



Department of Planning & Urban Studies: Bachelor of Science in Urban Studies & Planning (BSUSP)

Senior Honors Thesis Syllabus

Course Number: URBN 3999 (3 credit hours per semester)

Course Title: Senior Honors Thesis

Credit Hours: 6 credit hours (maximum)

Prerequisites: Program approval and Participation in the UNO Honors Program

Course Length: Students are advised to work on their thesis over a total period of two semesters. During this time, students should arrange a minimum of 4 tutorials with their advisor and/or other members of faculty who have the experience and knowledge to help them.

Course Description: A final, individual thesis intended to integrate material already covered in previous courses, as well as to provide an in-depth exploration of a topic of special interest or career relevance to the participant. Students work closely with a thesis advisor and are required to submit a comprehensive written report, as well as, make an oral presentation defense of the research results in front of a professional academic panel.

Resources / Recommended readings:

Students will find help in the textbooks they have used for all Urban Studies classes. For specific help in conducting and communicating research:

- Walliman, Nicholas, *Your Undergraduate Dissertation: The Essential Guide for Success*. Sage, 2014. 2nd edition. ISBN-13: 978-1446253199; ISBN-10: 1446253198

Learning Objectives:

On successfully completing the course, students will have learned how to synthesize their existing knowledge, to work independently and to present and defend their arguments.

Specific objectives:

Intellectual

- To explain and apply relevant theories, laws, practical techniques and facts in a chosen area.
- To interpret data, draw logical conclusions from them, and give recommendations where appropriate.
- To apply the knowledge, experience and skills learned at university to a chosen situation in a trans-disciplinary way.
- To broaden one's knowledge on a specific topic, issue, company or industry.
- To demonstrate the ability to tackle problematic issues and look at a problem from various perspectives.
- To show the ability to analyze various aspects of a topic.

- To review and synthesize knowledge, make judgements and reasoned arguments.
- To apply various research techniques, find suitable sources of information and acknowledge them in the thesis.

Communication

- To demonstrate one's ability to logically organize and structure a large amount of information.
- To prepare and deliver an interesting and informative oral presentation.
- To answer questions and defend one's findings in a professional manner.

Organization

- To develop time management and planning skills.

Motivation & Independence

- To be able to choose a topic of interest that will help the student in his/her future career.
- To build self-discipline.

Requirements for successful completion:

In order to fully benefit from this course, students should start work on their thesis as soon as possible. In addition, they should proactively and regularly seek help from their thesis advisor.

Thesis advisor:

The advisor's role is to guide students in their progression, improve their analytical reasoning, and encourage them to construct a sound analysis and to design a structured report. It is the student's responsibility to work closely with their advisor, who will help with the following:

- Discuss the thesis proposal (topic and outline) prior to approval.
- Agree to a timetable for consultations and submissions of sections of the thesis.
- Advise on theoretical content.
- Advise on possible sources of information, and methods of data collection and analysis.
- Advise on extra skills you may need to acquire, including use of English.
- Comment on the thesis as it develops.
- Advise on the structure of both the written report and the oral presentation.
- Introduce you to other faculty who may be able to help with specialist requirements.
- Offer constructive criticism.

In addition, the advisor must approve the submission of the final report, will attend the oral presentation, and participate in grading the work.

Honors Committee

The Senior Honors Thesis Committee will be comprised of the Thesis Advisor, Honors Program representative (typically the Director) and a 3rd member selected from UNO Faculty and/or a community member with expertise in the research topic area. The 3rd member must be approved by the Program.

Structure:

The report should follow structure outlined below:

| SECTIONS | PAGE NUMBERING |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Title page. | Starts at <i>i</i> . |
| Acknowledgements. | |
| Abstract. | |
| Table of contents. | |
| Introduction. | Starts at 1. |
| Development. | |
| Conclusion. | |
| List of references / works cited | |
| Appendices (A, B, etc.) | |
| List of Figures & Tables | |

Oral presentation requirements:

The oral presentation should highlight the most interesting findings of the written report and not necessarily follow the same structure. The presentation should be used as an opportunity to present one's own views, opinions and experiences. It should take 30 minutes, after which the audience and the jury will ask questions.

