**Community-Engaged Planning and Design: Why? When? How? and Who?**

**UP 219-3 | Winter 2019 | Wednesdays 2:00 – 4:50 PM, 3108 Rolfe Hall**

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Office Hours: By appointment on Wednesdays

**OVERVIEW**

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.” – Jane Jacobs

Traditional planning approaches often fail to genuinely bring citizens into the decision-making process, particularly in low-income communities of color. Without authentic community input, neighborhood planning efforts misalign with residents’ priority needs at best, and at worst, further divide and degrade a community.

This course explores how planners and designers can use participatory processes, beyond the standard community meeting, to surface local knowledge that adds value and depth to planning and design interventions. We will pursue answers to critical questions including: Do participatory approaches to design and planning lead to more equitable outcomes? Is participation the missing link in successfully addressing environmental, social, and economic justice issues? Can participatory processes actually increase project impact and decrease costs?

In the first half of the course, students will investigate participatory theories, methods, and practices; explore common barriers and tradeoffs in participatory approaches; and consider the differences between participation that informs, participation that influences, and participation that decides. Students will be asked to debate the values, objectives, and applications of participation, and offer substantial critiques using their expanded theoretical framework.

In the second half of the course, students will work in groups to design a participatory methodology for a real public space project in the Eastern Coachella Valley. Students will present their participatory methodologies to the class to evaluate qualities including authenticity, level of shared decision-making power, creativity of engagement, and ability to reach diverse populations. Students will then be asked to create a site plan based on resident input that addresses the practical needs of the community while introducing innovative and speculative ideas that blur the lines between planning, design, and community development.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Explore theories and methods of participation and investigate common critiques
- Examine a range of planning and design practices rooted in a community-engaged approach
- Learn how to use stakeholder input to iteratively shape project parameters and outcomes
- Develop practical skills and techniques to design and implement authentic participatory planning methodologies for various project types and phases
- Master new visual literacy tools that enhance the participatory process
BACKGROUND

Chelina Odbert is an urban planner, Co-founder, and Executive Director of Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI). KDI is a non-profit participatory design and community development organization. The interdisciplinary firm partners with under-resourced communities to advance equity and activate the unrealized potential in neighborhoods and cities through research, planning, advocacy, and built works.

KDI’s participatory approach to planning and design is based on a decade of practice in low-income rural and urban communities in Kenya and the United States. Since 2011, KDI has been working with residents in five communities in the Eastern Coachella Valley to address community-prioritized issues of environmental, economic, and social injustice.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course has two parts:

1. Why participate? A review and critique of the history and theory of participation, participatory methods, and participatory planning and design practices.

In Part 1, students will be introduced to an expanded set of theories of participation. They will then examine innovative methods of participation, as well as domestic and international firms that define themselves as participatory practices. Students will choose one high-profile participatory planning process and firm to study in depth, and offer a critique.

2. How to participate: Techniques for developing robust participatory methodologies and ensuring the outputs authentically shape the outcomes of a project.

In Part 2, students will first work in groups to develop a participatory methodology for a real public space project in the Eastern Coachella Valley. Students will then design a conceptual site plan for a public space that draws from both community input (see note) and their technical training as planners.

Students will present their plans in a juried review. The jury will include participatory planners, designers, and at least one community member from the Eastern Coachella Valley.

Note: Due to timing of the academic quarter, students will not implement their participatory methodology developed in the course. Instead, students will receive a package of community input to inform their site plans, collected through an actual participatory processes implemented by KDI.

REQUIRED FIELD TRIP

There is a required field trip to the public space site in the City of Coachella, Riverside County, in Week 7, which will take place on Saturday, February 23. Transportation will be provided, and details will be shared in class closer to the trip date. The trip will take place in lieu of class time on that week. However, the instructors will be available on campus for desk critiques during the regular class time on February 20. Please make yourself available for the trip, or inform the instructors ASAP of any irreconcilable conflicts.
COURSE GRADING + DEADLINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentations (excluding final project)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Papers (excluding final project)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in class</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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PARTICIPATION IN CLASS

As a course on participation, we love and encourage participation in all its forms. Students will be graded on participation in class, which can be demonstrated in different ways to accommodate different learning styles. The following options are available for class participation:

- Participation during discussions in class, asking questions and/or offering comments
- Sending questions for discussion in class to the instructors prior to a class session (deadline: noon before each class meeting; minimum 2 questions)
- Sending comments in response to discussion following the class session (deadline: midnight after each class meeting; minimum 200 words)

Additional methods for participation can be proposed to the instructors for inclusion on this list.

