

## **ENVS 6330 Environmental Planning Workshop**

**Winter 2024**

**Credits: 3.0**

### **Course Director**

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### **Time and Location**

Monday, 5:30 p.m. – 8:20 p.m.

The location of the class will vary, and will include (but may not be limited to):

- HNE 142
- Waterfront Toronto: 251 Queens Quay East, Toronto
- Toronto City Hall: 100 Queen Street West

### **Calendar Description**

Using the Greater Toronto Area as the laboratory, the workshop explores the context and debates surrounding the environmental future of the area in which we live, work, study, and play. The purpose is to allow students an opportunity to observe, critically analyse, and develop environmental plans within an applied setting.

### **Course Description**

Using a former industrial area in the eastern part of Toronto's waterfront as a study area, the workshop explores the history of development on the waterfront, the rationale behind its revitalization and the factors to consider when planning and developing a new mixed-use community. Designed as a cooking class for urbanists, the workshop is a recipe for successful city building, and will offer students an opportunity to critically engage with the context, pressures, and challenges of building a new neighbourhood.

### **Outline**

The course is a seminar-style course led by the instructor, with additional guest speakers. The class will meet weekly. Classes are in person unless public health directives require remote learning. A walking/site tour is planned. Students are required to attend class sessions off-site, accessible by TTC. EClass is used for course management.

### **Prerequisites**

There are no prerequisites for this course; however, priority will be given to students in the second year of the MES Planning Program.

### **Anticipated Course Readings**

Course readings will include publicly accessible planning documents, policy reports, precinct plans, City of Toronto Staff Reports, zoning by-laws, and secondary plans. Additional readings may be assigned or recommended during the course.

### **Course Evaluation**

Evaluation will be based on class participation and two group projects:

- Participation: 40%
- In-class group assignment: 20%
- Group project (presentation & report): 40%

### **Course Description**

The Keating Channel is a 1,100-metre long channel that was created at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to provide a route between Ashbridge's Bay and Toronto's inner harbour. For much of its history, Keating Channel functioned as a support to surrounding industry, but by the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the industrial decline in the waterfront, the channel functioned poorly as the mouth of the Don River.

In the early 2000's, the City of Toronto, the Province and the Federal government created Waterfront Toronto with a mandate to revitalize former industrial sites throughout the waterfront. Working with stakeholders and all three levels of government, Waterfront Toronto undertook a number of precinct plans, setting the planning direction for the development of sustainable, mixed-use, communities. As part of the revitalization efforts, Waterfront Toronto began the re-naturalization of the mouth of the Don River, which will protect the new neighbourhoods from flooding.

Two of the new neighbourhoods, the Keating Channel Precinct and the Villiers Island Precinct sit on either side of the Keating Channel and as the flood protection work nears its completion, Waterfront Toronto has begun the process of implementing the Villiers Island Precinct Plan, and has begun an update to the eastern portion of the Keating Channel Precinct.

Working in groups under the direction of the course instructor, students will undertake a review of the existing plans, legislation and broader City priorities and propose new ideas for the development of a new mixed-use community in Keating Channel East. Particular focus will be put on how new development can deliver a variety of public policy goals, including: affordable housing, sustainability and resilience, community infrastructure, appropriate built form and the creation of a public realm that animates the Keating Channel.

Activities throughout the term will include lectures, guest speakers, field visits, research, and

working sessions. Final presentations will be made to City of Toronto Planning and Waterfront Toronto.

This course will require students to work both individually and collaboratively, in groups.

## **Learning Outcomes**

This course will:

- Engage students with current planning policy and legislation in the City of Toronto and develop an understanding of the relationship between policy and implementation.
- Provide tools for students to navigate and understand Official Plan policy, zoning by-laws, and OLT decisions through research into current policy and legislation.
- Will engage students in the creation of community plans, particularly with respect to urban revitalization.
- Provide insight into the implementation of policies in the built environment and facilitate a better understanding of how policy shapes the built environment.
- Support achievement of professional planning competencies as defined by the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP), including “functional” planning knowledge and skills, and “enabling” planning competencies related to professionalism, planning values, and ethics. See details below.