Grading:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Resource & Writing Assignments | 30% |
| Mid-term report | 30% |
| Final Project/Presentation | 40% |

Grading System:

| | |
|---|--------|
| A | 90-100 |
| B | 80-89 |
| C | 70-79 |
| D | 60-69 |
| F | 0-59 |

Spring 2016 – UNO Syllabus Attachment (**UPDATE IN FUTURE SEMESTERS**)

Spring Semester Important Dates*

| | |
|--|----------|
| Last day to adjust schedule w/out fee..... | 01/10 |
| Semester Classes Begin..... | 01/11 |
| Last day to adjust schedule w/fee, or withdraw with 100% refund | 01/19 |
| Last day to apply for May commencement..... | 03/04 |
| Final day to drop a course or resign..... | 03/09 |
| Mid-semester examinations | 02/22-26 |
| Final examinations..... | 05/02-06 |
| Commencement..... | 05/13 |

*Note: check Registrar's website for Saturday and A/B sessions, and for items not listed here: <http://www.registrar.uno.edu>

Spring Semester Holidays

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Martin Luther King Holiday..... | 01/18 |
| Mardi Gras Holidays..... | 02/08-09 |
| Spring Break..... | 03/23-26 |

Withdrawal Policy – Undergraduate only

Students are responsible for initiating a action to resign from the University (withdraw from all courses) or from a course on or before dates indicated in the current Important dates calendar. Students who fail to resign by the published final date for such action will be retained on the class rolls even though they may be absent for the remainder of the semester and be graded as if they were in attendance. Failure to attend classes does not constitute a resignation. Check the dates on the [Registrar's website](#). Please consult The Bulletin for charges associated with dropping and adding courses.

Incomplete Policy – Undergraduate only

The grade of I means *incomplete* and is given for work of passing quality but which, because of circumstances beyond the student's control, is not complete. The issuance of the grade of I is at the discretion of the faculty member teaching the course. For all graduate and undergraduate students, a grade of I becomes a grade of F if it is not converted before the deadline for adding courses for credit (as printed in the Important Dates Calendar) of the next regular semester including summer semester.

Repeat Policy

When a student is permitted to repeat a course for credit, the last grade earned shall be the one which determines course acceptability for degree credit. A student who has earned a C or better in a course may not repeat that course unless, (1) the catalog description indicates that the course may be repeated for credit, or (2) the student's Dean gives prior approval for documented extenuating circumstances.

Graduate Policies

Graduate policies often vary from undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, see the [Graduate Student Handbook](#)

[Academic Dishonesty Policy](#)

Safety Awareness Facts and Education

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here: <http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/>

UNO Counseling Services and UNO Cares

UNO offers care and support for students in any type of distress. Counseling Services assist students in addressing mental health concerns through assessment, short-term counseling, and career testing and counseling. Find out more at <http://www.uno.edu/counseling-services/>. First-year students often have unique concerns, and UNO Cares is designed to address those students succeed. Contact UNO Cares through <http://www.uno.edu/fye/uno-cares.aspx>.

Emergency Procedures

Sign up for emergency notifications via text and/or email at E2Campus Notification: <http://www.uno.edu/ehso/emergency-communications/index.aspx>. All emergency and safety procedures are explained at the Emergency Health and Safety Office: <http://www.uno.edu/ehso/>.

Diversity at UNO

As the most diverse public university in the state, UNO maintains a Diversity Affairs division to support the university's efforts towards creating an environment of healthy respect, tolerance, and appreciation for the people from all walks of life, and the expression of intellectual point of view and personal lifestyle. The [Office of Diversity Affairs](#) promotes these values through a wide range of programming and activities.

Learning and Support Services

Help is within reach in the form of learning support services, including tutoring in writing and math and other supplemental instruction. Visit the [Learning Resource Center](#) in LA 334.

Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

UNO is an equal opportunity employer. The Human Resource Management department has more information on UNO's compliance with federal and state regulations regarding EEOC in its [Policies and Resources website](#).