



School of Planning, Public Policy and Management



**University of Oregon
School of Planning, Public Policy and Management**

**PPPM 620: Research Skills in Planning and Management
Winter 2023– 2 credits**

Combined Sessions Tuesdays (CRN: 24477)

MNM Students: Thursdays (CRN 24478)

Professor Dyana Mason, PhD
Office: 147C Hendricks Hall
Phone: 541.346.2324
Email: dmason@uoregon.edu

Mason Office Hours by appointment:
www.calendly.com/dyanamason/officehours

Course Overview

The general purpose of this course is to provide students exposure to common research skills utilized in the fields of planning and nonprofit management. This course will provide exposure to and practice using various skills so that students can apply these concepts to Community Planning Workshop and Nonprofit Consultancy, professional projects, and professional experiences after graduate school.

Research Skills is a 2 credit course that is offered in the Winter of the First Year for Masters of Community and Regional Planning and second year Masters of Nonprofit Management students (and PPPM graduate students by permission of instructor.) In this class, students focus on understanding and applying specific research methods, tools, and techniques. This class helps students understand typical research skills, and provides an important framework for students to conduct their own research in professional projects. As practitioners, students will rely on the knowledge gained in this course to conduct surveys, interviews, and content analysis, among other skills.

Learning Objectives

- 1) Understand and differentiate various research skills used in planning and nonprofit management
- 2) Apply knowledge of research skills and methods relevant to planning in Community Planning Workshop and Consultancy projects
- 3) Gain knowledge to apply skills in independent research projects (like CRP professional projects)
- 4) Gain and retain the skills necessary to analyze and describe various types of data

Course Structure

This class operates as a combination of lecture and workshop. The Tuesday session will include the full CRP and MNM cohorts, and the Thursday sessions will be MNM only for group work on assignments and

your final paper. Students will be organized into teams based on their Consultancy projects. The instructors will lecture about a specific skill. In the Thursday class, students will work in teams to apply knowledge, often to their projects. The readings are limited to key topics that describe skills and will be discussed during class, hence it is imperative that students come prepared by having completed the assigned readings (by Tuesday lecture).

Course Assessment and Assignments

Each student’s grade for the class will be based on their demonstration of attainment of the learning outcomes for the class. Some assignments will be completed individually and some assignments and in class exercises will be completed in pairs or in your project teams. Students will be asked to complete quizzes on Canvas between the Tuesday and Thursday classes (starting in Week 2) to gauge understanding of course concepts. These quizzes will be completion grades, meaning that you get full credit if you attempt and complete the quiz.

Assignment descriptions will be distributed throughout the term. All assignments will be submitted electronically on Canvas. If you have technical issues submitting your assignment, take a screen-shot of your computer screen displaying the error, email us immediately and attach the screen-shot and assignment to the email.

Assignments	
Interview Assignment (two part: group and individual)	20%
AI Assignment (Individual)	15%
Survey Analysis (two part: individual and group)	25%
Research Design Plan (Team)	20%
Quizzes on Canvas – individual	10%
Active Participation and In Class	10%

Grading Scale and Explanation

100	A+	85-89	B+	70-74	C+	55-59	D+	<45	F
95-99	A	80-84	B	65-69	C	50-54	D		
90-94	A-	75-79	B-	60-64	C-	45-49	D-		

A+ signifies that the student clearly exceeds an exceptional level of achievement and complete mastery of all material. This is an exceedingly rare grade.

A signifies an exceptional level of achievement and superb command of the material. Demonstrates higher level thinking and mastery of subject

A- signifies a very good level of achievement and understanding of the material with some areas of potential improvement and mastery.

B+ signifies an average level of achievement with adequate professional proficiency.

B signifies a slightly below average achievement in relation to professional proficiency; the student has understood the information, but there are gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

B– signifies that the student has not obtained professional proficiency of the subject material and there is significant room for improvement. While a B- allows the student to pass the class, a student with an overall GPA of a B- is not in good standing.

C+ or lower signifies unacceptable work for graduate level or professionals. Significant deficiencies in

assignment or knowledge.

D or lower is not a passing grade and student does not earn credit

P/NP: for a passing grade the student must achieve the equivalent of B- or better

Course Website

The course website is located on the University of Oregon's Canvas system (<https://canvas.uoregon.edu>)

The class syllabus, announcements, some readings and other materials will be posted on the Canvas site. Additionally, all assignments will be submitted on the Canvas site. Syllabus updates will be posted to the Canvas site and revisions will be described for each revised version. We will use the email function in Canvas to communicate with you. It your responsibility to check email and messages for class updates. Please adjust your Canvas notification settings accordingly.

Required Reading

There are no required textbooks for this course. All readings are required readings unless noted as optional or reference on the course schedule or Canvas. Weekly readings should be completed prior to lecture on Tuesday. Readings and resources will be available on Canvas or web. See course schedule for a complete list of course readings.

Classroom Environment

In order to create a classroom in which students are comfortable expressing their opinions and perspectives, we ask that students please approach the readings and others' contributions with both an open mind and a willingness to question one's own assumptions and biases. It is important that we create an atmosphere of debate and discussion, but you should be respectful of others at all times. As both a student and a professional you should recognize that your language and actions should be inclusive of all people regardless of their country of origin, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and political views. Language or action that is abusive or discriminatory will not be tolerated and is against the University Student Code of Conduct policies.

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This class is structured to encourage student participation through class discussion and break out activities. I will cover a lot of content in our live sessions, and the easiest way to consume that information is to be present.

Communication with Instructor

Email is the best way to get in touch with the instructors. We encourage you to email us with questions on the syllabus, assignments, readings, etc. If you would like to meet with us in person, please visit during office hours or email to set up an appointment. We are both generally very prompt in replying to emails, so if you have not heard from us within 48 hours, we encourage you to re-send the email.

Dyana's is dmason@uoregon.edu.

Course Policies

Flexibility in an Uncertain Time

Your health and your family's health is the most important thing. As the university community adjusts to teaching and learning remotely in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change. I will check-in with you frequently about how the class is going to get your feedback on how the learning environment is working for you. I will be mindful of the many impacts the unfolding events related to COVID-19 (and other current events) may be having on you. Though course engagement accounts for 10 percent of your grade, I offer daily make-up activities (discussion board posts) in lieu of attending class. During this unusual time, I encourage you to talk with me about what you are experiencing so we can work together to help you succeed in this course.

Covid Contingencies

In the event of a campus emergency that disrupts academic activities, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change. Information about changes in this course will be communicated as soon as possible by email, and on Canvas. If we are not able to meet face-to-face, students should immediately log onto Canvas and read any announcements and/or access alternative assignments. Students are also expected to continue coursework as outlined in this syllabus or other instructions on Canvas.

Late Assignment Policy

All assignments will be submitted electronically. No hard copies are requested. If you need an extension, please reach out to me as soon as you think you'll need one. If you need help, reach out to me as soon as you need it and we can collectively work on a plan for getting your assignments submitted. If you submit an assignment late without requesting an extension, late assignments ten percent for every day (24-hour period) they are late. **Assignments submitted more than 5 minutes past the deadline will be graded as late.**

Accommodations for Religious Holidays

- Let me know of any exam or assignments that overlap with religious festivals (Yom Kippur, Eid, Diwali, etc.) that are not university holidays, and I am happy to find an alternative.
- Let me know if you need any accommodations in class on a festival day (e.g., if you are fasting).

Missed Class Policy

You are responsible for all content missed, including any assignments, knowledge or skills covered or assigned in missed class(es.) Please ask classmates for class notes. If you miss a class, you can make up for attendance to that class session by posting a 500 word summary and reflection on the readings that week. You can miss two classes (or substitute discussion posts) for any reason without it affecting your grade. If you miss more than two class sessions (and miss the makeups), I will deduct a point per each missed session from your final grade.

Incomplete Policy

The University has recently updated their incomplete policy. Now, students must request an incomplete here: <https://registrar.uoregon.edu/current-students/incomplete-policy>. The link also includes information about the policy and eligibility for an incomplete. Once completing this form, I will be notified of the request and will either accept or deny the request in writing. If accepted, we will come to an agreement in writing about expectations for completing any missing course components.

Accessible Education

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

You are expected at all times to do your own work. Copying content from other students or and submitting it as your own work is grounds for failing the class. The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. For example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor.

Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at:

<https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>

AI Policy

Like it or not, AI systems are here to forever change the way we work, just like automation did for the generations before us. Our goal is to ensure you feel comfortable in the responsible use of these tools to augment your work.

In your work, we expect you to use and experiment with AI. Use of AI is not considered plagiarism in our context unless you fail to provide proper attribution. The following guidelines will help you use AI tools responsibly and transparently:

- **Provide attribution** – Based on the circumstances, you should provide attribution for anything that involved AI:
 - **For content that comes directly without editing from an AI, or closely paraphrasing AI:** content should be quoted and appropriately cited (see *Citation Guidelines*).
 - **For content that originates from AI but that you have since altered:** include an “AI Acknowledgements” section at the beginning or end of the deliverable (see *Citation Guidelines*).
 - **Exception:** Tools like Grammarly are built on AI systems. However, like Spellcheck, these tools are widely used to assist with basic grammar and spelling, so we do not expect you to include mention of them in your AI Acknowledgements section UNLESS you used them extensively to re-write sentences. (For rough guidance, assume using these tools to re-write ten or more sentences counts as extensive, triggering a mention of the tool in the AI Acknowledgements section.)
- **Be aware of limitations** – AI tools are just that: tools. They have many benefits and can make your work easier, but you can't stop using your brain. Be especially aware of the following limitations:
 - **Bias:** AI tools train on whatever data they're fed, which means they're learning and reinforcing all the same biases that might show up in humans.
 - **Accuracy:** Generative AI (GenAI), AI systems that produce content in response to prompts, are just making things up based on what their model tells them is most likely to come next. This means they can produce inaccurate or untrue content.
 - **Inputs:** When you prompt GenAI tools, the quality of your output largely depends on the quality of your prompt.
- **You hold ultimate responsibility** – Anything you produce, whether you generated it yourself or whether AI helped you generate it, is your responsibility. You will be held accountable for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or otherwise unethical content.

In Reflection Assignments

Reflection assignments are the only time we discourage use of AI, or at least ask that you use AI tools with particular care. Reflection is inherently personal: AI can't tell you what you learned and how it connects to your life. You may choose to use it as a tool for prompting your reflection, or you may choose to use it to develop graphics or other media to accompany your reflection, but your reflection should be based in your own experiences, ideas, and connections.

Citation Guidelines

For direct quotes or close paraphrasing: Use the [MLA Guidelines](#) to produce a source that you will either footnote or endnote at the close of the quote or close of the paraphrased section.

- General Format: "Title." *AI tool*, version, publisher of the tool, date content generated, general URL of tool
- Example: "Describe the symbolism of the green light in the book *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald" prompt. *ChatGPT*, 13 Feb. version, OpenAI, 8 Mar. 2023, chat.openai.com/chat.

For supportive use of AI in your work – AI Acknowledgements section: At the beginning or end of whatever you're producing, include an AI Acknowledgements section where you describe how you used AI in any of the production of the work. This should include:

- A list of any prompts you used
- A list of any AI tools you used
- A description of how you interacted with the content to alter it and check it for accuracy

In general, we recommend you keep screenshots of any AI interactions used in your work so you can refer back to them later if needed. Save these in your project files.

Documented Disabilities

The University of Oregon strives for inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Sexual Violence, Harassment and Survivor Support

I am a Student-Directed Employee, which means I will direct students who disclose sexual harassment or sexual violence to resources that can help and will only report the information shared to the university administration when the student requests that the information be reported (unless someone is in imminent risk of serious harm or a minor). The instructors of this class are required to report all other forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment to the university administration.

Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender-based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment may seek resources and help at safe.uoregon.edu. To get help by phone, a student can also call either the UO's 24-hour hotline at 541-346-SAFE [7244], or the non-confidential Title IX Coordinator/OICRC at 541-346-3123.

Students experiencing any other form of prohibited discrimination or harassment can find information and resources at investigations.uoregon.edu or contact the non-confidential Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance at 541-346-3123 or the Dean of Students Office at 541-346-3216 for help. As UO policy has different reporting requirements based on the nature of the reported harassment or discrimination, additional information about reporting requirements for discrimination or harassment unrelated to sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment is available in the [Employee Reponsibilities section](#) of the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance website.

Specific details about confidentiality of information and reporting obligations of employees can be found at investigations.uoregon.edu/employee-responsibilities.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GEs, are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This

statement is to advise you that your disclosure of information about child abuse to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following link for detailed information about mandatory reporting: [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

Inclusion Statement

It is the policy of the University of Oregon to support and value diversity. To do so requires that we:

- respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals.
- promote a culture of respect throughout the University community.
- respect the privacy, property, and freedom of others.
- reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidation of any kind.
- practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others.
- promote the diversity of opinions, ideas and backgrounds which is the lifeblood of the university.

Course content, class discussions, projects and activities, and assignments for this class rest on an assumption that human diversity is an appropriate focus of attention. The course requires and expects critical thinking about, and sensitivity to, the impact of diversity (culture, religion/faith, gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomics, physical and cognitive ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and other considerations) both in relation to the populations we serve, and in the classroom. Students are encouraged to develop and expand their respect for and understanding of diverse identities and experiences.

Your Well-Being

Life at the university can be very complicated. Students often feel overwhelmed or stressed, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationships, or just need help navigating challenges in their life. If you're facing such challenges, you don't need to handle them on your own--there's help and support on campus.

As your instructor if I believe you may need additional support, I will express my concerns, the reasons for them, and refer you to resources that might be helpful. It is not my intention to know the details of what might be bothering you, but simply to let you know I care and that help is available. Getting help is a courageous thing to do—for yourself and those you care about.

University Health Services help students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. If you need general resources on coping with stress or want to talk with another student who has been in the same place as you, visit the Duck Nest (located in the EMU on the ground floor) and get help from one of the specially trained Peer Wellness Advocates. Find out more at health.uoregon.edu/ducknest.

University Counseling Services (UCS) has a team of dedicated staff members to support you with your concerns, many of whom can provide identity-based support. All clinical services are free and confidential. Find out more at counseling.uoregon.edu or by calling 541-346-3227 (anytime UCS is closed, the After-Hours Support and Crisis Line is available by calling this same number).

Tentative Course Schedule (all readings available on Canvas)

Week	Date	Content	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1 IN-PERSON TUESDAY AND THURSDAY	January 9	Intro and Course Overview	Nishisiba, Jones and Kraner (Chapter 1); Greenlee (2015) – skills Brown (2019)	
	January 11			Quiz 1 at Thursday 8:30 am
Week 2	January 16	AI/Visual Communications	Boston AI Guidelines, Seattle AI Guidelines Codeswitch podcast https://www.npr.org/2023/11/08/1197954253/code-switch-draft-11-08-2023	
	January 18	AI Exercise		Quiz 2 due Thursday 8:30 am
Week 3	January 23	Interviews and Focus Groups	Patton Ch. 7 (pg 277-357)	
	January 25	Writing Interview Questions Exercise		AI assignment due Sunday (individual) Quiz #3 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 4	January 30	Survey Design and Sampling	Kelley et al (pg 261-266); http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/survey.php ;	
	February 1	Writing Survey Questions Exercise		Part 1, Interview Assignment Due (Team) due Sunday; Quiz #4 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 5	February 6	Data Quality and Descriptive Analysis	Wang and von Hofe, ch 2 (pg 11-50)	
	February 8	ACS Margins of Error Exercise		Part 1, Survey Assignment Questions Due (Team) (due Sunday) Quiz #5 due Th at 8:30
Week 6	February 13	Survey/Quantitative Analysis	http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/survey.php	
	February 15	Survey Analysis Exercise		Part 2, Interview Assignment Due (due Sunday) Quiz #6 due Th at 8:30 am
Week 7	February 20	Content Analysis and Coding Qualitative Data	Patton Chapter 8, Center for Evaluation and Research “Coding Qualitative Data”	
	February 22	Qualitative Data Exercise		Part 2 Survey Analysis Due (individual) Quiz 7 due Th at 8:30 am
Week 8	February 27	Case Studies	Yin ch 1-2 (pg 1-54)	
	February 29			Quiz #8 due Thu at 8:30 am

Week 9	March 5	Presenting your Research, Telling your Story	Reading TBD	
	March 7	Tables and Figures Exercise		Part 2 Survey Analysis Due (individual) Quiz #9 due Thu at 830am
Week 10	March 12	Selecting Methods, Course Wrap-Up	Watch the panel discussion on inclusive research. (1 hour) https://nij.ojp.gov/multimedia/inclusive-research-engaging-people-closest-to-the-issue	
	March 14	Cohort Check-in		Quiz #10 due Thursday 8:30 am

Grading Rubric Example (will vary by specific assignment – check Canvas for each assignment rubric)

<i>Criteria</i>	Unacceptable professional quality	Minimally acceptable professional quality	Adequate professional quality	Very good professional quality	Highest professional quality
EVALUATION					
Addressing each portion of assignment • Will vary					
Providing adequate justification • Use of literature to present issues and arguments • Development of a coherent argument or reasoned position • Exhibition of higher-level thinking, synthesis and argumentation					
Writing (see below) • Clearly structured and organized • Professional tone • Grammar, referencing & presentation					

WRITING: Detailed Feedback	Weaknesses or Deficiencies
Logical structure: Can your reader follow presentation of information? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory section to orient the reader to the purpose of the document • Clear sequence of sections: logical order for writing task • Clear structure to sections • Uses subheadings effectively—reader can easily find key information • Uses paragraphs to support structure • Clear topic sentences • Links between paragraphs • Links within sections 	

<p>Professional approach: <i>May not apply for each assignment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective paper avoids bias and prejudice • Assertions supported by evidence (references, clear information, citations) and not just opinion • Uses a range of high quality sources • Appropriate use of active and passive voice • Awareness of audience: avoids slang, jargon and informal language • Coherence 	
<p>Grammar: <i>Errors can raise questions about sloppiness</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noun verb agreement • Correct use of tense • Complete sentences • Appropriate punctuation • No run on sentences • No spelling errors or typos • Other grammar issues 	
<p>Referencing: <i>Provide support for assertions in accepted referencing style.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In text references (author date, page) or footnotes • Reference list (or footnotes) using proper citation format 	
<p>Professional Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't overuse bullets • Professional format (page #s, clear print + graphics) • Free of handwritten edits • Use graphics to support text, but not replace it • Proofreading 	

Student Engagement Inventory

Educational Format or Activity	Traditional Hours Engaged (Grad)	Explanation/Justification
Lecture	13	80 minute class -- Tuesdays are lecture
Labs or workshops	13	80 minute class -- Thursdays are workshop. Time to work on exercises and assignments.
Assigned readings	16	Approximately 340 pages of reading.
Projects or presentations	25	Three written assignments that relate to applying research skills (on topics related to projects.)
Draft Research Plan	15	Final paper that relates to their project for Spring term.
Online interaction (e.g., discussion boards)	3	Quizzes on Canvas (short retention/comprehension quizzes administered between classes.)