## **Requirements**

### *Participation*

- Attend class prepared and ready to participate.
- Evaluation is based on attendance, and active and substantive participation in class discussions, fieldwork, and all class activities.

### *Course Texts (required)*

- No textbooks to be purchased (although optional). Readings linked through Moodle to York Libraries.
- Readings will be issued in each class, as needed

### *Course Materials*

- TTC fare will be required to attend sessions off-campus.

## **Assignments**

### *Part I: Class Assignment*

Summary of planning policy and development history of Keating Channel

As a class, with research divided among small groups, we will review planning policy and development history in the study area, and prepare a comprehensive list of plans, reports, key policy objectives.

This research will establish the policy framework for the group project and provide direction for the themes to be explored by each of the group projects.

Details to be discussed in class.

*Due:* Monday, February 5.

### *Part II: Group Projects*

Working in small groups, students will research and develop policy and plan direction for Keating East neighbourhood based on a theme established in the class assignment (for example: housing, infrastructure, built environment, sustainability, etc.).

- Each group will be responsible for preparing a presentation and accompanying report that establishes the following:
  - 1) History of the theme to be explored
  - 2) Policy context
  - 3) Precedents
  - 4) Policy and/or plan direction and implementation
- The goal will be to prepare an accessible and visually appealing presentation to reflect each group's subject
- The class will present its findings and directions as a comprehensive presentation on April 1, 2024 to Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto
- Each group will also prepare a report no longer than 20 pages, including graphics and images by April 8, 2024
- Evaluation of each group project will be assessed by the instructor based on evidence of thorough engagement with the readings and themes of the course, research excellence, participation, high quality of written presentation, and synthetic, critical, and original thinking.

### **Course Evaluation**

Course evaluation is based on class participation, assignments and group project. Approximate weighting of these activities is:

- Participation: 40%
- Class assignment: 20%
- Group project (presentation, report, peer evaluation): 40%

The courses in the MES program are set up with a Pass/Unsatisfactory system to encourage collaboration and evaluation is provided by the instructor for course activities and through the

final evaluation form appended to each student's dossier. A Pass in this course indicates that the student has fully participated in the course and has a good level of knowledge and synthesis of course concepts. A letter grade will be included in the instructor's course evaluation, unless otherwise requested by the student.

### **Weekly Schedule**

Note that the location of classes is preliminary and may be subject to change. Class location will be confirmed in the class prior.

While there are no required readings although students will be required to research and read a variety of publicly available reports, documents and plans. Readings will be assigned weekly.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Location</b>
Week 1	January 8	Introduction to Environmental Planning	HNES 142
Week 2	January 15	A history of the lower Don River: site tour	Waterfront Toronto
Week 3	January 22	Identifying a city's priorities: the policy framework	HNES 142
Week 4	January 29	Planning for growth: infrastructure and resilience	City Hall
Week 5	February 5	Making a beautiful city: urban design	Waterfront Toronto
Week 6	February 12	Experiencing a city: public realm and biophilic design	Waterfront Toronto
	February 19	Reading Week	
Week 7	February 26	Making a city affordable: current direction in affordable housing	TBD
Week 8	March 4	Creating a sustainable city: environmental policy	TBD
Week 9	March 11	Building a sustainable city: private sector development	Waterfront Toronto
Week 10	March 18	Working with the public: community engagement and Indigenous placemaking	HNES 142
Week 11	March 25	Imagining future cities: what's next?	HNES 142
Week 12	April 1	Presentations	Waterfront Toronto
	April 8	Group project due	

### CIP/OPPI Planning Accreditation

For students seeking planning accreditation, this course assists students in achieving their Canadian Institute of Planners and Ontario Professional Planners Institute accredited planning program certification, by directly supporting attainment of their functional and enabling competencies, as follows.

