/20	Full Draft of 2 nd half of paper due: Data/Findings; Findings Analysis; Recommendations, Conclusion (for any section you have questions feedback- I will not provide detailed feedback for long, unedited sections—only work that you have specific struggles with/questions on)
Friday, 4/7	Final Comps Paper due (Full written final version. You can add your pretty images, tables, etc. later). This includes table of contents, acknowledgements, a self/position statement (if you'd like) as well as all the other sections. The writing in this version will determine grades submitted on the 15th (see guidelines attached below). This version must include your last semester final paper and revisions to your literature review and all sections in fall 2022 paper.

Monday, 4/24	Senior Comps Grades Due to the Registrar (pass/no pass/distinction)
Monday April 17th, Friday April 21st & Week of April 24th W (12-2:30pm; Friday and following times TBD)	Comps Public Presentations (your presentation is a part of your course grade) (15%)
Wed, May 3rd or Thursday May 4th	End of Year Awards Ceremony/Celebrating Seniors

Schedule

- Mon 1/23** Welcome back; course timeline; report back schedule
- Mon 1/30** *Written Detailed Progress Report from break due; Post to Moodle.*
- Mon 1/30** Qualitative Data Analysis; How to Code and Analyze Interviews (Francisca Castro, '21)
- Mon 2/6** Getting through Data Analysis; Organizing and Sorting Data; Data Analysis Questions – Please bring questions to class (Professor Seva Rodnyansky)
- Mon 2/13** Analyzing, Presenting, and Visualizing Your Data/Effectively Presenting Your Findings—Library Staff, Sarah Parramore (class in Brown Lab)
- Mon 2/20** President's Day – No class meeting
- Mon 2/27** No Class meeting; Work on Findings/Findings Analysis
- Sun 3/5** Findings Section Due including at least one data visualization/chart/table, etc. due by 11:59pm via moodle and posted to your google folder
- Mon 3/6** No Class meeting: One on One Meetings
- Sun 3/12** Recommendations and Conclusion Sections Draft Due by 11:59pm and posted to your google folders
- Mon 3/13** SPRING BREAK
- Mon 3/20** TBD

Mon 3/27 Presenting your work; Lightning Presentations- 3 minutes and discussion. We will need to complete these lightening presentations this week, so we can discuss an added time if needed this week (maybe Wednesday 12-1:30pm 3/29 TBD)

Mon 4/3 No Class Meeting

Friday 4/7 *Final Written Comps Paper due by 5:00; deliver hard copies to UEP office*

Mon 4/10 Debrief and Presentation Dry Run: Elements of a successful presentation/questions about presentation; meet with your panel

Mon 4/19 & Friday 4/21 Senior Comps Public Panel Presentations

**Mon 4/24-
Fri 4/28** Senior Comps Public Presentations (as needed TBD) and Senior Luncheon

May 4th **UEP End of the Year Gathering; Celebrate the Seniors**

(see below for course grading rubric and college supports)

Course Grade for UEP 411

UEP 411 Professor(s) will assign a final course grade based on the following:

- Participation (20%)
 - Class participation and discussions
 - Initiative taken with the research and in class
 - Engagement with course material, professors, and classmates
- Written assignments (60%)
 - 1) Progress Report; 2) Findings Section; 3) Final Comps Paper
- Public presentation of comps (20%)

Distinction on Comps

The professor(s) teaching the comps courses (in consultation with other UEP faculty) will read and evaluate each comps project. Students will receive one of the following:

- 1) Pass only;
- 2) Pass w/Distinction only, or
- 3) Pass w/Distinction + Honors

“Pass” designation will be given to comps that meet the following baseline criteria:

- Present a clear, relevant and researchable topic
- Articulate a clear research question and methodology
- Represent a strong grasp of the relevant literature
- Present clear evidence/data that addresses the research question
- Reflect a well defined and organized structure
- Contain strong, analytic writing, clear arguments, and a clear audience.
- Include relevant recommendations
- Capture your passion and engagement in an applied research project.

“Distinction” will be awarded to projects that reflect the criteria above and excel in the following:

- Level of complexity and depth of analysis
- Relevance and applicability of recommendations

Departmental Honors

UEP faculty will also designate “Honors” to students if they have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher and have been awarded “Pass with Distinction” on their Comps project. In some cases, UEP faculty may decide to grant Honors to a student with GPAs between 3.25 (the College baseline) and 3.49 in cases where a students’ comps projects reflects an extraordinary effort and research product.

UEP faculty will notify students of Distinction and Honor awards following the comps presentations.

College designated Graduation Honors

The College awards graduation honors based on overall GPA based on the following:

- Summa cum Laude: Grade point average of 3.90 or above.
- Magna cum Laude: Grade point average of 3.75 or above.
- Cum Laude: Grade point average of 3.50 or above.

Grade point averages for Honors are based on work completed at Occidental College only.

Course/Campus Policies and Support Services

Classroom Responsibilities

Teachers and students share the responsibility of learning and teaching. We see our responsibilities as creating the space and stimulating enthusiasm for learning, coming prepared to class, creating the goals and structure for a course, introducing concepts and ideas, and facilitating the sharing of knowledge amongst the students and between the professors and the students. Students are responsible for attending and participating in class, completing assignments in a timely manner, and being prepared to discuss readings and material in class. Students are also responsible for engaging in respectful, open and thoughtful discussion with each other and the professors.

Academic Integrity

Occidental College assumes that students and faculty accept and respect the principle of academic honesty. Academic misconduct, including cheating and plagiarism, is not tolerated. The policies for cheating, plagiarism and academic misconduct are outlined in the Student Handbook (available online at: <http://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook>)

Support Services

The college provides a set of resources to students to support them in learning. The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) provides writing assistance to students to develop ideas, draft, and revise papers. See <http://www.oxy.edu/writing-center>

Students with documented disabilities who are registered with Disability Services are required to present their accommodation letter to the instructor at the beginning of each semester or as soon as possible thereafter. Any student who experiences significant physical or mental impairments may contact Disability Services at (323) 259-2969 to learn about available services and support. More information is available at <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>

The Emmons Health and Counseling Center also provides important support services and can help you address issues of stress, medical and mental health and overall well-being. <http://www.oxy.edu/emmons-wellness-center>.