COURSE POLICIES

Students are responsible for attending class regularly, participating fully in class discussions of the readings, completing assignments in a timely manner, and observing the following guidelines:

- Use laptops and electronic devices only for work related to what we are doing in class
- Actively listen to your colleagues and contribute respectfully to class discussions; and
- Do not use cell phones during class.

Students are also responsible for the proper attribution of all ideas, text, pictures, and graphics that are not their own. All the images used for assignments should belong to the public domain and always include the name of the author of the image. Please consult University policies on academic integrity here: https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/portals/16/documents/studentguide.pdf.

If you have a disability and require accommodations, please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) (online at www.osd.ucla.edu) or by telephone at (310) 825-1501. They are also located in A255 Murphy Hall to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact OSD as soon as possible and let the instructors know so that we can meet your learning needs.
COURSE OUTLINE

All course materials will be available online on CCLE. **READINGS TO BE DETERMINED.**

Week 1 | January 9

**Introduction to Participation in Urban Planning + Design**

- Introduction to the course and instructors
- Preliminary overview of participation in planning and design: “Participation in the Wild”
- Participatory activity
- Introduce Assignment #1: Literature reflection assignment

Week 2 | January 16

**Participation in Urban Planning + Design: The Literature**

- **Deliver:** Assignment #1: Literature reflection
- Lecture on participation theory and case studies
- Discussion of readings
- Introduce Assignment #2: Debate

**Readings to discuss in class:**

**WHY: The Beginnings**


Week 3 | January 23

**Participation in Urban Planning + Design: Methods and Processes**

- **Present:** Assignment #2: Debate
- Lecture on participatory methods
- Introduce Assignment #3: Critique

**Readings to debate in class:**

**WHY IT WORKS**


WHY IT DOESN’T


Week 4 | January 30

Participation in Urban Planning + Design: Projects and Practices

- Present: Assignment #3: Critique of processes
- Discussion of readings on participatory processes, participants, and projects

Readings to discuss in class:

WHO


Week 5 | February 6

Designing Participatory Processes

- Lecture/discussion on designing participatory processes
- In-class pilot of participatory activities
- Introduce Assignment #4: Participatory methodology
Readings to discuss in class:

**HOW + WHEN**


**Week 6 | February 13**

**Desk Critique of Participatory Methodology**

- Desk critiques of public space plans with instructors and guest jurors from KDI, including planners, architects, and landscape architects

**Week 7 | February 20**

**FIELD TRIP TO SITE IN LIEU OF REGULAR CLASS**

*The class will travel to the City of Coachella to visit the public space site for the final assignments on Saturday, February 23. No class held during regular meeting time. Optional office hours on campus with instructors during regular class time.*

- **Deliver:** Assignment #4: Participatory methodology report (DUE FEBRUARY 20 TO CCLE)
- Introduce Assignment #5: Public space plan
- Introduce community participatory dataset

**Week 8 | February 27**

**Workshop + Critiques of Public Space Plans**

- Lecture / activity on narrative development for concept design
- Desk critiques of public space plans with instructors and guest jurors from KDI, including planners, architects, and landscape architects

**Week 9 | March 6**

**Workshop + Desk Critiques of Public Space Plans**

- Lecture / activity on graphic representation
- Desk critiques of public space plans with instructors and guest jurors from KDI, including planners, architects, and landscape architects
Week 10 | March 13

Final Presentation of Public Space Plans for Critique

- **Present:** Assignment #5: Public space plan

Finals Week | March 20

Final Public Space Plans Due

- **Deliver:** Assignment #5: Public space plan (report)