#### Functional competencies are integrated into coursework, including:

- 1) Students will engage with the **history and principles of community planning** through the review and discussion of the historic settlement, and contemporary planning, of Toronto's eastern waterfront. Students will gain knowledge of: **human settlement**, along with its evolution and history; the influence of the natural setting and site context, geography, economy, environment and sustainability issues, plus political and social structures that will shape future development. Students will be able to: identify lessons learned from past experiences; link lessons learned in human settlement to current and future planning challenges and opportunities.
- 2) The workshop has a strong emphasis on planning theories, principles, and practices related to environmental planning and urban development. The workshop has a particular emphasis on understanding the **policy considerations** planners must have regard to as they form recommendations and engage in **plan and policy making**. Especially through their group project, students will develop strategies for **plan implementation** as they make recommendations for the planning and development of the site.
- 3) The workshop highlights how local and senior **government policy** and finance influence the delivery of infrastructure, which in turn has profound impact on the physical design of communities and the uses the land can support. Students will critically engage with: the delivery of transportation infrastructure and how it determines community structure; the roles of finance, economic development and social service provisions, including housing; understanding the elements of sustainable community building and the progression of sustainable initiatives.
- 4) The final project requires students to use their understanding of **developments in planning and policy** to establish sustainable policy and/or plan directions as part of their group project. Students will be encouraged to assess how certain policy priorities may impact the implementation of other policies and will be encouraged to debate how best to implement their direction for the site.
- 5) Diversity and inclusiveness will underpin the consideration of environmental planning, including Indigenous people.

#### Enabling competencies are integrated into coursework, specifically:

- 1) Throughout the workshop, students are required to exercise their **critical thinking** and problem-solving skills, which will include research and analysis, creativity, and a broad awareness of contemporary urban issues. Students will be required to consider how the policy and plan recommendations they make will ultimately be reflected in an

implementation plan.

- 2) Through groupwork and final presentations, students will reinforce their **interpersonal skills**, and will be required to exhibit excellent **communication**, within their group and to a broader audience of peers and professionals. Focus will be on the development of new skills related to the use of graphic communication of complex policy direction.
- 3) Through in-class discussion and exercises and group project work, students will work on their competencies related to: **Leadership, Professionalism and Ethical Behaviour**, particularly as it relates to integrity and trust and diversity and inclusiveness. Students will be encouraged to develop their leadership skills through self-reflexive consideration of their and their group's values and vision, and to monitor progress and identify when to make corrections through group work.

### Access / Disability

If you have a health-related learning, physical, psychological or sensory impairment and require accommodation in teaching style or evaluation methods, please register with the Office for Persons with Disabilities. Once you are registered, the instructor will be notified and will make arrangements for necessary accommodation.

Students who feel that there are extenuating circumstances that may interfere with the successful completion of the course requirements are encouraged to discuss the matter with the instructor as soon as possible.

Students with physical, learning or other disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in teaching style, access to materials or sites, or evaluation methods should discuss this with instructor early in the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Do not hesitate to ask.

### Academic Honesty

All York students are subject to policies regarding academic honesty as set out by the Senate of York University and by the Faculty of Environmental Studies (FES). Students are strongly encouraged to read the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty, a copy of which can be found on the York University website <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm>

FES is committed to maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity. Please be advised that conduct that violates the ethical or legal standards of the University community may result in serious consequences. For more information, please contact the Director, Student and Academic Services and/or the FES Writing Program Coordinator.

### Research Ethics

Students may be required to conduct interviews as part of the research process and are covered by course- wide approval Faculty of Environmental Studies Human Participants Research Protocol.

Students are advised that all human participants in the research must have either signed a

written consent form or have provided oral consent for their participation in the research. Students also are advised that the consent forms must be retained by the instructor for two years following the completion of the research.

### **Student Conduct**

Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavour. Further, the instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. A statement of the policy and procedures involving disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on the York website at: <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies>